

Scream scriptures in Antonin Artaud

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Abstract: This text arises from the listening-reading experience of the works of Antonin Artaud and brings together the testimony effects in the constructions of the poet about a moment of looseness between the voice and the word, giving rise to the scream. This study about the voice and attempts of writing the unspeakable leads to an accessory question about the body. In this structure, based on the psychoanalysis threads, *lalangue* – as a theoretical articulator encompassing body and word, voice, and writing – stands out. Based on *lalangue* the essay is directed to the work of Artaud to travel along the scream path from the emptiness of the unanchored voice of the word in a moment of fall of the subject to space/time of addressing and existence. An existence that will be supported and embodied in the work of Artaud.

Keywords: drive, voice, Antonin Artaud, *lalangue*.

The weaving of this text begins with the encounter between Antonin Artaud's work, a French artist from the late 19th century and early 20th century. His work is composed of body and writing: poet, playwright, actor... Artaud (re)creates a place to write a name in culture. He will be recognized for his creation, the plays he starts writing, and the innovative and subversive theater school he proposes. The Theater of Cruelty, theorized in works such as *The theater and its double* (1964/2012) and published manifestos, proposed to concern not only the theater, but also language, and poetry. Artaud engenders himself through his work, which uses as raw material the impossible that is discomfiting and uncomfortable. His narrative carries a transmission power that can help us continue building the clinic. The experience of reading his work can take place as if listening were a listening-reading gathering the effects of testimony on the moment of the subject's fall, time of release between voice and word, when what emerges is the scream, within the poet's constructions. For this purpose, we followed a path of reading intended to be a listening essay on Antonin Artaud's narrative deposited in letters he wrote during his internment period in French asylums between 1937 and 1946. The reading uses the letters as a guiding thread while making space for elements of other productions by the poet that are linked to his written correspondences. For this text, we sought, in the lines of psychoanalysis, *lalangue* – a neologism proposed by Jacques Lacan as a theoretical articulator linking body and word, voice and writing. It is from *lalangue* that this article approaches Artaud's work.

Scream scriptures: a writing on the impossible



Figure 1. *Anguish/The blue head* (Antonin Artaud, 1946)¹

“Why lie? Why trying to put something on the literary field that is the cry of life itself? Why give appearances of fiction to what carries the ineradicable substance of the soul, which is like the lament of reality?” (Artaud, 1979, p. 29). In his question, Artaud shifts the reading in two directions. The first highlights the irony that carries his unease and the questioning tone that is his trademark. The “why” seems to carry a criticism – there is no fiction that fully approaches

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¹ Retrieved from <https://glo.bo/39yupjD>

the ineradicable of the soul. The second invites us for a literal reading of his sentence as a question. There is a question in Artaud: why do we set out to write? Seeking for a writing that attempts to convey a message, a saying that conveys our unbelievable, our regrets, each one's cries... Literature, theater, the arts, that which we sometimes produce as contours to the scream, to the Real that shall never be written – there is where its power lies. The so-called Real as that which compels the subject to keep creating as, according to Lacan's formula (1972-1973/1985), it is that which cannot be written. The Real as a record pinpointing the impossible; that which cannot be symbolized and, precisely for that reason, demands an incessant job of registration.

On May 25, 1924, Antonin Artaud starts a letter to Jacques Rivière shifting that which gains voice from a lament of reality – the scream – from the plane of literary writing. Following that same correspondence, we found an Artaud committed not to lie about the “essence of the thing: ... a disease that snatches speech and memory, that ravishes thought, . . . a true paralysis” (Artaud, 1979, p. 30). The scream that pierces your flesh and soul on a daily basis, as explained by Rivière, is incomprehensible by literary writing. Artaud relies on another scripture to speak of his anguish, to make of the cry a trait that, addressed to the Other, saves him from paralysis and non-existence. An Other that, as elaborated by Lacan (2002, p. 39), in his seminar *The desire and its interpretation*, corresponds to the place of the code, a place belonging to the treasure of the language. We speak of a place as Lacan takes it as a canvas to reflect on the constitution of the subject, the graph of desire. A graph, in which positions are marked to define the subject-position and all the movements comprising its relationship with the Other.

It is a writing of the hole that breaks out in Artaud to speak of his scream and that can mediate his relation to the Other. This notion of hole highlights its power insofar as it simultaneously indicates the hole – the imminent chance of a fall – and the edge – the possibility of setting up a screen in front of that which may collapse. The hole, as explained by Násio (1993), is a space surrounded by a pulsating edge. Edge and hole organize formulations on the body's erogenous zones, body orifices – driving territories. The self-portrait opening this article carries the question that guides us in its outline: an outline of the scream as a way to restore words to the voice. In his self-portrait, the image is made of holes. The open mouth portraits the scream, it draws the voice in a pure state. A silent cry representing this experience of disarticulation between voice and word. The man, taken by the hole. A mouth that devours and through which the subject, in his relationship with the Other, may also be devoured. A surface that is outlined in Artaud's open mouth, which, in each stroke, in each word, in each act, seems to drag the hole into the scene:

And I always wrote to say that I never said anything, that I couldn't do anything, and that, in reality, when I did something, I didn't do anything. All my work was built, and it could not be otherwise on this nothingness, this hecatomb, this mixture of extinguished fires and suffocated screams. (Artaud, 1977, p. 100)

Artaud, faced with the insufficiency of words to convey the scream, “these states that are never named, these eminent situations of the soul” (Artaud, 2014, p. 210), which give news about that moment when the voice loses the word, rehearses another use of the language. Faced with this outcome and the insufficiency of words, as he experiences them, he proposes another word, one that comes close to the effect they acquire in dreams, a word prior to the words – an expression built by Artaud in *The theater and its double* – to speak of the secret psychic impulse. “I wrote a text with mystical comments on the transcendental language of the Bohemians, and in it, I tried to address the issue of Antichrist concretely and directly... I sent this text to Jean Paulhan with the title KABHAR ENIS-KATHAR ESTI” (Artaud, 1981, pp. 107-108).

Artaud will try to propose a new relationship with language in articulation between theater and poetry. From the articulation of these elements, he will take what image and sound language have to try and produce singular effects. Onomatopoeias are prominent in his writing and will compose text, trying to express that which escapes the meaning and the symbolic. Artaud does not work with the cloistered word, fossilized in its meaning, stabilized in an *a priori* exclusionary to the subject. He seeks to free the word with his production, situating it in a way that loudly and clearly transmits the voice that supports the interstices of the discourse and that is encrypted within the body. According to Artaud (1964/2012), “the obsession with a clear word that says everything leads to the dryness of words” (p. 139).

We must admit that the word became fossilized, that the words, all words, have frozen and sank into their meaning, into a schematic and restricted terminology. For the theater, as it is practiced here, a written word is worth as much as the same word said out loud. This leads some theater lovers to say that a play read provides more precise joys, greater than the performance of the same play. Everything that concerns the particular enunciation of a word and the vibration that it can spread in space escapes them, as well as everything that, as a result, is capable of adding to the thought. (Artaud, 1964/2012, pp. 138-139)

Artaud wishes to unfurl words, returning the power beyond their meaning. In the function of the thawed words, he recognizes the possibility of

enunciation that fills gaps and trespasses the body. Gestures and sounds will comprise the script of the plays. The actors will be invited to improvise, to compose the scene with the *other scene*. Without being aware of the *other Freudian scene*, Artaud applies it to his art. In this way, putting the scream on written terms calls for a plurality of creations – it is not by chance that we recognize in his drawings crucial elements of his quest for registering the cry.

Each line I draw in a drawing or I write in a text represents a bottomless weight in my conscience that I must lift due to the resistance of everyone's conscience except for some very few friends like you... To make a whole wall of bad conscience fall through drawings or poems and allow the souls to get to the end of what they always sought: true life on the plane of true earth, however, what is in sight is nothing more than a facade. (Artaud, 1986, p. 74)

The drawings and the painting can be thought of as a possible background, a plot that supports the subject when he falls. Strokes and brushstrokes outline the void with more vivid and colorful contours to the Real. It is worth remembering a passage from *The sinthome*, in which Lacan starts outlining the Borromean knot, a topological figuration of the inseparability of the records of the Symbolic, Real, and Imaginary:

The desire for knowledge meets obstacles. To embody this obstacle, I created the knot... If, on the one hand, the knot is abstract, it must, however, be thought and conceived as concrete... I was able to provoke what I called agitation and emotion with these figures that you see here more or less substantiated by writing and drawing. (Lacan, 1975-1976/2007, p. 37)

Both Artaud and Lacan engaged in giving contour to the Real, each with their own strokes producing holes through which one can glimpse at this something being transmitted. Design, writing, and topology operate as this line, needing patience and time to register an opening. Lacan seeks to substantiate the Real through writing and drawing. He seeks to outline the Real through topology, drawings based on the Borromean knot, and from the Moebius band. Structures taken from mathematics and which are offered as a support for the thinking to circumvent the impossible. There is a passage in Milner (1987) about poets working with the impossible, that is, with what the lack entails and which cannot be written:

The surprising thing is that the failure is not absolute, and a poet recognizes himself in this that can effectively, if not fill the gap, at least affect

it. In the language he works, it may happen for a person to leave a mark and open a path where an impossible to write is written. (p. 26)

From different paths and with different developments, both Artaud and Lacan occupied themselves with transmitting that what speaks of that which cannot be written or drawn, or painted, or sculpted... but will not give up existing.

Lalangue: the body of the word

You might question what are those thoughts that the word cannot express and that, much better than through the word, would find their ideal expression in the concrete and physical language of the stage ... this material and solid language through which the theater can distinguish itself from the word.

