

ARTIGO

FROM THE PLACE OF HUMAN SCIENCES IN PHYSICAL EDUCATION TO THE PLACES OF BODY IN CONTEMPORARY TIMES: BETWEEN BEING AND HAVE¹

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ABSTRACT: In these reflections, I intend to draw a relationship between the place of Human Science in the education of Physical Education teachers in Brazil and some impressions about the bodies and subjectivities in contemporary times. First, I outline historical and epistemological observations that establish interpretations and meanings among present situations, past events, and some structural elements to understand the place of sciences in social reality, particularly in Brazilian Physical Education. Secondly, I present some formulations based on my previous studies, focusing on the questions of being and having a body, drawing mostly on Lacanian psychoanalysis. The essayistic and, somewhat, provisional aspect of some ideas and articulations in the text reflects a formal affiliation or, at least, a regard for Theodor W. Adorno's important lessons and notions, such as the understanding of what philosophy and thought are.

Keywords: physical education, human sciences, body.

DO LUGAR DAS CIÊNCIAS HUMANAS NA EDUCAÇÃO FÍSICA AOS LUGARES DO CORPO NO CONTEMPORÂNEO: ENTRE SER E TER

RESUMO: Pretendo esboçar, nestas reflexões, uma relação entre o lugar das Ciências Humanas na formação de professores de Educação Física no Brasil e algumas impressões sobre corpos e subjetividades no contemporâneo. No primeiro momento, faço uma observação de caráter histórico e epistemológico, constituindo interpretações e sentidos entre situações do presente, ocorrências do passado e alguns elementos estruturais, para compreensão e localização das ciências na realidade social, especificamente, da Educação Física brasileira. No segundo, apresento algumas

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formulações a partir das minhas pesquisas e estudos nos últimos anos, sobretudo, detendo-me em um problema que indico como a questão entre ser e ter um corpo. Neste momento, recorro especialmente a psicanálise de orientação lacaniana. O aspecto ensaístico e, de certa maneira, provisório de algumas ideias e articulações do texto reflete uma filiação formal ou ao menos uma consideração por lições e noções importantes de Theodor W. Adorno, como a compreensão do que seja a filosofia e o pensamento.

Palavras-chave: educação física, ciências humanas, corpo.

DEL LUGAR DE LAS CIENCIAS HUMANAS EN LA EDUCACIÓN FÍSICA A LOS LUGARES DEL CUERPO EN EL MUNDO CONTEMPORÁNEO: ENTRE EL SER Y TENER

RESUMEN: Pretendo esbozar, en estas reflexiones, una relación entre el lugar de las Ciencias Humanas en la formación de profesores de Educación Física en Brasil y algunas impresiones sobre cuerpo y subjetividades en el contemporáneo. En un primer momento, hago una observación de carácter histórico y epistemológico, constituyendo interpretaciones y sentidos entre situaciones del presente, hechos pasados y algunos elementos estructurales, para comprensión y ubicación de las ciencias en la realidad social, específicamente, de la Educación Física brasileña. En el segundo, presento algunas formulaciones basadas en mis investigaciones y estudios de los últimos años, sobre todo, centrándome especialmente en un problema que señalo como la cuestión entre ser y tener un cuerpo. En este momento recorro especialmente al psicoanálisis de orientación lacaniana. El aspecto ensayístico y, en cierto modo, provisional de algunas ideas y articulaciones del texto, refleja una filiación formal o al menos una consideración por lecciones y nociones importantes de Theodor. W. Adorno, como la comprensión de lo que es la filosofía y el pensamiento.

Palabras clave: educación física, ciencias humanas, cuerpo.

INTRODUCTION

The pedagogical development with a critical bias, with all its plurality of positions, marked a new era for Brazilian school Physical Education – PE since the end of the 1980s, which is confirmed by the proliferation of studies, the bibliographical presence in public exams, the reconfiguration of curriculum matrices in initial training, and progressively in the graduate courses.

In fact, Brazilian PE, thought of as a complex area of teacher education, research, work, and interventions, more or less pedagogical, around the body and its practices, through different epistemic, technical, and technological references, has produced an extremely rich and pertinent academic and scientific expansion. In this expansion, Human Sciences- HS in Brazilian PE ended up filling a “void space” that, naturally, could not be filled by training sciences or the physiology of exercise, or even the previous philosophical, historical, and pedagogical formulations, due to the nature of the problems and challenges that, sooner or later, as properly human questions in the scope of education, appeared as a specific area in the PE space.

Thus, Brazilian PE could effectively deal, in a critical way and maybe deeper, with pedagogical and didactic (KUNZ, 2004), historical (SOARES, 2001; LINHALES, 2009), sociological (BETTI, 1998; BRACHT, 2005), anthropological (DAOLIO, 1995; 2004) issues, among the many productions of these authors and others.

The most substantial presence of HS in the academic and pedagogical space of PE considerably expanded the perceptions and understandings about the body and its practices. In a way, they have called PE and its participants to more current debates and actions about the corporality of individuals and social groups in their condition of political subjects and their bodies.

