

End text, on the topic *Zazen & the embodiment of emptiness - symptom/body event*.
by Lorena Rivero de Beer
Presented on 10th July 2021 – see below

So coming to the end of this cartel, I am asking myself, what have I been looking at when looking at Zen practice through the Lacanian lenses? Why, even though they are such different practices, do I experience them as so similar? It's as if both practices are driving me towards the same position.

In Zen, the starting point is Zazen (silent meditation) and Dharma Talks (dharma is thought as an aspect of truth or reality). Alongside those, there are one-to-one interviews with a teacher in which one can talk about one's own being and personal situation and how the practice manifest in one's life. Also, after some time in the practice one might start working with a teacher on Koans, a paradoxical question without an obvious rational response, for example, how to walk straight along a winding mountain path? The latter bring about the paradoxes and limitations of language's capacity to convey reality while also opening up a hole in which the nature of reality might be grasped or experienced. This then goes back to Zazen, in which the body position and the hand mudra reflects the embodying of emptiness. Through this backdrop of emptiness, one's own inner discourses and unconscious ways of being start to become more visible, it becomes apparent how a certain form is created again and again, and one has the opportunity to become intimate with it. I used the word body previously (as a construction of language), not living organism. In my understanding, Zazen brings the body and the living organism (as an expression of the real) into contact, so that the gap between them can be experienced. And I suspect that the notion of enlightenment (the unity of form and emptiness) also describes the unity of the body and the living organism.

On the other hand, analysis starts from speech and is aiming at subjective emptiness, 'the memorial of the trace of jouissance left by the initial lost object' (Laurent, 2019). And then the effort to live one's own life with the freedom and responsibility that emerges out of it, how to bear the effects and consequences of living according to one's desire, that then leads also to the desire/need to manifest that in the world.

And even though both practices, Zen and Psychoanalysis, are clearly different, in my own experience they seem to be attempting to do the same: to create a rim to mark the hole, a rim that for me finds expression in the body sitting in Zazen, holding the cosmic hand mudra.

The body position in Zazen becomes a temporary refuge in which to touch base, this then allows me to experience a sense of containment through my body. A refuge that creates the conditions for a body capable of holding the hole, 'the reminder or the fantasm', a body that can isolate and contain 'what is not a signifier' (Miller, 2003)

And yet, I question myself, is that really it? Emptiness can only be valorised to the extent that it can be seen in form and 'the form most readily used for the dissemination of emptiness is language' (Wright, 2000). So is Zen an expression of my symptom, able to hold the hole or more like a new master signifier that covers it up? Is it about accessing the real and allowing it to unfold in the symbolic or rather about an unfolding in the imaginary that creates further delusion and alienation? Can it be both? Something I need to learn to navigate?

This questioning has been happening alongside the end of an analysis with an English-speaking analyst and the beginning of a new one with a Spanish-speaking one in which I am hoping to access aspects of my Real that I suspect may not have been accessible in my analysis in English. And with that comes the question, of what am I looking for? Am I looking for my orientation points? Are the latter in my 'body' traversed/constructed by different languages? And if so, can Zen practice offer me an orientation? Does it support analysis?

At this moment, I believe that this questioning is part of my symptom, and that Zen, is part of that; it offers me a helpful structure in which to unfold my symptom, helping me to observe it moving back and forth from the inside to the outside of language.

References

Laurent, Eric, *Interpretation: From Truth to Event*, Speech delivered in Tel Aviv, 2 June 2019, pg 7, See <http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=12613>

Wright, Dale S., *Philosophical Meditations on Zen Buddhism*, Cambridge, 1998

See [End Text, The topic, Zazen & the embodiment of emptiness – symptom/body event : 10th July 2021 \(Zoom\) : Lorena Rivero de Beer](#) or [here](#)
<http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=12953>

Other texts by Lorena Rivero de Beer [here](#) <http://www.lacanianworks.net/?cat=763>

Presented at an exchange between two cartels on Saturday 10th July (Zoom)

Towards New Lacanian School of Psychoanalysis Congress 2021: Bodily Effects of Language, May 2021: See www.nlscongress2021.com

The cartel on 'Being a body & having a body' & the other cartel on 'Bodily Effects of Language' are meeting, on Zoom, to exchange on Saturday 10th July 2021. Both cartels are registered and working within the New Lacanian School of Psychoanalysis.

