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A la Conquista del Cuerpo Equivocado

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Reviews (I)

Missé, M. (2018). *A la Conquista del Cuerpo Equivocado*. Barcelona: Egales - Artiñano.

Miquel Missé is a Catalan sociologist and trans activist, reference in Spain and more specifically in Trans activism centered in Barcelona since the 2000's. His contribution to LGBT and Trans studies in Spain has been central to the theorization and defense of Trans Depathologization and the advocacy for trans rights. In addition to his academic work as a researcher at Vic University, he is a trainer and independent public policy consultant for gender and sexual diversity, as well as the promotion of a diverse and critical trans culture.

His work has contributed to the trans critique to pathologization medical narratives and the call for the diversification of trans theories and embodiments. His last book, titled *To the conquer of the wrong body*¹, follows the biomedical narrative of the “wrong” trans body and draws on the discomfort provoked by this essentialising cis-narrative of the trans body. This one goes beyond theorization of structural cisnormative violence by breaking with the reasoning that relates trans identity to bodily suffering and ‘gender dysphoria’². Mainly, he reviews Trans Theory for the visibilization of gender as a socio-cultural norm that crosses and affects every body and human being, with different intensity depending on their gender belonging and context.

In the first chapter biologist and medical theorizations around the trans bodily suffering and gender dysphoria, developing into the narrative of the “wrong (trans) body,” the main object of his essay. Additionally, Missé searches for meanings and the origins of transgenderism outside biomedical theories, reflecting on the system of (cis)gender identities. The second chapter focuses on the popularization of trans activism in Spanish culture

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during the 2010's. More specifically, it points at the "Trans Visibilization" (101) milestone in media and social assimilation of its radicalism. Besides, he reflects on and question the lack of solutions and strategies to accompany trans children when suffering body acceptance, the most mainstream issue regarding transgender activism. The last chapter aims at a transgender ethic of the body based in questioning the social gender structure, instead of understanding practices of body transformation as the only destination for trans bodies. Focusing on how the structure provokes pain and suffering problematizes the structure and not the individual (trans)bodies, shifting guilt and pain towards the cis-gender system. Missé finalizes this essay brilliantly by acknowledging other possible trans experiences and offering the book as a space to face contradictions and painful experiences in trans lives.

Trans Studies and activism shakes gender foundations in contemporary debates and points at how gender as a power system impacts all of us, regardless of the gender we identify with. Missé is proposing new ways to think about masculinity outside the essentialization of the cis-male body. His work becomes an example of how Trans Theory generates a common and critical ground where masculinities can be made from alternative embodiments and attributes, such as trans, non-conforming, and intersex experiences. His book shows how masculinity can be performed through doubts, acknowledgments, emotionality, and recognition – attributes systematically detached of the 'strong' male identity - of trans masculine experiences, building on the review of hegemonic cis-masculinity.

Notes

¹ Original title: *A la Conquista del Cuerpo Equivocado*

² I refer to 'gender dysphoria' as the medical category and psychiatric diagnosis that recognise trans bodily suffering and allows access to certain medical treatments for body transformations (more in: [Missé, 2018, p.24](#)).