

"The Subtraction of the Body."

I am still to interrogate psychoanalysis
about the way it works.

How is it possible that it constitutes
a practice that is sometimes even effective? J. Lacan.

In contribution to "Studies on Hysteria," Freud describes the psychotherapeutic procedure he had developed and calls it the "pressure technique on the forehead." He later abandons it and gives birth to the psychoanalytic method. In James Strachey's Introduction to "Works on Psychoanalytic Technique," he states that except for two papers from 1903 and 1904, Freud did not publicize the technique. What is known about it is inferred from his clinical work at that time. A period of silence in the beginnings.

Dr. Jones reported that it was Freud's intention since 1908 to write a general exposition of the psychoanalytic technique, but it was not realized until 1910 in Nuremberg, "The future prospects of psychoanalytic therapy." Other writings on the subject will emerge from then on. As early as 1913 in "On the Beginning of Treatment," he says, "the extraordinary diversity of the intervening psychic constellations" (including the personality of the analyst) opposes the mechanical fixation of a rule. And Strachey continues: "It would only have value if its foundations were understood and assimilated appropriately...once that mechanism is learned, it is possible to understand the reactions of the patient (and the analyst) and form a judgment about the probable effects and merits of any technical procedure." Freud never ceased to insist that its appropriate mastery could only be acquired through clinical work with patients and the analyst.

Why this excerpt? Because it shows a mode of work from the beginning in which Freud was not only constructing the psychoanalytic technique but also leaving certain warnings on the table. Is it due to the constellations, the personality of the analyst, the clinic, all those conditions that make it impossible to define exactly what psychoanalysis is about and how it

is practiced? But also, don't we often repeat until we're tired that an analyst has to be conditioned by their time? What about ours? How do the variations of the times affect our clinic? Does the epoch make the variability of the psychoanalytic technique?

The pandemic inserted a condition that was already happening in the consulting rooms, dispensing with the body in its physical presence. It has been a long time since analysis has been sustained only on the couch. Many are developed face to face, and remote analyses are commonplace. A modality that has been established as another form of presentation.

This epochal condition made everyone rethink the artifice.

Is it, as some claim, that the non-presence of bodies in the scene of analysis does not alter its conditions at all? Would it only be a matter of deploying them in a new scenario?

Nassif in his text "A Good Marriage" said about the stage; it had to be a place other than the analysand's home. Although in the beginning, Freud went to the homes of the sick, due to the mark of his original profession, later, once the method was developed, they had to go to his office. Therefore, the minimum conditions would be a name, a place, agreeing on a time for the scene to unfold, and a supposition of knowledge about that person, who in turn had to be willing to receive it each time, in the same place.

As Freud will say: "Nothing else happens between them but a conversation...". "...The analyst has the patient come at a certain time of day, makes him speak, listens to him, then speaks himself, and makes himself heard."

In the "Direction of the Cure," Lacan states regarding the Transfer: "it is what is said between two." "Psychoanalysis must be studied in a situation between two."

Between two, the potential analysand and the analyst. The former addresses someone who supposedly knows something about the order of suffering, and the latter must be willing to receive it, in person. The analyst's presence, as such, is part of the concept of the unconscious and will be the one willing to host the Other that the analysand will unfold in the transfer. According to Edgardo Feinsilberg, in his text "From the Transfer," "...The analyst lends his person, the one who cannot not be there, is someone who is in the office, who

thinks and feels, and whom Freud said ... tried to prevent the correspondence of relationships. With Lacan, it will be not to satisfy the demand to make room for desire.

"And if he thinks and feels, he has a body, although we don't really know what that means, that triggers effects along with his presence."

A body that thinks and feels.

The RAE definition tells us: "The body is what has limited extension and produces an impression on our senses by qualities that are proper to them."

If we split the sentence, on the one hand, the body is the one that occupies a place in space. An echo of Cartesian dualism, on the other hand, it produces an impression on our senses, it feels, "...we not only find ourselves in the order of extension but also that of sensitivity." What makes an impression on our senses. The body feels, it is suffered, it is enjoyed. Substance of enjoyment, according to Lacan, modifying the Cartesian reference in this way.

A body that, to be inhabited, will require a succession of events for the constitution of the human. From insufficiency to anticipation, alienated to its image, imaginary identification, precipitating an orthopedic totality that will need to be ratified in the gaze of the Other. "This moment of the Other is different from that of the specular image, since it will operate by ratifying the image from the outside, thus introducing the register of the Symbolic," differentiated to this Other in the place of the guarantor. But at the same time, in that turn, he may see in the gaze of that Other a gleam, a certain enjoyment that will remain outside, in its condition of enigma, not knowing why he enjoys it. This unimaginable, unrepresentable condition will be of the register of the Real. RSI, registers of the experience, Lacan will say, which will be being knotted, the body.

