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A new imaginary



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A NEW IMAGINARY

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We must be broken, as I might say, into a new imaginary establishing meaning. (...) the meaning as such that I defined earlier of the copulation, in short, of language since it is from that that I support the unconscious: from the copulation of language with our own body.
(Lacan, 1975-1976 [2006], p. 120)

This year's issue of *LAPSO, Annual Journal of the Master's Program in Lacanian Psychoanalytic Theory* is devoted to the "new imaginary," which Lacan enunciates in the class "On sense, sex, and the real" in *Seminar 23* (1975-1976 [2006]).

As stated in the first editorial, the journal is committed to research, which involves being "open to what is new, not without foundation" (Gómez, 2016), as it is the way we have of "escaping from what we already know, which can only present erudition struggles" (Laurent, 2010, p. 15). In this sense, "a new imaginary" is the notion which serves as the starting point for the questions weaving the web of *LAPSO's* third issue. Readers will find that the different texts adopt the form of an inquiry about that notion articulated with the different facets of the syntagma.

Since the beginning of Lacanian teaching, we have had elaborations on the imaginary register, a formulation which has become increasingly complex. We could even state that Lacan never stopped using the imaginary; what is more, in his latest teaching he even said that he always adored it (Lacan, 1973). In different references to this topic, we find that it was primarily a scopic imaginary at the beginning; later, when Lacan resorted to the developments of structuralism, the imaginary register was subsumed in the symbolic. He did not abandon it, but the notion of the power of images as long as the Other of language intervenes was put forward. We also find the articulation between image and drive based on the object relation (Brousse, 2012). However, in his late teaching, the imaginary register acquired a different preponderance. Lacan made a conceptual turn by using the topology of the Borromean knot. He also emphasized that the imaginary was equivalent to the symbolic and the real. In *Seminar 23*, he stated:

These three circles of the Borromean knot have this something which cannot fail to be retained, which is the fact that they are all three equivalent as circles. I mean that they are constituted by something which is reproduced in the three. (...) it is the result, let us say, of a certain concentration—that it should be in the imaginary that I place the support of consistency. In the same way that it should be from the hole that I make the essential of what is involved in the symbolic and that, by reason of the fact that the imaginary and the symbolic—this is the very definition of the Borromean knot—are freed one from the other, that I support what I call ex-sistence, especially from the real.
(Lacan, 1975-1976 [2006], p. 50)

Taking these considerations into account and based on the Lacanian corpus, we may ask ourselves what happens to social bonds from the moment the above new traits are established in civilization, or what are the effects on subjectivities caused by the transformations promoted by technoscience.

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In 1964, Jacques Lacan stated: “The spectacle of the world, in this sense, appears to us as all-seeing” (Lacan, 1964, p. 82). Today it is evident that the all-seeing world is articulated with the proliferation of screens, which gives the question different overtones. This is the reason why in *The Absolute Eye* (2010) Gérard Wajcman holds that the trait of the epoch produced a new civilization which is the result of an unprecedented mutation, as “science and technology have given their new god eyes that never sleep” (Wajcman, 2010, p. 15). Lacan had anticipated this when he conceptualized the ascent to the social zenith of the object *a* and its implications.

But that is not all with regard to the “new imaginary” proposed by Lacan. In *Seminar 23*, Lacan put forward the notion of the imaginary as consistency, thus alluding to the notion of body. This change of direction led to the consideration of the fact that the *parlêtre* participates in the economy of *jouissance* through images and Jacques-Alain Miller offers clues about this topic when he states that it is about “resorting to the imaginary to get an idea of the real” (Miller, 2013, p. 258).

In *LAPSO*’s third issue, all these clues come together and the question is what Lacan was alluding to when he said “we must be broken, as I might say, into a new imaginary establishing meaning (Lacan, 1975-1976 [2006], p. 120). This quote was the starting point for the authors in *LAPSO* No. 3 to make a singular articulation of the topic. The reader will find texts about the effects of the digitalization of images, the treatment of *jouissance* based on surveillance devices and the new panopticon, the reconsideration of the imaginary register and of the symptom based on the Lacanian developments of the Borromean knot, the clinical practice of artifices and the notion of the consistency of the body, among others.

Philosophy, gender studies, art, and literature are also part of this year’s journal. One of the papers tackles Paul B. Preciado’s contributions to *pharmacopornography* as a favorable field to inquire about the sense-establishing new imaginary; another deals with the body as the Sovereign Image in the history of art; and, finally, another paper puts forward a hypothesis with regard to Alejandra Pizarnik’s work. In addition, there is an interview with the photographer Marcos López, who believes that images are a way of “speaking and breathing.”

Finally, the “*LAPSO* Interview” tells us about a Lacan who “never grows old,” as stated by Baby Novotny in a fecund conversation with Jorge Assef. She answers the question of what she interprets by “breaking into a new imaginary,” alluding to the effect of this Lacanian idea on clinical practice. This is a fundamental interview in *LAPSO*’s third issue dealing with Lacanian clinic, politics, and episteme.

The topic of the issue that lies ahead for the reader to discover is one there is still a lot of questioning to do about: *LAPSO*’s issue No 3: A New Imaginary.

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