



The «mystery of the speaking body»

Il «mistero del corpo parlante»

Le «mystère du corps parlant»

O «mistério do corpo falante»

El «misterio del cuerpo hablante»

With *lalangue* in the body

The body is me, myself, an imaginary body, constituted by the specular image through the mirror of ideals of the Other. The body is made of language because it incorporates itself into the big Other which is the first body, previous, which is the symbolic body, place of language indistinguishable from the place of the unconscious. The human body bears its own mark that allows it to be placed in a signifying chain. Therefore the body has a shape and is located in space, appears in the mirror and can be touched, manipulated as the body of any object, and can be broken, fragmented. The body has a name, as well as its parts, as evidenced by anatomy. The imaginary and symbolic body is not necessarily the living body because the corpse too has these same characteristics.

What gives life to body is the drive – echo in the body of the what is said by the Other. Thus, the body is the screen of the scopical drive – as you can see every time today in the fashion of tattooing of the painting of the body and *body art* in the field of Fine Arts. The face is no longer the only place for body painting. From painted faces, turning away from makeup, we passed to painted trunks, painted arms, painted buttocks etc. The tattoo shows the body as a screen for the gaze of the Other. The body is also the drum of the invocatory drive which makes of it a dancing body. The music of the Other, what we call voice, enters the body and makes it dance to a simple finger-drumming up to the theatre-dance of Pina Bausch. The body had the balancing –the sway of the sea as said Vinicius de Moraes– but this balancing is the swing of the sound waves what the poet has captured in the music of the girl of Ipanema swinging their body while walking towards the sea.

The Other of language has a body but does not exist. What gives existence to the human body is the *jouissance* which as defined by Lacan is the relation of the speaking being with its body. The human being is a «speaking body». And this body is the seat of *lalangue*. Through *lalangue* language happens to make speak a body plenty of *jouissance*. And it is through the symptom that *lalangue* –that is to say what maternal language is deposited in the body like drops of *jouissance* for a human being– makes the body a speaking one. The body in so far as organism is the seat of *lalangue*.

In Seminar XX –*Encore*– Lacan plays with words in the French language to evoke the diversity of explanations of the body and is ironic about neuropsychiatry: «When it (the body) is supposed to think in secrecy it has secretions – when it is supposed to think concretely it has concretions»¹.

Thus, the *lalanguished* body is the body of the speaking being, the body of *parlêtre*, that who is prisoner and determined by the signifiers of his mother language that have set down for such subject, producing secretions, concretions, in summary, *sinthomes*. It is the speaking body, the body of the *linguistery*, that is to say of this bakery and carpentry language where human bodies are made. Thus, the human body is *linguisterical*, seat of *lalangue* that incorporates in *sinthome* as an event of the body. The *sinthome* is the mark left by the rain of the letters of *lalangue* in the body.

«You learn to speak and this leaves traces and, thus, has consequences that are nothing other than *sinthome* [...] Analysis consists of realizing why we have these *sinthomes*»². The *sinthome* as letter is evidence of the trace of *lalangue* in the body, trace like the navel linking the speaking body to the Other of language. This navel, name of the real of the unconscious in Freud, is a mystery –the mystery of the «speaking body» that an analysis allows the subject not only to account for but also to know how to deal with– literally.

Antonio Quinet, Rio de Janeiro, 11/2/2010

Translation by: Berti Glaubach, Tel Aviv Forum

¹ J. Lacan, Le Séminaire livre XX, *Encore*, Seuil, Paris, 1975, p. 100.

² J. Lacan, Le Séminaire livre XXV, *Le moment de conclure*, séance du 10/01/1978, inédit.