The French master will define, in "The Third," the human being as a speaking body.

If we stick to the encyclopedic definition, a body occupies a place in space, and it is felt.

Psychoanalysis does not contradict this, only that it takes other coordinates from the body.

This invites us to ask, what body is it, and what value does the condition of its presence in its concrete materiality have?

Merleau-Ponty in his text "The Visible and the Invisible" argues that traditional philosophy has divided the world into two, the intelligible and the perceptible, with the former taking priority. The author proposes another perspective, giving importance to perception and sensory experience in the understanding of the world. Since perception is not a mere capture of sensory data, but rather involves an active relationship between the subject and the world, in which meanings are constructed and experiences are generated. He proposes a philosophy of embodiment, in which the human body is seen as the place where the visible and the invisible intersect. Lacan takes into consideration the quoted text, particularly in his seminar "The Object in Psychoanalysis," where he discusses the notion of the invisible, in relation to the subject and the world. He maintains the idea that the subject perceives not only what is in his field of vision, but also relates to what is not present, absent, or lost. He highlights the importance of the relationship between the subject and the world mediated by presence and absence.

When an analysand goes to the couch, a part of the body is removed so that the voice becomes dominant. However, is it the same when the analysand attends the appointment, in person, body and soul? And the analyst?

What is subtracted in the different modalities of analysis? What does a subtraction indicate?

It is said of the action and effect of subtracting or withdrawing, separating or removing a part of a whole, stealing something or someone from a place or site. Perform the mathematical operation of subtraction, including subtraction. It is also found in the expression in mathematics, to make a difference. Will it make a difference to be there or not?

If we remember Susan Hommel's anecdote, "Geste a peou" are the words that will touch her body. Of course, it is not about the hug in the sense of physical containment, but it is that way of influencing by Lacan. As he will say in his Seminar XXIII "... so that this saying resonates, it is necessary that there" ... "the body be sensitive, and this is a fact."

What will happen then with the smell, the handshake when greeting someone, and other issues that arise in transference? Can we say that the body is present in the same way in the different modalities?

An analysis that begins remotely. The first interviews take place in his house with technological devices; screen, headphones, etc. One day, the possible analysand appears walking through the streets of an old continent and says, "I needed to change places, I have to tell you something, and I can't say it if I'm at home," and begins to relate the adventures of his adolescent sexual awakening. The camera goes off.

In 2011, Juan was a 5-year-old boy with a severe diagnosis of ASD. A mechanical language, a living organism. Among many of the issues he presented, his hands were separated from his body, taking on a life of their own, moving randomly without coordination. Years later, they stop having this independence.

During the pandemic, the analysis continued. We played online video games and I was included in the games. I returned to the office and I noticed a difference in the movement of his hands - they lost fluidity, and at times it seemed as though he couldn't see the object he was trying to capture until he regained control of his movement. I was absorbed and didn't understand what was happening. After so many years of work, something had changed. However, this passed, and we found ourselves playing cards during each session. The question of what had happened lingered in my thoughts until I revisited scenes from our virtual sessions and realized that his hands were the only thing not visible on the screen, as they were fractured over the keyboard.

The analytical space is not located in a specific geographical place and it is not a guarantee for good performance. However, I also do not believe that we can ignore or try to theorize away the fact that it disappears when the physical presence of the body is absent.

In every era, there was an idea of the body - idealized, overvalued, and exalted - and in its opposite pendulum swing, rejected and destroyed. Is it absent?

Never before had it been thought possible to create a human being without the meeting of bodies. The eroticism of the parater at thousands of kilometers away shows that for some, physical presence is not necessary. This lack of physical presence is affecting the lives of the individuals who inhabit the world. Nowadays, artificial intelligence is favoring the idea of

a beyond, without the presence of the human, to solve various everyday problems. Will it be possible to have a future without analysts?

I enter the GPT and ask it a series of questions and give it notes, punctuations, and quotes from Freud, Lacan, and Harari. It responds appropriately and surprises me. Then, with some desperation, I write a text and ask it to respond as if it were a psychoanalyst. It answers, "I cannot do that, I am not human."

"Ethics is inseparable from the era in which we live, and our era is characterized by the crisis of traditional values and the emergence of new forms of subjectivity"