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The Geopolitics of Pimping

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Powerful winds of critique have begun shaking the territory of art again since the mid-1990s. With different strategies, from the most activist to the most strikingly aesthetic, this movement in the air of the times finds one of its origins in an unease with the politics that govern the processes of subjectivation, and especially the place of the other and the destiny of the power of creation: a politics characteristic of the finance capitalism that established itself across the planet from the mid-1970s onward.

It is curious to notice that in Brazil this movement only began to take shape at the turn of the century, among elements of the new generation of artists who were beginning to express themselves publicly, frequently organized as "collectives." Still more recent is the participation of this local movement in the discussion that has long been maintained outside the country.[1] Today, this type of theme has even begun to enter the Brazilian institutional scene, in the wake of what has been happening outside the country for some time, where artistic practices involving these questions have been transformed into a "trend" within the official circuit – a phenomenon characteristic of the media, with its market-based logic, which orients a great deal of artistic production today. In this

migration the critical density of those questions is often dissolved, in order to constitute a new fetish that feeds the institutional art system and the voracious market that depends on it.

A certain number of questions arise concerning the emergence of these themes in the territory of art. What are such preoccupations doing here? Why have they become increasingly recurrent in artistic practices? And in the case of Brazil, why have they appeared so recently? What interest do the institutions have in incorporating them? What I will do here is to sketch out a few prospective pathways of investigation, in order to confront these questions.

At least two presuppositions orient the choice of those pathways. The first is that theoretical questions always arise on the basis of problems that present themselves within a singular context, insofar as those problems affect our bodies, provoking changes in the tissue of our sensibility and a resultant crisis of meaning in our references. It is the uneasiness of the crisis that triggers the work of thinking, a process of creation that can be expressed in different forms: verbal (whether theoretical or literary), visual, musical, cinematographic, etc., or again in a purely existential form. Whatever the means of expression, we think/create because something in our everyday lives forces us to invent new *possibles*, in order to incorporate into the current map of meaning the sensible mutation that is seeking passage in our day-to-day experience. All of this has nothing to do with the narcissistic demand to align oneself on the "trend" of the moment, in order to obtain institutional recognition and/or media prestige.

The specificity of art as a mode of the production of thought is that the changes of the sensible texture are embodied in artistic action and they present themselves alive within it. Hence the power of contagion and transformation this action potentially

bears: it puts the world to work and reconfigures its landscape. Thus it is hardly surprising that art should investigate the present and partake of the changes that are occurring in actuality. If we grasp the use of thinking from this perspective, and if we accept art as a way of thinking, then the insistence on this type of theme in the artistic territory can indicate to us that the politics of subjectivity – and especially of the relation to the other and of cultural creation – is in crisis, and that a transformation in these fields is surely underway. So, if we want to answer the questions posed above we cannot avoid the problematization of this crisis and the process of changing it involves.

The second presupposition is that to think this problematic field requires us to summon up a transdisciplinary gaze, for innumerable layers of reality are interwoven there, whether on the macropolitical plane (facts and lifestyles in their formal, sociological exteriority) or on the micropolitical one (the forces that shake reality, dissolving its forms and engendering others in a process that involves desire and subjectivity). What will be proposed next are some elements for a cartography of this process, sketched essentially from a micropolitical point of view.

In Search of Vulnerability

One of the problems of the politics of subjectivation that artistic practices face has been the anesthesia of our vulnerability to the other – an anesthesia all the more devastating when the other is represented by the ruling cartography as hierarchically inferior, because of his or her economic, social or racial condition, or on any other basis. But vulnerability is the precondition for the other to cease being a simple object for the projection of pre-established images, in order to become a living presence, with whom we can

construct the territories of our existence and the changing contours of our subjectivity. Now, being vulnerable depends on the activation of a specific capacity of the sensible, which has been repressed for many centuries, remaining active only in certain philosophical and poetic traditions. These traditions culminated in the artistic vanguards of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, whose activity produced effects that have left their mark on art across the twentieth century. More broadly, they propagated throughout the social tissue, ceasing to be a privilege of the cultural elites, particularly from the 1960s on. Neuroscience itself, in recent research, corroborates this observation that each of our sense organs is the bearer of a double capacity: cortical and subcortical.[2]

The former corresponds to perception, allowing us to apprehend the world in terms of forms, in order to then project upon them the representations we have available, so as to give them meaning. This capacity, which is the most familiar to us, is associated with time, with the history of the subject and with language. With it arise the very figures of subject and object, clearly delineated and maintaining a relationship of exteriority to each other. The cortical capacity of the sensible is what allows us to preserve the map of reigning representations, so that we can move through a known scenario where things remain in their due places with a minimum of stability.