It consists of everything that takes the scene, everything that can manifest and express itself materially in a scene, and that is directed, first and foremost, to the senses instead of addressing the spirit in the first place, as is the case with the language of the word. (Artaud, 1964/2012, pp. 36-37)

According to Caldas (2007), the writing of *lalangue* decants in its origin from an Other still disorganized, disarticulated from grammar, or a symbolic organization. As pointed out by the author, it falls from an Other bearer of a disjunct speech of the language structure. The author makes an excerpt from Lacan's seminar *Encore*, to highlight the difference between language and *lalangue* as a result of the encounter with the mother tongue and the object – an experience that would be inscribed in a time prior to the articulated speech. The author also highlights that the equivocality occurs through this encounter, and *lalangue* rises from this misunderstanding comprised of noises, assonances, and these disarticulated signifiers. Porge (2014) also deals with this notion: “Neologism introduced by Lacan to designate the integral of misunderstandings of which the mother tongue is composed for a subject, which determines the functioning of the unconscious, both in its stumbles and plunges into the enjoyment of the body” (p. 79).

Disarticulated from the grammar, disjunct speech, consisting of noise (Caldas, 2007), *its value lies on the resonances, prior to articulate speech* (Artaud, 1964/2012), *effects of the enjoyment on the body* (Porge, 2014)... ways of saying *lalangue* which seems to constitute the mortar for Artaud's constructions in the multiple languages used to state his questions. The poet was unaware of the neologism coined by Lacan, *lalangue*, however, some of it is transmitted through his work.

It must be said that the realm of the theater is not psychological, but plastic and physical. And it is not a question of whether the language

of the theater is capable of reaching the same psychological resolutions as the language of the words, or if it can express feelings and passions as well as words, but of whether it does not exist in the domain of thought and intelligence, attitudes that words are incapable of taking and that gestures and everything that participates in the language in space reach more accurately than words do. (Artaud, 1964/2012, p. 78)

Artaud has another way of carving words: “As if the words spawned from the dark night of the soul” (São João da Cruz, cited by Coêlho, 2013). “Something is there, and this something is nameless”, as the author articulates, it is the “splintered verb,” “as well as bored words (non-meaning)” (Chaudanne, 2013, p. 7). Poetic references carrying this dimension of the language hole. The use of the word in Artaud works to write that hole and operate with it. With a level of craftsmanship, he creates with a voice suffering from excessive incarnation and that remains attached to the body, to the sound. We can situate the hole as a signifier that guides the encounter between the Artaudian language and *lalangue*. *Lalangue* is not-whole, it carries within itself the remaining of a body that voices it, the same way Artaud’s carved words do in his work. Artaud does it with *lalangue*, he creates with the impossible, turning it into text, drawing, creation that bears a saying, leaving a mark with the proposal of the Theater of Cruelty, by reading language on the body. In denouncing the precariousness of words and their insufficiency, Artaud makes of the hole the condition for his art. To him, art requires that truth sustained by emptiness and hecatomb.

In the endeavor to convey the un-word in the word, Artaud (1964/2012) proposes poetry within the space that unfolds on a realm that does not belong strictly to words, but which is comprised of music, dance, plastic arts, and gestures. He is busy giving body to his grammar, which is grounded on its matter and its gestures. A grammar is plotted in the actor’s body and the words as they come up in dreams. In his letters, he spoke of this process of reinventing the language as inspired by life, sensations, the crossing of the body in words; a language anchored in the body, *alangue – lalangue*.

By intertwining body and word, Artaud’s work provides elements to think *lalangue* as this “truth” – a signifier that always finds its way back into his writing while referring to everything that escapes articulated discourse and leans towards the unavoidable questions of the soul. And it is in this scenario that Artaud seeks his “Word prior to words” (Artaud, 1964/2012, p. 63). Artaud’s theater is built with a language coded in the body. According to him in *The theater and its double*, the source of this new language will be sought in a “most remote and backward point of thought” (Artaud, 1964/2012, p. 129). Upon finding a dead-end in words, the author makes a return to the gesture, that is, to what the body can say. And, in this scenario, a language is articulated between the body and what is encrypted in it.

It is an Artaudian elaboration touching the Lacanian *lalangue* neologism, which speaks of the language that takes place within the fracture of the word.

It is not a question of suppressing articulate speech, but of giving words the importance they have in dreams. As for the rest, we must find new ways to take notes on this language, whether these means are related to musical transcription or if a kind of encrypted language is used. . . . On the other hand, this encrypted language and musical transcription will be precious as a means for transcribing the voices. (Artaud, 1964/2012, p. 107)

In his statements about *lalangue*, Lacan (1972-1973/1985) differentiates it from a tool that serves communication. The unconscious is made of *lalangue*. Something that comes close, brushing with the Artaudian summons. According to Lacan (1972-1973/1985), language is what we try to know about the *lalangue* function: “It articulates things that go much further than what the being speaking supports through enunciated knowledge” (p. 190).

