

BODY. WORK. POVERTY.

**Alexandre Osório
Amarante Abramovici
Artur Barrio
Bartosz Dolhun
Catarina Leitão
Celeste Cerqueira
Darja Shatalova
João Leonardo
João Tabarra
Katy Bentall
Nuno Ramalho
Reinhold Zisser
Sérgio Leitão**

**CURATOR
EDUARDA NEVES**

TOMATO PROJECT

BODY. WORK. POVERTY.
Edited by Eduarda Neves



TOMATO PROJECT

BODY. WORK. POVERTY.

Qui, dans l'épaisse nuit qui couvre la nature... [VOLTAIRE]

***a memory**

In July, a friend of mine, Pedro Ruiz, invited us to visit a small workers' row houses area (one of the so called *islands*) in ruins, located in Porto, behind K11 Paiol Azul gallery (in front of Palacete Pinto Leite). The simple crossing of a street separates the grandeur of a palace from the trail of misery and survival of an *island*. It was inhabited in the past by two poor old women who, meanwhile, have died. Surrounding one of the houses there was an extensive tomato garden full of fruits, almost all small green tomatoes. However, in one of them, larger and already mature, a large fissure was visible, identical to those that crossed the walls of these abandoned houses or to the ones drawn in some bodies in the form of scars. It pointed to the possibility that, from one fruit, the language of pleasure or guilt, poverty and inequality - the language of survival - could be enunciated.

The tomato has been frozen and will leave that state on the opening day, in May 2021. A tomato as subject-object, a possible ethos of speech.

***a project**

The body. As in Bong Joon-ho's film *Parasite*, poverty has a smell. The same smell. And those bodies stink. Houses too. Social inequality crosses these places. An inequality that is also transmissible. Palaces and islands. People's homes. Some are rich and others poor. Bodies of work, survival bodies, divided into production modes, sometimes transformed into modes of repression. The social worker is everywhere, from the factory to the university. A work without pleasure in a pleasureless body. As in the world of Kasper Hauser, in Herzog's film, there are bodies that do not know what a house is. They can only grasp a few words and still don't understand poetry but they aspire to play the piano in the rhythm of breathing. Necessity and desire stand as common ground of what is building up in time, revealing obstinate ways of being. Resisting the trap of fear, noble flavours and smells of pleasure are called upon. They cause the vibration of another disorienting and subverting body. Appealing to the poetic function that disturbs hierarchical divisions, the alimentary body combines all delusions. It is the violent language of life that speaks through the organism (Nietzsche and Artaud), the orgy (Sade), the force field (Deleuze), through what is the product of social organization (Marx). In this body which we affirm as a chain without beginning or end, it is libertinage, the order of libertine life, *desire's lawless law*, and not sexuality's law, as Foucault so lucidly considered concerning Sade, which we must name here. All sounds of desire, all detachments of thought. Endless freedom. There are those who choose the realm of submissive and boring shadow zones. As in *Parasite*, we may continue to pretend that we are not relatives. We prefer, however, brighter pictures.

Alexandre Osório's *1/2 pensão* examines the relationships between economic capital, symbolic capital, and freedom. What is an opportunity? What is ownership? What is success? How much longer will the system condescend to poverty pockets? How is one to explain the ethos of the corporate interests that have been turned into sectorial rhetoric? The power of money has established new ways of enclosure and ensured the dominance of conformism. As Castoriadis wrote, a lie works only if everyone's complicit with it. Half a plate, a chain, and an animal's skin—images that signal the triumph of the unlimited diffusion of abandonment.

From António Pinheiro Guimarães and António Alves Vieira's verses, Amarante Abramovici's installation *Centauro* reinvents objects that take on a talismanic, magical force. Home and the heart. Beauty and desire. An island. By endowing the space with a liturgical atmosphere that resembles an *ex-voto*, the work—which includes the poem *Exumação sem cadáver dentro*—casts a renewal of beliefs and a sort of act that consecrates a pact of faith. It is the gift that which, knowing neither the sender nor the addressee, translates into liberation. And that is often a form of salvation, too.

In *Situação ambiente. K. (1970)*, Artur Barrio renders visible a number of situations and domestic environments that not only mark the history of art but also enquire into the Brazilian social and political scene. Through photographic representation, a set of images shows us decomposing objects, elements from everyday, public, and private life as marks of degradation and poverty. Likewise, it moves away from the artworld landscape, from the dominant market and even museological logic, which are summoned by the artist through a radically free poetics. It may so be the case that the programme of a certain melancholy reveals itself in Barrio's *Situações*; and it may so happen that we still find in them the shadow of our present time.

Catarina Leitão's *SN_001. Systema Naturæ: Machinamentum unifolium (Tubulaceae), SN_013. Systema Naturæ: Dubitatio binervatus, and Noverboracus multinervatus (Thecaceae)* are constituent parts of her *Museu Portátil*. Linking together drawing, installation, fictional elements, and botanical research, Leitão carries on with that line of work. Using conventional taxonomic systems, her approach to plants shapes a complex visual architecture that problematises the boundaries between the singular and the multiple, representation and fiction, the animal and the vegetal. From natural history as the science of order to the visual, wild state of thought, it is still life that breathes in this figuration.

Celeste Cerqueira's *É preciso ter tomates* evokes genetic engineering technologies. Through big corporations, economic imperialism makes farmers depend on the former; capital and business shape the patents that lie in the shadow of transgenic species. The available seeds, on which farming is contingent, or the impossibility of reusing seeds from previous plantations, frame economic efficiency. Market and inequality—the most reliable alliance for profiting off nature. Prosperity as a monopoly of the rich. Political rebellion as a form of compromise.

Bartosz Dolhun and Reinhold Zisser's work *Entangled Terrestrial Bodies. Porto ←→ Vienna* results from a situation of incapacity—during the pandemic, the artists were not able to

travel to Porto. As such, they instead went to the Kunsthistorisches Museum Wien and, from the building's well-tended garden, extracted a block of dirt they would later put into a wooden crate. Built just for this purpose, the latter, together with some instructions, was then sent over to Porto. Over the course of the exhibition, the artists Renata Portas and Sérgio Leitão went to the Serralves gardens and, likewise, removed a block of dirt of the same size as the one they had brought from the Vienna garden, swapping one for the other inside the crate. The whole action—both in Vienna and in Porto—was filmed, and was later presented over the duration of the exhibition. This is how performativity, as a strategy of exchange and convergence, can still revitalise institutional critique.

By overlapping maps of Vienna and Porto, Darja Shatalova's installation *PostGaleria* puts forward a critical analogy. In Vienna, the Fleischmarkt—a historical post office in the centre of the Austrian capital—is the place that corresponds to this curatorial project's venue. Taking this reference into account, Shatalova constructed a sound piece from field recordings. By specialising noises, conversations, voices, and machines, the artist reconciles us with the experience and temperature of a city that presents us psycho-geography as one of the great forms of unexpectedness.

Addiction proves to be the major field of agency one discerns in João Leonardo's artistic trajectory. Likewise, the work *Sem Título (Seis Estágios)*, in text form, as an alphabet soup, acquaints us with the six stages of addictive behaviour. Between the individual and the collective, the political and the social, this delirious staging can both lodge in the affirmation of an animal body and reopen up to the emptiness of its own illusion. It is the obscurity of foolishness that sways the *veritas* and asserts it as folly. Finally, dream reigns secretly, passion rules, and angels fly through the night.

Evoking the motionless body of survival, at the limit of its pose, João Tabarra's *Corpo Dobrado* erases any mark of luminosity whatsoever. While the work allows us to glimpse a sort of theatricality framing the scene, Tabarra presents us with a fragmentary body, an indirect, diffuse fullness in which control, disparity, and absence move through the flesh, thus mirroring the mechanisms of subjection and opposition to force. However, it is self-referentiality that, formalised as pure denotation, operationalises the audacity of the real. It is in the silence of all possible combinations that oblivion still vibrates.

Katy Bentall's book *The Two Tomato Ladies* resumes an imaginary story conceived by herself in 2020. In it, two ladies grow tomatoes in the city of Porto, inspired by all the other women who likewise grow them in Dobronsky, Poland. The book on view in the exhibition is one of the non-identical twins, as the other one is on display at the Skarpa gallery. Owing to Dobronsky's unremarkable economic power, a seemingly excessive use of tomato marks the local cuisine. The book, in its fragile precarity, is not *about* those people; rather, it was made for them to read it. L for *livro* [book]. The imaginary, from book to book—so wrote Michel Foucault. L for *ligação* [connection].

Issu passa evokes the austerity of the island on which Nuno Ramalho's work is presented, as the space takes the form of the artist's conceptual programme. The energy and lightness of fragility shape not only this sculpture but also the body, work, and poverty.

Between space and route, the materials become figures or the image of an indefinite, indeterminate chart, as the vicinities turn into a collective memorial. In the words of Gilles Deleuze, this is a passage from a monumental sculpture to another of a hodological nature—sculpture as travel.

From the headquarters of the Milanese magazine *Poesia*, Marinetti sends a letter to Paris on February 21, 1909 — the day after the publication of the futurist manifesto in *Le Figaro*. Addressee: Curnonsky, the so-called *Prince of Gastronomes*. In the gallery, an edition of his book *Cuisine et vins de France*, a full-bodied beef-heart tomato perched on a fragment of colored foam and a small black suitcase. Jars of jam and cherry tomatoes that spread their scent during the exhibition period. On the workers' row houses, the so called island, in ruins, crossed by an extensive luminous string, images and sounds of absent inhabitants. A metal hook suspended at the entrance. It reminds us of the famous gastronome's death: a fall out of the window after a long and depressing diet. *Bonjour Monsieur Curnonsky [I-V]*, by Sérgio Leitão, takes us on a labyrinthine journey through the five senses. Evoking parallel narratives, it is the body, work and poverty that become images of our finitude.



Eduarda Neves
Curator

+ info : www.tomatoproj.weebly.com/



PROJECTO TOMATE

CORPO. TRABALHO. POBREZA.

Qui, dans l'épaisse nuit qui couvre la nature... [VOLTAIRE]

*uma memória

Em Julho, um amigo, o Pedro Ruiz, convidou-nos a visitar uma pequena *ilha* constituída por duas casas em ruínas, situada no Porto, nas traseiras da galeria K11 Paiol Azul, em frente ao Palacete Pinto Leite. O simples atravessar de uma rua separa a imponência de um Palacete do rasto de miséria e sobrevivência de uma *ilha*. Nesta, viveram duas idosas, pobres, as quais, entretanto, morreram. Rodeando uma das casas, distingue-se um extenso tomateiro cheio de frutos, quase todos pequenos tomates verdes. Porém, num deles, maior e já maduro, era visível uma grande fissura, idêntica às que atravessavam as paredes daquelas casas abandonadas ou às que encontramos desenhadas no corpo sob a forma de cicatrizes. Assinalava a possibilidade de, a partir de um fruto, se enunciar a linguagem do prazer ou da culpa, da pobreza e da desigualdade.

O tomate foi congelado e abandonará esse estado no dia da inauguração, em Maio de 2021. Um tomate como sujeito-objecto, possível *ethos* do discurso.

*um projecto

O corpo. Como no filme de Bong Joon-ho, *Parasitas*, a pobreza tem cheiro. O mesmo cheiro. E cheiram mal aqueles corpos. As casas também. A desigualdade social atravessa-as. A desigualdade também se transmite. Palácios e ilhas. As casas das pessoas. Uma são ricas e outras são pobres. Corpos de trabalho, de sobrevivência, divididos em modos de produção, por vezes transformados em modos de repressão. O operário social está em todo o lado, da fábrica à universidade. Um trabalho sem prazer num corpo sem prazer. Como no mundo de Kasper Hauser, no filme de Herzog, há corpos que desconhecem as casas. Apenas sabem algumas palavras e ainda não entendem a poesia mas aspiram tocar piano ao ritmo da respiração. Necessidade e desejo figuram como terreno comum do que no tempo se vai constituindo e dando conta de obstinados modos de ser. Resistindo à armadilha do medo, nobres sabores e odores do prazer são convocados. Fazem vibrar um outro corpo que desorienta e subverte. Apelando à função que perturba as divisões hierárquicas, o corpo alimentar combina todos os delírios. É a violenta linguagem da vida que fala através do organismo (Nietzsche e Artaud), da orgia (Sade), do campo de forças (Deleuze), do que é produto da organização social (Marx). No corpo que afirmamos como cadeia sem princípio nem fim, é a libertinagem, a ordem da vida libertina, *a lei sem lei do desejo*, e não a da sexualidade, como tão lucidamente Foucault considerou a propósito de Sade, que aqui nos importa nomear. Todos os sons do desejo, todos os desprendimentos do pensamento. A liberdade sem fim à vista. Há quem escolha o reino das submissas e entediantes zonas de sombra. Como em *Parasitas*, poderemos continuar a fingir que não somos família. Preferimos, todavia, quadros mais luminosos.

1/2 *pensão*, de Alexandre Osório, equaciona as relações entre capital económico, capital simbólico e liberdade. O que é uma oportunidade? O que é a posse? O que é o sucesso? Quanto tempo mais o sistema condescenderá com as bolsas de pobreza? Como explicar o *ethos* dos interesses corporativos que se tornaram em retóricas sectoriais? O poder do dinheiro estabelece novas formas de clausura e assegura o conformismo dominante. Como escreveu Castoriadis, a mentira só funciona com a cumplicidade geral de todos. Meio prato, uma corrente e a pele de um animal — imagens que sinalizam o triunfo da difusão ilimitada do abandono.

A partir dos versos de António Pinheiro Guimarães e António Alves Vieira, *Centauro*, instalação de Amarante Abramovici, reinventa objectos que adquirem a força mágica do talismã. A casa e o coração. A beleza e o desejo. Uma ilha. Conferindo ao espaço uma atmosfera litúrgica que recorda a imagem de um ex -voto, a obra — que incorpora o poema *Exumação sem cadáver dentro* — projecta -se na renovação de crenças e numa espécie de acto que consagra um pacto de fé. É a dádiva que, não conhecendo reme-
tente nem destinatário, se traduz em libertação. Não raramente, esta é também uma das formas da salvação.

Em *Situação ambiente*. K. (1970), Artur Barrio confere visibilidade a uma multiplicidade de situações e ambientes domésticos que não só marcam a história da arte como questionam a cena social e política do Brasil. Através da representação fotográfica, um conjunto de imagens apresenta-nos objectos em decomposição, elementos da vida quotidiana, pública e privada, que se expõem como marcas da degradação e da pobreza. É ainda uma posição de afastamento da paisagem do *art world*, da lógica dominante do mercado e até do museu, que o artista convoca através de uma poética radicalmente livre. Talvez o programa de uma certa melancolia se enuncie nas *Situações* de Barrio e ainda hoje nelas encontremos a sombra da nossa actualidade.

SN_001. Systema Naturæ: Machinamentum unifolium (Tubulaceae), *SN_013. Systema Naturæ: Dubitatio binervatus e Noverboracus multinervatus (Thecaceae)*, de Catarina Leitão, inscrevem-se no seu *Museu Portátil*. Articulando desenho, instalação, elementos ficcionais e pesquisa no território da botânica, a artista dá continuidade a essa linha de trabalho já iniciada. A aproximação às plantas, através dos convencionais sistemas de taxinomia, dá forma a toda uma complexa arquitectura visual que problematiza as fronteiras entre o único e o múltiplo, representação e ficção, animal e vegetal. Da história natural como ciência da ordem ao estado visual e selvagem do pensamento, é ainda a vida que respira nesta figuração.

É preciso ter tomates, de Celeste Cerqueira, evoca a tecnologia de manipulação genética. É dela que o imperialismo económico, através das grandes multinacionais, faz depender os agricultores. Capital e negócio dão forma às patentes que estão na sombra das espécies transgénicas. As sementes disponíveis, às quais está sujeito o cultivo, ou a impossibilidade de reutilizar sementes de plantios anteriores, configuram a eficácia económica. Mercado e desigualdade — a aliança segura para a rentabilização da natureza. A prosperidade como monopólio dos ricos. A rebelião política como uma das formas do compromisso.

A obra *Entangled Terrestrial Bodies. Porto* ←→ *Vienna*, de Bartosz Dolhun e Reinhold Zisser, resulta de uma situação de impossibilidade — a de não se poderem deslocar ao Porto no contexto da situação pandémica. Assim, os artistas deslocaram-se ao *Kunsthistorisches Museum Wien* e extraíram do relvado bem tratado — situado na frente deste museu — um cubo de terra que colocaram numa caixa de transporte em madeira. Produzida especialmente para o efeito, remeteram aquela, com instruções, para a cidade do Porto. Durante o período da exposição, os artistas Renata Portas e Sérgio Leitão deslocaram-se aos jardins do museu de Serralves e, de igual forma, retiraram um cubo de terra com as mesmas dimensões do que fora removido do jardim de Viena procedendo à respectiva troca no interior da caixa. Toda a acção filmada — em Viena e no Porto — foi apresentada no período durante o qual a exposição esteve aberta ao público. É assim que a performatividade, como estratégia de troca e aproximação, ainda pode revitalizar a crítica institucional.

Sobrepondo em escala os mapas de Viena e do Porto, *PostGaleria* — instalação de Darja Shatalova — propõe-nos uma analogia crítica. Em Viena, o local correspondente ao espaço expositivo deste projecto curatorial é Fleischmarkt 19, um histórico centro de correios em plena capital austríaca. Considerando esta referência, a artista regista gravações de campo a partir das quais constrói uma peça sonora. Através da espacialização de ruídos, conversas, vozes, máquinas, somos reconciliados com a experiência e a temperatura de uma cidade que nos devolve a psicogeografia como uma das grandes formas do inesperado.

A adição revela-se como o grande espaço de agenciamento do percurso artístico de João Leonardo. De igual maneira, a obra *Sem Título (Seis Estágios)* construída na forma de texto e como uma sopa de letras, aproxima-nos dos seis estádios que habitualmente são identificados nos comportamentos aditivos. Entre o individual e o colectivo, o político e o social, a encenação delirante tanto se aloja na afirmação de um corpo animal como se reabre ao vazio da sua própria ilusão. É a obscuridade da insensatez que agita a *veritas* e a enuncia como desatino. Finalmente, o sonho reina secretamente, a paixão impera e os anjos voam pela noite.

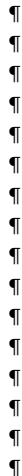
Evocando o corpo imóvel da sobrevivência e no limite da pose, a obra de João Tabarra, *Corpo Dobrado*, apaga qualquer marca de luminosidade. Deixando antever uma espécie de teatralidade que recorta a cena, o artista propõe-nos um corpo fragmentado, uma plenitude indirecta e difusa na qual o controle, a disparidade e a ausência se movem através da carne, assim espelhando os mecanismos da sujeição e a oposição da força. Todavia, é a auto-referencialidade que, formalizando-se como pura denotação, operacionaliza a audácia do real. É no silêncio das combinações possíveis que ainda vibra o esquecimento.

The Two Tomato Ladies, livro de Katy Bentall, retoma um conto imaginário que a artista concebeu em 2020 no qual duas senhoras cultivam tomate na cidade do Porto inspiradas em todas as outras que igualmente o plantam em Dobronski, Polónia. O livro em exposição constitui um dos gémeos não idênticos, estando o outro em exposição na galeria Skarpa. Não sendo Dobronski uma cidade de elevado poder económico, o

aparente excesso do consumo de tomate marca toda a culinária local. O livro, na sua frágil precariedade, não é *sobre* essas pessoas mas produzido para que elas o leiam. L de livro. O imaginário de livro em livro — escreveu Michel Foucault. L de ligação.

Isso passa, evoca a austeridade da ilha na qual a obra de Nuno Ramalho é apresentada. O espaço converte-se na forma do programa conceptual do artista. A energia e a leveza da fragilidade configuram não só a escultura proposta mas também o corpo, o trabalho e a pobreza. Entre o espaço e o trajecto, são os materiais que se constituem como figuras ou imagem de uma cartografia indefinida e indeterminada. Zonas de vizinhança que se convertem num memorial colectivo. Retomando as palavras de Gilles Deleuze, trata-se da passagem de uma escultura monumental a uma outra já hodológica — a escultura como viagem.

A partir da sede da revista milanesa *Poesia*, Marinetti envia uma carta para Paris a 21 de Fevereiro de 1909 — dia seguinte à publicação do manifesto futurista no *Le Figaro*. Destinatário: Curnonsky, o denominado *Príncipe dos Gastrónomos*. Na galeria, uma edição do seu livro *Cuisine et vins de France*, um encorpado tomate coração de boi pousado sobre um fragmento de espuma colorida e uma pequena mala negra. Frascos de compota e tomates cherry que durante o período da exposição disseminam o seu perfume. Na ilha habitacional, em ruínas, atravessada por uma extensa corda luminosa, imagens e sons de habitantes ausentes. Um gancho metálico suspenso na entrada. Lembra-nos a morte do famoso gastrónomo: uma queda da janela após uma longa e depressiva dieta. *Bonjour Monsieur Curnonsky [I-V]*, de Sérgio Leitão, interpela-nos para uma labiríntica viagem através dos cinco sentidos. Evocando narrativas paralelas, são o corpo, o trabalho e a pobreza que se convertem em imagens da nossa finitude.