The second, subcortical capacity, which is less known to us because of its historical repression, allows us to apprehend the world as a field of forces that affect us and make themselves present in our bodies in the form of sensations. The exercise of this capacity is disengaged from the history of the subject and of language. With it, the other is a living presence composed of a malleable multiplicity of forces that pulse in our sensible texture, thus

becoming part of our very selves. Here the figures of subject and object dissolve, and with them, that which separates the body from the world. In the 1980s, in a book, which has recently been reissued,[3] I began referring to this second capacity of our sense organs as the "resonant body." It is our body as a whole which has this power of resonating with the world.

Between the capacity of our body to resonate and its capacity of perception there is a paradoxical relation, for these are modes of apprehending reality that work according to totally distinct logics, irreducible to each other. It is the tension of this paradox that mobilizes and galvanizes the potential of thought/creation, to the extent that the new sensations that incorporate themselves in our sensible texture carry out mutations that are not transmittable by our available representations. For this reason they throw our references into crisis and impose on us the urgency of inventing new forms of expression. Thus we integrate into our body the signs that the world gives us, and through their expression, we incorporate them to our existential territories. In the course of this operation a shared map of references is reestablished, with new outlines. Moved by this paradox, we are continually forced to think/create, as suggested above. The exercise of thought/creation therefore has a power to intervene in reality and to participate in the orientation of its destiny, constituting an essential instrument for the transformation of the subjective and objective landscape.

The weight of each of these modes of knowledge of the world, as well as the relation between them, is variable. Which is also to say that the place of the other varies, along with the politics of relation to him or her. The latter in its turn defines a mode of subjectivation. The politics of subjectivation are known to change along with historical transformations, since each regime depends on a specific form of subjectivity in order to become viable in the

daily life of everyone. It is on this terrain that a regime acquires existential consistency and concreteness; hence the very idea of differing "politics" of subjectivation. Yet in the specific case of neoliberalism, the strategy of subjectivation, of relation with the other and of cultural creation takes on essential importance, because it holds a central role in the very principle that governs the contemporary version of capitalism. For this regime feeds primarily on subjective forces, and especially on those of knowledge and creation, to the point where it has recently been described as "cultural" or "cognitive" capitalism.[4] Considering what has been indicated above, I will now propose a cartography of the changes that have led art to engage with this kind of problem. To do so, I will take the departure point of the 1960s and 70s.

Birth of a Flexible Subjectivity

Until the early 1960s we lived beneath a disciplinary Fordist regime that reached its height in the "American way of life" triumphant in the postwar period, when a politics of identity reigned in subjectivity, along with a rejection of the resonant body. These two aspects are in fact inseparable, because only to the extent that we anesthetize our vulnerability can we maintain a stable image of ourselves and the other, that is, our supposed identities. Without this anesthesia, we are constantly deterritorialized and led to reconfigure the outlines of our selves and our territories of existence. Until the early 1960s, the creative imagination operated mainly by sneaking away to the fringes. That period came to an end in the course of 1960s-70s as a result of cultural movements that problematized the governing regime of the time, calling for "*l'imagination au pouvoir*." Those movements brought the dominant mode of subjectivation into crisis, and it soon collapsed along with the entire structure of the Victorian family at its

Hollywood apogee – a structure which had been fundamental for the regime whose hegemony began to fade at that moment. A "flexible subjectivity"[5] was then created, accompanied by radical experimentation with modes of existence and cultural creation which shattered the "bourgeois" lifestyle at its politics of desire, with its logic of identity, its relation to otherness and its culture. In the resulting "counter-culture," as it was called, forms were created to express that which was indicated by the resonant body affected by the otherness of the world, at grips with the problematics of its time. The forms thus created tend to transmit subjectivity's incorporation of the forces that shake up the environment and deterritorialize it. The advent of such forms is inseparable from a becoming-other of the self, but also of the environment. It can be said that the creation of these new territories has to do with *public life*, in the strong sense of the phrase: the collective construction of reality moved by the tensions that destabilize the reigning cartographies, as these affect the body of each person singularly, and as they are expressed on the basis of that singular affect. In other words, what each person express is the current state of the world – its meaning, but also and mainly, its lacks of meaning – as it presents itself within the body. So, the singular expression of each person participates in the endless tracing of a necessarily collective cartography.