I tapped into literature while writing books to say that I could not write; my thinking, when I had something to say or write, was that which most escaped me. [...] always advancing on the margins of what essential and enormous things I wanted to say and that told me I would never say. However, after 20 years, they seem extraordinary, not because of their success at that, but regarding the inexpressible... Something inexpressible expressed through works that are nothing more present catastrophes. (Artaud, 1977, pp. 92-93)

Facing the insufficiency of the discourse to situate its elaboration, Lacan creates (*lalangue* or *alangue*), just as the artist creates to tell us about life. As said by Artaud in the above section, art sometimes bypasses this impossible to say that, through craftsmanship, turns the language around, shatters the word to be transmitted. The poet understands that, through books, the unspeakable works to write itself, moving from the poet’s heart to that of the reader, the spectator. In this crossing, Artaud recognizes how successful his text was. The success is not in speaking the essential or the enormous, but in trying to speak the inexpressible through the work. Lacan (1972-1973/1985) points out that the analyst’s resource is precisely that which fractures and produces the failure in the language.

Following the thread of analytical discourse does not tend to anything less than refracting, bending, shaping its own curvature, and into a curvature that could not even be kept as that of the lines of force; what it produces with such a failure is discontinuity. Within the language, our resource is that which fractures it. (Lacan, 1972-1973/1985, p. 61)

With his writing, Artaud refracts, shapes his own curvature, sheds light on the limits of knowledge, the limit imposed on us by the Real. His concrete language, the one he seeks to bring closer to the words in his dreams and which would be prior to the articulated words, has the effect of situating something that remains as a missive, letter – *lettre*, in French, can be translated into both words – written and addressed to his readers in the search to outline their experience-limit with that which arises from out the word. In this sense, we can think of the drive in Artaud’s work, in its weave, from a language that welcomes *lalangue*...

Between the somatic and the psychic: echoes of a saying in the body



Figure 2. *Death and man*, Antonin Artaud²

You have to look at this drawing more than once to see it for the first time... I would like that when I look at it more closely, there would be a kind of detachment of the retina that I had when separating the top skeleton, on the page, like a composition for an eye. (Artaud, 1980, pp. 128-129, emphasis added)

We find a way to approach the concept of drive in Artaud’s *Death and man*. The author proposes a dismantled man. Between life and death, a body is split. According to Artaud, to be read, the drawing needs to be looked at more than once. Something needs to stand out from the eye for the design to be seen. In Artaud, who intended to create a composition for the eye, looking and seeing are differentiated. He seems to speak to us of those objects that need to detach themselves from the body to perform their drive transport function. An assembly is necessary for the drawing to be seen. An assembly of something which takes place by detaching an element from the body.

In 1905, in the text “*Three essays on the theory of sexuality*”, Freud (1905/2006) mentions that the drives are understood as partial and psychic representatives of an endosomatic source of stimuli that flows continuously. The drive “is one of the delimiting concepts between the soul and the physical” (Freud, 1905/2006, p. 159). In the text “*Instincts and their vicissitudes*”, Freud (1915) differentiates drive and stimulus, the latter, coming from the outside. Drives, in turn, whose origin is located within the organism, are characteristically present as a constant force. The statement that the drive is a concept between the somatic and the psychic is resumed. The drive is the psychic representative of the stimuli that originate within the organism and reach the mind as a measure of demanding work done to establish a connection between the words and the body.

Coutinho Jorge (2011) highlights that the central element of the Freudian conception of the drive is its partial character, specified by a drive source (the fringes of the body) and the achievement of a target that is never fully realized, always leaving something to be replaced in a circuit. The author resumes the two drive dualisms proposed by Freud in his theorizing on the drive: the first, which situates the sexual and self-preservation drives; the second, referring to the life and death drives. In “*Beyond the pleasure principle*”, Freud (1920/2006) places the death drive beyond the pleasure principle. The formulation of the death drive in Freudian theory, according to Coutinho Jorge (2011), opens space to the specification of two drive characteristics: its conservative, restitutive character, and its repetitive aspect. At the end of his 1920 text, Freud states that the death drive exerts this tendency to a return to the inorganic state and that the pleasure principle, in turn, would serve the death drive, insofar as its function is to preserve the amount of constant excitation in the psychic apparatus, keeping the excitation as low as possible. Still in “*Beyond the pleasure principle*”, he will work on repetition, one of the aspects inherent to the drive, based on dreams that occur in traumatic neuroses, children’s games, and the phenomenon of transference: “The manifestations of the compulsion to repeat... present in a high level a drive character and, when acting in opposition to the pleasure principle, give away the appearance that some demonic force is in action” (Freud, 1920/2006, p. 46).

We must highlight this “demonic” manifestation, as pointed out by Freud (1920/2006), this force that calls for a compulsion to repeat and redirects us towards Artaud’s work and his attempt to write the scream. In the seminar *The four fundamental concepts of psychoanalysis*, Lacan (1964/1998) speaks of the compulsion to repetition from the *tiquê* and the *automaton*. The *tiquê* refers to the insistence of the Real. The *automaton* is, by reference, processed by the Symbolic. According to Lacan (1964/1998), the Real is what prevails behind the *automaton*, that which drags the subject with it, the unassimilable thing perceived in the form of the trauma. The Real, which takes place within the role of the *tiquê*, can be represented by the accident. Such formulation leads us back to Artaud’s production, his

² Retrieved from <https://bit.ly/2PjmNe5>

incessant attempt to speak from the moment of the accident, the eruption, and the unnamable states of the soul. Something in Artaud cannot be written, staged, drawn, screamed... “The real is beyond the dream that we have to seek it – in what the dream covered, enveloped, hid from us behind the lack of representation” (Lacan, 1964/1998, p. 61).