In this article², I first reflect on the presence of HS in the field of Brazilian PE with predominantly epistemic observations. After that, I approach issues related to the body in contemporary times, mainly what I have previously called the problem between *being* and *having* a body. To do so, I am mainly based on the ideas of the philosopher Theodor W. Adorno and on Lacanian psychoanalytical theory.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND THE (HUMAN) SCIENCES

Within the effective social reality of PE, we find disputes across different institutionalized levels over the hegemony of narratives, interpretations, productions, and work. Conflicts produced – and I believe some still do – in many cases, misunderstandings in the epistemic/practical scope, such as the disregard or ignorance of certain problems, because they reference or privilege, during formation, only one specific theoretical field. There is a difficulty to recognize ethical, political, or social issues in the various practices of PE teachers; a certain incapacity of deep reflection and more reasonable interpretations exactly due to the lack of studies and references that can better instrumentalize teachers for this recognition, notably, references in the HS field, even though there are, to some theme, multidisciplinary approaches that can, for instance, consider for ethical reflections studies in biology, neurosciences, or genetics.

These types of situations, sometimes, seem to come from superficial or little reflected notions about which inhabit the practice and scientific knowledge in their relations with social reality on several levels; as the differences of difficulties of scientific understanding do not only show some specific technical and didactical problems, but also articulate themselves, almost always, in political and ethical positions. To strongly separate epistemology and politics seems as suspicious as it is naïve to not delineate with some precision the differences and characteristics of each domain. Knowledge cannot exist in the social sphere, in the concreteness of everyday relations, completely abstracted from the normative, moral, and political sphere. Let us imagine, for example, that a series of theorizations and knowledge about the gain of muscular mass (therefore, within a multidisciplinary domain involving physiology, nutrition, biomechanics, etc.), developed and applied throughout time consider, in different circumstances, the conceptions and determinations that guided the corporality of women, men, children, and older adults, that is, an implicit or explicit normative universe. In more schematic terms, we are faced by the viability and knowledge application in the field of Natural Sciences – NS, as they are conformed to a given normative *status quo* in each place and cultural-historical time. At the same time, there is a specific lexicon that, within this example, seems to belong to History, Psychology, Sociology, and that interprets and, to

² This article was developed from a lecture given in the IX *Seminário do PROEFE* and XI *Seminário do CEMEF*, “*A formação docente em educação física: o lugar das humanidades*” [Teacher education in Physical Education: the place of humanities], June 25 and 26, July 2 and 3, 2021.

some extent, explains the conceptions and determinations of the mentioned corporalities, composing a theoretical *corpus* that may or may not suffer the influences of a multidisciplinary domain used to transform the organism. Thus, there are NS types of knowledge that “submit themselves” to a given normative context at the moment of its effectiveness and, at the same time, there are concepts and theorizations that support the prevalence in time and space of said normative context and that do not belong, in their epistemic affiliations, to the NS but to HS³. What I intend to say, exploring the example given, is that regardless of the pathway of discoveries and formulations about how the gain of muscular mass could be beneficial to human health, there had always been a series of discussions that connected bodies to genders, in the ontological sense (what is to be a man or a woman), in the aesthetic sense (what is beautiful or ugly and what sensibilities are appropriate to each gender) and so on. However, as we know, this pathway, parallel to the formulations in NS and HS, almost always cross or intercross each other, more or less consciously, also in the present time.

Another epistemological situation in PE that deserves attention concerns the relationship between theory and practice (BRACHT, CAPARROZ, 2007). It is quite common nowadays (and, in this case, PE is not alone, as it is no exaggeration to perceive the same spirit in education and training in general), a strong inclination toward instrumentalization and a belief in the total applicability of knowledge within professional practice. The problem of the effectiveness of a theory in reality or in a perspective in which a theory’s truth or pedagogical guidance is seen by the positivity of the answer obtained or the alignment of an answer to what was previously proposed and expected – truth as synonymous to usefulness, correspondence between theory and empirical reality, concept and object, can indicate a lack of knowledge about the specificities of didactic objects or studies with which we deal, or even, an ignorance regarding the indetermination space between theory and practice, whose impossibility of complete identity between both does not impede knowing what is intended to know but demands a non-idealized and ethically-different reconfiguration of interpretation and action.

Hence, I do not intend a type of “thought purism”, related to the objects thought, but the peculiarities typical of the objects, their determinant differences for the creation of different areas as answers to the needs that are imposed by the wish to know about something. If, on one hand, the differences between worldly things resist, to a certain extent, unifying movements, be they thoughts or methods, on the other, there is no suggestion of a total separation of identities and principles regarding the interpretation and intervention forms. We may also not disregard the risk of imaginarily building, from a mosaic of different subjects, a totalizing and idealized view of an area, such as PE, as if a supposedly harmonious union of specialties could solve the endless flow of concrete problems and, sometimes singular, which daily challenge teachers’ practices. I believe that understanding and correctly delineating the differences and epistemological scopes in PE research may help modulate potential excesses in the tensions between ideological positions in professional work.

