



Bodily Timelessness

Farewell Editorial by the Chief Editor

Marta Castañer Balcells¹  

¹ National Institute of Physical Education of Catalonia (INEFC), University of Lérida (UdL). Lérida (Spain).

OPEN  ACCESS



Edited by:

© Generalitat de Catalunya
Department of Sports
Institut Nacional d'Educació
Física de Catalunya (INEFC)

ISSN: 2014-0983

Section:

Editorial

Original language:

Catalan

Published:

January 1, 2026

Front page:

Short track athlete in
mid-turn, with maximum
speed and focus on the ice.
© coolakov / Adobe Stock.

In this brief essay on corporeality, I offer a “counterpoint” as I bid farewell as editor-in-chief of *Apunts*. I witnessed the birth of the journal when I was a student at INEFC Barcelona, and over the past seven years, I have had the honor of directing it with the extraordinary publications team at INEFC, and bringing it to the top tier of scientific journals, indexed as Q1 by Scopus and in JCR and Q2 by WoS.

My professional career at INEFC has spanned four decades devoted to our profession, at a time when almost everything still had to be done. From the very beginning, we had to envision the future and with this short essay, my intention is not to close a chapter, but rather to revisit and reflect upon all that I have carefully and diligently cultivated through the Chair of Motor Skills¹, research projects, and my direction of the scientific journal *Apunts Educación Física y Deportes*.

Therefore, I am not presenting a conventional scientific article, like so many others I have supervised for the journal, but rather a concise and modest essay on the essence and fundamental substance of our profession, which I believe should always remain at the forefront: the body.

Bodily Timelessness

It is ideas about the body that evolve historically; yet the body itself, while absorbing the symbolic constructions of each historical period, remains, in a sense, timeless.

The body can be understood as a silent substance, to which props and recurring attributes are assigned along the chronological frieze of history. In this way, through our bodies, we act as conveyors of space and time, and consequently, of the perspectives of each historical moment. The body is what is visible; movement disappears, and since the various bodily manifestations are generated through the body's movement, we might say that it is ephemeral. Bodily expression, therefore, is an ephemeral art.

A painting exists in a single dimension: that of space, even though it may evoke the historical time in which it was created. Choreographing, in the broad sense of the Latin term *choros*, involves depicting the dynamics of bodies as if in a continuously moving painting encompassing spacetime. Each motor action, each gesture, replaces the one that preceded it, which is why it is impossible for it to be permanently imprinted on the viewer's retina.

Only technological capture, such as current body motion capture systems, allows us to visualize, retrospectively, the "choreography" of our bodies—this time as if it were a painting in motion. It provides an optimal way to render bodily expression permanent. It is stimulating to consider how this capacity to move forward and backward in time enables us to begin intuitively grasping the concept of a timeless bodily language.

Similarly to contemporary hypertext, the narrative of the body can move beyond linearity and adopt multiple readings. The body, like so many other phenomena today, has entered the postmodern vision of multiplicity; consequently, the notion of contemporaneity—of accompanying each historical moment—begins to lose its force.

Thus, I consider that a perspective opens onto the concept of bodily timelessness; at the same time, however, I believe it should not be understood as a mere process of juxtapositions, but rather as dynamic processes of hybridization that allow for optimal interweavings toward new motor and sports manifestations.

The timelessness of bodily language is made possible through audiovisual technological supports that allow it to be "retained," thereby enabling the recovery of the image of a person, a smile, a glance, or a motor or sports action. Yet the timelessness of bodily language can also be sustained

through the collective unconscious, formed by the subjective traits that each "viewer" recreates and remembers in their mind. In this way, a cultural transmission chain is generated, which, when set in motion, allows the recovery of past bodily configurations—understanding that even the previous minute is, in itself, part of the past.

An accordion impresses us with its wide range in relation to its extensibility and sound registers. Its folds and sounds seem endless. Drawing an analogy between this idea and bodily language, we can come to understand that the backdrop of our motor and sports practices lies in our continuous gestural flow.

The deployment of multiple perspectives is what bodily languages provoke in any communicative or interactive situation between people. Gestural actions of the body are replicated and, in turn, multiplied. Altogether, this forms a composition that presents a new bodily discourse, highly dynamic, which fosters new questions and reflections in each generation.

References

- ¹ Castañer, M. & Camerino, O. (2022). *Enfoque Dinámico e Integrado de la Motricidad (EDIM). De la teoría a la práctica*. Colección Motriu Actual. INEFC. UdL.