Lacan (1964/1998) affirms that the drive is conceived as an effect of the Other’s demand, an effect of the language on the subject from its first moments. This effect that the Other has on the subject can be perceived in the contours taken by the edges of the body, and which Freud named erogenous zones. As highlighted by Porge (2014), the drive reheats the question of the limit between the fringe, the body, the language, and *lalangue*. The drive draws a circular path in which the coming and going is essential to establish the contours of the erogenous zones.

Something that comes out of an edge that reduplicates its closed structure, following a circular path, and of which nothing else ensures consciousness but the object, as something that must be circumvented... This articulation leads us to make the manifestation of the drive the way of a no-brainer subject, as everything there is articulated in terms of tension, and has no relation to the subject but a topological community. (Lacan, 1964/1998, p. 171)

Lacan (1964/1998) named it *outline of the act* – starting from a bodily fringe and returning to it, outlining the object and establishing an erogenous zone at the same time. Freud (1915/2006) finds the three times constancy, which Lacan will enunciate as related to three grammatical forms: active, passive, and reflective, in the processing of the drive circuit: “Grammar vectorizes the path of the drive at the limit of the body and *lalangue*” (Porge, 2014). Lacan’s counting of this third time, making oneself, is a way of recognizing that the coming and going of the other two times do not write a circle reducible to a point. However, it points to a hole, this outline outlines a void. It is this third time that seems to allow the continuity of the circuit.

Along the Lacanian construction, the invocative drive will be considered the closest to the experience of the unconscious. Artaud (1964/2012) refers to the “music of the word” (p. 140) – reference – which speaks directly to the unconscious. It attributes value to what is perceived by the ears, allowing us to advance in the articulation between body and language, drive and *lalangue*: “Within the body, the drives are an echo of the fact that something can be spoken”. Lacan insists that the body must be sensitive to the speech for it to resonate and conform. And the body becomes sensitive through its orifices, from which the psychoanalyst indicates the specificity of the ear – because it cannot cover or close itself. “The eastern theater understood how to preserve a certain expansive value of words since the obvious meaning is not everything in the word, but *the music of the word, which speaks directly to the unconscious*” (Artaud, 1964/2012, p. 140, emphasis added).

Artaud’s formulations invite us to listen to words through that which enters through our ears, that which enters through the “physical affective aspect” (Artaud, 1964/2012, p. 140): its rhythm, music, its beyond/below the sense. Listening to them in their connection with what outlines the body, the physical in its connection with what one hears from the Other. To be heard, the words must be related to “the physical movements that gave rise to them” (Artaud, 1964/2012, p. 140), which goes beyond what they say grammatically and is transmitted through sound support, gestures, something that decant from the effect of addressing. In his considerations, Artaud makes us think about a saying that pulsates, that manifests through sounds, images, gestures. There is something to be conveyed in the word by a musicality that speaks to the unconscious; something that widens, as in music; something that is disconnected from grammar. Artaud refers to musicality, that language in between words that is encoded in the supports of musical notes and expressed through different letters, *lalangue*.

What stands out through voice: the object of the invocative drive

“What does the voice teach us as such, beyond the speech it holds on the phone?” (Lacan, 1955-1956/2002, p. 412). It is not about the voice we hear, which materializes through the sound support, but a voice that is reduced “to the pure point where the subject cannot take it otherwise than imposing on him” (p. 412). As object *a*, the voice is that which falls from the schism between the ear and the voice, resulting from a disjunction between sound and voice. The voice, as an object, materializes through sound but lies beyond it. Employing a good example, Lacan operates with this schism between sound and voice brought by Caldas (2007) in the seminar *The psychoses*: “If a deaf-mute is fascinated by the lines of their interlocutor’s hands, they will not register the discourse conveyed by those hands” (Lacan, 1955-1956/2002, p. 158). “Language is not vocalization”, says Lacan (1962-1963/2005, p. 299) in one of the lessons of the *Anxiety* seminar.

According to Porge (2014), the voice would stand out from the sound object, it would suffer this cut, a separation from the subject in the face of the lack in the Other in what he proposes as the *Echo stadium*. For the author, the “*Echo stadium*, ... the swirling edge of the subject’s silence” (Porge, 2014, p. 126), would be linked to a passage from the scream to the plead and the speech, with the voice as the remaining part. In this crossing, the voice becomes that which is impossible to retribute. The remnants around which the drive revolves. A remainder of which, as Porge (2014) points out, we can only apprehend the echo. According to the author, as object *a*, the voice stands out from sensory representations. In the seminar *Names-of-the-father*, Lacan (1963/2005) resumes this proposition that, as a drive object, the voice is not a matter of tone. The voice is not the saying. And the voice, like any drive object, does not

have a mirror image. Besides the cut, the voice is placed as an invocative drive object by inscribing a circuit between two body orifices – mouth and ear. There the circuit of the invocative drive is established. While retrieving one of Lacan's formulations from the seminar *Names-of-the-father*, Porge (2014) speaks of the voice's temporal dimension, of the object *a*: over some time, speech pauses, meeting silences, the voice resonates in those intervals.