Therefore, that “void space” of meaning and normativity, which I talked about, updated the constant dynamic of feedback between individuals and society, that is, between institutions and the social whole, between a given practice and its contexts. At the beginning of the gymnastic methods, the science that grounded them was socially incorporated into an intricate relationship between the moral-pedagogical and the medical-pedagogical discourses (BRACHT 1999; SOARES 2001). It was not simply a matter of a PE idiosyncrasy but a historical condition in the relationship

³ The aim of this example is simply to make more didactic the interconnection of different sciences and their knowledge, which, evidently, does not end the possibilities of relationship.

between scientific knowledge and social realities. For instance, the scientific content of the so-called *scientia sexualis*, in Michel Foucault's terms, contemporary with scientific gymnastics, navigated a discourse situated beyond the possible theoretical and practical knowledge of the 19th century.

When we compare these discourses on human sexuality · with what was known at the time about the physiology of animal and plant reproduction, we are struck by the incongruity. Their feeble content from the standpoint of elementary rationality, not to mention scientificity, earns them a place apart in the history of knowledge. (FOUCAULT, 1988, p.54)

It was the fate, so far, of some areas of modern sciences in the East to socially work sometimes more as normative discourse than, in fact, as a grounded practice. Similarly, a part of this fate was the asymmetric development when comparing areas, even those later grouped, whether in NS, HS, or social ones, and also within the same specific segment, such as Medicine. Let us read what the psychiatrist and psychoanalyst Sérgio de Campos comments about this:

In the early 20th century, however, while medicine was entering the scientific era with solid biological foundations, the same was not true of psychiatry (BERCHERIE, 1989). Its participation in the anatomoclinical method was discreet. Given the nature of its object, medicine (sic) established itself as a hybrid subject (ALONSO-FERNÁNDEZ, 1979, P.12) gathering, on the one hand, medicine contributions, and, on the other, following the school, contributions from the Husserlian phenomenology, Heideggerian existentialism, or Freudian psychoanalysis, contributions aimed at the study of patients' subjectivity. (CAMPOS, 2013, p.76)

This asymmetry in the academic-scientific development of the sciences, and even within subareas within a greater field, is certainly related to the nature of the objects in each scientific subject. The objects and their material, historical, and social specificities determine, in theory, the equally historical and cultural pathways of their concepts, methods, and theories, as they are correlated in their social insertions. Considering Adorno, the objects should be prominent in the process of knowledge production because, as a principle, they establish the *telos* of scientific activity. The aim at the end of each investigation, study, or research is to reach new knowledge about the object in question. Especially in Sociology, but not only, "The point is that the method cannot be posited as absolute in opposition to its subject matter; rather, but the method of sociology must also stand in a living relationship to this subject matter and must, as far as possible, be developed from it". (ADORNO, 2008, p.184). In some way, there is a vestige of Aristotelian knowledge if we consider the difference between the means and the ends in the practical context of sciences. A difference that, in the condition of these concepts' universality (means and ends), would irrevocably demand, in each particular situation of research, a symbiosis in which the ethical preponderance of the ends, to accomplish a specific end not every means can be used, on the contrary, an intimate procedure among them, making them mimetically close. Thus, we can say that a specific ethical and gnoseological position on the ends prevents thoughtless inversions of place and excesses in the relativization and comparison of the importance attributed to the means and the ends. (HORKHEIMER, 2004). The increasing expansion and diversification of sciences impose on thought, beyond critical and ethically-engaged observation, a need for detailed attention at the working-structure level, so as to apprehend the specificities, internal and external to their practices and knowledge, when assessed in their social insertions.

In a part of PE's epistemological history, the proliferation of new objects, questions, and problems established limits on naturalist and moralist views in the area. That does not mean that the limits to which I refer are broadly recognized and understood. On the contrary, disputes in the

ethical-moral and ideological field, evidently including market issues, are decisive in shaping scientific discourses.

A critical reconsideration of the biological bases is necessary and can only occur through subjects established in their specificities, precisely in other interpretive spheres. This reconsideration went through, and still goes through, reconfigurations of objects, problems, theories, and, notwithstanding, is part, or at least should be part, of a whole knowledge area that seeks to produce and continuous and reflexive debate with reality and the spirit of their time. At the same time, referring to scientific knowledge and its production, regarding the relationship between PE and society, we find in the area a continuous update of discourses, according to larger or external social tendencies, and perhaps this is more evident in the record of hard or laboratory sciences, with the increasing interest in neurosciences. From the perspective of initial training, I believe this tendency was also expressed in the division of undergraduate admission and the increase in the demand for bachelor's degrees, without disregarding the inherent problems in the field of teaching degrees in general, which, in this space, we cannot deepen. Hence, in part, the increase of bachelors refers to the historical connection of PE with the medical-pedagogical discourse, as well as, more recently, to the power of scientific advancement about the body and its roles. We know, from the academic experience of many, that in much of the PE and sports field, there is an updated disregard for knowledge connected to HS, perhaps greater than an effort to epistemologically recognize this knowledge and its related knowledge in the social reality.