Eduarda Neves
Curadoria

+ info : www.tomatoproj.weebly.com/

(texto escrito de acordo com a antiga ortografia)



EXHIBITION

Catarina Leitão	022—023
Celeste Cerqueira	024—027
Alexandre Osório	028—031
Sérgio Leitão	032—035
Reinhold Zisser & Bartosz Dolhun	036—039
Darja Shatalova	040—041
Artur Barrio	042—045
João Tabarra	046—047
Katy Bentall	048—051
João Leonardo	052—053
Amarante Abramovici	054—055
Nuno Ramalho	056—057

PERFORMANCES

Renata Portas	064—071
Telma João Santos	072—079

VISUAL ESSAYS

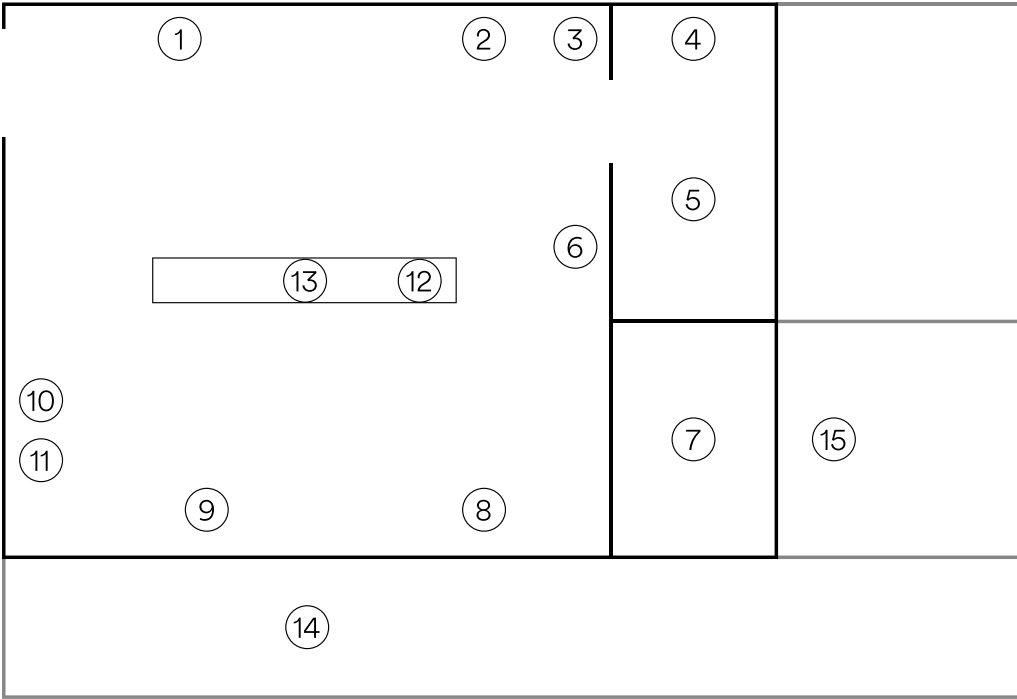
01	Maria Covadonga Barreiro	268—269
02	Daniel Moreira e Rita Castro Neves	270—275
03	Bárbara Flores	276—281
04	Alexandra Costa	282—283

ESSAYS

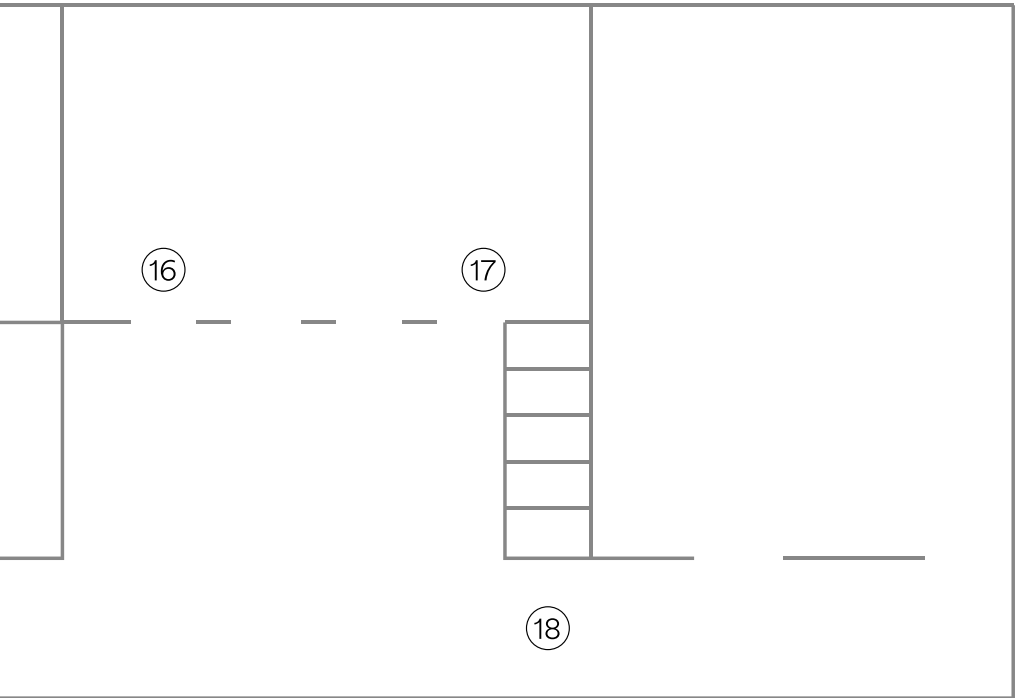
- | | | | |
|----|--|------------------------------------|---------|
| 01 | THE MATERIAL
IMAGINATION OF FOOD | Rômulo Morais | 084—091 |
| 02 | PAUPERTAS AUDAX. BOLD POVERTY.
<i>Postcards from Milan's independent art scene</i> | Giulio Verago | 094—115 |
| 03 | CORPS JETABLES : LES FEMMES DANS
LE « PATRIARCAT CAPITALISTE »
Une analyse féministe de la reproduction sociale. | Mara Montanaro | 118—127 |
| 04 | AMAZING GRACE. ETHICAL AND AESTHETICAL
CONTAMINATIONS IN-BETWEEN
Pierre Klossowski and Lars von Trier | Luis Lima | 130—143 |
| 05 | PUT YOUR HANDS UP IN THE AIR
PUT YOUR HANDS UP... IN THE AIR | Juan Luis Toboso | 146—151 |
| 06 | LA PHILOSOPHIE DU CORPS DU MARQUIS
DE SADE ET LE MATÉRIALISME LIBERTIN | Paolo Quintili | 154—179 |
| 07 | AMERICANISM AND FORDISM:
REPETITION, HABIT, AND IDEOLOGY | Nuno Faleiro Rodrigues | 182—187 |
| 08 | KILLED NEGATIVES: DEPICTING POVERTY,
STAGING PROSPERITY | Nayia Yiakoumaki | 190—209 |
| 09 | CAN THE STATE FALL IN LOVE?
NOTES ON THE SOCIAL INSERTION
INCOME (RSI) | Emanuel Cameira | 212—219 |
| 10 | A CLEAN BREAK FROM
IDENTITY POLITICS | Mohammad Salemy
& Rômulo Moraes | 222—237 |
| 11 | IN A LAND THAT YIELD EVERYTHING,
WHAT DO YOU HUNGER FOR? | Cristina Susigan | 240—247 |
| 12 | THIS BODY, THIS POVERTY:
ANDY WARHOL'S 1969 EXHIBITION
<i>Exhibition Raid the Icebox</i> | João Oliveira Duarte | 250—265 |

EXHIBITION

Opening: 07.05.2021, 5.30pm
Until 31.05.2021



— Paol Gallery





¹[**Catarina Leitão** - SN001. *Systema Natura: Machinamentum unifolium* (Tubulaceae).
Giclee print on Canson Museum ProCanvas WR Matte Poly-Cotton 395g, wood and northern thread.
Artist Proof. 2011-2021]

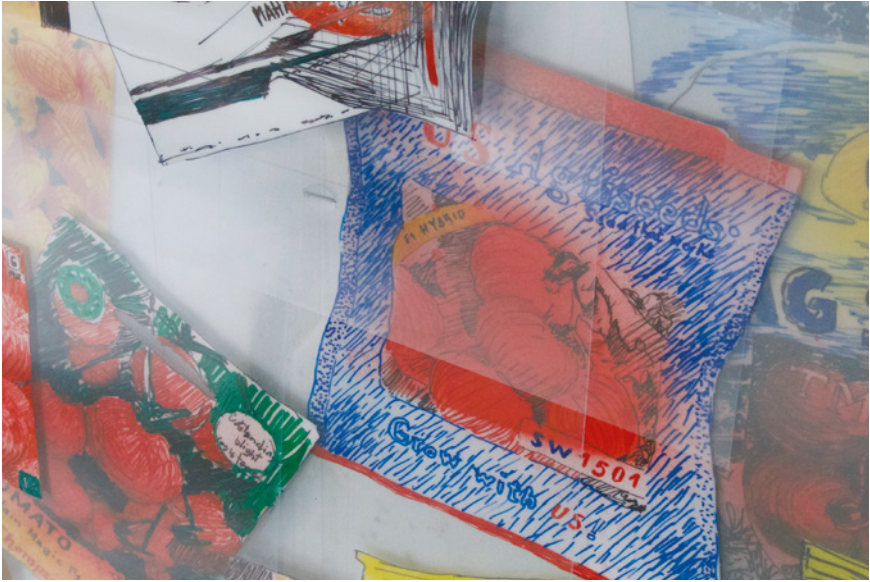


[Catarina Leitão - SN013. *Systema Naturae: Dubitatio binervatus e Noverboracus multinervatus (Theaceae)*
Giclee print on Canson Museum ProCanvas WR Matte Poly-Cotton 395g, wood and northern thread.
Artist Proof. 2011-2021]

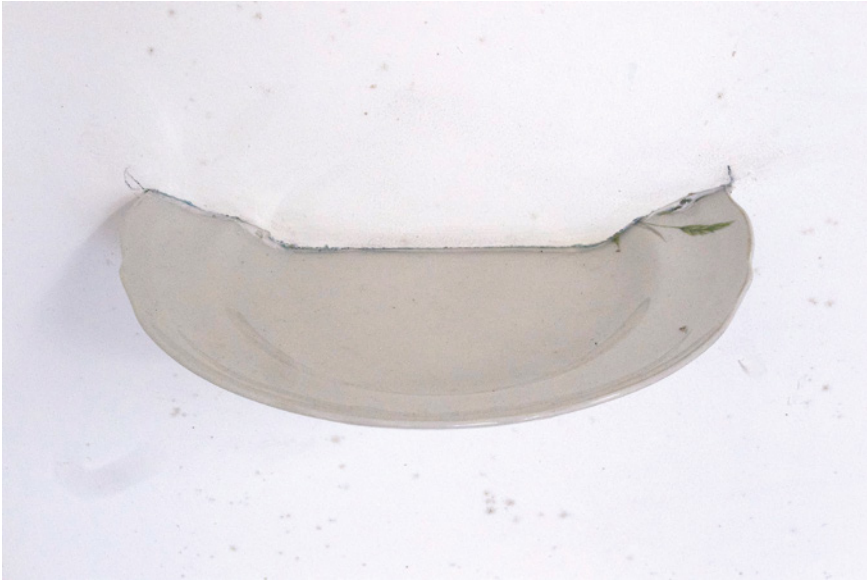


² [Celeste Cerqueira - *É preciso ter tomates*. Drawings on transparent polypropylene sheet. Permanent marker and spray paint. 2021]







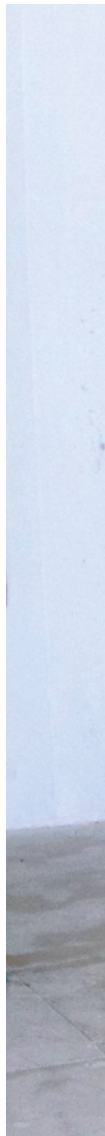


³[Alexandre Osório - *1/2 pensão*. Broken plate, glue. Instalação/Installation. 2021]





⁶ [Alexandre Osório - *O trabalho liberta*. Hunting trophy, hook and chain. Installation. 2021]





4, 11, 13, 14, 16, 17 [Sérgio Leitão - *Bonjour Monsieur Curnonsky* [I-V]. Installation. 2021]

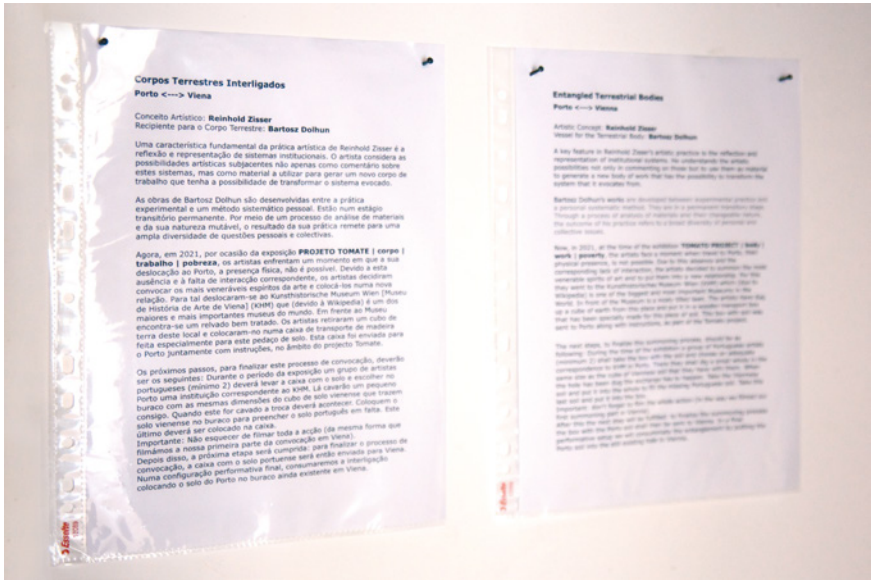








⁵[Reinhold Zisser + Bartosz Dolhun - *Entangled Terrestrial Bodies*. Porto <---> Vienna. Installation. 2021]









7 [Darja Shatalova - *PostGaleria*. Sound Installation, 8'31 min, loop, 2021]





⁸ [Artur Barrio - *Situação ambiente. K.*, 1970]





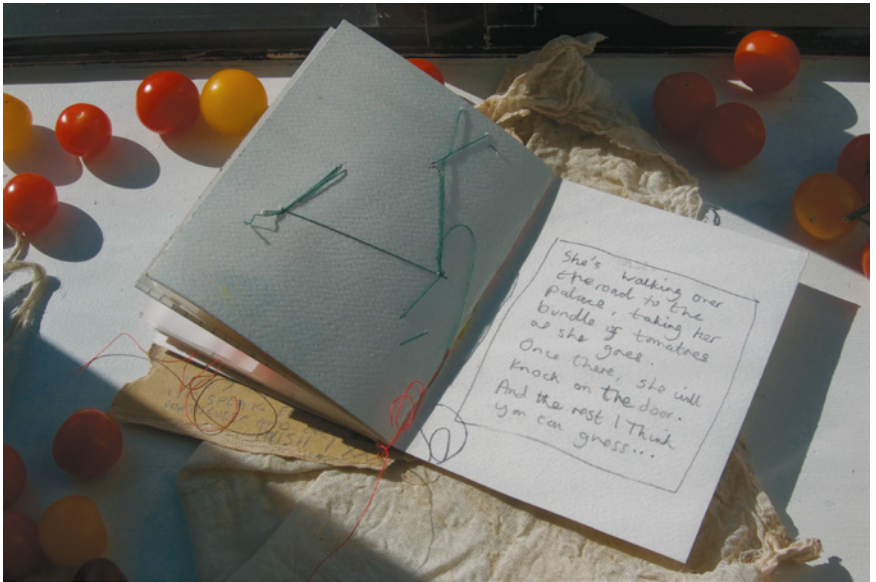
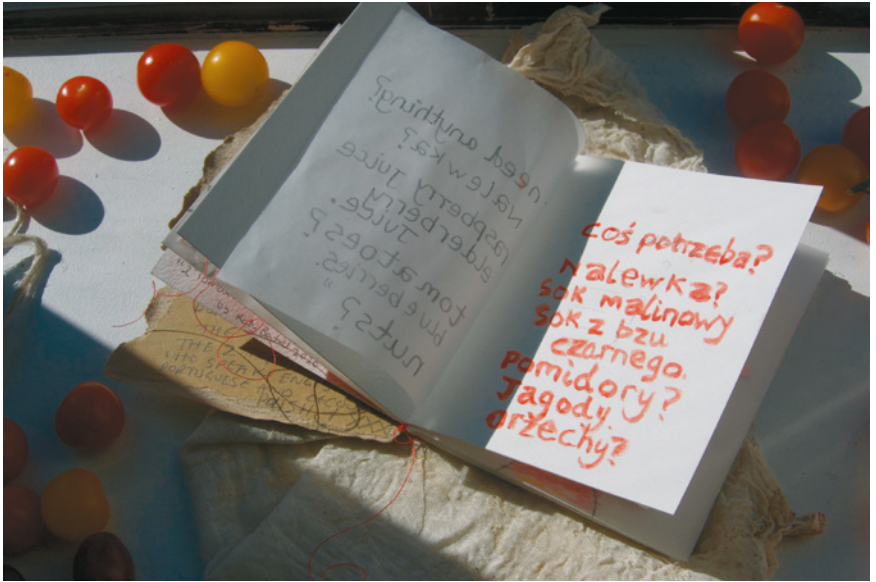




⁹ [João Tabarra - *Corpo Dobrado*. Poster, color print. 2021]

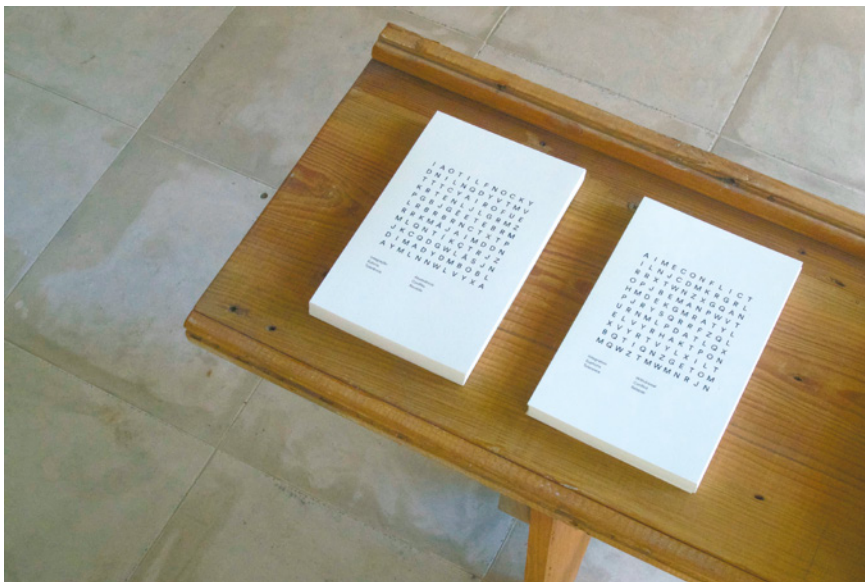












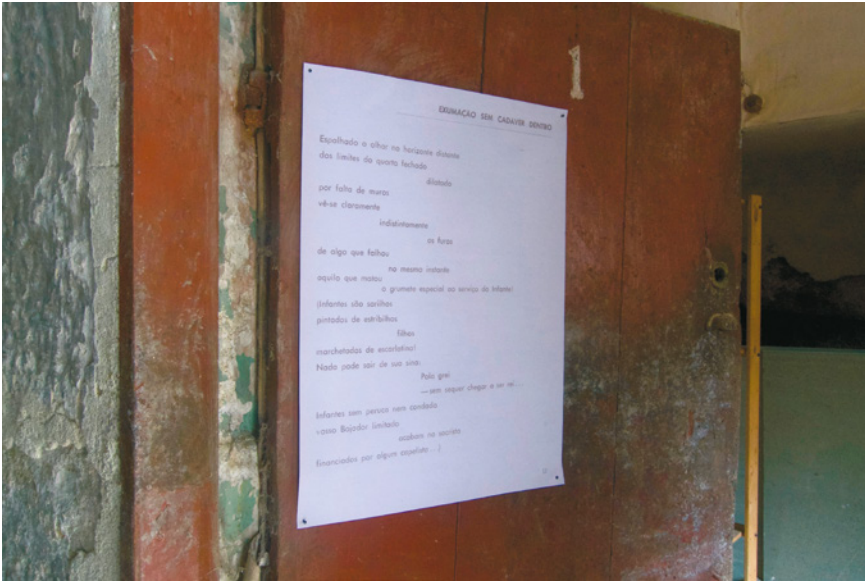
¹² [João Leonardo - *Sem Título (Seis Estágios)*. Text printed on paper. Edition of 200. 2021]

I A O T I L F N O C K Y
 D N I L N Q D Y V T M V
 T T T C Y A I R O F U E
 K R T E N L J L G R M Z
 P G B J G É E T E B R M
 L R B R B R N C T X T P
 R R K M Ä J A I M D D N
 M L Q N T Í K Ç T R J Z
 J K C Q D G W L Ä S J N
 D I M A D Y D M B O B L
 A Y M L N N W L V Y X A

Integração	Abstinência
Euforia	Conflito
Tolerância	Recada

A I M E C O N F L I C T
 I L N J C D M K R G R L
 R R X T W N Z X G Q A N
 O P J B E M A N P W V T
 H M D E K G M R A T Y L
 P J R Y S Q R R F Z Q L
 U R N M L P D A T L Q X
 E L V Y R H A K T P O N
 X V Y R T V Y L X I L T
 B Q T I Q N Z G E T O M
 M Q W Z T M W M N R J N

Integração	Withdrawal
Euforia	Conflict
Tolerância	Relapse





¹⁸ [Nuno Ramalho - *Isso passa*. Wood, plastic cover, hammer. 2021]





[Uma legenda final talvez sobre o tomate que se descongelou, etc.]