Today these transformations have consolidated themselves. The scenario of our times is completely different: we are no longer beneath the regime of identity, the politics of subjectivation is no longer the same. We all now have available a flexible and processual subjectivity as instituted by the counter-cultural movements, and our force of creation in its experimental freedom is not only favorably viewed and welcomed, but is even stimulated, celebrated and frequently glamorized. However, in all this there is a "but,"

which is hardly negligible. In the present, the most common destiny of flexible subjectivity and of the freedom of creation that accompanies it is not the invention of forms of expression motivated by an attention to sensations that signal the effects of the other's existence within our resonant body. What guides us in this creation of territories for our post-Fordist flexibility is an almost hypnotic identification with the images of the world broadcast by advertising and mass culture.

By offering ready-made territories to subjectivities rendered fragile by deterritorialization, these images tend to soothe their unrest, thus contributing to the deafness of their resonant body, and therefore to its invulnerability to the affects of the time that are presented within it. But that may not be the most deadly aspect of this politics of subjectivation, which instead is the very message that such images invariably convey, independently of their style or their target-public. At stake here is the idea that there exist paradises, that these are now in this world and not beyond it, and above all, that certain people have the privilege of inhabiting them. What is more, such images transmit the illusion that we could be one of these VIPs, if we simply invested all our vital energy – our desire, affect, knowledge, intellect, eroticism, imagination, action, etc. – in order to actualize these virtual worlds of signs in our own existence, through the consumption of the objects and services they propose to us.

What we are faced with here is a new *élan* for the idea of paradise developed by Judeo-Christian religions: the mirage of a smoothed-over, stable life under perfect control. This kind of hallucination has its origin in the refusal of one's vulnerability to the other and to the deterritorrializing turbulence that he or she provokes; and also in the disdain for fragility that necessarily derives from such an experience. This fragility is nonetheless essential because it

indicates the crisis of a certain diagram of sensibility, its modes of expression, its cartographies of meaning. By disdaining fragility, it does not call up the desire for creation anymore; instead it provokes a sentiment of humiliation and shame whose result is the blockage of the vital process. In other words, what the Western idea of a promised paradise amounts to is a refusal of life in its immanent nature as an impulse to continuous processes of creation and differentiation. In its terrestrial version, capital has replaced God in his function as keeper of the promise, and the virtue that makes us worthy of it now becomes consumption: this is what constitutes the fundamental myth of advanced capitalism. In such a context, it is at the very least mistaken to consider that we lack myths today: it is precisely through our belief in this religious myth of neoliberalism, that the image-worlds produced by this regime turn into concrete reality in our own existence.

Flexible Subjectivity Surrenders to its Pimp

In other words, the "cultural" or "cognitive" capitalism that was conceived as a solution to the crisis provoked by the movements of the 1960s-70s absorbed the modes of existence that those movements invented and appropriated their subjective forces, especially that of the creative potential, which at the time was breaking free in social life. The creative potential was in effect put into power, as was called for by those movements. Yet we know now that this rise of the imagination to power is a micropolitical operation that consists in making its potential into the major fuel of an insatiable hypermachine for the production and accumulation of capital – to the point where one can speak of a new working class, which some authors call the "cognitariat."[6] This kind of pimping of the creative force is what has been transforming the planet into a gigantic marketplace, expanding at an exponential

rate, either by including its inhabitants as hyperactive zombies or by excluding them as human trash. In fact, those two opposing poles are interdependent fruits of the same logic; all our destinies unfold between them. This is the world that the imagination creates in the present. As one might expect, the politics of subjectivation and of the relation to the other that predominates in this scenario is extremely impoverished.

Currently, after almost three decades, it is possible to perceive this logic of cognitive capitalism operating within our subjectivity. Yet in the late 1970s, when its installation began, the experimentation that had been carried out collectively in the decades before in order to achieve emancipation from the pattern of Fordist and disciplinary subjectivity was quite difficult to distinguish from its incorporation into the new regime. The consequences of this difficulty are that the cloning of the transformations proposed by those movements was experienced by a great many of their protagonists as a signal of recognition and inclusion: the new regime appeared to be liberating them from the marginality to which they had been confined in the "provincial" world that was now fading away. Dazzled by the rise to power of their transgressive and experimental force of creation which was now thrusting them beneath the glamorizing spotlights of the media, launching them into the world and lining their pockets with dollars, the inventors of the transformations of earlier decades frequently fell into the trap. Many of them surrendered themselves voluntarily to their pimp, becoming the very creators and constructors of the world fabricated by and for the new-style capitalism.

