

## **Abstract**

The subject of the thesis is a theoretical and empirical analysis of the human body, which is examined through the prism of eating disorders. Methodologically, the project rests upon the core methods of cultural anthropology. The purpose of the thesis is an application and testing of concepts apply concepts developed by the author of the thesis to research embodiment, specifically eating disorders perceived as culturally conditioned phenomena. The broader goal is thus to contribute to the development of the field of anthropology of body and contribute to the development of its theoretical and empirical foundations, while its specific aim is to apply the model of anthropology of body to the research of eating disorders.

The thesis proceeds from the general interpretation to the specific research agenda It is divided into three interrelated sections. The first part presents a summary of concepts and approaches to embodiment in social sciences, accentuating a diachronic perspective. In the second section the concept of embodiment is outlined introducing three structural levels. Anthropology of body serves as a starting point for tackling the issue of eating disorders. The third part is an empirical section. The outputs of the research on the body image of people with eating disorders are presented, analysed and interpreted. Projective drawing techniques are engaged as a core method. A group of people with eating disorders and a control group were asked to outline their bodies on a piece of paper. This investigation shows that subjects in both groups perceive themselves larger than they actually are. Using another drawing technique, the next part investigates connections between the images people with eating disorders have of themselves in three different stages of their lives: each participant depicts how she thought she looked like five years ago, how she looks like now and finally what her predictions is regarding her appearance in five years. This study clearly proves the drawings having repeating elements. People with eating disorders depict themselves thinner in the future than in the present believing that the weight loss will bring them happiness.

Keywords: anthropology of body, human body, eating disorders, culture, body image, nourishment