Therefore, considering the (tension) conditions of HS in the field of Brazilian PE, I will, from now on, reflect about the body and its contemporary vicissitudes.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION, BODY, BEING AND HAVING

The body and its practices as central PE themes imposed on the epistemological history of this area, together with its constitutive pedagogical character, its development into a progressive multidisciplinary tension between NS, HS, and social ones, despite its current complexity, technological and political power of the NS, and the laboratory field. This is related to the fact that the concept of body and the experience to which it refers belong more to the field of HS than to laboratory and natural ones. If, in biological classes, the human body is divided into anatomy and physiology, the notion of corporeal culture of movement, as well as body practices, was what advanced Brazilian PE, beyond dealing almost exclusively with the organism in physical activity.

body culture, movement culture, or corporal movement culture? At first, any of those, as long as it is a culture, that is, as long as it focuses on this concept. With this, in fact, I want to say that the concept which, in my understanding, indicates a new construction of our "object" is that of culture. It is the one that better expresses the most important resignification and the necessary denaturalization of our object, and that best reflects its socio-historical contextualization. (BRACHT, 2006, p.97)

In this critical repositioning in the face of the preponderance of the focus on the organism and its physiology, or in this "denaturalization" of the PE object, to say, as Valter Bracht, we find a privileged and decisive space to investigate and reflect about our relationships with our body, a current and multidisciplinary theme, whose importance for PE does not lie only on what we could confine to its universe of isolated activity field but its specificities irremediably interact with social determinations that involve other areas, institutions, and productions.

If PE teachers want to be up to the questions and problems of our times regarding the body and their practices, they need to be aware of more than scientific updates in genetics, neuroscience, and physiology. Listening to what HS has been saying about the body is crucial for an enlarged understanding of the realities effectively experienced with this body; realities that will always be historical or social, be they political, ethical, aesthetical, and physiological, thus, shaped in specific symbolic-cultural scenarios that, in turn, cannot be abstracted, considering that they simultaneously constitute and are constituted in said realities. When observing the question through the lenses of historical dualities, such as soul/spirit and body, culture and nature, we can follow Ana Márcia Silva,

considering that the body is presented as situated in the interconnection between culture and nature, between biological and social, according to some modern dualities, being completely from both domains. This hybrid condition is not only from the body and, perhaps, it is not even possible to find something that is not, especially due to the context of several globalization orders in which we live. (SILVA, 2006, p.75)

However, if we still insist in understanding the body solely through the spectrum of laboratorial sciences, what is the current tendency as a “common sense”, and want to, in this way, to socially work always and only in this perspective, we could be surprised with the consequences and ethical-moral problems, results of the determinism of excessively “naturalized” views able to instrumentalizing and impoverishing the social or cultural character of the bodies and their practices. In fact, the attempt to separate or hierarchize, and to overlap the biological with the social, should be understood as a political and ethical action, not only as a technical or epistemic one. “That is to say, there is nothing under the sun, and I mean absolutely nothing, which, in being mediated through human intelligence and human thought, is not also socially mediated. (...) It also applies to natural science and to technology.” (ADORNO, 2008, p.72).

Thus, based on this, I propose that we consider an issue that has been following me for the past few years. It is a problem present in other important discussions involving the body, be it a reflection on pedagogy and body practices in PE or on issues related to culture and identities, to stress two important examples. I refer here to what I call the dialectic between *being* and *having* a body. Hence, we will consider that

the thematic complexity of the body also implies the recognition of its double proximity with us, given that we are body and cannot talk from outside the body, as well as we cannot talk outside history; and given that we work with the body, not only producing knowledge about it, but also organizing social interventions from the body practices. (SILVA, 2006, p.75 – my highlight)

Following the writer, on the one hand, I can radicalize the issue of *being* in the elementary realization in the face of death. We stop materially existing when the vital functions of the body/organism cease. On the other hand, I radicalize the issue of *having* by noticing how in our everyday communication we frequently use possessive pronouns to refer to the body and its parts in several situations. In the excerpt above, “work with the body” is precisely how the author chose to refer to the fact that we not only are, but also have our body: a mark of separation, a difference that occurs between who *is someone and that differs from what one works with*. So, do we stop here? For example, in the statement that we are and have a body at the same time? The question is precisely, in this consideration, to identify, analyze, correlate, evaluate, and maybe transform the

individual and collective effects, subjective and social, the historical events and experiences of this properly human condition. When observing within and outside PE, I have the impression that every time we imagine and act, either strongly believing that we are our body or, on the contrary, that we have a body, we run into less or more serious problems. It does not seem, through any analytical lens, to be possible to take sides, as if it were a relatively simple issue; in which one could, for instance, completely separate, in reflection, objective moments when one is or has a body, the subjective impressions, the ideas, and the imagination about it. It also seems difficult to conceive that the practical and concrete consequences of the body, based on the actions grounded in more or less conscious notions about being or having it, symmetrically follow these possible oscillations of perception. That said, I can, thus, try to delineate individually and collectively, in the sense of a moral, pedagogical perspective, etc., in the levels of representations and meanings that guide certain choices, the moments of *having* and *being*, and, so, critically and reflectively evaluate them.