This confusion undoubtedly stems from the politics of desire that characterizes the pimping of subjective and creative forces – a kind of power-relation that is basically exerted through the sorcery of seduction. The seducer conjures up a spellbinding idealization that

leads the seduced to identify with the seducer and submit to him: that is to say, to identify with and submit to the aggressor, impelled by an inner desire, in hopes of being recognized and admitted into the seducer's world. Only recently has this situation become conscious, which tends to break the spell. This transpires in the different strategies of individual and collective resistance that have been accumulating over the last few years, particularly through the initiative of a new generation which does not in any way identify with the proposed model of existence and understands the trick that has been played. It is clear that artistic practices – through their very nature as expressions of the problematics of the present as they flow through the artist's body – could hardly remain indifferent to this movement. On the contrary, it is exactly for this reason that these questions emerged in art from the early 1990s onward, as mentioned at the outset. Using different procedures, these strategies have been carrying out an exodus from the minefield stretching between the opposite and complementary figures of luxury and trash subjectivity, the field in which human destinies are confined in the world of globalized capitalism. Amidst this exodus, other kinds of worlds are being created.

Profitable Wound

But the difficulty of resisting the seduction of the serpent of paradise in its neoliberal version has grown even greater in the countries of Latin America and Eastern Europe which, like Brazil, were under totalitarian regimes at the moment when financial capitalism took hold. Let us not forget that the "democratic opening" of these countries, which took place during the 1980s, was partially due to the advent of the post-Fordist regime, whose flexibility could only encounter the rigidity of the totalitarian systems as an obstacle.

If we approach the totalitarian regimes not by their visible or macropolitical side, but instead by their invisible or micropolitical side, we can see that what characterizes such regimes is the pathological rigidity of the identity principle. This holds for totalitarianisms of the Right and the Left, since from the viewpoint of the politics of subjectivation such regimes are not so different. In order to hold on to power, they do not content themselves with simply ignoring the expressions of the resonant body – that is, the cultural and existential forms engendered in a living relation with the other, which continually destabilize the reigning cartographies and deterritorialize us. As a matter of fact, the very advent of such regimes constitutes a violent reaction to destabilization, when it exceeds a threshold of tolerability for subjectivities in a state of servile adaptation to the status quo. For them, such a threshold does not summon up an urgency to create, but on the contrary, to preserve the established order at any price. Destructively conservative, the totalitarian states go much further than a simple scorn or censorship of the expressions of the resonant body: they obstinately seek to disqualify and humiliate them, to the point where the force of creation, of which such expressions are the product, is so marked by the trauma of this vital terrorism that it finally blocks itself off, and is thereby reduced to silence. A century of psychoanalysis has shown that the time required to confront and work through a trauma of this scope can extend to as much as thirty years.[7]

It is not hard to imagine that the meeting of these two regimes makes up a scenario even more vulnerable to the abuses of pimping: in its penetration to totalitarian contexts, cultural capitalism took advantage of the experimental past which was exceptionally audacious and singular in many of those countries; but above all, it took advantage of the wounds inflicted on the

forces of creation by the blows they had suffered. The new regime presented itself not only as the system that could welcome and institutionalize the principle of the production of subjectivity and culture by the movements of the 1960s and 70s, as had been the case in the United States and in the countries of Western Europe. In the countries under dictatorships it gained an extra power of seduction: its apparent condition as a savior come to liberate the energy of creation from its bonds, to cure it of its debilitated state, allowing it to reactivate and manifest itself again.

Power by seduction, characteristic of the worldwide governance of finance capital, is no doubt "lighter" and subtler than the heavy hand of local governments commanded by the military states that preceded; yet its effects are no less destructive, though with entirely different strategies and ends. It is therefore clear that the combination of these two historical factors, as occurred in these countries, has considerably aggravated the state of pathological alienation of subjectivity, especially with respect to the politics that governs the relation to the other and the destiny of the force of creation.