Porge (2014) highlights three times of the invocative drive that are connected to two series: the series of the mouth, of the speaking or calling, and the one out of the ear, the hearing and listening. The first is structured like this: speaking or calling; to be spoken to or called; to make oneself speak or called. Coming out of the ear, the second unfolds in this way: hearing or listening; being heard or listened to; make yourself heard or listened to. Temporalities that permeate moments of Artaud's speech on the paths traveled by his speech travels from his body until it reaches the viewer. In his production, there is the construction of a crossing through which a message flows from the letters, the body, the scream, the art until it "touches the viewer's heart".

From eyes to ears, intellect to sensitivity, the gesture of a character to the evocation of the movements of a plant through the cry of an instrument. The sighs of a wind instrument prolong the vibrations of vocal cords with such a sense of identity that we do not know if it is the voice itself that is prolonged or the sense that absorbed the voice since the beginning. (Artaud, 1964/2012, p. 58)

Artaud proposes scansion as a way to cut out a rhythm for his poems, a rhythm that is unique in that each reader will find his own. In this doing-with his poems, something is cut out in each reading. In Artaud's work, reading is an act. As quoted by Porge (2014), Lacan mentions that it is in the scansion of speech that the voice is found in its dimension as object *a*. Such scansion produces an interval understood as the emptiness inscribed by the lack in the Other, the enigma of its desire and enjoyment. Given this lack in the Other, something can stand out from the subject, such as the voice, for example. It is in an empty space produced from a cut, that is, from a scansion, that the voice can manifest in its dimension as object *a*.

By Lacanian topology, we find in Porge (2014) the marking of the path of the invocative drive that has the Moebian surface in which the Klein bottle is constituted as reference. A double loop path, where two holes articulate – mouth and ear; speak and listen – bordering a void. It is the Klein bottle that allows Lacan to figure the voice in its condition as object *a*, that object that has no representation, detached from the sound materiality that occurs in the movement from mouth to ear. In *L'Étourdit*, Lacan (1972/2003) writes that topology is necessary to demonstrate the Real. It allows us to demonstrate that there are cuts in the discourse that modify the structure: "Topology was not designed to guide us through the structure. It is the

structure – as a retroaction of the chain order in which the language consists" (Lacan, 1972/2003, p. 485). In his words, what the topology teaches is the necessary link established between the cut and the number of turns that it takes to cause a change in the structure. Artaud's reading allows us to witness the power of art, as well as that of topology, of writing these structural cuts in the constitution of the subject. We can witness the points of contact between some of the questions that animate both Lacan and Artaud when we place Lacan in a series with the Klein bottle; Artaud, with his self-portrait; and Munch, with *The Scream*.



Figure 3. Klein's Bottle³, *The Scream* (Edvard Munch, 1893)⁴, and *The Anguish/The Blue Head* (Antonin Artaud, 1946)⁵

The scream and the boundaries of the word

Artaud seemed focused on giving voice to the scream that is not materialized through the sound, that which goes from mouth to ear and that touches the heart: a connection between body and *lalangue*. Something between the somatic and the psychic also circulated in the artist's elaborations, a pulsating circuit that embodied both act

3 Retrieved from <https://bit.ly/3dlqvM4>

4 Retrieved from <https://bit.ly/3cHJq4H>

5 Retrieved from <https://glo.bo/39yupjD>

and text in the theater. For Artaud, the truth lies within the impossible evoked by the scream, it dwells within the “Word prior to the words”. For Quilici (cited by Coêlho, 2013), the scream is not necessarily the emission of an inarticulate and strident sound. The word can manifest as a word-scream when it is the first response to the ordinary impact – this apprehension of life as cruelty. The word-scream erupts in Artaud from this original impact and can harbor its effects, guaranteeing the connection between expression and life.

In his seminar *From an Other to the other*, Lacan (1968-1969/2007) will speak about the true cry of anguish, the empty cry, the silent cry. In his speech about what is true, he wonders about what the Other could answer to the subject at that moment of cry. Nothing, except in the direction of making the object *a*. In Artaud, we see the resonance of the question posed by Lacan. “To describe the scream I dreamed of, to portray it with lively words, with appropriate words and to, mouth to mouth and breath against breath, make it reach, beyond the ear, the viewer’s heart” (Artaud, 1964/2012, p. 171).