Projecto Tomate
Corpo. Trabalho. Pobreza.

Tomato Project
Body. Work. Poverty.



06.05.2021 — 18H30

PER
FOR
MANCE

RENATA PORTAS

Local / Venue

Galeria DÍNAMO Gallery — Largo de S. Domingos, nº 80 - Porto

PERFORMANCE



[Renata Portas - *A rose is a rose is a rose*. This performance took place at DÍNAMO Gallery, 06.05.2021, 6.30 pm]





【What is a name?

How important is gender in building wealth and value?

We have chosen a handful of women and half a dozen key moments in history (this one, still universal, with H) to think and to reflect upon us: which place of privilege do we owe Rosa Parks, Hilda Hilst, Gertrud Stein, Rosa Luxemburg and other women ?

What is left for us to do?

Keep the fist in the air, always fight: for us, for those who are to come and with respect for those who have preceded us. And here, and there, howl with joy.】









【Telma João Santos - *Entre(costas)*. This performance took place at Paiol Gallery. 07.05.2021, 6 pm】





["Rules of taste enforce structures of power." Susan Sontag

They taught me several techniques where my body never fitted. Disobedient, discovering itself in between vertebrae, muscles, negotiating between resistance and desistance, sometimes repetitive and dissonant scripts, transforming themselves into a discourse, travelling landscapes of not-knowing, angles, memories.

Body-everything, body-full, the place of performance art as ritual of (re)presentations of manifests of existence: the invisible work as the central script of a ballet, the anger and the plenty, rubbing themselves, the palm of my hand on the tomato, the voice redefining itself, the emergence of the present moment.]







BODY. WORK. POVERTY.

bodies

that still

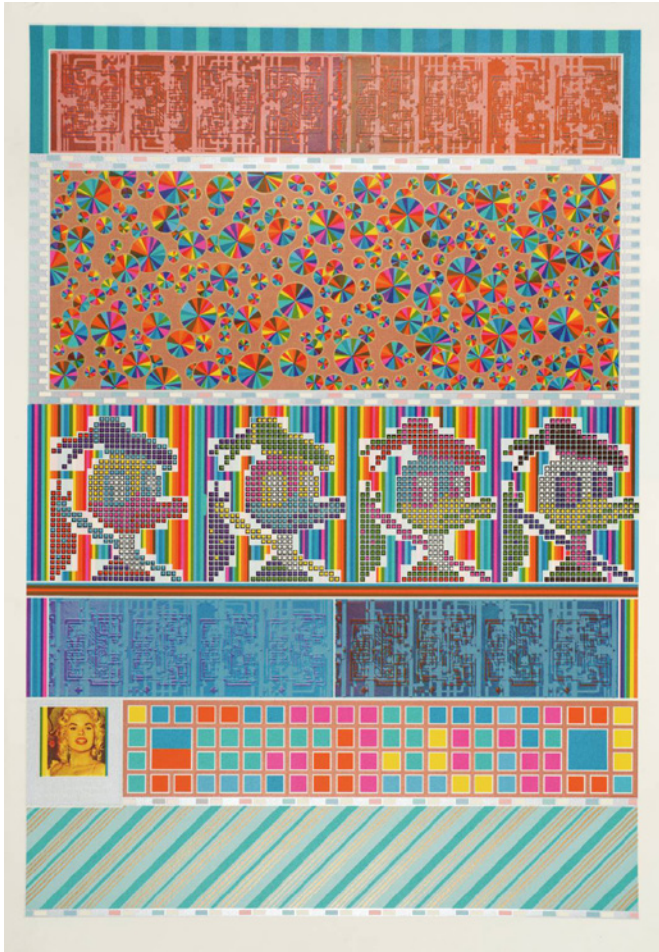
don't

understand

poetry



Rômulo Moraes



1
OF
2

E01

THE MATERIAL IMAGINATION OF FOOD

2

OF

2



[On the left, a design piece by Eduardo Paolozzi, 1967, with its unique profusion of textures and colours. On the right, a drink recipe out of Filippo Marinetti's *The Futurist Cookbook* (2/4 orange juice, 1/4 grappa, 1/4 melted chocolate and a hard-boiled egg yolk), as executed by *Vice Magazine*.]

"Every feeding is transubstantiation."

[Gilbert
Durand]

¹As typified by Quentin Meillassoux in *Après la finitude: Essai sur la nécessité de la contingence* (Paris: Seuil, 2006).

²John Dewey, *Art as Experience* (New York: Perigee Books, 2005).

³In his works dubbed “nocturnal,” Gaston Bachelard developed a philosophy of artistic creation based on the material imagination of natural elements (cf. *Water and Dreams, Psychoanalysis of Fire, Earth and Reveries of Will, Poetics of Space*, etc.).

⁴Michel Serres, *Os cinco sentidos: Filosofia dos corpos misturados I* (Rio de Janeiro: Bertrand Brasil, 2001).

⁵Vilém Flusser, *Vampyroteuthis infernalis* (São Paulo: Annablume, 2011).

⁶Idem, *A história do Diabo* (São Paulo: Annablume, 2008).

⁷Ibid.

⁸Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Kafka: Por uma literatura menor* (Belo Horizonte: Autêntica, 2014).

To use biology (or the scientific method in general) as central pragmatics for culinary research is a proof of creative precarity. With a little, healthy bit of “subjectalism,”¹ one soon realises that food cannot be understood through cold and distant analyses, in the Cartesian way, because the essence of food is the act of eating itself: cumulation of a coordinated interaction between subject and object, the “living creatures” and the “ethereal things”² that are here expressed as pieces of steak, slices of cornbread, bananas with honey. Feeding is what we experience when we eat them; it is an encounter with the edible beings. This phenomenological conception of gastronomy as *qualia* is the foundation that should allow us to elaborate a “gustative aesthetics” that emphasises, as I intend to, the material imagination of food. That is, I want to do with food what Bachelard did with the elements of nature,³ postulating a kind of poetic psychoanalysis that could describe, via a delirious and radically personal epistemology, the signs of the virtual plot that sustains these objects in their core. Philosophy has always opted for the primacy of vision over other senses, and was always made with vision as a parameter, in such a way that a source of knowledge as abundant as flavour has been left aside in the history of thought.⁴ We must begin to repair this injustice.

We thus follow minoritarian examples in the history of philosophy. For Vilém Flusser,⁵ for example, humans did not reach an evolutionary peak because we developed the nervous system and intelligence to its maximum degree (something that is closer to happening in bees, ants, and other animals whose colonies constitute disciplined, militaristic superorganisms), but because we developed the digestive system and alimentation to its maximum degree. In fact, he says, politics and economics are nothing more than ways of redistributing hunger throughout society, with human ideologies constituting, in their alternate succession, different ways of spreading, regulating, and hierarchising the appetites, and in that sense the history of humanity could simply boil down to the management of our stomachal volitions—and one day we’d also need a material imagination of farts and maldigestion, with which for lack of time we shall dispense for now. But what is humanity, asks Flusser,⁶ if not a gluttonous machine designed to devour the earth and then spit out new devourment techniques?

Flusser also proposes an interesting dichotomy between “chewing” and “yawning,” arguing that it is impossible to rest while eating or eat while resting.⁷ “Eating” here should mean not only “feeding” properly speaking, but more generally “consuming.” That is, the constant manufacturing of a need to consume in our society would be cause and consequence of an inability to sit quietly and enjoy the yawn—to settle down and digest. This opposition evokes the one Deleuze and Guattari formulate between “eating machines” and “speaking machines.”⁸ Speaking is like fasting, they propose: it’s putting out and producing significances, while eating is putting in and consecrating significances. While yawning is opposed to eating for lack of intensity, speech is opposed to it for extremity of intensity. To speak, to

eat, to yawn, in this order, one thing at a time. Simone Weil once wrote that eternal beatitude would be the ability to look and eat in a single operation,⁹ in which contemplating would already mean consuming, imagining would already mean realising. Acts of ideal appreciation and of material utilisation would fuse together deeply. Completeness means to eat a beautiful dish without losing the fantasy of what one eats exactly while eating it. This is perhaps the great challenge.

The difficulty of thinking about food, in some measure, really comes from the difficulty of thinking about swallowing. So accustomed to distinctive judgments, to the rigid and perpetual boundaries of identity, to the principles of non-contradiction and the excluded middle, we modern Westerners cannot understand the strange topology of absorption, in which an Other is predated and by predation transmutes the Self, mixes with it. Viveiros de Castro's research on anthropophagy in Amerindian mythology testifies maximally to this split,¹⁰ to our ineptitude to understand the fusion of bodies without resorting to a metaphor of the Other as a pathogen to be neutralised, that is, as an enemy. "You are what you eat," says a popular saying, but we rarely read it literally: you are precisely a composite of the fragments that nourish you, the portions hybridising to architect the golem. We are nothing but this patchwork of saps. The separation between a language of the *logos* and a second language, of sexual and gustative pleasure,¹¹ which aimed to sublimate the inequality between man and animal,¹² fails as soon as devouring reveals its own logic, even finer and deeper than the first one: paraconsistent contagion of forms, construction by folding, pleating, confluence, and interpenetration.

A plate of food is an ode to multiplicity. In the first place, because varied tastes can be found, extracted, from the same original model. Two broccolis of the same species, grown on the same farm, can provoke contrasting tastes if one is boiled and gratinated, and the other, fried in butter; a pig becomes two or three pigs if dismembered and marinated in different emulsions. Each archetypal food-shape opens up into dozens of hypothetical final products, the lines of possibilities diverging according to each technique that can be applied to each archetype, and in even more specific units according to the seasoning, the sauce, and so many other diversification factors that can be adopted by the cook. Secondly, the dish is an ode to multiplicity because it is itself a complex assemblage of categories, encompassing colours and textures and smells, intertwined and framed by the platter itself, the frame of this strange artwork. The volatile, tachygraphic morphology—the empirical embossment of the plate—expresses a web of sensory associations in which we immerse ourselves when eating.

The dish calls for a small ontological harmonisation, the refinement of the relations between its elements. We need counterweights of acid and sweet, dry and humid, hot and cold, soft and raw, in such a way that the Being of the dish is effectuated, in our palate, by the immediate condensation of a synthesis. Theory of balancement: to amass a dish is to practice

⁹ Simone Weil, *O peso e a graça* (Belo Horizonte: Chão da Feira, 2020).

¹⁰ Eduardo Viveiros de Castro, *Metafísicas canibais* (São Paulo: Ubu, 2015).

¹¹ Michel Serres, *Os cinco sentidos*.

¹² Giorgio Agamben, *O aberto: O homem e o animal* (Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira, 2017).

molecular equilibrium, to mix and magnetise unequal compounds, to find the modular balance between micro-particles that burst out in constellation. If tradition recommends certain combinations (such as fish and lemon) and censors others (such as fish and cheese), or if it requires a good dish to have main and secondary elements, it is because, besides the various aggregates having been tested until optimisation throughout history, taking root in the subsoil of cultural wisdom, the elements themselves also contain specific powers, specific tensional vectors. Thus, proteins bring out certain characteristics inherent in them, such as an energetic and thermal overload, a fibrous density that affects in a certain way the soft tissues of our bodies, satisfying a particular hunger, filling a particular cellular urge, and converting us to a particular being-in-the-world—hence the bizarre desire to take a nap after eating chicken at a Sunday family lunch. This whole network of alimentary causes and existential effects could only be revealed rigorously through a study of “comparative gastronomy,” which will be limited here to the level of physiological speculation. But it is a testament to the divine *telos* of nature that lamb and mint jelly, for example, get along so well: this reconciliation cannot be a mere evolutionary coincidence.

Cooking is therefore an alchemical feat, dosage and redistribution of taste-values reciprocally coupled onto one another. To set the harmonic clipping of the dish is to operate a spell, more an enchantment than a scientific experiment. Cooking makes us enter the zone of the celestial mechanics of satisfaction, in its mereological capacity for both joy and deception. No wonder it still maintains this aura of ceremonial magic, cutting through the limits of contemporary scepticism: in its exercise of extracting esoteric emanations from the interior of food and expressing these emanations as sensitive qualities, cuisine replaces the ritualistic theological procedures of the past (as it also happens in other crypto-mystical social qualifiers, such as fashion, advertising, sports, etc.).¹³ What remains as vestigial momentum is the theatrical gesture, that which, though useless, *means* (that is, articulates a freedom,¹⁴ elaborates labyrinths from clear paths). It is the table prepared with artisanal attention, the hand movements while pinching salt, a reverence towards the ingredients and their origins. What remains is the transformation by fire, one thing becoming another under the primordial pressure of the flames. Just like in *Babette's Feast*,¹⁵ the liturgies of the meal and of witchcraft are thus shuffled.

This philosophy of biodynamic mixing is also an image of a philosophy of the process, as postulated by A. N. Whitehead.¹⁶ For cooking is always the passage between forms, and not merely a fixed and final form. The essence of food is neither in pure nurture, in the sense of the simply given food, “grown on trees,” nor in manipulated fare, in the sense of foods reinterpreted by human technique till exhaustion, but it lies precisely in the feasible transitions between one thing and another: a nutritional base becomes a complicated body of senses. Neither nature nor culture, neither organic nor inorganic, but the inter-place of these orders, the mobile

¹³ I wrote this thinking of the historiographic works by Peter Sloterdijk—especially his monumental trilogy *Spheres*—but there are several other authors who theorised in the same direction (cf. some of the authors of the Circle of Eranos, like Eliade, Durand, Otto, and Neumann, as well as thinkers influenced by them, such as Jean-Jacques Wunenburger).

¹⁴ Vilém Flusser, *Gestos* (São Paulo: Annablume, 2013).

¹⁵ Short story by Karen Blixen, which became famous thanks to a 1987 film adaptation by Gabriel Axel.

¹⁶ Alfred North Whitehead, *Process and Reality* (New York: Free Press, 1978).

transfer between them. Even in the case of the transformation of food into detritus by the digestive system, what matters is neither the initial nor the final image of food, but the alteration of phases. Entities wither or swell or multiply or catalyse. The pot is a metamorphic machine that can even make matter disappear or explode amorphously. A volume of cabbage that barely fits in the pan remains, at the end of the cooking process, as a low blade of leaves; one more finger of yeast, and soon you will find your cake jumping out of the oven like boiling lava.

Everything that culinary theory tries to map is this passage, this transitional event, which lasts absolutely and therefore cannot be captured by our measuring devices (since these need to decompose each passage in definite moments). Between planting and tasting there are dozens of “black boxes,”¹⁷ factors of random decentralisation, and it is this succession of anomalous deviations that humanity has wanted to trace and dominate, deliberately or not, for millennia, by cooking. How to cultivate a certain flavour? How to make a gustative situation reappear as it did on that special occasion, how not to lose forever a pleasure so unique that every time, and perhaps too quickly, seems to evanesce from our mouths? Maybe the most advanced post for this type of engineering of tastes is in viticulture, for which such local grapes need to be cultivated for such timespan under such conditions, and then kept in such material by such Tuscan family, and so on. The experience of taste here is structured in all of its chain, it is overstratified: by drinking the wine, says Serres,¹⁸ we are tasting a geology of times and spaces, proving a deep narrative that has been codified into the liquid. The opposite of this experience would be the superficial and direct experience of fast food,¹⁹ which proposes an industry of the standardisation of flavours—McDonald's really is proud to present identical hamburgers, unchanged experiences, in Nice, Cusco, Illinois, or Nairobi.

But whereas the McDonald's consumer only receives its food passively, the wine *sommelier* works like a meticulous digger, in that he needs to intuit from the outside of the experience a world inner to it, an interstitial *spatium*²⁰ which can only be described through the intensive bricolage of the *sommelier's* subjectivity. Gastronomical criticism globally considered, actually, is the invention of a certain imaginary situation that underlies the dish in the very circumstance of eating it. It first provokes an intentional flattening of the experience, its reduction to an arrangement of noems (*epoché*), to then expand consciousness to the horizon of transcendental knowledge, from which the invisible or vaporous qualities that are stored in that dish can be traced back (and what else would be the origin of the “wooden aromas” and “citric tonalities,” nuances that only the *sommelier* perceives in what it drinks, and that for this reason seem so ridiculous to the amateur public?). Well, we already know an ox which is aware that it is going to be slaughtered, for instance, becomes a worse beef than the ox which dies suddenly or from natural causes, because the first kind contracts its muscles with so much strength, frightened, that it marks the meat eternally

¹⁷ Vilém Flusser, *Filosofia da caixa preta* (São Paulo: É Realizações, 2018).

¹⁸ Michel Serres, *Os cinco sentidos*.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ Gilles Deleuze, *Diferença e repetição* (Rio de Janeiro: Graal, 2009).

with stiffness. But only the wine taster is pretentious enough to propose that other, more subtle incidents are also charged to the experience of taste: manufacturing moment, decantation time, shape of the cup and ambience of the drinking experience, and even occurrences as tenuous as the harvest having been made by someone who suffered a childhood trauma or the winemakers being happy, sad, or angry while trampling the grapes.²¹ The food critic, then, but the *sommelier* more extremely, maps out an internal universe of correlations and fictitious occurrences, diagramming a field of semi-real sensations at each tasting, and affirming this field without fears of being wrong.

For to eat well is to fantasise the dish, we previously wrote. Food really tends to bring out this spectral reverie, crossed by currents of synesthetic translation. The opening of the palate to other senses is so common, in fact, that representations of taste usually appeal to primary qualities of other senses (as in the rice advertisement that represents the flavour of the grains by its heat, humidity, homogeneity, whiteness, etc.). But it's no wonder food usually plays a central role in science fiction and fantasy literature.²² First because it allows for a greater exchange between the senses when bringing food to the centre of the scene. And second because making food seem fantastic is easy, since it is a product of truly magical practices, so it already has a chimeric, make-believe aspect to it. Spaghetti with meatballs is already a fantastic phenomenon by itself, and no one could convince me otherwise. Thus, from Tolkien to Miyazaki, from *The Legend of Zelda* to *Pan's Labyrinth*, foods act as props that give the surreal world an apparent wealth of details, as if everything—even something as discreet as food—were alien in this new reality.

Finally, it doesn't seem absurd to say that what we eat also conditions what we fantasise. Tastes are directly linked to the imagination's expansion routes. In this sense, there are clear links between typical dishes of a certain culture and the cosmovisions promulgated by it. Much is discussed about the centrality of politics and religion in the history of cooking—in the notion of “ecological imperialism,” the expansion through imposition of species,²³ or in the verification of the inevitable connections between colonialism and food resources—but very little is said, conversely, about the influence of food in religion. Doesn't Christ turn into bread and vice versa? It is clear that the presence of some flavours on the shared menu of a people defines its experience of what is real and thus the concepts that it can formulate. I mean, there are still sub-explored reasons for why India has simultaneously generated a plurality of cults and gods and a plurality of spices; the fact that pepper is the matrix component of its dishes is also not irrelevant to the schematisation of India's beliefs. On the other hand, the absence of subtlety and timbristic gradation in German and English metaphysics must be directly linked to their tedious dishes based on lukewarm potatoes, insouciant soups, and offal derivatives.

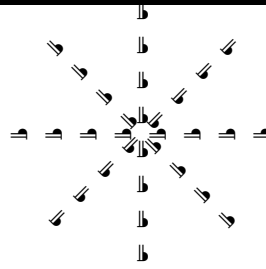
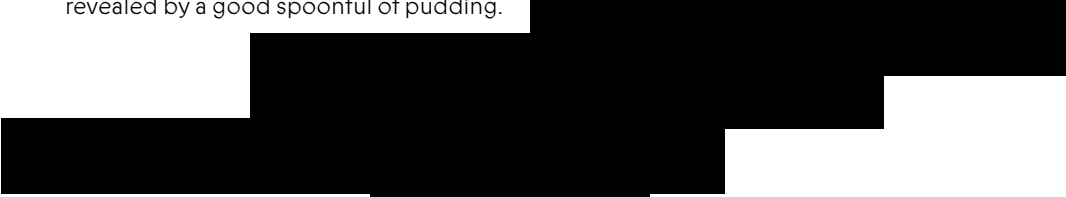
Above all, such a correspondence between gastronomy and systems

²¹ Michel Serres.
Os cinco sentidos.

