

# XI International Rendezvous of the Forums VII International Encounter of the School of Psychoanalysis of the Forums of the Lacanian Field

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## “Appropriating the inappropriable?”

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In the theme of our Meeting the question of the body's treatment comes to the fore, articulated with the question of time, or more precisely of the times we live in. Hearing the title, I immediately searched for its translation into my mother tongue. It was not the body but the notion of treatment which posed a problem. In Polish, one cannot speak of “treatment” to designate both a way of treating something and a cure. But I found that this issue of translation – pertinent to both our community and the global times we live in – was only the beginning of a fruitful problem. In the very concept of treatment, something is already supposed. It is that thing which is being treated – the body, in this case. This body of which Lacan said in the late years of his teaching that it “should impress you more<sup>1</sup>!” I note that it is in the spirit of not taking the body for granted, at the heart of clinical experience, that Ramon Miralpeix wrote his prelude, entitled “So that there be a body...”. Chantal Degril, on the other hand, began hers with the quote wherein Lacan reminds us: it is having a body, and not being it that characterises the human<sup>2</sup>. For my part, it is a recent reading of Giorgio Agamben's *The Use of Bodies*<sup>3</sup> which pushes me to look into this very Lacanian idea of having a body, and to juxtapose the notion of treatment with that of use, as developed by the Italian philosopher.

I find it important to question this verb of having – of having a body in the 21<sup>st</sup> century – especially in the context of capitalist discourse. To begin, I would point out that we may be accustomed to associate having with ownership, but “to have” can mean “to be able to do something with”, but also “to have to do something with”, to be obliged by something. And one can also “have” a disease: curable, and incurable (like desire). According to Agamben, body, language and landscape are the three inappropriables for the human being. For him, a condition for relating to the inappropriable – a possibility which he calls use – is never owning.

In her prelude, Colette Soler underlined a significant point of orientation within the theme – psychoanalysis treats bodies which have already been treated, by discourse. In this “already been treated”, we can accentuate either the mark of a trace, or, on the other

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1 LACAN J. Seminar Book XX, Encore, (session of May 8th, 1973) trans. B. Fink, W.W. Norton&Company Inc, New York 1998, pg. 109

2 The quote is „LOM, the basic LOM, LOM who has a body and has only one. One has to say it like that: he has one... and not: he is one...It is having it and not being it that characterises him.”, LACAN J. Joyce le Symptome, *Autres Ecrits*, Paris, Seuil, 2001, p. 565

3 AGAMBEN, GIORGIO *The Use of Bodies*, trans. A. Kotsko, Stanford University Press, 2016

hand, an assumption. My interest is in the latter. There is the assumption of a previous treatment, and then, within the assumption that that treatment requires, something of the body escapes us. It is our task in psychoanalysis to elucidate how. What is it that escapes? Repetitive treatment of the body through speech miraculously creates this body's unity, as treating logically assumes an object of treatment. But that same supposition seems to also hide the signification it creates. Sketching out the premises of a discussion, one could attempt to paraphrase Lacan: "That there might be a body remains forgotten behind its usage in its treatment"<sup>4</sup>. Colette Soler also seems to point to this very problem of the body's inaccessibility when she says that in clinical experience, those bodies already treated by discourse cannot satisfy subjects.

It might seem that treatment is more concerned with its object, while use considers it only as a means to another end. This is not my line of thinking here. I regard "treatment" as that which implies more of a distance with the treated object than is the case with use. And the end in question for which "use" would be the means is precisely that of jouissance, inseparable from the body.

In the treatment of the body by the fantasy, for example, the body's capacity to be imagined as a whole, separable object is used by the subject as he or she borrows its mode of being – which is always a "being in exchange" with the Other – from the "partiality" allowed by the drives, in order to mis-recognise him or herself. The trouble in the affair is the undecided position with respect to jouissance, as the subject attributes it to the Other. Vacillating in the and/or in order to save one's being, for another time. This would be the unconscious assumption of signification within the treatment by fantasy, which bets on making a place for the subject's being. A bet, we can even call it a bet of (self)love which creates signification, and which is a leap into the future perfect tense.

But where is the body in its corpo-reality, faced with the leaps of this subject? Isn't it doomed to be jet-lagged? In its weight, lagging behind the jet of this leap into the future that the subject always is. Jetlagged for years, a metaphor which I owe to an analysand who thus named her symptom of insomnia. In what would be the "peace of the evening", at the very moment when the body is put out of use, the potential dormant within the symptom remains restless, speaks of the body through nightmares, showing that one can, indeed, sleep furiously<sup>5</sup>. But, playing on contemporary and historic metaphors, would the alternative of awakening the body from jetlag be only that of ...sleepwalking? A moment when the body does take over, while the sleep of the subject indicates how it remains inappropriable in its mystery. As analysts, we don't advertise a full-awakening (which as Lacan says would be death), and the syncopation between the subject and body remains, it is the *parlêtre*. Can we opt for something other than sleepwalking, in the use of bodies that an analysis facilitates?

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4 Lacan's famous sentence is "That one might be saying remains forgotten behind what is said in what is heard" in *L'Étourdit*, available in English translation by Cormac Gallagher, distributed in THE LETTER 41 (2009) 31-80

5 I evoke the « *Colorless green ideas sleep furiously / Furiously sleep ideas green colorless* » commented upon by Noam Chomsky in his *Syntactic Structures*, and which Lacan quotes in the first lesson of Seminar XII, *Les problèmes cruciaux pour la psychanalyse* (session of December 2nd 1964, unpublished version).

Perhaps Lacan's beautiful re-definition of the drive also allows us to conceive of the knotting, from treatment to use of the body. As he says the drives “are the echo in the body that there was a saying”<sup>6</sup>. It means that speech made use of the body, if it was allowed by a subject. In this use the body become a field of resonance for the voice of the Other, a landscape for its echo, rather than an enclosed, whole object.

In the French etymological dictionary usage is defined first of all as generally received practice, a custom, also as the manner of being of someone, the use of something, and also: a particular function. My idea here is that in use, the employment of the body is more direct than in the case of treatment. Perhaps we could also say: the treatment of an organism through speech which makes of it a body is what allows for its use. Or the assumption made by the treatment is put to the test in use? If only this passage was so simple, we would not have much work.

In order to use something attentively, one has to have a certain know-how. The “how” implies attention to detail, within a certain structure of knowledge. In usage, the “how” is both present, in an instant, and immediately forgotten in the purpose of that use. When the “how” in this know-how is overly accentuated in a model, it is manner. The joy of forgetting oneself in this “how” is style. Agamben's study, which I am very briefly recounting here, doesn't imply that using the body means mastering it. My comment on the know-how doesn't imply it, either. What seems to be more important is that through use, the body is the very space of the human's indirect relationship with being, which is lacking. So is the creative power of this verb, and of its use – the use of use, I would say, which requires time and repetition to be verified in its effects for each one.

Accentuating the “how” of both manner and style, I find it surprisingly close to that linguistic subtlety which was pointed out to us in Lacan by Soler – that of postulating a corpo-rection as what allows for a bond, of bodies, through the effects of jouissance which owe something to the miracles of language.

To be continued in Buenos Aires!

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6 LACAN J. Seminar XXIII, *Joyce le sinthome*, session of November 18th, 1975, unpublished