It seems that dealing with the body as something to be had, “a dead thing”, *corpus*, as Horkheimer and Adorno said, in the 1940s, was a decisive trace of Western culture in a broad sense, and this continues to mean the unquestionable benefits of scientific progress as, equally, indisputably, the barbarity and collective and individual violence. On the one hand, it is important to notice, thus, that, in the hypostasis of the body as something to be had and the problems arisen from this, there is a situation better described in social terms: it is not only my body as an instrument that is at stake but also the body of the other that is under my rule, my domain, even if momentarily. This object-body, more or less strongly alienated from the individual, assumed, in some important moments of Western history, the reified place of the work force, the object of pleasure, the trainable and disciplined body.

On the other hand, the obsession of being one’s own body, no less present in history, taken to the last consequences nowadays, makes us recognize, for example, from what a concept such as narcissism can teach us, in a more problematic level, that imagines that one is the body that one has, to strongly self-identify with the image of this body, often results in problems for the individual. For Sigmund Freud (2010; 2011a; 2011b), there is an aspect of the concept of narcissism and its experience closely connected to the psychotic condition⁴. Right at the start of “On Narcissism: An Introduction”, we find the relationship between the concept of narcissism and the reflections about the libido in the neurosis and psychosis. In the psychotic case, it refers to a question of degree, that is, in the amount of libido removed from the objective reality and guided towards the *Ego*, but, according to Freud, without a subjective correlate, as in the neurosis, in which the subject keeps certain bonds, imaginarily mediated, with the external reality. The excess and hypostasis of libido guided towards the I would, thus, be characteristic of narcissism in paraphrenia. It is a situation of an *Ego-image-body* condensing libido.

Thus, if on the one hand, there are problems in the *body-object-objectified*, and in this issue we can remember the observations about sporting training done by Alexandre F. Vaz (1999) from the critical theory of Horkheimer and Adorno, in what body training reproduces the violence of nature’s immemorial domination through the rationality of enlightened spirit, on the other, we find situations that trigger a need felt by the subject to intervene in the *real* of the body; as if the direct intervention in the body were fundamental to “correct the existence” of the subject when faced by itself, for example in the many cases of women who lost their lives in risky aesthetical procedures, often with the due preparation⁵, in the occurrences of mental health in the cases of

⁴ With all due care required to mention Freud and the place of narcissism in his theory, I would like to highlight only a type of “excess” that can circumscribe the relationship with the body and image, that is, with no intention of labeling the examples and situations cited in the text with the psychoanalytical categories.

⁵ We should be aware of the historical-social conditions regarding the objectification of women’s bodies.

bulimia and anorexia, sometimes fatal, or yet, in scenarios of serious organic illness due to the abuse of anabolic steroids.

The radical fact that our existence is connected to the body, from which we have an open flank for the discussions about finitude, does not immediately mean that the production of a total identity with the body one already has: it is, on the contrary, the production of a subject, at the level of its most intimate subjective formations. Therefore, it is, perhaps, a frequent mistake to confuse our organic, physical existence with our “ontological existence” and with the fundamental subjectivations of all human life. Nonetheless, both things are not completely separated. If we support the interpretation of a given conceptual incongruence between body and organism (safeguarding the final protagonism of the organic over the body in the moment of death or a serious or terminal illness), we can see that the contemporary identifications to one’s own organism, supported by the popularized “scientific discourses” and the products, techniques, and intervention technologies available at the market depend on a symbolic-conceptual work of overlapping the image of one’s “corporal unity” to the working of the living organism. At the same time, we can notice, through the Lacanian psychoanalytical prism, that the overlapping of meaning, such as this, often, rigid and totalizing in many cases, nowadays, will be, notwithstanding, one of the possibilities of imaginary production on one’s own body, as it would be articulated to the subjects’ self-recognition through and in corporal image. This fundamental psychic operation, of an *imaginary* nature, indicates that the relationship of the subject with his/her body is not established in a direct line with the “*real* of its physiological working”. If we could think, for example, of human suffering as a corporeal experience, Mário Fleig (2004) will observe, from a psychoanalytical perspective, that every suffering is essentially psychic. Every mental suffering carries something corporeal and, in turn, the corporeal here is not reduced to the location of neurophysiological problems but refers to the intersection points between the image of the body and its perceived and felt materiality in the inalienable presence of language. Even the neurophysiological pathologies, we can advocate that we are in a corporeal condition that embodies suffering as marks of an *imaginary* and a meaning.