²² Cf. "Why Do Fantasy Novels Have So Much Food?" in *Atlas Obscura*, 2018. Available on: <https://www.atlasobscura.com/articles/fantasy-books-food>.

²³ Alfred W. Crosby, *Ecological Imperialism: The Biological Expansion of Europe, 900–1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986).

of thought—between eating and speaking, languages and tongues—brings out the need to eat better also to dream better. Because perhaps a new image of the world, the image of our future, will appear not in books or lectures, and will not even be articulated apophantically, but just be revealed by a good spoonful of pudding.



bodies of work,
survival bodies



Giulio Verago

“It may be said that Milan represents a broad, perhaps extreme, image of the more general situation of Italian artistic production and policy over recent years, of the uneven relationships between private and public initiative. ... Milan—city of the entrepreneurial and cultural bourgeoisie—is the extreme reflection of Italian arts policies: built largely on private initiatives and the patronage of certain individuals and sponsors However, such private subjects, those concerned first and foremost with their own economic interests, cannot and should not reasonably be expected to carry out the work that public bodies normally do in democratic countries.”

[LUCA
CERIZZA¹]

PAUPERTAS AUDAX BOLD POVERTY

*Postcards from Milan's independent
art scene*

¹ Luca Cerizza,
“(Thinking) outside the
box — Private initiative
and public slowness in
Milan (1985–2010),” in
Souvenir d'Italie.
A non-profit art story
(Milan: Mousse, 2010),
pp. 178–180.

What I want to recollect here are some quick, flickering glimpses into the Italian independent scene in Milan. I have chosen iconic, ever-changing places whose precarious and resilient examples deal with the concept of bottom-up change.

Being an artist in modern Italy has never been child's play.

Carla Accardi and Nanda Vigo, Antonia Pozzi and Alda Merini, Umberto Bindi and Luigi Tenco, Franca Rame and Giulietta Masina, Pier Paolo Pasolini and Laura Betti are just past examples of the bittersweet way to success.

In the field of visual arts today, many young graduates from Italy's best art academies struggle against irrelevance in the mainstream media, balancing life and work in a society that does not fully recognise visual art as a reliable profession.

Many of the best stories of contemporary art in Italy started from small-scale initiatives, run by private citizens.

In Milan, in the last quarter of the 20th century, artists, intellectuals, curators, and visionary philanthropists tried to fill the void left by the institutions; the lack of a proper, independent, continuously funded office for contemporary art; the lack of a place to nurture research outside the Academy, the artist studio, and the *salotto*.

One of the outstanding characteristics of Italy is the interdependence of its centres, the profound bounds between different and somewhat complementary approaches to cultural production. Milan has always been a lively and engaging city: it hosts seven universities and is the richest metropolitan area in Italy and in Europe.

In this fragmented, precarious framework, Milan remains a place where the clash between opposite views has emerged in all its incendiary and grotesque magnitude.



[Franz Gerald Krumpl performing at PAC—Padiglione Arte Contemporanea on the occasion of *As soon as possible*. Performance loop. The Class of Marina Abramovic Braunschweig School of Art, 2003]

1

OF

7

Late 1970s: Casa degli Artisti (1909–), Corso Garibaldi, 89/A

"L'artista era ormai solo nei confronti della società, e la sua solitudine poteva portarlo alla sterilità o alla pazzia, come mai era successo nella storia. Rimaneva la possibilità di associarsi tra ricercatori, tra dispersi con gli stessi interessi. I gruppi nascono per ragioni elementari, per necessità di lavoro e di difesa comune."²

² Claudio Verna, *Figurative arts in the industrial society*, unpublished academic dissertation, University of Florence, 1961, p. 20.

³ Gian Paolo Prandstraller, "Osservazioni sul destino della professione," in *Arte come professione* (Venice: Marsilio Editori, 1974), pp. 211–222.

In 1974, Italian sociologist Gian Paolo Prandstraller (b. 1926) published interesting research about the status of visual artists and art workers in Italy from a sociological point of view: *Arte come professione*. The book is one of the first works of this type ever done in Italy, and recollects a mosaic of different points of view through a series of interviews with 64 Italian artists, 24 critics, and aesthetics scholars, as well as nine gallerists, notably including only nine women in total. Among them are major figures such as Bruno Munari, Umberto Eco, Palma Bucarelli, Simonetta Lux, Gillo Dorfles, and gallerist Arturo Schwarz.

In a pre-globalisation, post-68 scenario, the author foretold the big change underway, the slow, tectonic shift towards the recognition of the artist as a researcher.

After Prandstraller's sociological survey, countless others followed, before the creation of curatorial studies classes and the evolution of sociological studies helped this kind of researchers be more effective, detailed, specific.

In his final remark, Prandstraller recognised that the problem in Italy resides on both sides: on the one hand, Italian artists of that time seem to have a tendency toward conscious self-harm, as they deployed experimental and research-based practices that did not challenge the market-based status quo, and on the other side art is not recognised as a public service, unlike many other fields of intellectual research in modern society.

"Art can be recognized as a public service only as a result of a bottom-up movement, only if it's recognised by a growing number of people who reclaim the need for art."³

Casa degli Artisti is an anomaly. Built in 1909 by two philanthropist brothers as a compound for artist studios, it was one of the earliest examples of artist studios in Europe before Mussolini took power, as well as a place to connect the Milanese scene with the rest of Europe. Casa degli Artisti lived many lives and was visited by 20th century icons, like painter Renato Guttuso, writer Dino Buzzati, designer Angelo Mangiarotti, and jazz legend Chet Baker.

Among all the possible snapshots (including a recent renovation in a well-gentrified urban scenario), I choose to focus on 1979, when a group of young visual artists that included Giuseppe Spagnulo, Luciano Fabro, Hidetoshi Nagasawa, Paola Brusati, and critic Jole De Sanna founded a cultural association, aiming to bring new life to the building in the Brera district and irradiate that energy beyond the physical space inside the city itself.

⁴ Cf. https://www.wikiwand.com/it/Casa_degli_artisti.

In 1979, the very same idea of cross-fertilisation between visual art and the wider cultural landscape gave younger visual artists the chance to learn, experiment, and take risks in a safe environment, in the dilapidated building.

Casa degli Artisti let the voices of artists be heard—for instance, in the struggle for the restoration of Giorgio De Chirico's *I bagni misteriosi* in 1994. The cultural association still exists and curates projects nowadays, long after the death of that group of founder artists.⁴

It is undeniable that the legacy of that group of artists and intellectuals lives on as a symbol of survival and resilience, *un'isola felice*, as it continues to push us to reconsider the dialectic between political institutions and artists, between private and public space.





[Sit in for the restoration of Giorgio De Chirico's *I bagni misteriosi* in 1994]



2
OF
7



1980s: Brown Boveri (1984–1985), via Confalonieri 30

When I was born, in April 1980, Italian contemporary art scene was some kind of beautiful, sleeping beauty. The shocking waves of the *anni di piombo* had disrupted the social fabric, and an uncanny sense of impotence characterised the political spectrum.

⁵ Rosario Assunto, "Demittizzazione, fine della natura e morte dell'arte (giudicate secondo una prospettiva schellinghiana)," *Flash Art*, March–April 1980, pp. 11–14.

In 1980 the Italian Ministry of Culture was a new-born political body, having been established just six years earlier; there were no contemporary art museums in sight (the first one, Centro Luigi Pecci in Prato, opened in 1988). The April–May Italian edition of *Flash Art* (no. 96–97) included a lengthy piece about the "the end of Nature and the death of Art,"⁵ as well as articles about sacred monsters Salvador Dalí and Barnett Newman; and the February opening of one of the most important group exhibitions that have ever taken place in Italy—*L'altra metà dell'avanguardia*, 1910–1940, by Lea Vergine—was given a rather short review.

Like elsewhere in Europe, in the 1980s, Italy lived an ephemeral spring of economic growth, fuelled by a corrupt system. Milan has always been the main centre of contemporary art, and a new generation of private galleries would open later on, during that defining decade.

Regarding the Milanese independent art scene, the watershed moment came when a number of students from the Architectural Composition course held by Corrado Levi at the Politecnico di Milano occupied the abandoned Brown Boveri factory (1984–1985), using it as a test ground for investigations into the relationships between form and meaning.

The factory had been abandoned 20 years before and covered 20,000 square meters near the Garibaldi train station.

Levi, an architect, an artist, and a leading intellectual, successfully translated into the Italian discourse some elements of New York's New Wave scene.

The relatively short-lived experience at the Tecnomasio Italiano Brown Boveri Factory connected Milan with the international scene by inviting artists to regard the city as their studio. The same energy characterised other artist-run spaces like Spazio di Lazzaro Palazzi in Porta Venezia (1989–1992) and less structured experiences like the Via Fuggi artist cluster.



VIA GONFALONIERI 30
 19-18 MAGGIO ore 14
 INAUGURAZIONE



S. ARIENTI P. ARES
 C. ASCHIERI C. BARNA
 S. CARY V. CAVENAGA
 S. CORTERAPIS E. CONTINI
 A. GAVGAI A. FALCONE
 G. GARBIN F. GARBELLI
 G. GIORCELLI G. LIPIERO
 H. HOIST Y. YAKIR C. LEVI
 V. GIANMARIA A. MANISIRIGLI
 A. MARI A. MARTEGANI
 E. MUSATI C. PENNISI
 M. LEGGRINI V. RINALDI
 P. PELLEGRINI M. SACCHI
 P. ROSETTI M. SIGURANI
 G. ROGNANI A. TAGLIATEFRO
 S. SEVOLDI A. E. VALLI
 C. SPOLDINI VENTRIGLI
 F. VALENTE P. VUCCONI
 F. VALE P. ZUCCHICO
 V. VOIRE DONNICO
 F. V. V. V. V.

23 maggio - 4 luglio
 marconi

(Invitation to the opening at the Brown Boveri exhibition)



F.P.4 ILFORD



9



8



F.P.3 ILFORD



F 4 - ILFORD



F 4 - ILFORD

[Brown Boveri, photo by Salvatore Licitra]

Early 1990s: Viafarini (1991–), via Carlo Farini 35

In the first of his American Lessons: Six Proposals for the Next Millennium (1985, published posthumously in 1988), Italo Calvino spoke of lightness, and identified it with great precision and determination. He stated that he supported the subtraction of weight, that he had come across significant testimonies of it in the literature of the past and present, and above all that he considered it to be a dominant value of the future. A lesson—almost a manifesto—for many of the artists of the 1990s generation, some of whom had trained under Lucio Fabro at the Brera Academy of Fine Arts, or had met at the Casa degli Artisti or had founded the space via Lazzaro Palazzi. They were all aware of the ideological value of the materials that Arte Povera had sanctioned, and set out to contrast this with lightness, precision, and determination. Not through weak thought [pensiero debole n.d.] but weightless 'poverista' materials.⁶

⁶ Milovan Farronato, "Italian Area," in *Souvenir d'Italie*, p. 308.

Viafarini opened in 1991 inside an old printing press. At that time, the Isola district was a popular neighbourhood with a bad reputation—a frontier. It has since been dramatically changed by gentrification, but there remains a peculiar livelihood within the city.

The idea that inspired the founder Patrizia Brusarosco was to bring the experience of New York's artist spaces and German *Kunstverein* into the Italian context.

It represented a turning point for the Italian independent scene for many reasons.

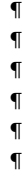
In the 1990s, its programme was mostly devoted to the idea of presenting ambitious large-scale installations as solo presentations, along with comprehensive group shows linked to a programme of workshops, roundtables, and panel discussions.

But above all the core idea was to start an archive of the contemporary scene in Italy, to gather the information about the most deserving artists (later digitised through a database)—a relational archive where the best research is put into dialogue with curators based in Italy and abroad.

The space itself was founded together with a group of then emerging artists: Maurizio Cattelan, Letizia Cariglio, Alberto Garutti, Liliana Moro, and later on the generation of Paola Pivi, Diego Perrone, Claudia Losi, and Pietro Roccasalva, just to name a few.

The foundation of the space was the foundation of its archive, with the exhibition *Immagini Proiettate*, where people could take a look at the carousel of projected slides and read the portfolios of the artists made available in the physical archive.





5

OF

7

[Immagini Proiettate,
opening of Viafarini, 1991. Photo by Alberto Callari]



[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

"Viafarini has been the experimental Kunsthalle that Milan had never had and still does not have.

A place where artists can go and talk to a critic without this being a humiliating experience.

A place where an artist in search of information can find out about how to apply for study grants abroad. A place where a student can go and study books and catalogues that cannot be found in any other public library in Italy, purchased year after year and dutifully archived.

A place where it is understood what it means for a young artist to learn how to display their work, leading in certain cases—such as that of Margherita Manzelli—to memorable solo shows, while in others—such as the Transatlatico series, the general rehearsal for the Via Fiuggi group—to group shows that have marked the beginning of an era, not to mention the presence of such figures as Alberto Garutti and Giacinto Di Pietrantonio.

A place that has never shied away from dealing with training projects and which, therefore, has made room for exhibitions by students from the Academy over the years.

...

A place that has learnt to cope with forms of funding based not on the sale of works but on contributions, striving to make the best possible use of the money provided by public bodies and banking foundations. Working in this fashion is tiring, yet it is the only way that makes it possible not to sink to compromises when

dealing with young artists without a guaranteed market.

A place that has been frequented by the best Italian curators, be it only to write a text, and that continues to be a training ground for many. Not everyone knows that a lot of support has come from Maurizio Cattelan, that Vanessa Beecroft worked here as an assistant, that many curators and artists of the most recent generations also made their debut right here. Art economists such as Pierluigi Sacco, stylists such as Martin Margiela, architects such as Stefano Boeri have passed through here before going on to become references, setting the tone for a deliberately interdisciplinary approach to looking at contemporary art.

...

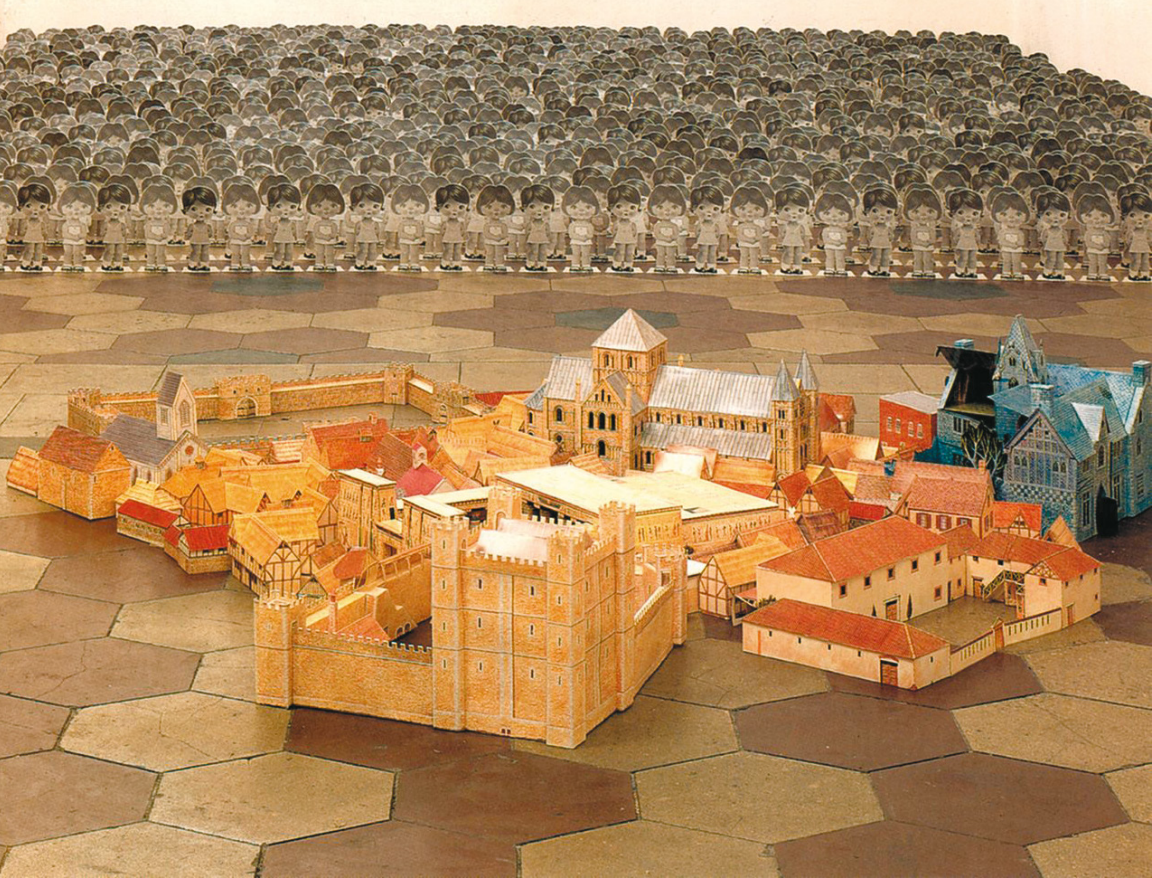
A place that has been ostracised and envied by magazines and galleries, simply because none of them could muster the flexibility to move on so many different levels.

A place where none of those who have contributed to the artistic programming have ever really been paid. The enthusiasm with which people have worked here shows just how much the space has been able to communicate its own ideal values. The secret? Learning costs. At Viafarini we have been able to make mistakes free of charge. We've had a place—both in physical and moral terms—made up of relationships, information, artworks, and people.

Happily stable and dynamic, Viafarini has been and is, above all, a place.”⁷



⁷ Text by Angela Vettese published on the occasion of Viafarini's 20th anniversary, 2010.



[Liliana Moro Abbassamento, 1992. Dolls and paper constructions installation view at via lazzaro palazzi courtesy galleria emi fontana photo roberto marossi collection mambo]

6

OF

7

New Century, New Wave

The new century gave rise a new wave of openings. In the 2000s, the city's social and urban fabric changed enormously. Big development projects created brand new central and gentrified neighbourhoods such as Porta Nuova and City Life, raising the value of every building and rent, thus pushing the independent scene and artist studio towards the outskirts.

Connecting Cultures (2001–), a venue and documentation centre founded by curator and researcher Anna Detheridge, with a special focus on sustainability in arts and design; Assab One (2002–), founded by another woman—editor and journalist Elena Quarestani—as a project space inside a former factory in the outskirts of Milan; MARS — Milano Artist Run Space (2008–), a participatory project conceived by a group of artists inside a small garage in the lively NOLO neighbourhood; the Brown Project Space (2008–2012), a small project space that published a book and devised an editorial platform; the new operative venues of Viafarini (2008–) and Care Of (2005–), organisations at Fabbrica del Vapore in the Chinatown district; the Peep-Hole (2009–2016), a project space that opened in the former studio of Patrick Tuttofuoco and was then moved to an artist foundry; Gasconade (2011–2016), co-founded by critic Michele D'Aurizio and a group of artists and friends; MEGA (2016–), a microscopic space co-founded by photographer and publisher Giovanna Silva; and Edicola Radetzky (2016–), a small newsstand located in the iconic Navigli neighbourhood, built in the early 20th century, which was completely renovated by artists and has been artist-run ever since.

Different missions, different tools, same goals. Different voices in the Milanese white noise: some of them are still singing, some of them have decided to turn that energy into something else.

This list does not seek to be a comprehensive one. I have simply included some highlights, different examples that have shared the constant longing for new formats, the constant craving for opportunity, for representing Milan as the gateway to a wider European cultural debate.



Conclusions

The findings of Prandstraller's research in 1974 are (unfortunately) still relevant for many reasons. Even if the art world has changed everywhere, Italy included, I can still relate to many of the contributors' statements as they endure scepticism, hesitance, and resistance in recognising the proper role of contemporary artists within Italian society.

On the bright side, the large funding initiative Italian Council, activated by the Ministry of Culture, is gradually trying to fill the void and promote the inclusion of Italian artists' works in the museums' public collections.

Yet, the post-covid crisis Italy is currently facing forces us to face what has not been done in the recent past. The failed accomplishments. All the missed opportunities and mistakes made by politicians, as well as by artists and art workers themselves. Groups like the AWI — Art Workers Italia,⁸ born amid the first covid lockdown, are putting time and energy in much-needed lobbying actions to change the mindset of legislators.

⁸ Cf. <https://artworkersitalia.it/about/manifesto/>

Many talented Italian curators and critics who were born in Milan or started their careers in the city have successfully pursued them abroad: Milovan Farronato, Cecilia Alemani, Vincenzo De Bellis, Francesco Garutti, and Massimiliano Gioni are just examples of a wider phenomenon. Among Milan's many museums, there is still no contemporary art museum, and the emerging Milanese artistic scene has to cope with this bothersome absence of "the" institution. Good museums are not a cemetery of artifacts, but rather a central piece of the social and cultural fabric of a community: a place to pass on knowledge and skills, to redefine and update collective memories and narratives.