Anthropophagic Zombies

If we now focus our micropolitical gaze on Brazil, we will discover an even more specific feature in the process of neoliberalism's installation, and of its cloning of the movements of the 1960s-70s. In Brazil those movements had a particularity, because of a reactivation of a certain cultural tradition of the country, which had come to be known as "anthropophagy." Some of the characteristics of this tradition are: the absence of an absolute and stable identification with any particular repertory and the non-existence of any blind obedience to established rules, generating a

plasticity in the contours of subjectivity (instead of identities); an opening to the incorporation of new universes, accompanied by a freedom of hybridization (instead of a truth-value assigned to a particular repertory); an agility of experimentation and improvisation to create territories and their respective cartographies (instead of fixed territories authorized by stable and predetermined languages) – all of this carried out with grace, joy and spontaneity.

The tradition had initially been circumscribed and named in the 1920s by the Brazilian modernists gathered around the Anthropophagic Movement. Like all the cultural vanguards of the early twentieth century, the visionary spirit of the local modernists already pointed critically to the limits of the politics of subjectivation, of relation to the other and of cultural production that characterized the disciplinary regime, taking its logic of identity as a major target. But whereas the European vanguards tried to create alternatives to this model, in Brazil there was already another model of subjectivation and cultural creation inscribed in people's memory since the very foundation of the country. Maybe this was the reason why Oswald de Andrade, the major reference of the Anthropophagic Movement, could glimpse in the national tradition a “program for the reeducation of the sensibility” that could function as a “social therapy for the modern world.”[8] The service that the Brazilian modernist movement did for the country’s culture by highlighting and naming this politics was to lend it value, making possible a consciousness of cultural singularity. It could then be asserted against the idealization of European culture, a colonial heritage that marked the intelligentsia of the country. It’s worth noting that even today this submissive identification affects a great deal of Brazil’s intellectual production, which in some sectors has merely replaced its former object of

idealization with North American culture, as is especially the case in the field of art.

In the 1960s-70s, as we have seen, the inventions of the early part of the century ceased to be restricted to the cultural vanguards; after a few decades, they had contaminated the politics of subjectivation, generating changes that would come to be expressed most strikingly by the generation born after the Second World War. For the members of this generation, the disciplinary society that attained its apogee at that moment became absolutely intolerable, which made them launch upon the process of rupture with this pattern as manifested in their own everyday existence. Flexible subjectivity thus became the new model, the model of a counter-culture. It was in the course of this process that the ideas of anthropophagy were reactivated in Brazil, reappearing most explicitly in cultural movements such as Tropicalismo, taken in its widest sense.[9] By calling up the traits of a tradition that was deeply inscribed in the Brazilians' bodies, the counter-culture of the country attained an especially radical freedom of experimentation, generating artistic proposals of great force and originality.

Now, the same singularity that gave such strength to the counter-cultural movements in Brazil also tended to aggravate the cloning of those movements carried out by neoliberalism. The anthropophagical savoir-faire of the Brazilians gives them a special facility for adapting to the new times. The country's elites and middle classes are absolutely dazzled by being so contemporary, so up-to-date on the international scene of the new post-identity subjectivities, so well-equipped to live out this post-Fordist flexibility (which, for example, makes them international champions in advertising and positions them high in the world ranking of media strategies).[10] But this is only the form taken by

the voluptuous and alienated abandonment to the neoliberal regime in its local Brazilian version, making its inhabitants, especially the city-dwellers, into veritable anthropophagic zombies.

Predictable characteristics in a country with a colonial history? Whatever the response, an obvious sign of this pathetically uncritical identification with finance capital by part of the Brazilian cultural elite is the fact that the leadership of the group that restructured the Brazilian state petrified by the military regime, and that made the process of redemocratization into one of alignment on neoliberalism, was composed to a great extent of leftist intellectuals, many of whom had lived in exile during the period of the dictatorship.

The thing is that anthropophagy itself is only a form of subjectivation, one which happens to be distinct from the politics of identity. But that doesn't guarantee anything, because any form can be invested with different ethics, from the most critical to the most execrably reactive and reactionary, as Oswald de Andrade already pointed out in the 1920s, designating the latter as "base anthropophagy."[11] What distinguishes between the ethics is the same "but" that I mentioned above, when I referred to the difference between the flexible subjectivity invented in the 1960s-70s and its clone fabricated by post-Fordist capitalism. The difference lies in the strategy of the creation of territories and, implicitly, in the politics of the relation to the other. In order for this process to be oriented by an ethics of the affirmation of life it is necessary to construct territories with a basis in the urgencies indicated by the sensations – that is, by the signs of the presence of the other in our resonant body. It is around the expression of these signals and their reverberation in subjectivities that breathe the same air of the times that possibles open up in individual and collective existence.