In another argumentative context, Adorno (2009), when thinking about human suffering, will do so by considering the dynamic between *having* and *being* a body, guided by the historical duality with the concept of spirit. In the philosopher’s perspective, having a body, as something one has, separated and morally submitted by nature from its passions to a supposed completely enlightened and superior spirit, would be a mistake not only ethical and epistemic but also ontological, common in the history of rationality in the West. It is an important problem for Adorno, which he approaches directly throughout extensive work. Thus, for the Frankfurtian thinker, suffering and pain have an essential physical nature⁶. He argues in the direction of a dialectical correction about the identities of the body and the spirit and, thus, helps us reflect on our identifications with one or the other concept. The corporeal and the spiritual, for Adorno, are different but not separated; close but not mixed up.

The history of spiritual separation regarding the corporeal will also progressively be a history of domination and excess of the former over the latter.

The controversy about the priority of mind and body is a pre-dialectical proceeding (...). Both body and mind are abstractions of their experience. Their radical difference is posited, reflecting the mind’s historically gained “self-consciousness” and its rejection of what it

⁶ “All pain and all negativity, the moving forces of dialectical thinking, assume the variously conveyed, sometimes unrecognizable form of physical things” (ADORNO, 2009, p.173). See also Horkheimer and Adorno’s work note, “Interest in the body”, on Dialectic of Enlightenment.

denies for its own identity's sake. All mental things are modified physical impulses, and such modification is their qualitative recoil into what not merely "is." (ADORNO, 2009, p.172)

Therefore, against this, the philosopher argued: against the idea of pure and crystallized identities; also against the will of unity or the reduction of one domain to another. In each of those cases, a sign of violence has inhabited, or even still inhabits.

Still about being and having...

When considering Adorno's work and, mainly, the reflections about the body, I recently proposed, in the context of a "negative ontological dialectic" with the spirit, that, in turn, reminds another complex relationship, that is, the one between history and nature, the hypothesis that we could benefit the critical and comprehensive reading of the body reality by bringing to the debate two other important concepts for the Frankfurtian thinker: subject and object⁷.

By observing how Adorno considered the relationship between these concepts, I have been suggesting that the body can better fill the space of the object, though, within a *dialectic correction*, which implies, in this case, an important ethical-moral background: not the historically recognized space in several moments in the ridiculed and violated body, but the object in its dignity, in its material priority in relation to the spirit; not as an exact ontological priority but with a certain autonomy, when not establishing itself as a precise correspondence of the spirit. It is a wager for the body, from the characteristics that Adorno originally conceived for the concept of object, culminating in his thesis of the object's primacy⁸. Therefore, a *pre-eminence or primacy of the body* would indicate a *body-object* dialectically corrected in its historical relationship with the spirit, and, in turn, in the subject approached in this text, this alterity assumed to the body, its mimetic *difference-similarity* with the spirit, could reposition the individual in the place of the subject, but a subject less imprisoned in the imaginary of his/her identification to the body/organism, an identification that normally dialectically reverberates when considering the body as a thing, which should be rationally dominated in all its manifestations and qualities; therefore, in a different way, a subject that is more in the place of *having* his/her body as an alterity, inspired by the object's dignity that is, at the same time, intimate and foreign, whose relationship could be grounded less on the excess and control, and more in the knowledge, respect, and consideration of differences.

Nowadays, there is a strong drive toward the idea that one *is* the body they *have*; mainly due to the unfathomable advances in areas and specialties, such as genetics, neurosciences, physiology, and technologies of image production, the latter applied to medical diagnoses or virtual narcissistic entertainment in social networks. Referring to image diagnostic medicine, the psychoanalyst Éric Laurent (2016) observes that this is part of a broader social context, which we could point out as an "empire of images"⁹. This is not to say that, in other periods, the images and the sense of vision itself did not have a decisive place in European and Western culture but that, in the last decades, we have in each corner of our daily lives, in the big cities, the mark of vision and images: from the security cameras everywhere to the drones that fly over us with an increasing frequency, and the technological updating of outdoor billboards and publicity, among other examples.

⁷ Ac. BORGES, Thiago, F. de. *O primado do corpo a partir da filosofia de T. W. Adorno*. Belo Horizonte: Editora Dialética, 2020.

⁸ Ac. ADORNO, Theodor. W. Sobre sujeito e objeto. In: ADORNO, Theodor. W. *Palavras e sinais: modelos críticos 2*. Translation Maria Helena Ruschel. Petrópolis: Vozes, 1995.

⁹ This was, in fact, the theme of VII ENAPOL – *Encontro Americano de Psicanálise de Orientação Lacaniana*, simultaneous to the XIX *Encontro Internacional do Campo Freudiano*, which took place in September, 2015, in the city of São Paulo.