Much more than the lack of contemporary art museums, funding, and resources, what scares me the most about my country is the evanescence (if not invisibility) of contemporary culture in the mainstream debate, especially post-covid.

I think the resilient stories of independent cultural production, especially the Milanese one, can be an inspiring example for young generations as they face the paradigm change that is to come.



[Draft by Maurizio Cattelan
for Viafarini Fundraising, 1997]



BIBLIOGRAPHY

Angela Maderna, *L'altra metà dell'avanguardia quarant'anni dopo* (Milan: postmedia books, 2020).

Silvia Simoncelli and Caterina laquinta (eds.), *Donne artiste in Italia — Presenza e Rappresentazione* (Milan: NABA Nuova Accademia di Belle Arti, 2018). Available on: https://i2.res.24o.it/pdf2010/Editrice/ILSOLE24ORE/ILSOLE24ORE/Online/_Oggetti_Embedded/Documenti/2018/11/15/Donne_artiste_in_Italia.pdf.

Fucking Good Art (Rob Hamelijncck and Nienke Terpsma), *Italian Conversations — Art in the age of Berlusconi* (Rome: NERO, 2012).

Patrizia Brusarosco and Milovan Farronato (eds.), *Souvenir d'Italie. A nonprofit Art Story* (Milan: Mousse, 2010).

Cristina Casero and Elena Di Raddo (eds.), *Anni '70: l'arte dell'impegno — I nuovi orizzonti culturali, ideologici e sociali nell'arte italiana* (Milan: Silvana editoriale, 2009).

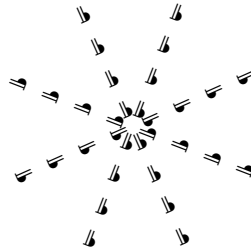
Giulio Ciavoliello, *Dagli anni '80 in poi: il mondo dell'arte contemporanea in Italia* (Milan / Trieste: Artshow edizioni / Juliet editrice, 2005).

Pier Luigi Sacco, Walter Santagata, and Michele Trimarchi, *L'arte contemporanea italiana nel mondo analisi e strumenti* (Milan: Skira, 2005).

Angela Vettese, *Artisti si diventa* (Rome: Carocci editore, 1998).

Gian Paolo Prandstraller, *Arte come professione* (Venice: Marsilio editori, 1974).

Quanto è (ri)conosciuta l'arte italiana all'estero, report curated by Silvia Anna Barrilà, Franco Broccardi, Maria Adelaide Marchesoni, Marilena Pirrelli, Irene Sanesi, ed. BBS-Lombard - Arte Generali, 2022



palaces
and
islands



Mara Montanaro

E03

CORPS JETABLES : LES FEMMES DANS LE « PATRIARCAT CAPITALISTE »

Une analyse féministe de la reproduction sociale.

J'aimerais commencer mon intervention avec 3 citations qui nous font entrer dans le cœur pulsant de l'imbrication entre corps-travail et pauvreté, imbrication qui, dans mon cas, sera une imbrication sexuée et genrée.

Marx et Engels dans *L'Idéologie allemande* affirment :

“ [...] à savoir que les hommes doivent être à même de vivre pour pouvoir "faire l'histoire"- Mais pour vivre, il faut avant tout boire, manger, se loger, s'habiller et quelques autres choses encore. Le premier fait historique est donc la production des moyens permettant de satisfaire ces besoins, la production de la vie matérielle elle-même, et c'est même là un fait historique, une condition fondamentale de toute histoire que l'on doit, aujourd'hui encore comme il y a des milliers d'années, remplir jour par jour, heure par heure, simplement pour maintenir les hommes en vie”.

Maria Rosa Dalla Costa, féministe marxiste des années 70 dans *Capitalism and Reproduction* soutient :

« Le développement capitaliste a toujours été insoutenable du fait de son coût humain. Il suffit, pour le comprendre, de se placer dans la perspective de celles et ceux qu'il tue, aujourd'hui comme hier. Le sacrifice d'une grande partie de l'humanité fut une des conditions nécessaires à l'apparition du capitalisme : extermination de masse, production délibérée de la misère et de la famine, esclavage, violence, son maintien repose sur les mêmes présupposés »

Ensuite, Peter Linebaugh. *The Magna Carta Manifesto*, 2008. (Je tiens à préciser que cette citation est faite par Silvia Federici dans son ouvrage *Feminism and the Politics of the Commons*) :

« La reproduction précède la production sociale. Toucher aux femmes c'est toucher au socle même »

Je me propose alors tout d'abord de reconstruire brièvement ce que Marx lui-même affirme sur la reproduction dans le 1 Livre du *Capital* pour ensuite enchaîner avec la centralité qu'elle a dans tout système capitaliste. Dans un deuxième temps j'analyserai comment les féministes marxistes ont remis au centre du débat la sphère de la reproduction depuis les années 1970¹.

Mon but sera de montrer comment cette exigence de penser la centralité de la reproduction est politique et nous permet de mieux comprendre les engrenages ainsi que les ravages necropolitiques du système capitaliste.

Du 1 livre du Capital au Capitalisme patriarcal

Dans le premier livre du *Capital* Marx observe comment dans le système de production capitaliste la force de travail soit la seule marchandise qui se distingue des autres marchandises par le fait qu'elle crée de la valeur et une valeur majeure par rapport à son coût.

Pour être échangé avec le salaire, la marchandise doit se présenter sur le marché au maximum de ses potentialités, en d'autres mots, un homme doit être nourri, éduqué, habillé, etc. (ce qu'on appelle socialisation de la reproduction).

Dans le rapport de production capitaliste la tendance est celle de réduire les dépenses liées à la reproduction de la force de travail. Ainsi, le travail reproductif (qui comprend aussi celui domestique et du care²) historiquement relégué aux femmes, est lié à la reproduction de la force de travail et participe au processus de valorisation de la marchandise *force de travail* et à la création de la *plus-value*.

Les théories marxistes jusqu'aux années 1970 n'avaient pas consacré beaucoup d'attention aux dynamiques d'exploitation et d'oppression dans ce qu'on appelle la

¹ Je me réfère notamment à Maria Rosa Dalla Costa, Selma James, Leopoldina Fortunati, Silvia Federici, Alisa Del Re, qui sont à l'origine de la campagne internationale *Wages for Housework*. Elles ont exploré le concept de reproduction en critiquant la séparation entre reproduction biologique et reproduction sociale, c'est-à-dire la reproduction des rapports d'exploitation capitalistes pour en mettre en lumière leur étroite connexion. Comme le soutient notamment Leopoldina Fortunati, il s'agit de dénaturaliser la reproduction, de montrer les rapports entre pouvoir et exploitation qui contribuent à considérer la reproduction comme non-travail en l'opposant au travail de production qui, par contre, selon l'économie politique et sa critique marxienne, est le lieu où émergent les contradictions sociales et politiques. En effet, c'est la naturalisation de la reproduction qui a permis une majeure extraction de plus-value : le travail non payé de reproduction a permis l'accumulation invisible du capital.

² Le travail de *care* peut comprendre (englober) un large éventail d'activités : des soins aux enfants, aux personnes âgées fragiles, aux malades et aux personnes gravement handicapées, à la préparation de la nourriture, en incluant également le travail domestique, le travail affectif et sexuel. Il s'agit d'une activité fondamentale pour la reproduction des liens sociaux, pour le maintien et la reproduction de la société dans le temps. Dans certaines études, une distinction est faite entre une définition large et une définition étroite de *care*, incluant uniquement les activités de *care* qui ont un aspect relationnel. (Voir Mignon Duffy - *Making Care Count. A Century of Gender, Race and Paid Care Work*. London, Rutgers University Press, New Brunswick, New Jersey, 2011 pour une critique de la distinction entre *nourtant* et *non nourtant care*). Selon Duffy, ce n'est que grâce à une version plus inclusive du *care* que l'on peut saisir toutes les implications de leur répartition actuelle à l'échelle mondiale en termes de race, d'ethnicité, de genre, et de classe. Ce travail est autant fondamental que méconnu, dévalorisé et traditionnellement considéré en dehors du champ de la politique et de l'économie. Cette exclusion se fonde - comme l'a souligné Joan Tronto - sur la manière dont sont conçues les frontières de l'espace politique et dont est construit l'objet de connaissance et d'intérêt propre à la politique et à l'économie. (Joan Tronto - *Moral Boundaries a political argument for an ethic of care*. Routledge, 1994 ; trad. fr *Un monde vulnérable. Pour une politique du care*. Paris, La Découverte, 2009 et aussi Brunella Casalini - *Il femminismo e le sfide del neoliberalismo. Postfemminismo, sessismo, politiche della cura*. Firenze, If Press, 2018). A la base de l'exclusion du *care* de l'espace public et de la sphère économique du travail, il y a donc une opération épistémologique qui, en termes foucauldien, est en même temps l'expression de certaines relations de pouvoir, visant à accréditer une ontologie sociale précise : le sujet du politique est autonome, rationnel, libre et indépendant, propriétaire de lui-même et de son travail, sujet dont les obligations et les responsabilités sociales sont définies par des choix fondés sur le consensus. Le mythe de l'autonomie et de l'indépendance, sur lequel se construit cette idée du sujet, a relégué le corps, les besoins, les émotions et les sentiments à une sphère privée naturalisée et déshistorisée, figée dans une dimension pré-politique apparemment indépendante des décisions publiques. (Pour une analyse détaillée des enjeux complexes du care, notamment en tant qu'éthiques du *care* et *travail du care* voir Fabienne Brugère - *L'éthique du « care »*. Paris, PUF, 2011)

dimension du genre. Le travail domestique et reproductif devient central dans le débat des féministes marxistes.

Un des textes fondamentaux de ce courant est sans doute celui de Maria Rosa Dalla Costa et Selma James, *Le pouvoir des femmes et la subversion sociale* (1972). Dans ce texte pour la première fois est critiquée la position marxiste classique selon laquelle le travail domestique serait non-productif. Dalla Costa soutient que ce que produit la femme ménagère n'est pas seulement la valeur d'usage, mais au contraire, est la marchandise force de travail. Force de travail que le mari peut vendre en tant que travailleur salarié sur le marché du travail : la productivité des femmes est donc indispensable pour la productivité du travailleur salarié (masculin).

Avec le soutien de l'État et de son appareil législatif, les femmes ont été reléguées dans les familles isolées les unes des autres : leur travail a été socialement invisible et défini comme non-productif. Il apparaît sous les formes d'amour, d'assistance, de la maternité. Dalla Costa comme d'ailleurs les autres féministes marxistes (Federici, Fortunati) refusent la division artificielle et la hiérarchisation que le capital a créée entre les travailleurs salariés d'un côté (les hommes) et les femmes. Elles ne considèrent pas la situation des femmes seulement dans les termes d'oppression : étant donné que le capital peut disposer du travail non-payé de la femme ménagère ainsi que du travail rétribué du travailleur salarié, le travail domestique est dès lors appelé exploitation. On ne peut alors pas comprendre l'exploitation du travail salarié sans en tenir compte de l'exploitation du travail non salarié d'où la création de la campagne internationale *Wages for Housework*.³

³ The International *Wages for Housework* Campaign (IWFHC) is a grassroots women's network campaigning for recognition and payment for all caring work, in the home and outside. See: Louise Toupin - *Wages for Housework. A History of an International Feminist Movement, 1972-77*. PlutoPress, 2018.

La force de travail, la capacité de l'individu soit physique soit intellectuelle que lui permet de produire valeur d'usage est une marchandise qui est échangée avec le salaire mais cet échange est possible seulement si cette force de travail est continuellement reproduit, c'est-à-dire si continuellement sont reproduites les conditions qui permettent à l'individu de faire partie du processus productif. C'est justement pour cet aspect que la force de travail est une marchandise singulière, car derrière la reproduction de la force de travail il y a les femmes qui la reproduisent sans cesse. Tout l'enjeu consiste dans la prétendue naturalisation de la reproduction là où, au contraire, il s'agit d'une construction historiquement déterminée, en d'autres mots de l'effet d'un ordre discursif qui a sans cesse dominé et exploité les corps des femmes.

Que reste-il, pourrait-on se demander, dans un contexte social et productif qui est complètement changé de ces intuitions et ces analyses ? Ces intuitions et analyses nous laissent une méthode, une pratique théorico-politique qu'il faut mettre à l'épreuve de notre présent.

Désormais on assiste depuis des décennies à ce qu'on appelle une *féminisation ou un devenir-femme* du travail, phénomène qui ne concerne pas seulement l'entrée massive des femmes dans le marché du travail mais signifie plutôt la précarisation, la dégradation des rapports de travail, la mise au profit des qualités relationnelles et émotives dites féminines qu'on ne peut pas mettre sous la forme d'un contrat mais qui sont requises désormais aux hommes comme aux femmes.

"En d'autres mots, du travail éducatif au travail du soin, de l'assistance aux personnes dépendantes aux multiples visages de la valorisation affective des prestations productives, le devenir-femme du travail est au cœur du processus de valorisation du capital. Ce marché du travail présente aujourd'hui de plus en plus, et toujours plus généralement, les caractéristiques de ce que l'on a considéré historiquement comme *le non-travail domestique féminin* : un temps de labour confondu avec le temps de la vie tout entière, une invisibilisation permanente, et des qualités entièrement basculées du côté de l'affectivité, de la compréhension, de l'émotion, de la patience et de la générosité, de la créativité et de l'attention, de la disponibilité et de la faculté d'adaptation – en somme : des qualités « féminines », qui sont devenues les qualités que l'on demande aujourd'hui à tous, travailleuses et travailleurs, afin d'extraire de la valeur de nos vies."⁴

La sphère de la reproduction a dépassé les frontières de la maison et maintenant elle définit la production elle-même en devenant immédiatement productive en appliquant des caractéristiques et prérogatives de la reproduction à tout le système productif.

⁴ J. Revel, <http://blogs.law.columbia.edu/critique1313/judith-revel-sur-le-deuxieme-sexe-de-simone-de-beauvoir/>

Bien évidemment tout cela est toujours en relation aux transformations du système productif dont dépend le système capitaliste. La reproduction même du système capitaliste ne concerne pas seulement les activités productives et d'échange et les formes qu'historiquement elles assument mais concerne aussi les modalités à travers lesquelles une société organise sa propre reproduction sociale et donc aussi les modalités à travers lesquelles construit la maternité, le travail de soin, la santé publique, le système éducatif et inclut comme légitimes certaines formes de vie et en exclure des autres.

Depuis les années 70 les féministes marxistes nous ont montré comme l'invisibilisation de la reproduction est la clé des processus de valorisations en termes capitalistes.

Cette crise sanitaire que nous sommes en train de vivre est le fruit des années des ravages des nécro-politiques néo-libérales, mais les conséquences de ces politiques ne sont pas les mêmes d'un pays à l'autre, d'un corps à l'autre. On peut voir alors comment on assiste à une explosion des inégalités sociales et raciales et de genre et par conséquence quelles vies, quels corps ont été fabriqué.e.s comme jetables, sacrificables et, au contraire, quelles vies, quels corps continuent à être protégés, soignés. Même respirer est devenu un privilège de classe et de race⁵, un privilège qui nous montre comment le genre est racisé et la race genré et comment on ne comprendrait les dispositifs d'oppression sans en tenir compte des conditions matérielles des rapports de production et de reproduction. Vergès dans son dernier ouvrage *Une théorie féministe de la violence* affirme à ce propos :

⁵ Voir Achille Mbembe – *Le droit universel à la respiration*: https://iberian-connections.yale.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Le-droit-universel-a-la-respiration-_AOC-media-Analyse-Opinion-Critique.pdf

[...] Pour le néolibéralisme le corps performant est celui d'un homme blanc, en pleine possession d'une force physique normée comme masculine, qui se lève tôt, fait son jogging, mange bio et travaille, sans compter ses heures, à sa réussite économique. [...] Ce que cache cette représentation du corps valide, c'est que sa performance est rendue possible par le travail des corps racisés : les femmes du ménage qui ont nettoyé sa salle de gym, ses bureaux, l'hôtel où il retrouve ses amis, ses amours, le train ou l'avion qu'il prend, la maison où il retrouve sa

famille, toutes ces femmes qui sont rendues invisibles et dont le corps s'épuise pour le sien s'épanouisse.⁶

⁶ Françoise Vergès – *Une théorie féministe de la violence. Pour une politique antiraciste de la protection*. Paris, La Fabrique, 2020, p. 17.

Silvia Federici dans *Le Capitalisme patriarcal* soutient qu'analyser la position sociale des femmes au prisme de l'exploitation capitaliste du travail révèle aussi la continuité entre discrimination sur la base du genre et discrimination sur la base de la race et nous permet de dépasser la politique en termes de droits qui présuppose l'ordre social existant et n'arrive pas à affronter les forces sociales antagonistes qui font obstacles à la libération des femmes⁷. En effet, il faut considérer que les femmes racisées, migrantes, sont « celles qui aident les femmes européennes à défaire les genres, en se substituant à elles dans le foyer, permettent ainsi aux femmes « nationales » de devenir des travailleuses sur le marché du travail productif »⁸. Ce qui est clair alors est que la réorganisation du travail reproductif selon les règles du marché, la « mondialisation du care » n'a ni libéré les femmes ni éliminé l'exploitation de ce travail.⁹

L'exploitation du travail est à la base du capital, qui s'est emparé des corps et les a réduits à une commune abstraction. Il en a fait de la « force de travail », des marchandises parmi d'autres, comme les autres.

⁷ Silvia Federici, *Le capitalisme patriarcal*. Paris, La Fabrique, 2019, p. 18.

⁸ Sara Farris – *In The Name of Women's Rights. The Rise of Femonationalism*. Duke, 2017.
Voir <https://www.contretemps.eu/femonationalisme-islamophobie-neoliberalisme/>

⁹ Silvia Federici – *Reproduction et économie globale*, in *Point zéro : propagation de la révolution*. Paris, Editions l'Xe, 2016

Comme le soutient le philosophe Daniel Bensaid dans *La discordance des temps* : « Le capital, c'est le recensement des corps, leur mise au travail, leur soumission à la discipline et au principe de rendement. En tant que force de travail, le corps devient une marchandise parmi d'autres. Car tous les corps, y compris ceux qui ne sont pas encore (ou pas en permanence) assujettis au travail salarié, sont des marchandises en puissance ».

En reprenant le titre d'un célèbre livre de Deleuze on devrait alors se demander : *Qu'est-ce que peut un corps ? qu'est-ce un corps ?* Corps de femmes, corps féminisés, corps défaits jusque dans le mouvement de procréation qui est transformé en reproduction, c'est-à-dire en production des producteurs, en corps au travail, corps exploités, opprimés, violés mais aussi et surtout corps résistants, corps subversifs, corps en grève, corps combattants, corps joyeux, corps puissants.

Car comme le dit Veronica Gago dans son ouvrage *La potencia feminista. O el deseo de cambiarlo todo* :

La puissance, de Spinoza à Marx, n'est jamais et n'existe jamais détachée du corps qui la contient. C'est pourquoi la puissance féministe est la puissance du corps en tant que corps toujours individuel et collectif. De plus, la puissance féministe étend, amplifie le corps grâce à la façon dont elle est réinventée par les luttes des femmes, par les luttes féministes qui, encore et toujours, actualisent le concept de puissance. La puissance n'existe pas dans l'abstrait. La puissance féministe, c'est la capacité de désirer¹⁰.

¹⁰ Veronica Gago – *La potencia feminista. O el deseo de cambiarlo todo*. Tinta Limón y Traficantes de Sueños, 2019.

Cette capacité de désirer existe car d'autres mondes sont possibles et les corps puissants, joyeux et imprévus des femmes en révolte, ces corps qui sont une marée indisciplinable, incontrôlable – à l'image de la grève internationale féministe – ces corps nous le prouvent.

Car s'il est clair « que le corps est la condition d'existence de la force de travail, il en est aussi la limite, en tant qu'élément principal de résistance à sa dépense¹¹ » et c'est pour cette raison que Federici dans la quatrième partie de *Beyond the Periphery of the Skin: Rethinking, Remaking, and Reclaiming the Body in Contemporary Capitalism*, « In Praise of the Dancing Body » nous dit : « A history of the body can be reconstructed by describing the different forms of repression that capitalism has activated against it. But I have decided to write instead of the body as a ground of resistance, that is, the body and its powers - the power to act, to transform itself and the body as a limit on exploitation »¹².

¹¹ Silvia Federici – *Caliban et la sorcière. Femmes, corps et accumulation primitive*. Paris-Genève, Entremonde, 2014, p.255.

¹² Silvia Federici – *Beyond the Periphery of the Skin: Rethinking, Remaking, and Reclaiming the Body in Contemporary Capitalism*. PM Press, 2020, Part Four, In *Praise of The Dancing body*.