Now, that is emphatically not the politics of the creation of territories that has predominated in Brazil. Instead, neoliberalism mobilized only the worst of this tradition, the basest anthropophagy. The "plasticity" of the border between public and private and the "freedom" of private appropriation of public goods – taken with derision and exhibited with pride – is one of its worst facets, clearly imbued with the colonial heritage. Indeed, this is exactly the facet of anthropophagy to which Oswald de Andrade had called attention when he designated its reactionary side. And this lineage is so intoxicating for Brazilian society, especially for its political and economic elites, that it would be naive to imagine it could simply disappear as though by magic.

There have been five centuries of anthropophagic experience, and almost one of reflection upon it, since the moment when the modernists circumscribed it critically and made it conscious. Against this backdrop the Brazilians' anthropophagic savoir-faire – especially as it was actualized in the 1960s-70s – can still be useful today, but not to guarantee their access to the imaginary paradises of capital; on the contrary, to help them problematize the disgraceful confusion between the two politics of flexible subjectivity and to separate the wheat from the chaff, essentially on the basis of the place or non-place that is attributed to the other. This knowledge would offer the conditions for fertile participation in the debate that is gathering internationally around the problematization of a regime that has now become hegemonic, and also in the invention of strategies of exodus outside the imaginary field whose origins lie in its deadly myth.[12]

Art has a special vocation to carry out such a task, to the extent that by bringing the mutations of sensibility into the realm of the visible and the speakable, it can unravel the cartography of the present, liberating life at its points of interruption and releasing its

power of germination – a task utterly distinct from and irreducible to macropolitical activism. The latter relates to reality from the viewpoint of representation, denouncing the conflicts inherent to the distribution of places established in the reigning cartography (conflicts of class, race, gender, etc.) and struggling for a more just configuration. These are two distinct and complementary gazes on reality, corresponding to two different potentials of intervention, both participating in their own ways in the shaping of its destiny. Nonetheless, problematizing the confusion between the two politics of flexible subjectivity so as to intervene effectively in this field and contribute to breaking the spell of the seduction that sustains the neoliberalism power at the very heart of its politics of desire, necessarily entails treating the illness that arose from the unfortunate confluence in Brazil of the three historical factors that exerted a negative effect on the creative imagination: the traumatic violence of the dictatorship, the pimping by neoliberalism and the activation of a base anthropophagy. This confluence clearly exacerbated the lowering of the critical capacity and the servile identification with the new regime.

Here we can return to our initial inquiry into the particular situation of Brazil within the geopolitical field of the international debate that has been gathering in the territory of art for over a decade, around the destiny of subjectivity, its relation to the other and its potential of invention under the regime of cultural capitalism. The unfortunate confluence of these three historical factors could be one of the reasons why the debate is so recent in this country. It is clear that there are exceptions, as is the case of the Brazlian artist Lygia Clark, who just one year after May 1968 already foresaw this situation. As she described it at the time: “In the very moment when he digests the object, the artist is digested by the society that has already found a title and a bureaucratic

occupation for him: he will be the future engineer of entertainment, an activity that has no effect whatsoever on the equilibrium of social structures. The only way for the artist to escape co-optation is to succeed in unleashing a general creativity, without any psychological or social limits. This creativity will be expressed in lived experience."[13]

What are the powers of art?

From within this new scenario emerge the questions that are asked of all those who think/create – and especially artists – in the attempt to delineate a cartography of the present, so as to identify the points of asphyxiation of the vital process and to bring about, at exactly those points, the irruption of the power to create other worlds.

A first bloc of questions would relate to the cartography of pimping exploitation. How does the tourniquet that leads us to tolerate the intolerable, and even to desire it, come to take hold of our vitality? By means of what processes is our vulnerability to the other anesthetized? What mechanisms of our subjectivity lead us to offer our creative force for the fulfillment of the market? And our desire, our affects, our eroticism, our time? How are all of the potentials captured by the faith in the promise of paradise by the capitalist religion? Which artistic practices have fallen into this trap? What allows us to identify them? What makes them so numerous?