Since the 19th century, there has been a complex overlap involving, so far, values, techniques, and technologies. From the Benjamin's observation of speed, the "shocks", and the fleetingness of life in the metropolises, updated in the analyses of the "philosophy of sensation" by Christoph Türcke (2010), to Flusser technical images; we can perceive, as one of the consequences of ascension to the social zenith of the illimited profusion of image production, a type of "ontologization" of the body. Türcke's memory and critical observation about a certain updating of the dictum "to be is to be perceived"¹⁰ follow the placing of the body (and its image) in the center of the debates and the possibilities of understanding the configurations of contemporary life. The success of *Instagram* is not by chance; compared to *Facebook*, it is much less textual and, in a restricted sense, focused on images. The recent loss of conventional text, the written one, as a part of the history of communication and the production of human knowledge, evident in the prevalence of *Twitter*, the success of *podcasts* and *Tik Tok*, is articulated in the focus on corporeal image. It is not only to expand into new types of media and ways to access information and communication, which, certainly, have their advantages¹¹, but an *agitation of bodies* that, besides constantly demanding the production of its evidence, marks the refusal of quietness and a certain "oblivion" of a body that follows us. The excessively tattooed, pierced, liposuctioned, and filled bodies that populate the networks until the paroxysm of a "human Ken" or, in some cases, what is called *Body art*.

The time we live in, one of agitated and ontologized bodies, is also one of the new malaises, consistent, in many cases, with the current identification forms of the body/organism. It is the body prevailing, maybe as never before, in the territory of mental illness, with the cases of Obsessive Compulsive Disorder- OCD; Attention Deficit Disorder with or without hyperactivity – ADHD, to cite two examples. The subjectivity terrain, in the current context of psychiatry, is paired with the fields of social body image, the medical image of illness, and genetic identity, forensic or not, all witnessing the contemporary march towards the "unit of Being" in the body. A curious circumstance of "unity" because, to unify something, there needs to be pre-existing parts to be unified. Identifying A with B, the psychism with a part and the works of the brain, the pleasure with a given hormonal discharge, and the love for a person with certain neural connections, all this presupposes a complete alignment of discursive and experimental records, sometimes different in history. Perhaps the new forms of malaise that affect the body indicate something of this aspiration to unity that cannot be completely fulfilled.

Being a body that one *has* does not go through a bias of conceptual identification of the body to the organism but also through the imagetic construction of meanings for the corporeal image, more or less articulated with interventions in the body itself¹². Interventions use, to a greater or lesser extent, technological resources from the body sciences, depending on the intention and possibilities.

I consider, from a psychoanalytic reading of the time in which we live, those two powerful voices compete but also articulate themselves in the everyday seduction of subjects with their bodies: (I) the marriage between the capitalist discourse and the science one, in which we listen to

¹⁰ *Esse est percipi*, from the Anglican 18th-century theologian, George Berkeley.

¹¹ The intention is not to restrict the criticism towards the isolated dimension of contents in the networks and the internet as a whole, this would be to misunderstand the nature of the phenomenon in the social sphere. The forms and structures cannot be excluded from reflection, because they are determinant in the working of the virtual life apparatus.

¹² There is another issue that I consider to be central to the reflections and possible understandings about the dynamics between *being* and *having* a body: a question about unit and body fragmentation. A theme that I cannot develop here but have recently approached in an article published at the journal *Analytica*. Ac. BORGES, Thiago. F. de. ROSA, Márcia. *Ter e ser um corpo a partir do estágio do espelho: entre a unidade e a fragmentação*. In. *Analytica: revista de psicanálise*. São João del-Rei, v.13, n.24, janeiro/junho de 2024.

the standardization appeals, even if sometimes disguised as bets on diversity; (II) the political discourse (in a special sense here) of the “right to enjoyment”, the right to live with the body in absolutely singular ways – it is a political discourse because, even if presented under a psychoanalytical concept (enjoyment)¹³, it affects, in practical ways, acts, manifestations, and projects that tense social life in the fight for recognition, new spaces, and rights. Individual positions that mix themselves with standardized and institutionalized discourses, in the conformations of the ways of being, feeling, and acting in each moment of history, in each social space.

If we, in fact, update the euphoria of the late 19th century and the 20th century, about the organism based on the rhythm of neuroscience, genetics, etc., carrying the idea of a complex system expressed in the image of corporal unity, this impressively happens together with the epistemic and discursive fragmentation about the organic body.

Today, there is a frequent search for fulfillment, as an intention, of the Freudian prognostic that “anatomy is destiny”¹⁴. However, we might say, following Jacques-Alain Miller in Lacan’s recapitulation of the Freudian issue, that it is less a question of destiny than, maybe, a corporeal moment when the subject and its psychic production are not stagnated. Something resists and escapes the determination of Being in the anatomy, the ultimate identification with the organism, as a human index, or even, as Marcus André Vieira (2020, p.1) states, “anatomy is decisive, but not essential, natural”. Miller will say that,

Freud does not refer to the anatomical body when explaining the subjective difference in sexuation. Indeed, the anatomy does not even determine hysteria, because as Lacan observes in “Television”, the hysterical conversion does not obey the anatomic sharing [...]. Alongside the anatomic body, it would be possible to question the living body, distinguished from it. About the living body, as it speaks and that the word conditions its pleasure, it would maybe be possible to say that it makes destiny. (MILLER, 2011, p.4)

Therefore, at least in psychoanalysis, there are conditions to resist the pull towards standardization and control, as there is still a possibility of the *living body*, marked by the contingency of each subject’s singular experience.

