

Jule Jakob Hesseler

### **The libidinal body - a queer reading of Lyotard**

My recent studies focus on the interdependences of bodily tropes and conceptions of desire. Taking the texts from Butler and Foucault as a starting point to approach the interplay of body-sexuality-discourse-power, I would like to ask how conceptions of desire are interrelated with somatic figurations and whether a queering of somatic images might direct towards a possible draft of queer desire. In the texts of Butler and Foucault, the body is constituted and concurrently destroyed in a process of discursive materialization. This simultaneousness of destruction/construction interferes with Freud's libidinal economy. Even if it implies a dualistic structure differentiating drives into libido and death drives, Eros and Thanatos function in an almost inseparable way. In the development of his drive theory Freud takes the organic unity as an initial point. In his text *Libidinal Economy* Lyotard mentions that this notion of a somatic unity-totality produces the conceptualization of desire as lack, which dominates Freud's psychoanalysis and serves as an assumption for a binary gendering of the body and reciprocally the postulation of a heteronormative conception of sexuality. On the contrary, Lyotard delineates a body, which could be read as a metaphor of polymorphous perversity: fragmentary, plural, particular, the surface of a multiplicity of libidinal streams. This implies a libidinal economy and hence a draft of desire which is not guided by a lack, but can be understood as multiple, productive, perverse, excessive (close to the Deleuzian idea of desire). Firstly, I would like to explore if Lyotard's corporeal image functions as queering of the body and thus, if this involves the potential of a queer conception of desire. Resorting to Butler and Foucault, the question emerges how this model of desire can be conceived as a sexual dispositive that is produced in the powerful process of discoursivation. Secondly, I want to analyze further intersections of different body tropes and conceptions of desire in the texts of Freud, Lyotard, Butler as well as Foucault.

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