Dans cet ouvrage si, d'un côté Federici se propose d'extirper nos corps des pouvoirs et des dispositifs technologiques qui les aliènent et les transforment en identifiant la plaie : les rapports sociaux de genre, de classe et de race, de l'autre, elle dessine une stratégie militante et joyeuse inspirée du féminisme communautaire d'Amérique latine :

« We need to listen to their language as the path to our health and healing, as we need to listen to the language and rhythms of the natural world as the path to the health and healing of the earth. Since the power to be affected and to effect, to be moved and to move, a capacity that is indestructible, exhausted only with death, is constitutive of the body, there is an immanent politics residing in it: the capacity to transform itself, others, and change the world ».¹³

¹³ *Ibidem*.

Pour le dire avec Deleuze, Federici exhorte à s'affecter de joie, à multiplier les affects qui expriment un maximum d'affirmation, à faire du corps une puissance qui ne se réduit pas à l'organisme.

« An important step here is understanding that we come to the movement with many scars. We all bear the marks of life in a capitalist society. This, in fact, is why we want to struggle, change the world ».¹⁴

¹⁴ Ivi, Afterword – *On Joyful Militancy*.

Il est clair dès le départ que les blessures viennent du fait que « l'un des principaux projets du capitalisme a été la transformation de nos corps en machine de travail¹⁵ » mais ce processus s'est appliqué différemment aux hommes et aux femmes. Dès *Caliban et la Sorcière* Federici n'a cessé d'analyser comment le corps a été pour les femmes dans la société capitaliste ce que l'usine a été pour les travailleurs salariés : le terrain originel de leur exploitation et de leur résistance, lorsque ce dernier a été approprié par l'État et les hommes et contraint de fonctionner comme moyen de reproduction et une source d'accumulation capitaliste.¹⁶

Dès son engagement dans le mouvement féministe, le fil conducteur des réflexions de Federici a été la question des conditions matérielles de vie des femmes, leur oppression et exploitation, la question du travail reproductif des femmes en montrant comment il participe de façon essentielle à l'accumulation du capital. Or nous savons très bien comment le capital s'est emparé des corps et les a réduits à une commune abstraction. Dans *Beyond the Periphery of the Skin: Rethinking, Remaking, and Reclaiming the Body in Contemporary Capitalism*, Silvia Federici se propose de refaire ce recensement des corps des femmes dans le capitalisme, avec le grand mérite de toujours tenir compte des conditions matérielles d'existence; autrement dit, aucune transcendance n'est possible, les corps sont toujours processus et en relation, ce sont des corps désirants dont Federici dessine une cartographie matérialiste et immanente en montrant toute leur puissance quand ces corps se rebellent, luttent, occupent les rues et construisent des lignes de fuite en devenant des corps politiques.

¹⁵ Silvia Federici – *Caliban et la Sorcière*, op. cit, p. 33

¹⁶ lvi, p. 29

Pourquoi le corps ? et pourquoi pas le corps ? il est évident que c'est dans le rapport que nous entretenons avec notre corps, dans la manière dont est structurée sa relation à l'autre que s'enracine et se perpétue le système d'oppression et d'exploitation dont nous sommes l'objet dans la société capitaliste, car « body politics expressed the realization that our most intimate, presumably “private” experiences are in reality highly political matters of great of concern to the nation-state, as demonstrated by the extensive legislation that governments have historically adopted to regulate them».¹⁷

Le corps des femmes est dès lors un champ d'intersection des forces matérielles et symboliques, il n'est pas un destin anatomique. Tout l'enjeu du mouvement de révolte féministe a été de *dénaturaliser* la féminité, c'est-à-dire dénaturaliser ce que devrait être et faire une femme. Ce qu'il faut alors revendiquer en suivant les analyses de Federici est dès lors l'abolition de toutes les formes d'exploitation.

¹⁷ Silvia Federici – *Beyond the Periphery of the Skin: Rethinking, Remaking, and Reclaiming the Body in Contemporary Capitalism*, op. cit.

« Again, our task as feminists is not to tell other women what forms of exploitation are acceptable, but to expand our possibilities, so that we will not be compelled to sell ourselves in any way. We do so by reclaiming the means of our reproduction—the lands, the waters, the production of goods and knowledge, and our decision-making power, our capacity to decide what kind of lives we want and what kind of human beings we want to be ».¹⁸

¹⁸ lvi, op. cit.

D'ailleurs cette réappropriation des corps est déjà pratiquée par des militantes féministes d'Amérique latine depuis des années : pour elles, le corps des femmes est le premier terrain de lutte qu'il faut décoloniser, dépatricialiser.

« *Ni las mujeres ni la tierra somos territorios de conquista !* ». Ni les femmes ni la terre ne sont des territoires à conquérir ! Ce cri résonne dans toute l'Amérique latine. Il est apparu par la voix du groupe féministe bolivien *Mujeres Creando* mais on pense également aux analyses de Lorena Cabnal, féministe communautaire guatématèque¹⁹ qui souligne comment « c'est sur les corps des femmes et aussi sur la terre que toutes les oppressions sont construites ».

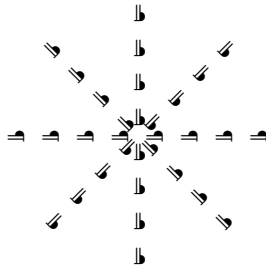
On devine alors en quoi la voie que Silvia Federici nous invite à parcourir est celle d'une politique immanente d'écoute des corps et de la terre ; en effet, elle nous enjoint à écouter « to the language and rhythms of the natural world as the path to the health and healing of the earth »²⁰ rappelant, au fond, ce que soutenait Françoise Collin : « le critère de l'action révolutionnaire c'est la santé. Et la santé ce n'est pas le travail, ni son corollaire, le loisir. La santé, c'est peut-être les femmes ».²¹

¹⁹ L. Cabnal dans un entretien avec J. Falquet affirme à ce propos : *C'est une incohérence cosmogonique que de défendre la terre, sans défendre les corps des petites filles et des femmes qui vivent en elle. [...] Ni le socialisme ni le féminisme ne seront émancipateurs s'ils ne font pas la connexion entre le corps et la Terre. Peu à peu, cette consigne est devenue vitale dans nos réflexions. Effectivement, c'est sur le corps des femmes, et aussi sur la terre, que toutes les oppressions sont construites, mais c'est aussi dans nos corps que l'énergie vitale est enracinée pour nous émanciper, nous guérir avec la terre et nous permettre de continuer. Il y a un conflit territorial historique à propos du corps des femmes et de la terre, et les femmes Indiennes ont été expropriées de leur corps, comme l'est la terre* » («Corps-territoire et territoire-Terre » : le féminisme communautaire au Guatemala » (<https://www.cairn.info/revue-cahiers-du-genre-2015-2-page-73.htm>).

Je renvoie également aux articles de J. Falquet : <https://www.contretemps.eu/racines-feministes-lesbiennes-autonomes-dabya-yala/>; <https://www.contretemps.eu/racines-feministes-lesbiennes-autonomes-decoloniale-dabya-yala/>; à Veronica Gago, (<https://www.contretemps.eu/guerre-corps-femmes-finance-territoires/>); aux ouvrages de Silvia Federici - *Re-enchanting the World: Feminism and the Politics of the Commons*. PM, 2018 ; Arturo Escobar - *Sentir-Penser avec la Terre. Une écologie au-delà de l'Occident*. Paris, Seuil, 2019 ; Rita Laura Segato - *La nuevas formas de la guerra y el cuerpo de la mujeres*. Pez en en Arbol/ Tinta Limón, 2014 ; pour les réflexions plus récentes sur l'éco-féminisme en France à l'ouvrage de Jeanne Burgart Goutal - *Etre écoféministe. Théories et pratiques*. Paris, L'échappée, 2020.

²⁰ Silvia Federici – *Beyond the Periphery of the Skin: Rethinking, Remaking, and Reclaiming the Body in Contemporary Capitalism*, op. cit.

²¹ Françoise Collin – *Le corps se rebiffe*, in *Le travail c'est la santé*. Les Cahiers du Grif, n. 11, 1976



necessity
and desire



Luis Lima

Abstract

Keywords

Aesthetics, Ethics, Cinema,
Lars von Trier,
Pierre Klossowski

E04

AMAZING GRACE ETHICAL AND AESTHETICAL CONTAMINATIONS IN-BETWEEN

Pierre Klossowski and Lars von Trier

This article aims to present a reading of the film *Dogville* (2003), by Lars von Trier, in dialogue with the essay *Living Currency* (2008), by Pierre Klossowski, guided by ethical and aesthetic considerations. With an analysis of the narrative and the device created by Trier, we intend to demonstrate how the director establishes, mainly through the main character, Grace, a libidinal economic system where a living currency is effective. This designation condenses a Klossowski proposal from the beginning of the 1970s that foresaw the speculative hyper-economisation of attention and affections. Klossowski responds to this prediction with an allegory in which he abolishes money, replacing it with the generalised exchange of bodies. The currency ceases to be inert, and its standard value is no longer stable, since the reference is purely relational. Thus, Trier's character, a newcomer to *Dogville*, embodies and mobilises the new system of economic exchange within the small community by indiscriminately and graciously donating her production force and ultimately her own body. What is the price of giving? What balance of exchange can be established when affections are in circulation? In the same way that Klossowski proposes the generalised exchange of bodies, suppressing cash, what is suppressed when Grace offers production force and her own body? Finally, what does Trier suppress when he violently exposes his cinematic device?

In 1970, Pierre Klossowski stated that the only *authentic universal communication is the exchange of bodies through the secret language of corporal signs*. The libidinal economy that arises from this is subsidiary to a philosophy that, even if it does not believe that the generalisation of the gratuitousness of bodies is plausible, at least considers it to be so. We are talking about Blanchot and Bataille, with Sade in the background, but in a referential contextualisation of the thought of Foucault (in the letter that serves as a preface to the 1971 edition of *Living Currency*) and of Deleuze (in the appendix dedicated to Pierre Klossowski in the 1968 edition of *Logique du Sens*). However, since we are dealing here specifically with a reading of Klossowski's work, literary (Klossowski the novelist and translator), discursive (Klossowski the essayist), plastic (Klossowski the draughtsman), and imaginal (Klossowski the scriptwriter and the occasional actor) issues will not be separated. Rather, they will be employed on the same methodological plane, with a highly aesthetic character and strong use value, without forgetting the various ethical and moral issues at play, in dialogue with Klossowski's strong theme of the art of hospitality, as elaborated in his *Les Lois de l'hospitalité* (2001).

For a critical appreciation of the two works under analysis—the aforementioned *Living Currency* and the film *Dogville* by the Danish director Lars von Trier (2003)—it is important to reflect upon the question of welcoming the other, looking at the stranger who looks at us, establishing a price for gratuitousness, stipulating an economy of work and the use of affections that quickly becomes a regime of labour and sexual slavery. As for the woman named Grace—a character played by Nicole Kidman—in the town of *Dogville*, she will be looked at using Klossowski's proposals for a general economy of the signs of the bodies; that is, for an aesthetic ethic that is pulled out and redistributed in the circuit of creation of emotional value processed by various constituent pairs: gratuitousness and price, victim and executioner, gesturality and everyday life—all of which concur to a voluptuous emotion that does not fail to summon Nietzsche and his *will to power*. This woman's body, Kidman's real body, the woman-actress-to-make-her-own, no longer in a mode of representation, but on a plane of presentation and *performance*, is no longer distinguished from the body of *Grace-the-character*. Moreover, in this indistinctness, in the context of cinema, it may attest to the concrete possibility of putting into practice the words of Pierre Klossowski: *the exchange of bodies for the secret language of bodily signs*.

For an economy of freeness according to Klossowski

The reading of Lars von Trier's *Dogville* and the visionary images of Pierre Klossowski's *Living Currency* met at a translational moment between 2002 and 2004, coinciding with the film's premiere in 2003. That year, I was translating, in the literal and literary sense, from French, Klossowski's very brief but complex text. I remember that, at the book launch, the French editors published a laconic letter by Michel Foucault which,

rather than pointing out directions for a possible reading, drew a veil over Klossowski's words. As such, before the reading began, a game of desire for a libidinal economy of images was inaugurated. Ethically, it was Foucault being Foucault, anchoring in intellectual seduction the pleasure of reading that is always to come. But he warns us, after invoking in the same paragraph the thought of Blanchot, Bataille, Marx, Freud, and Sade, alluding to Nietzsche in *Beyond Good and Evil*, and stating that we have in our hands "the most elevated book of our time": "That was precisely what we should've been thinking about: desire, value, and simulacrum—the triangle that dominates us and, starting so many centuries ago, has constituted us throughout our history," insofar as it provided conceptual resources that would allow French thought to move from the cursed part of Bataille to the libidinal economy that Deleuze and Guattari, Lyotard, or Baudrillard's simulacral elevation would consequently nurture. The use that is made of Sade's thought to reread Marx or Fourier and rethink Freud: such is the elevation to which Foucault refers, bringing onto the stage, or onto the scene, the roles played by desire and pleasure in the economy of industrial production and its implications for the economic relations between voluptuousness, affections, use value, will to power, or elementary needs.

A Nietzsche (Virgil, Hölderlin, Wittgenstein, Walter Benjamin, Heidegger, or Kafka, etc.) translator, a Latinist, an essayist, and a novelist, among other activities, Pierre Klossowski appeared, upon the screening of Lars von Trier's film, as a brother, a henchman, an integral member of the great *complot* that Lars von Trier had staged in *Dogville*—a *complot*, or a pact, between its actors, but also with the viewers, as we shall see later on. We could think of a *complot* against America and its time and way, as the parody name Thomas Edison Junior (a kind of hybrid being between two seminal figures of the American collective identity: Tom Sawyer, the unstable and individualistic young rebel; and Thomas Edison, the inventor of, among other "patents," the capitalist monopoly) is assigned to a character who enters the scene as a moralistic mediator-philosopher-demiurge from the small Appalachian mountain village.

If many people preferred to focus on *Dogville* as a work indebted to Brecht's theatre—an idea, by the way, that was never rejected by Trier—in particular to his *The Threepenny Opera*, it is important here to remember the verses taken from another subsidiary work, popularised in Brazilian popular culture by Chico Buarque, the *Ópera do Malandro* (*Beggar's Opera*), which describes a Geni (South-American version of Brecht's Jenny) as follows: "Her body belongs to the wanderers/ To the blind, to the migrant/ To those who have nothing else/ She is a well of kindness/ And that is why the city/ Lives always repeating/ Throw stones at Geni/ Throw stones at Geni/ She is made to catch/ She is good to spit on/ She gives to everyone/ Damn Geni." Enslaved, she works for nothing but her own self-satisfaction, rejecting only to be loved by the stranger who threatens, "with a hundred thousand cannons like that," to raze the terrified city.

In addition to the Brechtian reference, we could also consider *Dogville*, from a formal point of view, to be a violative film not only by its narrative but also by its aesthetics. Such a violation is achieved in two ways: either by the sheer transparency of the device or by the actors' direction. The film was entirely shot in a studio, practically without a set or

any props (except for some beds, tables, a bell, a church organ, a bench, some chairs), thus perverting, on the one hand, but also intensifying, on the other, the very principles stated by Trier and the other members (most notably Vinterberg) of the Dogma 95 manifesto. As for the actors, they are psychoanalysed in *Dogville Confessions*, as in almost all the films in which the director wants to have a hand in and total control over the bodies he stages, doing away with representation in order to show a pure acting and thus animate a whole visual and libidinal economy that goes far beyond good and evil. There is also politics, strongly anti-American, much evoked by critics on the other side of the Atlantic who point out that the Danish director has never been on American soil, but Trier prefers to recall Kafka's unfinished tale of America—where the narrator is, and as it could only be with Kafka, an outsider. So many loose ends, so many avenues to get into *Dogville*. But it was Pierre Klossowski's *Living Currency* that, in this case, echoed Lars von Trier's entire device.

Having been used so much as an epigraph, a famous Klossowski quote proves to be a confession: "I am under the dictation of the image." It is not my place to summarise here the proposals and advances of *Living Currency* (the shortest of Klossowski's books, but one which is key to understanding the author's literary and visual relationship with the exploited and monetised body); nevertheless, I must list some of the main concepts of the text, in the form of a vocabulary of thought, in the post-modern sense of the term, to highlight the harmony with what we find in *Dogville*:

Gratuitousness and price: The postulate of *gratuitousness* (grace, from the common placement of Grace, blossoming in the free play of passions) would here seem to abstract a primordial element of voluptuous emotion: the aggressive element that demands and presupposes resistance—implicit in creative work as much as in emotional benefit—that is to say, what remains *irreversible* in the absence of any play.

To give and to receive: To give in order not to receive is tantamount to giving in order to increase (Spinozian vision of the soul). To receive in order to be is tantamount to receiving and diminishing oneself, not being able to give back without ceasing to be. That which is given and received, the object of exchange, is lust. The one who gives and receives is the follower.

Victim and serial killing (difference and repetition): For Sadean characters, it is sometimes the quality of the same victim upon whom the act of their executioner falls, when performed differently, that gets the upper hand over the notion of the act; and sometimes it is the same repeated act that, performed indifferently upon a number of victims, affirms the quality of the act.

Repetition: Producing, fabricating serial objects, according to a certain method, responds here to the quality of the

act that is indifferently performed on the numerous victims. The *serial killer* who always kills in the same way. For example, products of mass consumption, regarding which only the quality and efficiency of the act of production is important, the series, the repetition.

Difference: It is the living object. On the contrary, trying out various manufacture methods to establish the quality of the same product and increase its rare character responds to the diversity of acts experimented on the same victim to possess it in its rarity or uniqueness. The victim that is given diversely is a differential gift: a grace or Grace. For example, a luxury product, in its uniqueness, the rarity, the difference, the singularity of a living body.

Living currency: It is the sign of wealth (worth something else) and it is wealth itself (exclusively valuable in itself, but not satisfying in itself the demand for itself, since its quality as a sign does not allow it to do so): it is essentially different from inert currency (cash). Living currency is "a simulacrum of exchange—a simulacrum that resides in the form of the resources in labour, hence of a living currency, unconfessed as such, already existing. ... Either the industrial slave establishes a close relationship between her bodily presence and the money it yields, or she substitutes herself for the function of money by being money itself: at the same time the equivalent of wealth and wealth itself. Suppress money and you will have universal communication between beings First the earth; then the instruments; then the objects and finally the signs of the objects, until the interposition between beings and their desires, of signs valid for the desires and their objects as assessable resources. ... The only authentic universal communication is the exchange of bodies by the secret language of corporal signs."

Laws of hospitality: According to *Les Lois de l'hospitalité* [Hospitality Laws], the corporal presence of a visitor, of a stranger, of a foreigner passing through, is to assign them the role of offering themselves to others. It is their strangeness, coming from outside, their otherness, which, given freely to the one who first (offered) themselves, exposes the terror of the one who receives it.

Lars von Trier as Klossowski's reader

In a remote Appalachian mountain village—where the uniqueness of the place and the choral character of the film compels everyone to be present, if only as silhouettes, to the transparency of the device—*Les Lois de l'hospitalité* are totalitarian ones. By omitting walls and doors, Lars von Trier strips away the institutional and domestic facades

that conceal the violence of the underlying political economy, evoking a Foucauldian image of surveillance and rendering the image of small-town hospitality into a vision of regulation and repression in which sexuality is converted into increasingly sadomasochistic forms: "I can force the flowers to bloom in early spring, I can force you," says one of the film's characters (Chuck) to Grace before the first strangely *panoptic* rape.

In the same way, *Dogville* was shot on a black stage with minimal scenery, with the final credits consisting of archival footage—the only documentary evidence of an America framed by British artist David Bowie's song "Young Americans," in a frightening parade of the different faces of American poverty, photographs taken in the poorest ghettos, in the most sordid corners, in the most unimaginable slums. Documentary images of the bodies of poor Americans—some of which dating from the time when the story of the film is told (the Great Depression)—thus materialise the montage of the real, the montage of the fable, which Jacques Rancière imputes to Jean-Luc Godard in the last chapter of his book *La Fable Cinématographique*.

Still on a visual level, the Borgesian map can also be invoked here: we recall Borges' short story describing a life-size map, on a scale of 1:1, so detailed that it entirely covers the territory. As the country declines and falls into ruins, the map deteriorates until only fragments remain in a deserted expanse (let us recall that Grace's workforce too is fragmented and objectified, interpreted as discrete parts playing a specific, disjointed role). In *Dogville*, the map also precedes the territory and engenders it, paving the way for entering the fable. But it is a real fable, a cinematographic fable, as Jacques Rancière conceives it. It is the real, and not the map, whose traces persist here and there, that becomes real, like the dog in *Dogville* that, at the end of the film, takes on a body, after everything collapses, everything burns, everything disappears.