This flesh that is no longer touched in life, this language that will not pierce its shell, this voice that no longer threads the path of sound... all of this of which my fresh meat mummy is made of gives God an idea of the emptiness the need to be born put me in. (Artaud, cited by ASSOUN, 1999, p. 135)

Assoun (1999) will take the fragment of the Artaudian text to think of a voice that does not thread the path of sound, something that subverts the defining idea of a sound object and redirects the search to the dimension of the voice as an object of the drive. Lacan (1968-1969/2007) mentions that this scream, in Freud’s elaboration, will be associated with “something absolutely primary” and *Nebenmensch*, the other – a way that Freud found to name the otherness located in the similar that welcomes and supports the baby in their primal helplessness. “This scream is centered in the very silence, arising in the presence of this other” (Lacan, 1968-1969/2007, p. 219). In the work *The theater and its double*, Artaud affirms that the scream launched in the play *The Theater of the Seraphim* evokes “the hole of silence, of silence that retracts”:

Now, the scream that I have just released evokes first a hole of silence, of silence that retracts, then the sound of a waterfall, a sound of water, in order, because the noise is connected to the theater. ... This means that, when I represent my scream, it no longer revolves around itself, but awakens its double strength from the walls of the underground. And this double is more than an echo, it is a reminder of a language whose secret was lost by the theater. (Artaud, 1964/2012, pp. 170-171)

The scream, when addressed to the public, assumes a double that transcends the echo and becomes memory.

In his poetics, Artaud talks about a forgotten language, evoked by this double of the scream that only happens when represented and addressed. A language from an earlier time that can be evoked when we refer to the scream. “The scream is the limit of the voice. It tears the throat”, elaborates Porge (2014, p. 117). In this crossing between voice and speech, the scream appears as that archaic call prior to the words that can build the bond between the child and the one who will welcome them in their helplessness.

The scream is born from helplessness in a time without words. It is through the scream and the sounds that arise, with the bodily changes we observe, the baby’s paths until they meet the language. It is by becoming an appeal that the scream will step into the drive circuit. As Porge (2014) puts it, between the scream and the voice, there is a period of transition through the game of vocalizations, the babbling, the gurgling, the lallation. According to Porge’s formulations (2014), the *Echo stadium* would be linked to the moment of crossing from the scream to the appeal and the speech, producing the voice as a remaining object.

The silence slides between the voice and its echo. According to Porge (2014); silence, voice, and shout form a knot. The scream will keep its connection to the body, as previously said, from the body in ecstasy, where *lalangue* makes text. This language of jouissance intervenes in the form of *lalangue*, the first characteristic of the talking being: “That is why the scream in Artaud breaks out ever more forcefully. The scream is unity, that which breaks out is unity, a world, a society, a body representing nothing. The scream is the rupture of language” (Oscar del Barco, 1979, p. 24).

An affirmation that dialogues with Lacan’s propositions (1955-1956/2002) when he states that the scream, “the most extreme edge of the motor participation of the mouth in speech” (p. 162), is the thing by which the spoken word is combined with the absolutely a-significant vocal function. Nothing, the absolute silence that follows the scream. The scream that comes after the silence is silent, echoes in a voiceless voice, which does not thread, as Artaud refers in his elaborations, paths of sound. The scream echoes in the body, making the body its screen. Scream and silence, in this sense, seem to establish a link, both pointing to an emptiness of the word. The scream, therefore, when extinguished, would lead to silence. And the subject, in turn, would arise from that in-between.

According to Porge (2014), silence resonates when the scream digs it out, referring to the Klein bottle to think the hole in the scream. Same as Lacan (1964-1965), Porge (2014) refers to the canvas *The scream*, by Edvard Munch, to illustrate his elaborations. The author continues with an interesting question: “What better way to speak of the scream than the silence of a painting?” (Porge, 2014, p. 115). Interesting in that it shifts the question of scream and voice to something different from the sound, which echoes in the bulkhead of language, in *lalangue*.

This image is where the voice is distinguished from the whole modulating thing, as it is the scream that makes it different in the face of all the forms, the smallest of the language, it is the simplicity, the translation of the apparatus called into question. Here the larynx is nothing but a syringe. The implosion, the explosion. The cut, the missing. The scream, perhaps, gives us the security of something through which the subject does not appear more than as the meaning of this anonymous, cosmic open opening (*béance*), marked in a corner of two human presences. (Lacan, 1964-1965, p. 58)

For Lacan, this image helps us reflect on how the voice is distinguished from the modulation. As recalled by Lacan after his class, Freud articulates the scream hole into the *Nebenmensch* (the similar, the next one to help). This impassable hole, as Lacan (1964-1965) refers to it, “carved within ourselves and to which we can only get closer” (p. 59); “Well, the scream that I just released evokes first a hole of silence, of silence that retracts, then the noise of a waterfall, a noise of water, is in order, as the noise is connected to the theater” (Artaud, 1964/2012, p. 170).

In a conference on paranoia, Melman (2008) raises an interesting question: “When do you start screaming? You don’t scream at any time, you scream when the signifier is useless. When no one wants to hear it, then, as a last resort, we must hear the voice in its pure state” (pp. 55-56). In this sense, the author explains that the scream, the miracle of the howling, takes place when the whole system – namely, its relationship with the language – seems about to collapse. The scream, in this injunctive time, would be the only means to sustain the power of the voice, the only way for the subject to protect himself from the anguish of disappearance, from the collapse of the world. Couso, Karoty, Aguirre, and Mazza (2010) point out that the voice, as an object of the drive, can detach itself from the significant chain. Thus, the voice may appear as a pure sound, separate from its bindings to the word. Here, we could think of the crisis eruption, an injunction that Melman (2008) highlights as the howling time. In this sense, the detached sound of the word is taken by the subject as a pure sign of an absolutized signification. Something insurmountable, as the authors elaborate.