The discussant was Joanne Conway, one of the NLS cartel delegate, with members of the other cartel and the addition of comments from supporters/guests.

Meeting Participants

From Cartel 1 - Being a body & having a body

Julia Evans (plus-un) Sandwich, Kent & London, UK, Topic *Cutting as interpretation on a/the body*.

Ganesh Anantharaman, Chennai, India, Topic *Jouissance & body event?*

Lorena Rivero de Beer, Liverpool, UK. Topic *Zazen & the embodiment of emptiness - symptom/body event*.

Marcin Zaremba, London, UK Topic *Treating anorexia as a body event*.

From Cartel 3 - Bodily Effects of Language

Nicolas Duchenne (plus-un), Rotherhithe, London, UK Topic *The real father is an effect of language*

Giuseppe Covelli, Amsterdam, Netherlands Topic *The body at the place where a word should have been spoken*

Owen Hewitson, East London, UK, Topic *Idioms of Distress - Appeal, Nomination, and Other Ways to Say* Owen is unable to be present at the December encounter.

Greg Hynds North London, UK, Topic *Subject and body*

Jo (Josephine) Rostron North West London, UK Topic *An elaboration of the presence of the body in the psychic structure*

Previous discussant, on Saturday 10th March 2021, was René Raggenbass, also an NLS Cartel delegate.

Some texts from cartels:-

[Ganesh Anantharaman http://www.lacanianworks.net/?cat=740](http://www.lacanianworks.net/?cat=740) : Navigating the entanglement of Desire and Jouissance : 10th July 2021 (Zoom Cartel Exchange) : Information [here http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=12955](http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=12955)

[Lorena Rivero de Beer http://www.lacanianworks.net/?cat=763](http://www.lacanianworks.net/?cat=763) : End Text, The topic, *Zazen & the embodiment of emptiness - symptom/body event* : 10th July 2021 (Zoom) : Information [here http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=12953](http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=12953)

Other texts on or from cartels [here http://www.lacanianworks.net/?cat=650](http://www.lacanianworks.net/?cat=650)

[Two Forms of Body : 7th July 2021 \(Zoom\) : Julia Evans or here http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=12952](http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=12952)

[Treating Shell Shock – re-conceptualising what worked : 12th March 2021 \(Zoom Intercartel Meeting\) : Julia Evans or here http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=12905](http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=12905)

[Ganesh Anantharaman http://www.lacanianworks.net/?cat=740](http://www.lacanianworks.net/?cat=740) : Present without a body: absence, lack, & loss in the work of a cartel : 12th December 2020 (Zoom Intercartel Meeting) : Information [here http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=12852](http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=12852)

[A reflection on cartel work examining COVID-19](http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=12727) by Julia Evans on 25th October 2020 or [here http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=12727](http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=12727)

[Ganesh Anantharaman http://www.lacanianworks.net/?cat=740](http://www.lacanianworks.net/?cat=740) : An Estimate Experience : 25th July 2020

: Information [here http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=12722](http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=12722) Also published in 4 Plus One – the NLS cartels’ newsletter, 4+1, no 16, <https://quatreplusone.com/index.php/n16/>

Frank Rollier : 4 PLUS ONE - The Formula of a New Mode of Social Bond : 26th June 2020 (Athens) :: Information [here http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=12853](http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=12853) Also published in 4 Plus One – the NLS cartels’ newsletter, 4+1, no 16, <https://quatreplusone.com/index.php/n16/>

[THE PANDEMIC versus a pandemic – Cartel Opening Statement](http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=12588) by Julia Evans on 25th April 2020 or [here http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=12588](http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=12588)