Another bloc of questions, which is in fact inseparable from the former, would relate to the cartography of the movements of exodus. How to liberate life from its new dead ends? What can our force of creation do in order to confront this challenge? Which

artistic devices are succeeding in that confrontation? Which of them are treating the territory of art itself, a territory that is increasingly lusted for and at the same time undermined by the pimping that takes it as a bottomless well for the extortion of the surplus value of creativity, in order to increase its seductive power? In short, how to reactivate in our times, in each situation, the political potential inherent in artistic activity, its power to unleash possibles? By which I mean, its power to embody the mutations of the sensible, and thereby, contribute to reconfiguring the contours of the world.

Answers to these and other questions are being constructed by different artistic practices, along with territories of all kinds that are being reinvented every day, outside the imaginary field whose origins lie in the deadly myth proposed by cultural capitalism. It is impossible to foresee the effects of these subtle perforations in the compact mass of dominant brutality that envelops the planet today. The only thing we can say is that by all indications, the geopolitical landscape of globalized pimping is no longer exactly the same; molecular currents would be moving the earth. Could this be a mere hallucination?

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[1] Here the author refers to a number of political art collectives that have significantly multiplied in recent years primarily in the region of São Paulo Contra Filé, Bijari, Cia Cachorra, Catadores de Histórias, c.o.b.a.i.a., A revolução não será televisionada, TrancaRua, Frente 3 de Fevereiro ... If some of the most "visible" and "institutional" moments of the articulation of this "local movement" are compared with similar activities taking place outside Brazil – a concatenation to which Suelly Rolnik refers without going into detail – this results in an interesting diagram of

contemporary forms of a transnational articulation of artistic and politicized practices that have occurred in these years; their characteristics are, most of all, a progressive connection with local and translocal social and political practices (e.g. the movement Sem Teto do Centro) and a "flexible", ideologically unbiased relationship to the art institution with fluid entries into and exits from the institutions. See for example the participation of 13 collectives in the IX Biennial of Havana under the title Territorio São Paulo (http://www.bienalhabana.cult.cu/protagonicas/proyectos/proyecto.php?idb=9&&idpy=23), the exhibition Kollektive Kreativität in Kassel, organized by the collective What, How & For Whom (WHW) (http://www.fridericianum-kassel.de/ausst/ausst-kollektiv.html#interfunktionen_english), the group EtcÈtera (http://www.exargentina.org/participantes.html) and the exhibition Self-Education in the National Center for Contemporary Art Moscow, coordinated by Daria Pirkyna and the St. Petersburg collective Chto Delat? (What is to be done?) (http://transform.eipcp.net/calendar/1153261452). On Collective Creativity, WHW, Etcétera, Ex Argentina, Grupo de Arte Callejero (GAC), cf. Brumaria, , nº 5, Arte: la imaginación política radical, Summer 2005, http://www.brumaria.net [translators note].

[2] See Hubert Godard, “Regard aveugle,” in: Lygia Clark, de l’oeuvre à l’événement: Nous sommes le moule, A vous de donner le souffle, catalogue of an exhibition under the same name, curated by Suely Rolnik and Corinne Diserens (Nantes: Musée de Beaux-Arts de Nantes, 2005) ; pp.73-78. Brazilian translation: “Olhar cego,” in: Lygia Clark, da obra ao acontecimento. Somos o molde, a você cabe o sopro (Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo, 2006); pp. 73-78. The text is the transcription of a filmed interview I did with Godard in the context of a project I have been developing since 2002, seeking to construct a living memory of the experimental

practices proposed by Lygia Clark and of the Brazilian and French cultural within which they originated The 68 films made so far had played a central role at the abovementioned exhibition, mounted in France (2005) and in Brazil (2006).

[3] Cartografia Sentimental: Transformações contemporâneas d o desejo (São Paulo: Estação Liberdade, 1989, out of print; reissued with a new preface, Porto Alegre: Sulina, 2006).

[4] The notions of "cognitive" or "cultural" capitalism, proposed from the early 1990s onward, chiefly by the researchers now associated with the French journal Multitudes, represent a further elaboration of Deleuze and Guattari's ideas relative to the status of culture and subjectivity in the contemporary capitalist regime.

[5] The notion of "flexible subjectivity" is derived from that of the "flexible personality" suggested by Brian Holmes (cf. "The Flexible Personality," http://transform.eipcp.net/transversal/1106/holmes/en). I have developed it from the viewpoint of the process of subjectivation in certain recent essays. See “Politics of Flexible Subjectivity: The Event-Work of Lygia Clark,” in Terry Smith, Nancy Condee & Okwui Enwezor (eds.), Antinomies of Art and Culture: Modernity, Postmodernity and Contemporaneity (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006); “Life for Sale,” in Adriano Pedrosa (ed.), Farsites: urban crisis and domestic symptoms (San Diego/Tijuana: InSite, 2005).