FINAL REMARKS

To some extent, the representational and discursive dynamic in PE history followed that ambivalence between *being* and *having* a body, which, considered from a critical point of view, has remained so far, even if sometimes unaware of this, a certain preventive and reflexive potential

¹³ In psychoanalysis enjoyment and pleasure are different concepts. Enjoyment fundamental refers to the body, though it cannot be understood only from the bias of corporal record. This implies that one cannot live without enjoyment (considering that one cannot live without a body), we cannot fully give it up, even though we can question a certain experience of enjoyment. See LACAN, Jacques. *O seminário: livro 20 mais, ainda*. Texto estabelecido por J-A Miller. Tradução de M. D. Magno. Rio de Janeiro: Zahar, 2008 e, MILLER, Jacques-Alain. *Elementos de Biologia Lacaniana*. Translation Yolanda Vilela. Belo Horizonte: EBP-MG, 1999.

¹⁴ Ac. FREUD, Sigmund. Sobre a tendência universal à depreciação na esfera do amor. In: FREUD, Sigmund. *Obras completas volume. XI*. Tradução de Jayme Salomão. Rio de Janeiro: Imago, 1970. FREUD, Sigmund. A dissolução do Complexo de Édipo. In: FREUD, Sigmund. *Obras completas volume. XIX*. Translation Jayme Salomão. Rio de Janeiro: Imago, 1976. I appropriate, at my own risk, this famous phrase outside its psychoanalytical context to illustrate a more general situation.

against more rigorous identifications and potentially more encompassing ones that have always lurked and seem to be more prevalent in the past years. The problems surpass the pedagogical field and also appear in the health and political spheres, which should expand our concern and attention to contemporary phenomena.

At the same time, I believe that the same ambivalence between *being* and *having* did not completely align with the political and epistemic division of the PE field in Brazil, considering that this issue is located in that division established in the re-democratization period among the supporters of abstract sport (positive in itself) and the functional and physiological body, on the one hand, and, on the other, the supporters of critical pedagogies based on the HS. Thus, one group and the other supported, through their own means and narratives, their own meanings to *be* and *have* a body. Considering the closing moment, if I called special attention to the drive towards the identification with the organism and its physiology, we need to attend to the signs, as said, mainly for health and political experience.

In this sense, faced by the contemporary ode of *being* a body/anatomy, it seems important to be able to perceive and interpret, in another direction, because *being*, to some extent, is to dangerously anticipate the ultimate moment, the finitude's threshold in each situation when the death of the organism updates the preponderance of the *Real* over the delusions of identity and completeness. As the psychoanalyst Sandra Espinha (2013) stated, the body is posterior in relation to the organism. It consists of an observation that, without any intention of deepening the issue, basically indicates that one always creates a body and takes possession of it. Being "second", posterior, does not mean a pre-dialectical chronology but, above all, it refers to the inevitable implications for the subject, from also inevitable contact and entanglement between body and language that, in turn, are made in each social experience with a core of irreducible singularity. If it is not wise to establish a direct transposition between the theory and the clinical markers for a sociological analysis, it is possible and, who knows, fruitful, to examine in what measure a certain clinical theorization contributes to open new consideration points for the reflection and analysis in other fields, considering, for instance, the basic Sociology characterization in the duo "individual and society".

Nowadays, to critically reflect on the technical domination of nature as a position that guaranteed not only the benefits of progress in societies but also, in part, its barbarities and regressions, means, within the theme discussed here, to problematize the relationships with the bodies and, within them, the thrust towards the drive to identify the organism (mediated by the discourses of science and capital). The HS field, more directly applied to the PE field or not, seems necessary and decisive for this enterprise.

Therefore, and to conclude, in these times of a drive towards *being*, I would like to think about the possibility of *having* a body, but as an alterity that continues. As an unavoidable circumstance that demands a "know-how" beside or beyond the formula of domination and constant control. It is an option that glimpses a break on the march of domination and violence and, at the same time, an advancement in the space of collaboration and solidarity; solidarity in the company of sciences and enlightened of our limits and mistakes in relation to our bodies and those of others because the body, perceived as another that is not completely reduced to the several apprehensible determinations of our not knowledge but that leaves open a *quantum* of irreducible indetermination. In this field, the subjects are called upon to support something of their singularity in the relationship with their bodies, in a rigorous sense. Instead of a compulsive domination and control, to dose or numerically increase, a "know how with"; with what cannot be apprehended, when each one must imply oneself, I insist, in a singular way. Could a remark such as this help PE teachers in their daily work?

To encourage a continuous critical reflection, I, therefore, leave a Laurent's Lacanian formulation, faced by this contemporary torrent towards a body ontologization, whether the decisive point is the biological organism and its functions, or the cultural image of a collective and individual identity; in times of scaring biological and political turmoil: *having* a body, always, and never *be* this body, in any way.

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DECLARATION ABOUT DATA AVAILABILITY

Contents subjacent to the research text are presented in the manuscript.

DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest in the present article.