As in the traces marked in chalk on the stage floor; as in the Lars von Trier's handy-cam moves; as in the unactualised *voiceover* (for it always seems late in relation to events), there is an expressive multiplicity that invariably presents itself in the same act of suspension of gratuitous vocation. It is Grace's univocal relationship with each of the inhabitants of *Dogville*. It is a body that is unique because of its difference; a body that is not poor, whose skin is white, which shines and illuminates the town; a gratuitous body that repeats itself in the difference of how it gives itself. And what it gives is a dazzling, monomaniacal repetition of body movements, of facial expressions, of the thought in the voice: grace. This compulsive univocity—which is sometimes found under the dictation of the absent image, sometimes under the dictation of the off-screen text to be translated, to be read, to be updated, sometimes under the moral dictation of a graceful diva who becomes an executioner when updated—is the unique voice of the foreigner who, in an eternal return, repeatedly, expresses an annihilating difference of the same (the closed community of decimated *Dogville*).

We may say, with Klossowski, that Lars von Trier's fable emerges as a possible answer to the question "Where am I, in my own body?" A bio-figuration of living pictures or compositions, like phantasmal beings that demultiply and populate a territory that is

home, the territory of one's own body, where one is already the host through but the actualisation that only the guest can effect: a living, therefore ontological and graphic figuration. It is thus under laws of hospitality that the composition of *Dogville* emerges as a textual body, a Klossowskian home for strangers passing through, for visitors seeking rest or staying overnight. It is up to the guest, who does not yet know it, to actualise the whole territory, to free from its prison the host's own body, which suffers from the fear of not knowing who they are.

Somewhere between embracing the near and dispossessing the far, the distant, the monster, or pure difference, it is the univocal expression in its productivity of difference that allows itself to be populated as the self and the others contaminate and invade it. Because the body itself is not one; each intensity freely carries out its passage through the secret language of bodily signs. What secret in language? None but that of figurative absence—which, thus, may go by the name of "perversion" and be acted upon by "voluptuous emotion."

* "Subtract the unique from the multiplicity to be constituted; write at $n - 1$. Such a system might be called rhizome." Cf. Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Capitalisme et Schizophrénie 2 — Mille Plateaux* (Paris: Les Éditions de Minuit, 1997 [1980]), p. 13

To be strange, foreign, to be different and to stay overnight by invitation, and to provoke the redemption of the one who offers the bed, the wife—who is also the hostess—living guest and virtual image always to be updated; to be strange and to go to meet the master of the house, who, in the Deleuzian formula of the univocal being, tells us to come in, so that the formula of the *All — 1* may be fulfilled. So that one may free oneself from the anaesthesia of habit, from the happiness that terrifies one; so that everything is possible, everything but one.* This explosive, repeatedly dissolving unity, this banal happiness that asserts itself in the multiplicity of internal difference, is precisely the practice that affirms the powers of a principle of differentiation.

Pierre Klossowski's broad expressive plane is populated by a multiplicity of contaminating forces, by various strains of life viruses that, from body to phantom, from phantom to simulacrum, from simulacrum to afterlife, inscribe an authentic orgy of expression found in Lars von Trier: to take up again this process of contamination of the bodies by the invasion of a language made of signs, signals affixed to the skin and to the movements of the flesh. That is why the text, the voice, the images are not present in any plan, but rather the thought, that is, an image of it, given that thought is always absent. *Dogville* consists here in drawing a living picture in the Klossowskian sense, showing, in each shot, an atmospheric block, a condensation of the whole in each frame. They are, therefore, simulacra, but so alive and real that they haunt each place they occupy. It is hospitality, the opening of the cinematographic field to all possible strangeness, that allows for the introduction, the intromission, the invasion of the stranger, of the other, for the existence of each frame, of each plane, of a living body.

Dogville is a place out in nowhere, an a-topic *topos* for a monomaniacal being (author-director) to express the unspoken, which is different from saying the unspoken. We find multiplicities, potentialities which are so significant that they are no longer fixed in a single character, in a single line, in a single shot, or in a single image-sentence. There

is no exact, precise value for this type of game, for this composition that proceeds by living frames. Neither plagiarism nor allusion, neither note nor quotation, neither robbery nor sacrifice, only a *serial murder* that, in the same repeated act, affirms difference in the series it establishes as absolutely different, absolutely differential, in order to make signs, signals, expressive blocks from the victims for its composition, for producing meaning. Always unique; a sense of the continuous production of difference. There are forces at each moment, each time, that exist, which return: the persistence of the return is the monomania immanent to the being that expresses itself (Klossowski-Trier: the great monomaniac).

Producing living images entails showing the body, the bodies, multiple and interchangeable, open bodies crossed by ghosts, simulacra. It is, then, on a purely expressive plane that Pierre Klossowski emits signs, which are so many other signs of a universal language that leaves the code of the everyday and the subjective to embrace the universal exchange of bodies—in a pure, desiring or desired energy—and to fulfil the construction of an expressive machine.

This expressive multiplicity, perversely, generates a unique style, an unmistakable voice, an univocity of being; that is, a single expression for its different terms, phantoms, simulacra, henchmen, the expression of an opening to multiplicity. This is the expression of a *monomaniac's* thought—someone who is repeatedly fixed in a single scene, diversified either by the act, the object of the act, or the actor: a body that reveals itself to another, even to itself. The staging that such practice produces does not open an abyss without establishing bridges to cross it, bridges merely suspended in the potency of voluptuousness, in desiring emotion: living currency.

These terms, many other concepts, the phrasing, the style, are strong constraints, perverse actors, parallel bars that delimit and expose, that force the executioner's gestures in the diatribes of syntax to, in a unique fashion, keep the supreme victim perceptible: Grace. The stranger who is the other is the force of attraction that regulates the movement of chaos and establishes the simulacrum as it creates the dance of ghosts, which is like saying: the strange attractor is the potentiator of the repetition that establishes the difference of the self—Grace is living currency.

Dogville is a counter-natural agreement, an incestuous marriage, a pact between the filmmaker and the actors, between the film and the viewers. What is at stake is not an adherence to fiction, or a suspension of disbelief in the images; rather, what is at stake is an almost immediate identification with the living picture we are presented with: absolutely parallel to the real world and, at the same time, absolutely improbable, because it is totally transparent. What we are shown is the impossibility of visibility from the point of view of the moving camera, that handy-cam supported by the Dogma 95 manifesto.

The bodies are on the stage; the viewer is also there. In this movement, Trier invents for cinema what would be the living painting for Pierre Klossowski: life-size drawings, traced in coloured pencil, lining the walls of the artist's studio in the latter's case. For Trier, the studio plays this role, transformed into a closed community for the ensemble of actors

who, during the six weeks of shooting, isolated themselves from the world, to invent an America in Scandinavia. What do Trier's living pictures consist of? Hedges, house walls, doghouse, town hall buildings, church, marked on the black floor in white chalk strokes, invisible doors that open and close but make themselves heard, a vast studio space whose off-stage area is left in the dark, and some material elements like the entrance to the mine, beds, desks, a table, some chairs, and park benches.

The actors are presented not as such but as *performers* who exhibit the work of the actors whose bodies they present, without representation, to the camera man. And they are arranged on the set like the other elements, and they are transparent like the walls of the houses and therefore even more opaque and impenetrable.

The discursive device of *Dogville* presents itself abundantly through the narrative flow of the voiceover, which, rather than anticipating events, announces what the viewer already sees before them. The actors and the sounds of their movements in space, as well as the barking of the dog, the wind stirring the trees, or the falling rain are also heard. Everyone on stage is seen and heard in a panoptic device that likens the viewer to a privileged *voyeur* of all bodies, who still hears everything but knows nothing more than what is being shown to him via precursory signs of a moral catastrophe. This folding of the spaces into which the inside and the outside, the public and the private, good and evil, are ceaselessly sliding is only another dimension of the game of cruelty that is this film, and which is found in the folding of other dimensions such as transparency and opacity, the excess of speech and perfect mutism, the total visibility of the inhabitants of *Dogville*, and the absolute invisibility of the world outside the confines of the town.

But this is only one layer of Trier's film. To this invocation of or tribute to the aforementioned Brechtian theatre, the main element of the discourse is superimposed: the voice of a falsely omniscient narrator, with a far-fetched phrasing, full of literary figures, explanatory, and at the same time ironic and detached. As in other films by the director, *Dogville* has a narrative structure arranged into chapters where, from the introduction to the end, all the dramatic moments are delimited and as if pre-announced. These two aspects—the schematic staging of the narrative and the performance of the bodies belonging to the actors who play the roles of *Dogville's* inhabitants—grant the film its effectiveness and seal a blood pact with the viewers. Based on this, one can look at this pact as a commercial treaty. But what is there to trade in this game of images, sounds, bodies, and words? An entire pulsional economy. *Dogville* is an economic fable where community, the body, work, poverty, sexual urges, revenge instincts are staged, and everything that makes up the narrative of this film comes from an economic and physical betting and speculation on bodies, voluptuousness, and perverse emotions that are far beyond good and evil. *Dogville* is an economic fable as conceived by Pierre Klossowski in the last chapter of his book *Living Currency*: "Imagine for a moment an apparently impossible regression: that is, an industrial phase in which producers have the means to demand, as payment, objects of sensation from consumers. These objects are living beings."

And it is, precisely, newcomer Grace's economic-vital dependence on the community that causes *Dogville's* stable economic eco-system to convulse, which had hitherto operated on a system of co-dependence among equal citizens. By entering it, Grace (or grace) blurs the social agreement, awakens an instinct of domination, and, above all, sets in motion the following mechanism of calculation: the more she is in danger, the more

her value changes; the more dependent she is, the more her salary can be negotiated and more hours she can work, performing the most degrading tasks, especially those of a sexual nature, which are eventually factored in to set her pay. Thus, we gradually move from an exchange based on the fair laws of hospitality to an increasingly stronger valorisation of the perverse emotion derived from Grace's work, until she is simply enslaved: her work is no longer paid, and she has also lost sovereignty over her own body.

The master of ceremonies, according to Klossowski in *Les Lois de l'hospitalité*, is Tom (a wannabe writer and the mastermind of the community, performed by Paul Bettany): the one who organises and supervises the little social game of which Grace will become a victim and who is merely the community's representative, the watchman on standby to call and welcome the passing stranger. This character is the only one who does not participate directly in the trading-commerce, who asks for nothing and receives nothing. He is a supposedly disinterested mediator and cannot claim the spoils of a tragedy called Grace. As a false mediator and true lover whose desire is frustrated, he functions as a whistle-blower, interrupting in the same gesture the vicious circle of *Dogville's* now libidinal economy and laying bare the perverse exploitation of the living currency that Grace is. Tom thus hands Grace over to the band of evildoers, who at the beginning of the narrative were pursuing her, realising that the gang is led by her father. At the film's redemptive and apotheotic end, the father offers her a partner position in the gang to share his power in order to take over the family business. Grace accedes to her father's offer and takes the power that has just been bestowed on her by having the entire population of *Dogville* murdered: "If there is any town this world would be better without, this is it." And Grace concludes: "Shoot them and burn down the town."

The failure of the pact based on the laws of hospitality is evident and results in the annihilation of one of the parties: the inhabitants of *Dogville*, who have violated, manipulated, betrayed, profited from, and humiliated the other party. If Grace is enslaved, as we have seen, through economic calculation, the population of *Dogville* is eliminated through moral calculation. Grace's final reasoning is that poverty and base instincts have nothing to do with her or the exploitation of her labour and body, and that this community has acted freely and wickedly. Therefore, they should all be punished severely. *Dogville* should thus disappear from the map and literally from American soil.

In the end, Moses, the dog of the village which borrows its name, will be the only survivor and the only sound-image, audible but invisible, which materialises in front of the camera to finally free us, the viewers, from the pact established at the beginning of the film. At last, one could tell that Tom's tale (the one for which he was seeking a perfect illustration of the human nature) was told.





BIBLIOGRAPHY

José Bragança de Miranda (org.), Sob o ditado de Pierre Klossowski — Ekphrasis para Les Barres Parallèles, Sem Título coll. (Lisbon: Fundação de Arte Moderna e Contemporânea — Coleção Berardo, 2010);

Chico Buarque, Ópera do Malandro, LP, 6349400/401 (Polygram, 1979).

Bertolt Brecht and Kurt Weill, Die Dreigroschenoper, Theater am Schiffbauerdamm, Berlin, 31 August 1928.

Gille Deleuze, Logique du Sens (Paris: Les Éditions de Minuit, 1997 [1969]).

Michel Foucault, L'ordre du Discours (Paris: Gallimard, 1971).

Pierre Klossowski, A Moeda Viva, trans. Luís Lima (Lisbon: Antígona, 2008 [1970]).

Pierre Klossowski, Les Lois de l'hospitalité, L'imaginaire coll. (Paris: Gallimard, 1965).

Pierre Klossowski, Nietzsche et le Cercle Vicieux (Paris: Mercure de France, 2003 [1969]).

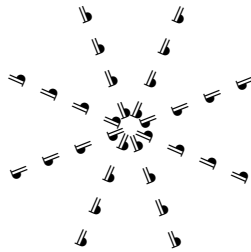
Jean-Claude Lamy, Lars von Trier, Le Provocateur (Paris: Grasset & Fasquelle, 2005).

Friedrich Nietzsche, Œuvres Philosophiques Complètes (Paris: Gallimard, 1974 [1888–1889]).

Friedrich Nietzsche, Ainsi Parlaît Zarathoustra (Paris: Flammarion, 1996 [1969]).

Jacques Rancière, O Destino das Imagens, trans. Luís Lima (Lisbon: Orfeu Negro, 2011 [2003]).

Jacques Rancière, A Fábula Cinematográfica, trans. Luís Lima (Lisbon: Orfeu Negro, 2014 [2001]).



obstinate
ways
of being



Juan Luis Toboso

E05

PUT YOUR HANDS UP IN THE AIR PUT YOUR HANDS UP... IN THE AIR

There is an intentionality that is revealed, intimately risky, in the minimal gesture of remembering a person's name: hesitating, oscillating, feeling the fear of doubt and error... to finally enunciate and affirm it. That person survives in the memory of others, and for this we have established an ephemeral constellation of several variables, which has been shaped as an axiomatic space of relationships.

*Entre tu y yo hay un nosotros.*¹

¹ Marina Garcés, *Entre Nosotros*, 2006. http://espaienblanc.net/?page_id=552 (4th June 2021).

From this exercise, we have created a gap in the form of an individual understanding of the body. It is not just us, in the form of a singular intention, who create the ways of understanding a relationship with the world and life so that it gives some meaning to existence. The world, whatever it is, is populated by an intense variable of unstructured life forms whose cartography creates detours and collisions capable of recognising that the part of true life is absent.² Most of the time, we experience situations and emotions as if a strong irrefutable truth were given off from them, but we sadly feel them as simple experiences in motion. Like a fever spike. An increase in body temperature, which gives rise to the so-called fever, is a reaction of the human body to infections or viral invasions that conflict with its normal functioning. Fever makes us fragile. Fever is a healing process.

² Emmanuel Levinas, *Totalité et Infini: essai sur l'extériorité*. Le livre de Poche, Paris, 1961. Pag.21.

In the wakefulness between dreams, we wake up projecting strange images that are sometimes hallucinations and another true organic engineering of the mind to formalise

the processes of extraction of the most toxic dreamlike and intangible material from ourselves. In that individual waking state in which reality and fiction, insanity and sanity, condensation and thawing coexist, our body can no longer be just one because at the extended moment of our becoming, we go from being a rigorous "I" to an indeterminate "we." That indeterminacy is a feeling of freedom!

As in the landscape of the abandoned island in *La Invención de Morel*, an island inhabited by vestiges of a civilisation that gave up on itself, we can imagine that we are a type of agent who, holders of various materialisations, interacts with the forms of the past playing with the notion of existence without any respect for time.³ There is a dance, and we all dance. There is a swarm of bodies, there is an image, another image, and another image. We all dance: images and bodies. All bodies... all images. All alive, all dead, all material... all potential. These existential affective relationships give us a lot of pleasure and, above all, stimulate meaning.

³ Adolfo Bioy Casares, *La invención de Morel*, 1940.

...she alerted me with a minimal gesture. a gesture that is nothing but a threat.⁴

⁴ Sofia Dias & Vítor Roriz, *Um gesto que não passa de uma ameaça*, (Premiere: 2yh July 2011 - CCB, Lisbon).

The signal for us to move forward does not necessarily come through large invitations that bombard our bodies' receptors with shiny stimuli. We need a signal that vibrates and smells, that is uncomfortable and noisy, that does not adapt to the harmony of the constant movement of the scroll of a screen, that bursts with the welcome word, but demands hospitality.

¶
¶
¶
¶
¶
¶

For too long, we have underestimated the transformative capacity of these minimal gestures in which we enunciate that collectivity and also we forget to create possibilities for forming desire, not only in the social field but also in the centre of our own construction as individuals, thus leaving us surprised by the strength of the sensorial that derives from the relationships we establish with the world and with others.

There is no place
for a body that dances

alone.

There is no place for a body that dances alone. If we do not follow the zigzag of its gestures, look at him, beat our feet to the rhythm, and complicitly observe the possibility that a part of his body might fall and fracture, then there will be no way of understanding whether all that effort will be meaningful. ... It would be wonderful if it fell against us, if it attacked us violently and took us to the land of the uncontrolled. How exciting!

In an involuntary gesture, some of the mirrors in the great room where the memorable sequence of the film *The Fearless Vampire Killers* by Roman Polanski takes place, reflect the loneliness of the only three living performers in that scene. Nothing here could be more comical and more tragic at the same time.⁵ The apparent and objective image we are offered by the reflection in the mirror causes this encounter to breakdown. Vampires don't see their mirror image. The minuet boom, its intertwined rhythm breaks. The excess of reality destroys the delicious fiction in which we all danced together, because, once again, true life is absent. Imagination is necessary for us. How to do it then? How to fill in those gaps that excess of reality produces? If it were not for the exercise of the imagination, many things would remain to be explained, to be answered, to even live. Because "building a life" means putting the capacity to imagine and invent at the centre of the self-institution processes of an emancipated society.⁶

⁵ Roman Polanski, *The Fearless Vampire Killers*. UK, Cadre Films & Filmways Pictures, 1967. DVD.

⁶ On the concept of "radical imagination" in Cornelius Castoriadis, *L'institution imaginaire de la société*. Paris, Le Seuil, 1975. By Marcelo Expósito <https://ficunam.unam.mx/marcelo-exposito-la-imaginacion-radical-en-conversacion-con-virginia-roy-y-alfredo-ruiz/> (4th June 2021).

In these ever-complex relationships between the imagined and the experienced, constructing a political body that generates its own dynamics and vital strategies can have a certain effect. Is the pursuit of fixing and sharing collective imaginaries nothing more than contact hunger to write a statement? But in it, in enunciation, once again, we

will never be isolated. “The statement is always collective, even when it seems to have been emitted by a solitary singularity like that of the artist.”⁷

⁷ Gilles Deleuze y Félix Guattari, *Kafka pour une littérature mineure*. Ed. du Minuit, Paris, 1975. Pages. 29-33.

And
how
will
we
guess
its
form?...

There is no form for something that is not an image that we share, an image that we know is not *our*. In a sense of exclusion that is less strict than the usual one associated with the feeling of belonging, we cannot imagine a common without a strong attraction to it. Something in that we coincide and in that we diverge. What drives us to discuss them; we are the knot; those we reflect on and what we belong to. In this ecology of knowledge, starting from a political imagination that surpasses the neoliberal infection of bodies, we must consider something important: that the *tomorrow* cannot be just the winter. That the moment we live in is toxic and flammable, but it is only from this toxicity that it is intended that we think of a future in dispute, and where we suspect again. We should be afraid of the future. We've already been there.⁸

⁸ Edward Bond, *La Trame cachée*, Paris, L'Arche, 2003.

Then we will have to do it ourselves without waiting for it to arrive as something established. And the way we will do it will be very simple: we will think that it will have no form. Because, if it were so, if it had to adopt a settled form, we would follow the logic of a static model that we deny. However, they must be, yes, a place of affirmation, of assembly; a space containing all the enunciation possibilities and all the formless, open, complex forms, so that complexity fills our head with other potential ones.

That possibility is perhaps a return to the body. In his book *Ser o no ser un cuerpo*, Santiago Alba Rico suggests that we have been displaced from the anthropological axis; that the distance between where we live and where our life occurs has been growing;⁹ and that one way of understanding this distance is the constant flight through which we continuously explore life. There is a constant obsession to flee the body, to neutralise its links, to anaesthetise its ways of feeling and enunciating. However, there are moments

⁹ Santiago Alba Rico, *Ser o no ser (un cuerpo)*, (Madrid, Seix Barral, 2017)

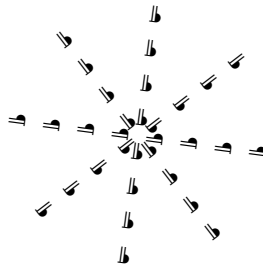
of reunion that are inevitable. Relapses that resume the bond of the bodies... Disorders, illness and love are an example of this. ... *from time to time, cataclysms occur that encourage us to return to nature, that is, to recover life.*¹⁰

A collapse of capitalism would also be a collapse of bodies. And, with this, the need to return to an interdependence network that links us, that protects us, emerges again. An act of immunity. Ancestral communities have long experience in collapses, and have overcome each and every one of them through the body. Affirming the construction of ourselves, wondering: what is the use of thinking so much about the future, if we do not even believe in the forms of life with which we inhabit the present? The present is discontinuous and proposes a **variable that is prone to scale disorientation and very fast movements.**

Inhabiting the future requires bodies to collapse. So... *Put your hands up in the air!*¹¹

¹⁰ Antonin Artaud, *Le théâtre et son double*. Paris, Ed. Gallimard; Coll. Métamorphoses, 1938. Pag. 11.

