

The Body in Quarantine

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1. In the beginning, there was the body – that of the mother, of the primitive Eve. It is not correct, as proposed by the inaugural book, that she came from Adam's rib. It was the opposite: we emerged from the maternal body.
2. There is an Aleph of the body, which is the navel. That is life's first scar.
3. The body can be cut, tattooed, scribbled, and inscribed. The body is a parchment on which history prints characters – the passing of the time tills lines on this surface.
4. The signs of identity are on the body: on the fingerprints, on the iris's texture, on the ears' geometry, on the tongue's bulbs and crests.
5. I do not know if I am or am not, but my body exists me and insists me.
6. The body devours and is devoured, touches and is touched, sees and is seen.
7. The mother cradles a body, sustains it, cleanses it. Under the rhythm of her caress, a melody is composed on our skin's pentagram.
8. The body is memory, live souvenir of a past.
9. We feed on other bodies to survive, we eat Christ's body to make and become a community. 'This is my body that will be devoured by you; do this to celebrate me.'
10. The body is thirsty: thirsty for knowledge, thirsty for love, thirsty for existence.
11. Bodies penetrate each other, perforate each other, poke at each other's deep entrails or tangentially brush each other.
12. Murderers mark the bodies after taking away their vital breath. They remove eyes so that there are no witnesses; they cut tongues to prevent accusations; they cut genitals to stop reproduction.
13. Bodies study one another, get closer, capture each other's aroma, skirt each other's lips, become blind in order to traverse and be traversed.
14. Divided by Zeus, a fragment of being eternally searches for another being who can complete and complement them. The body yearns for other forms of body.
15. The body loves – incestuously, endogamicly, exogamicly, filially, tenderly.
16. The body matures. The beardless infantile flower blooms into fruitily volumes – the body provokes.
17. Mutation is an essence of the body's becoming. Its surface is adorned, aromatized, aligned, dressed and undressed, decorated, drawn and redrawn on. We are never at ease inhabiting its form.
18. Since the beginnings of humanity, we have enlarged lips and lobes, stretched necks, destroyed tarsi and metatarsi. Now we implant silicone in the mammary glands and trim nasal septa. One has one's body operated and intervened on, hoping to make it inhabited by the ideal essence of beauty.
19. The body is extension, but also intension – it lives in continuous tension.
20. The body is pulsion, but also com-pulsion and re-pulsion.
21. The body is *soma*, *physis*, *dermos*, *cardios*, *pneuma*. There is not one single body entity, since one is multiple, with communicating vessels and networks that entwine and entangle.
22. The body gets ill, decays, wrinkles. The body hystericizes, obsesses, splits, hypocondricizes,

and anguishes itself.

23. The knuckles or metacarpophalangeal joints chafe against a solid surface. From the small capillaries around them spurts the red liquid.
24. The *vulvar mucosa* folds itself in humidity, fascinated by the cavernous mesh that fills up with blood.
25. Blood reminds us of the advent of life – although every 28 days it also reminds us of the failed life.
26. The body throbs between pains and loves.
27. The body vomits and regurgitates, rejects, undoes, excretes.
28. The body incorporates, assimilates, metabolizes.
29. El Greco saw bodies as languid forms. Egon Schiele used to say that he painted the light that emanated from the bodies. Bacon showed us the overflowing fluidity and the mutation of their forms. Botero left us with the flesh's voluminous voluptuosity.
30. The body is presentation and representation.
31. To Freud, all modern life's apparatuses are but extensions of our body. Borges copied the same idea.
32. Within the brain's circumvolutions inhabits another body, different from the one we see in the mirror; in our brain, we are more lips than torso, more hands than arms. Our body is what we see, but our body feels us differently than the image in the mirror.
33. In front of the mirror the body undresses, observes, criticizes, corrects, and dreams itself – it becomes another. In front of the mirror, the eyes that look at me are not mine, they are someone else's.
34. My body is a territory of freedom... what a vain illusion.
35. Your body is the souvenir of difference: the color of your skin, the shape of your torso, the volume of your legs, the pigment of your iris, the undulation of the hair that covers the frame of your face, the melanin on your skin, the taste of your kisses.
36. The body tangles and untangles, veils and unveils, covers and uncovers itself. The body masks. A mask is a person – without masks, we impersonalize ourselves, we become nude bodies. Nudity does not lie; veils hide the body's truth.
37. A body deceived Freud, winked at him, told him that a pipe is not necessarily a pipe.
38. 'Is that a gun in your pocket, or are you just glad to see me?' (Mae West)
39. Anatomy is just one of the many versions of the body's per-versions.
40. Freud's body is that of the pulsion; Lacan's one is that of the signifier; Plato's is that of the ideas; Christ's is that of pain; Winnicott's is that of the mother; Laplanche's is that of seduction; mine will be that of the worms who will devour it for centuries and centuries.
41. The body is the deluding matter that makes us forget the nothing that we will be.
42. A body that is not subject nor object; it is treated as though it was another, but it speaks to us as though it was autonomous.
43. Spinoza used to say: 'no one has yet determined what the body can do' (P2, part III. Of the Affects, *Ethics*, 1677).
44. After all, every body is the witness of an ephemeral existence.

Translator: Gabriel Hirschorn-Zonana