[6] See footnote 4 above.

[7] At the outset of the military dictatorship in Brazil, the cultural movement persisted with all its vigor. With the promulgation of Institutional Act no. 5 in December of 1968, the regime reasserted itself and the movement faltered, tending toward paralysis. Like any totalitarian regime, its deadliest effects may not have been the

palpable and visible ones of prison, torture, repression and censorship, but other more subtle and invisible ones: the paralysis of the force of creation and the subsequent frustration of the collective intelligence, these being associated with the terrorizing threat of a punishment that could extend even to death. One of the most tangible effects of such a blockage was the significant number of young people who underwent psychotic episodes at that time. Many of them were interned in psychiatric hospitals and not a few succumbed to the "psychiatricization" of their suffering, never again returning from madness. Such psychotic manifestations, partly stemming from the terror of the dictatorship, also occurred in relation with the "extreme experiences" characteristic of the counter-culture movement, consisting in all kinds of sensory experimentation, generally including the use of hallucinogenics, in a posture of active resistance to the bourgeois politics of subjectivation. The diffuse presence of terror and paranoia that this engendered no doubt contributed to the pathological destiny of these experiences of the opening of sensibility to its capacity for resonance.

[8] Oswald de Andrade, “A marcha das utopias” (1953), in A Utopia Antropofágica, complete works of Oswald de Andrade (Globo: São Paulo, 1990).

[9] The counter-cultural movement in Brazil was especially radical and broad, Tropicalism being one of the major expressions of its singularity. The active youth of the period were divided into the counter-culture and the political militants, both of which suffered equal violence from the dictatorship: prison, torture, assassination, exile, in addition to those who succumbed to madness, as already noted. Nonetheless, the counter-culture was never recognized for its political potency, unless it was by the military regime that fiercely punished those who participated, placing them in the same

jails as the official political prisoners. Brazilian society projected a pejorative image on the counter-culture, originating in a conservative vision that in this specific aspect was shared by both Right and Left (including the militants of the same generation). Such a negation, even today, persists in the memory of the period, which on the contrary preserves and elevates the militant past.

[10] Brazilian television occupies an important place on the international scene. A sign of this is the fact that the telenovelas of the Globo network are now broadcast in over 200 countries.

[11] Oswald de Andrade, “Manifesto Antropófago,” (1928), in A Utopia Antropofágica, op.cit.

[12] In the early 1990s I began to work on the question of anthropophagy in the sense whereby it is problematized here. This work formed the object of three texts. The first, written in 1993, is "Schizoanalyse et Anthropophagie," in Eric Alliez (ed.), Gilles Deleuze: Une vie philosophique (Paris: Les empêcheurs de penser en rond, 1998), pp.463-476. The second is “Subjetividade Antropofágica” / “Anthropophagic Subjectivity,” in Paulo Herkenhoff & Adriano Pedrosa (eds.), Arte Contemporânea Brasileira: Um e/entre Outro/s, XXIVa Bienal Internacional de São Paulo (São Paulo: Fundação Bienal de São Paulo, 1998), pp. 128-147. Bilingual edition: Portuguese / English. The third is “Zombie Anthropophagy,” in Ivet Curlin and Natasa Ilic (eds.), Collective Creativity (Kassel. Kunsthalle Fridericianum, 2005). Bilingual German/English edition. Published in a shorter version in French as “Anthropophagie Zombie,” in Mouvement: L’indiscipline des Arts Visuels, no. 36-37, pp. 56-68 (Paris, Sept.-Dec. 2005).

[13] “L’homme structure vivante d’une architecture biologique et celulaire,” in Robho no. 5-6, Paris, 1971 (a facsimile of the journal is available in the catalogue Lygia Clark, de l’ oeuvre à l’événement. Nous sommes le moule, à vous de donner le souffle, op.cit.); reissued under the title “(1969) O corpo é a casa,” in Lygia Clark, Textos de Lygia Clark, Ferreira Gullar e Mario Pedrosa (Rio de Janeiro: Funarte, 1980, out of print); pp. 35-37; then later in Manuel J.Borja Villel and Nuria Enguita Mayo, eds., Lygia Clark, exhib. cat., Fondació Antoni Tàpies, Barcelona, 1997. Bilingual editions: Spanish/English and French/Portuguese.