Escrituras do grito em Antonin Artaud

Resumo: Este texto decanta da experiência de escuta-leitura da obra de Antonin Artaud e recolhe, nas construções do poeta, efeitos de testemunho acerca de um tempo de soltura entre voz e palavra, quando o que emerge é o grito. Este estudo acerca da voz e das tentativas de escritura do inominável conduz a uma pergunta auxiliar sobre o corpo. Nessa composição, destaca-se, a partir dos fios da psicanálise, *lalangue* – articulador teórico que enlaça corpo e palavra, voz e escrita. É a partir de *lalangue* que o artigo se inclina em direção à obra de Artaud para percorrer a travessia do grito desde o vazio da voz desancorada da palavra em um momento de queda do sujeito para um espaço/tempo de endereçamento e existência – existência que se sustentará corporificada na obra de Artaud.

Palavras-chave: pulsão, voz, Antonin Artaud, *lalangue*.

The scream does not require strength, it just demands weakness, and the will shall arise from the weakness, yet it will live to imbue the weakness with all the strength of the claim. Now I can fill my lungs with the roar of a waterfall whose burst would destroy them if the scream I wished to let out was not a dream.

... They gave birth to the image of that armed war cry, that terrible underground scream.

For that scream, I need to fall.

It is the scream of the fulminated warrior who, in a drunken sound of glass, sweeps past the broken walls.

I fall.

I fall, but I’m not afraid.

I ignore the uproar of anger, in a solemn noise...

I scream in my dream, but I know that I am dreaming, and on both sides of the dream I make my will reign.

I scream in bone armor, within the caves of my rib cage, which, to the perplexed eyes of my head, takes on immense importance.

But with this stunning scream, to be able to scream I must fall.

I fall underground and back, never back again. (Artaud, 1964/2012, pp. 169-170)

The scream that gains strength in its weakness becomes a path through which its affections flow. Something of the unspeakable goes on in the hole that the scream digs in the subject. The scream opens way, pierces the body armor while attempting to survive the force of claim. You must fall to scream, as the poet says. The subject’s fall, plunging to the underground, is where the poet tells us of his existence. In the fall, it creates. In the Artaudian production taking place within this psychic underground, there is a work with *lalangue*, the voice, and the body. In this creation, the crossing of the scream to speech is built. In this scenario, the scream can break out and make itself heard. The hypothesis is that, in attempting to write the scream, Artaud’s work operated with *lalangue*. Through this operation, the scream could be addressed, allowing the voice, upon touching the viewer’s heart, to engage in a circuit that included the Other, as Artaud expected.

Escritures du cri chez Antonin Artaud

Résumé : Ce texte parle de l'expérience de l'écoute-lecture de l'oeuvre d'Antonin Artaud et recueille dans les constructions du poète des effets de témoignage sur un temps de relâchement entre la voix et la parole, lorsque ce qui émerge est le cri. Cette étude concernant la voix et les tentatives d'écriture de ce qui est innommable nous conduit à une question subsidiaire sur le corps. Dans cette composition se démarque, à partir des fils de la psychanalyse, *lalangue* – articulateur théorique qui lie corps et parole, voix et écriture. C'est à partir de *lalangue* que l'article se penche vers l'oeuvre d'Artaud pour couvrir le passage du cri depuis le vide de la voix détachée de la parole, dans un moment de chute du sujet vers un espace/temps de directionnement et d'existence. Existence qui se soutiendra incarnée dans l'oeuvre d'Artaud.

Mots-clés : pulsion, voix, Antonin Artaud, lalangue.

Escrituras del grito en Antonin Artaud

Resumen: Este texto decanta de la experiencia de escucha-lectura de la obra de Antonin Artaud y recoge en las construcciones del poeta efectos de testimonio respecto a un tiempo de soltura entre voz y palabra, cuando lo que emerge es el grito. Este estudio sobre la voz y los intentos de escritura de lo innombrable conduce a una pregunta auxiliar sobre el cuerpo. En esa composición se sobresale, a partir de los hilos del psicoanálisis – *lalangue* – articulador teórico que enlaza cuerpo y palabra, voz y escritura. A partir de *lalangue* es que el artículo se inclina hacia la obra de Artaud para recorrer la travesía del grito desde el vacío de la voz desanclada de la palabra en un momento de caída del sujeto a un espacio/tiempo de direccionamiento y existencia. Existencia que se sostendrá corporificada en la obra de Artaud.

Palabras clave: pulsión, voz, Antonin Artaud, lalangue.

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Erratum

In the manuscript “**Scream scriptures in Antonin Artaud**”, DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1590/0103-6564e180132>, published in the journal *Psicologia USP*, volume 32, page 10:

Where it reads:

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Should read:

Escrituras del grito en Antonin Artaud