[Greg Hynds http://www.lacanianworks.net/?cat=739](http://www.lacanianworks.net/?cat=739) or <http://gwh.xyz>: A cartel on trauma (17th July 2019 – London) :

Information [here http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=12355](http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=12355) Also published in 4 Plus ONE February 2020, <http://quatreplusone.com/index.php/n14/>

[Henrik Lynggaard http://www.lacanianworks.net/?cat=761](http://www.lacanianworks.net/?cat=761) : The logic that haste determines (17th July 2019 London) :

Information [here http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=12354](http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=12354) Also published in 4+1, the cartels’ newsletter – December 2019, available <https://quatreplusone.com/index.php/n13/>

[Julia Evans http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=12365](http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=12365) : A work in progress report of ‘Trauma and Urgency’ cartel, 2018–2019 (17th July 2019 – London) :

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[Owen Hewitson \(www.lacanonline.com\)](http://www.lacanonline.com) [here http://www.lacanianworks.net/?cat=742](http://www.lacanianworks.net/?cat=742) :
What makes a trauma traumatic? : 8th February 2019 (Manchester) :
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[Julia Evans http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=12365](http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=12365) : Why is trauma urgent? :
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abbreviated copy is published in 4 PLUS ONE issue 10 February 2019 see
<http://quatreplusone.com/index.php/n10/>
[Greg Hynds http://www.lacanianworks.net/?cat=739](http://www.lacanianworks.net/?cat=739) or <http://gwh.xyz> : Understanding in
Analysis : 14th December 2018 (Manchester) :
Information [here http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=12321](http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=12321)
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[Bruno de Florence http://www.lacanianworks.net/?cat=752](http://www.lacanianworks.net/?cat=752) : Ignorance is a Passion :
10th March 2016 (London) : Information [here http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=11983](http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=11983)
[LW cartel: Jouissance & symbolic \(dis\)order](#) by Julia Evans on 30th July 2011
or [here http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=76](http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=76)

Related Texts:

[The Real Presence and Slipperiness of the Body \(LRO 248\)](#) : 11th October 2020 : [Catherine Lacaze-Paule](#) or [here http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=12716](http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=12716)
[Jacques Lacan's sayings excavated](#) by Julia Evans on 17th October 2020
or [here http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=12725](http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=12725)
[Lacanian Psychoanalysis Not Without the Body](#) : 18th January 2020 (Dublin) : [Bernard Seynhaeve](#) (audio) or [here http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=12609](http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=12609)
[Announcement of title for the 2020 NLS Congress, Interpretation, From Truth to Event](#) : 18th
June 2019 : [Bernard Seynhaeve](#) or [here http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=12627](http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=12627)
[Interpretation : From Truth to Event](#) : 2nd June 2019 (Tel Aviv) : [Éric Laurent](#) or [here http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=12613](http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=12613)
[The symptom in the perspective of the speaking body in civilisation](#) (audio) : 19th May 2016
(London) : [Éric Laurent](#) or [here http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=12016](http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=12016)
[The Unconscious and the Body Event : the full interview](#) : July 2015 : [Éric Laurent](#) or [here http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=12023](http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=12023)
[The Unconscious and the Speaking Body](#) : Paris : 17th April 2014 : [Jacques-Alain Miller](#) or [here http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=11959](http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=11959)
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[Trauma in Reverse](#) : 27th April 2002 (New York) : [Éric Laurent](#) or [here http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=12265](http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=12265)
[Lacanian Biology and the Event of the Body](#) : 12th & 19th May 1999 (Paris VIII) : [Jacques-Alain Miller](#) or [here http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=12423](http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=12423)
[Interpretation and Truth](#) : 1st July 1994 : [Éric Laurent](#) or [here http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=11992](http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=11992)
[The Body in the Teaching of Jacques Lacan](#) : May 1984 : [Colette Soler](#) or [here http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=12751](http://www.lacanianworks.net/?p=12751)