¹¹ The Black & White Brothers, *Put Your Hands Up*, Hamburg, Club Tools, 1998, CD.



disorienting
and subverting
body



Paolo Quintili

*«...Il n'y a qu'une vertu, la justice;
qu'un devoir, de se rendre heureux;
qu'un corollaire, de ne pas se surfaire la vie
et de ne pas craindre la mort».*

[D. DIDEROT,
*Eléments
de physiologie*]

1

OF

36



[Bronzino, *Allégorie de Vénus et Cupidon* (1550).]

E06

LA PHILOSOPHIE DU CORPS DU MARQUIS DE SADE ET LE MATÉRIALISME LIBERTIN

1. Une «époque de la Raison»? *La Mettrie libertin*

La Mettrie est le premier philosophe libertin du XVIII^e siècle. Premier au sens qu'il a été, dès le début du siècle, à la fois le continuateur et le rénovateur d'une longue tradition de pensée qui remonte à l'époque de la Renaissance¹. A propos du *corps* il en parle relativement au problème du plaisir, dans son dernier petit livre, *La Volupté* (1745), réédité deux fois, sous les titres *L'École de la Volupté* (1746) et ensuite *L'Art de Jouir* (1751). C'est comme un testament spirituel, où il y affirme clairement : «Plaisir, Maître souverain des hommes et des dieux, devant qui tout disparaît, *jusqu'à la raison même*, tu sais combien mon cœur t'adore, et tous les sacrifices qu'il t'a faits !...»². La philosophie hédoniste-épicurienne de La Mettrie *soumet* la raison au *corps*, en affirmant une sorte de noble «servage» de la raison.

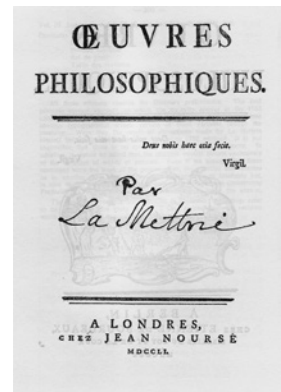
¹ Je me permet de renvoyer à mon édition: Denis Diderot - Julien O. de La Mettrie - *L'arte di godere. Testi dei filosofi libertini del secolo XVIII*. Roma, éd. par P. Quintili, Manifestolibri, 2006 et aux études d'A. Vartanian - *La Mettrie's L'Homme Machine. A Study in the Origins of an Idea*. Princeton University Press, 1960; et Ann Thomson - *Materialism and Society in the mid-eighteenth Century. La Mettrie's Discours Préliminaire*, Genève-Paris, Droz, 1981.

² Julien Offray de La Mettrie - De la Volupté. Anti-Sénèque ou le Souverain Bien – *L'École de la Volupté, Système d'Épicure*, édition préfacée, établie et annotée par A. Thomson. Paris, Desjonquères, 1996, p. 141 (mes italiques).

2

OF

36



【Edition posthume des Œuvres de La Mettrie.】

Cependant, il refuse de placer son hédonisme sur le même plan de la littérature pornographique, dont on avait déjà connu, à l'époque, les meilleurs exemples (*L'Académie des Dames, Dom B**** etc.). Au contraire : « ... Dieu des belles âmes, charmant plaisir, ne permets pas que ton pinceau se prostitue à d'infâmes voluptés, ou plutôt à d'indignes débauches qui font gémir la Nature révoltée. Qu'il ne peigne que les feux du fils de Cypris, mais qu'il les peigne avec transport»³.

Eros, l'enfant d'Aphrodite, parle la langue de la *volupté*, qui est un *mouvement permanent du corps*, qui transporte, excite et prépare les sens à *dépasser* la raison, sans l'humilier⁴. Comme dans les tableaux de F. Boucher, peintre qui exprime au mieux l'esprit libertin des philosophes du XVIII^e siècle, les « manœuvres de la volupté », suivant l'expression de La Mettrie, sont adressées à l'âme («matérielle») et à la raison des hommes pour les guider vers le bonheur.

³ Julien Offray de La Mettrie - *L'art de jouir*, dans *CŒuvres philosophiques*, to. II, éd. par Francine Markovits. Paris, Fayard, 1987, p. 299.

⁴ Julien Offray de La Mettrie - *L'École de la Volupté*, éd. cit. p.139: « Le plaisir est de l'essence de l'homme et de l'ordre de l'univers. La débauche seule, et tout ce qui nuit à l'intérêt de la société, est crime ou désordre, je n'en connais point d'autre. Le goût du plaisir a été donné à tous les animaux comme un attribut principal, ils aiment le plaisir pour lui-même, sans porter plus loin leurs idées. L'homme seul, cet être raisonnable, peut s'élever jusqu'à la volupté; il est distingué dans l'univers par son esprit ; un choix délicat, un goût épuré, en raffinant ses sensations, en les redoublant en quelque sorte par la réflexion, en a fait le plus parfait, c'est-à-dire le plus *heureux* des êtres» (mes italiques).

3

OF

36



[Boucher (1703-1770), *La toilette de Vénus* (1751).]

La raison, le discours, le récit, œuvrent pour la clarification, la purification des sens en corps ; et nombreux sont les lieux de l'œuvre de La Mettrie où ce rapport raison/corps est de subordination. «Que ce Dieu vif, impétueux, ne se serve de la raison des hommes que pour la leur faire *oublier*, qu'ils ne raisonnent que pour exagérer leurs plaisirs et s'en pénétrer; que la froide Philosophie se taise pour m'écouter. Je sens les respectables approches de la *volupté* ...»⁵.

⁵ Julien Offray de La Mettrie - *L'art de jouir*, éd. cit., p. 299 (mes italiques).

4

OF

36



[F. Boucher, *Grivoiserie 1* (1740).]

Les idées et le mouvement culturel même du libertinisme du XVIII^e siècle réfutent donc le poncif historiographique qui affirme que les Lumières ont représenté «le siècle de la raison», sans ombre ni clair-obscur. Beaucoup de philosophes de cette époque, tels que La Mettrie, ont exalté le rôle positif et central du corps, des passions et du plaisir pour comprendre les secrets ressorts de la nature humaine.

2. Les caractères du matérialisme

L'esthétique libertine du *corps* et du plaisir, chez La Mettrie, ne concerne pas seulement l'œuvre de l'art mais aussi l'*expérience humaine* dans son ensemble. Elle a comme son arrière-plan idéal la philosophie médicale et matérialiste de l'auteur. Qu'est-ce que le *matérialisme*? Les thèses centrales sont les suivantes : 1/ la matérialité de l'«âme»; 2/ la *passivité* de la nature humaine, plus exposée aux douleurs qu'aux plaisirs; 3/ le primat de la nature corporelle sur la pensée (métaphysique, morale); 4/ l'individualité des plaisirs.



[J.-H. Fragonard (1732-1806), *Baiser en dérobée...* (1751).]

5

OF

36

L'ensemble de ces propositions, à la fois théoriques et pratiques, vont dans la direction de l'affirmation d'une *éthique-esthétique de l'existence*. La philosophie libertine et matérialiste (la partie et le tout) est ainsi, avant tout, une véritable éthique-esthétique de l'existence qui affirme délibérément un choix conscient de *valeurs* différentes, sur le fondement desquelles régler l'existence individuelle de l'homme, valeurs nouvelles par rapport à la tradition. La Mettrie eut, pour cela, une existence exemplaire. Il fut un véritable aventurier de la raison. Issu d'une famille aisée – son père était notaire – La Mettrie fut le meilleur élève, en Hollande, du maître chef de l'École éclectique de médecine, Hermann Boerhaave (1668-1738), dont il traduisit en français les *Institutions de médecine* (Paris, 1739-1740)⁶.

⁶ Cf. Ann Thomson - *Materialism and Society*. cit., chap. II, pp. 21-32: *La Mettrie and Medicine*.



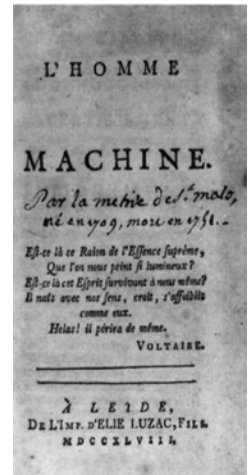
【Antoine Pesne (1683-1757), *La Mettrie* (1750).】

6

OF

36

L'ouvrage qui le rendit célèbre comme philosophe hétérodoxe fut *L'Homme Machine*, publié en 1748. Dans ce texte subversif, La Mettrie a imprimé un tournant décisif à sa philosophie, vers une conception *moniste* de l'être humain et du monde: – Unité d'âme et de corps, négation de la spiritualité et de l'immortalité de l'âme, affirmation, à la Spinoza, de l'unité de la substance du monde – et un *déterminisme* en psychologie et physiologie des fonctions organiques. Il s'agit là d'un *déterminisme du bonheur*.



7

OF

36

【Frontispice de *L'Homme Machine* (1748).】

L'homme est un être impérieusement et entièrement *déterminé* par la nature et par ses lois, d'une nécessité absolue. Ces lois *obligent*, le forcent à chercher son bonheur. Ce bonheur est *corporel*. *L'Homme Machine* offre une analyse des phénomènes psychologiques qui fait économie de l'«hypothèse inutile» d'une âme séparée du corps. *Tout est donc corps dans l'homme*: «La Nature nous a tous créés uniquement pour être heureux ;

oui tous, depuis le ver qui rampe jusqu'à l'aigle qui se perd dans la nue. C'est pourquoi elle a donné à tous les animaux quelque portion de la Loi naturelle, portion plus ou moins exquise selon que la comportent les *organes* bien conditionnés de chaque animal»⁷.

⁷ Julien Offray de La Mettrie - *L'Homme-machine*, dans *Œuvres philosophiques*, to. I, éd. par Francine Markovits. Paris, Fayard, 1987, p. 92.

8

OF

36



【La Mettrie à l'époque de *L'Homme Machine* (1748).】

3. Le Système d'Épicure, l'amitié

À côté de *l'Art de jouir*, le philosophe publiera un autre texte qu'il réussit à rééditer dans ses *Œuvres philosophiques*: *le Système d'Épicure* (1750), déjà paru en 1748 sous le titre d'*Histoire naturelle des animaux*. Approfondissant ses réflexions lucrétiennes sur l'origine de la vie et confirmant son refus de tout finalisme providentialiste, La Mettrie y réaffirme le plaisir du corps et une forme de volupté *partagée*. Les plaisirs physiques les plus élevés, notamment ceux de *l'Eros*, sont réabsorbés (non pas supprimés) et saisis à la lumière de la *philia*, l'amitié épicurienne, lieu de partage des joies de la vie. Ninon de Lenclos (1620-1705), femme libre, écrivaine, philosophe, est sa muse inspiratrice.

9

OF

36



【Ninon de Lenclos, «la belle insoumise»】

Sous cette forme, il est possible une extension et une universalisation du plaisir individuel, qui néanmoins reste circonscrit dans les bornes d'un «jardin» où n'accèdent encore qu'un petit nombre d'*esprits forts*, ceux qui savent bien distinguer entre des *plaisirs raffinés* et des plaisirs *débauchés*. Cependant, La Mettrie ne s'était pas borné à tisser un éloge du «système d'Épicure». Les types de plaisirs dépendent des types individuels de tempéraments et de caractères. Et à propos du caractère de l'homme vulgaire, «voluptueux et débauché», en l'invitant à obéir à sa propre nature, sans remords,

ni fausse conscience, La Mettrie arrive à affirmer, dans l'*Anti-Sénèque* : «Prends donc le bon temps, quand et partout où il vient; jouis du présent, oublies le passé et ne crains point l'avenir. Songes que le blé qui est semé hors du champ est toujours du blé; qu'un grain perdu, n'est pas plus pour la nature, je ne dis pas qu'un gland pour une chêne, mais qu'une goutte d'eau pour la mer; que tout ce qui la délecte est plaisir; et que rien n'est contre elle, que la douleur»⁸.

⁸ Julien Offray de La Mettrie - *Anti-Sénèque ou le Souverain Bien*, dans *De la Volupté*, éd. cit., p. 92.

10

OF

36



【F. Boucher, *Grivoiserie 3* (1740).】

La Mettrie n'hésita pas à laisser la liberté aux plaisirs même les plus déréglés : voilà donc ce qui a été appelé «un hymne effréné à la volupté»⁹. Le bonheur ne peut être que *physique*, soit corporel, et dicté par la conformation du corps: «Que la pollution et la jouissance, lubriques Rivaless, se succédant tour à tour, et te faisant nuit et jour fondre de volupté, rendent ton âme aussi lascive, s'il se peut, et pour ainsi dire aussi gluante que ton corps. Enfin puisque tu n'as pas d'autres ressources, tires-en parti: bois, manges, dors, ronfles, rêves; et si tu penses quelquefois, que ce soit comme entre deux vins ; et toujours, ou au plaisir du moment présent, ou, si tu as cet esprit d'économie, au désir ménagé pour l'heure suivante»¹⁰. Cet hymne à la *liberté du corps* ne fut pas bien reçu par les mêmes *Philosophes* (Diderot), qui marquèrent LM d'*Infâme*.

⁹ Cfr. Robert Mauzi - *L'idée du bonheur dans la littérature et la pensée françaises au XVIIIe siècle*. Paris, Albin Michel, 1994 [1974], chap. VI, §7, pp. 249-253: *Le scandaleux bonheur de La Mettrie*.

¹⁰ Julien Offray de La Mettrie - *Anti-Sénèque ou le Souverain Bien*, dans *De la Volupté*, éd. cit., p. 92.



11

OF

36

【F. Boucher, *Grivoiserie 4* (1740).】

4. Plaisirs raffinés et débauchée. Le droit à la débauche

Ici on peut parler de l'affirmation d'un «droit à la débauche». Le sens était clair: aux «porcs» il faut laisser la *liberté de jouir* «en porcs», à la seule conditions qu'ils ne nuisent pas à autrui et sans prétendre qu'ils obéissent au dictés d'une vertu impossible (pour eux) et à une morale universelle, égale pour tous : «Mais si non content d'exceller dans le grand art de voluptés, la crapule et la débauche n'ont rien de trop fort pour toi, l'ordure et l'infamie restent pour ton *glorieux* partage ; vautres y toi, comme font les porcs, et tu seras heureux à leur manière»¹¹. Le scandale, en 1750, fut énorme.

¹¹ *Ibidem*; ed. 1750, pp. 88-89.

【F. Boucher, *Grivoiserie 5* (1740).】

12

OF

36

Le plaisir ne dépend pas de la volonté, mais il se forme à partir de l'expérience sensible vécue par chacun, dans son propre *corps*, qui est doué de mémoire. Ainsi le système matérialiste de La Mettrie s'avance vers l'immoralisme du marquis de Sade. Thèse centrale: aucun homme n'est *libre* de choisir ce qui lui plait ou pas. La vie qu'il a vécu et son organisation corporelle ont déjà choisi pour lui, l'ont déterminé à jouir d'un certain genre de plaisirs et pas d'autres. L'«hymne effréné» (R. Mauzi) à la volupté individuelle de l'*Anti-Sénèque* trouvera, plus tard, les plus vastes échos dans l'œuvre «immoraliste» de D. A. F. de Sade. Mais cet hymne contenait aussi déjà des implications idéologiques et politiques très *conservatrices*.

13

OF

36



[J.-H. Fragonard, *Jeune fille délivrant un oiseau de sa cage* (1770).]

5. *L'individualisme hédoniste. Le chemin vers Sade*

C'était l'invitation à un plaisir qui n'obéit qu'aux différences corporelles, singulières, de tempérament, de chaque individu – au nom d'un «bonheur organique» primaire. La Mettrie conservait, comme critère-limite de sanction, uniquement l'*utilité ou la nuisibilité sociale* et rien de plus. Cela devait apparaître (et ne put pas ne pas apparaître) comme provocateur, d'une façon intolérable, même pour les penseurs les plus radicaux. En premier lieu, La Mettrie cassait le front idéologique des «Lumières» – qui était alors en construction – de la lutte pour une morale laïque affranchie, sans sanctions métaphysiques, au nom de l'équation bayléenne : matérialisme= athéisme=vertu sans dogmes.

C'était en quelque sorte comme un retour au libertinage du siècle précédent. Deuxièmement, La Mettrie revendique en fait ouvertement son appartenance à la tradition du «libertinage érudit», de marque conservatrice et élitiste. Il met en cause F. La Mothe Le Vayer (1588-1672) – dans le *Discours préliminaire* qu'il ajoute à l'édition de ses *Œuvres philosophiques* de 1751. En effet, La Mettrie, tout comme La Mothe Le Vayer, arrive à distinguer une *double vérité*: 1/ celle du médecin et du philosophe, qui affirment franchement leur matérialisme et le pratiquent. Et puis 2/ la *vérité pour le peuple* qui, ne comprenant pas les trames compliquées de la philosophie, est confié aux soins de la morale et de la religion, deux instruments politiques de contrôle des esprits et des corps («au double frein de la Morale et de la Religion, on a prudemment ajouté celui des supplices»¹²), pour l'obéissance aux lois.

¹² Julien Offray de La Mettrie - *Discours préliminaire*, dans Ann Thomson - *Materialism and Society* cit., p. 208.

14

OF

36



【Précepteur royal et Historiographe de France.】

La révolte et le défi de Sade se frayent leur chemin à partir de ces thèses philosophiques libertines, mais en les critiquant. Le Marquis de Sade, en fait, tout en appréciant la pensée et l'œuvre de La Mettrie, sa source, prendra ses distances sur ce point essentiel de la *double vérité*. Le corps (et son plaisir) devient une *valeur absolue* de l'expérience humaine, un terrain de bataille dont le concept s'étend, de façon universelle, au-delà de tout frontière de classe, de race, de société et de sexe. Il faut maintenir les différences organiques/corporelles individuelles, ne pas les réprimer, surtout, et même les légitimer, non seulement dans la mesure où elles n'ont pas des retombées nocives sur le terrain social et politique ; et cela doit se réaliser sans ouvrir les portes à cette espèce d'*atomisme esthétique* des plaisirs qui abandonne l'homme dans les mains des «Magistrats» ou des «Tyrans» (La Mettrie).

6. «L'Enfer, sur papier Bible!...»

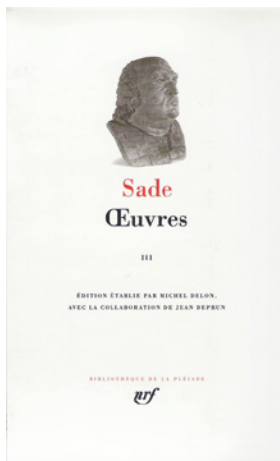
Sade est un penseur de la Révolution française, qui a été redécouvert, dans toute son importance historique et littéraire, seulement depuis peu de décennies. L'édition critique des *Œuvres* dans la prestigieuse collection Gallimard-Pléiade n'a été achevée qu'il y a une vingtaine d'années. L'édition de la *Correspondance*, en 27 volumes, a été achevée seulement en décembre 2007!¹³ L'éditeur Gallimard, pour lancer la sortie du premier volume des *Œuvres*, en 1990, trouva une formule publicitaire géniale. «*Sade: l'Enfer, sur papier Bible!*».

¹³ D.A.F. Sade - *Correspondances du marquis de Sade et de ses proches, enrichies de documents, notes et commentaires*. 27 vol., Genève, Slatkine, 1991-2007.

15

OF

36



[Première éd. critique des *Œuvres* (1990-98).]

16

OF

36



[Buste de Sade – Bibliothèque G. Normand.]

Au cœur de l'«Enfer» – qui est le nom donné sous le premier Empire à la cote des livres interdits et censurés dans la nouvelle née Bibliothèque Nationale –, se trouve en effet l'œuvre du Marquis, avec le n. 1. La devise publicitaire était ainsi bien calibrée: l'œuvre de Sade constitue encore aujourd'hui le noyau central de la cote «*Enfer*» de la BNF de Paris, avec plus de 100 volumes. Cette œuvre vise à représenter les «malheurs de la vertu» morale que l'homme connaît, dans une société qui est en soi-même corrompue et injuste, lorsqu'il veut agir «droitement».

C'est le sujet du conte *Les Infortunes de la vertu* (1787), ébauche manuscrite rédigée dans la Bastille du grand roman publié plus tard comme *Justine ou les malheurs de la vertu* (1791) et ensuite *La nouvelle Justine ou les malheurs de la vertu, suivie de l'histoire de Juliette, sa sœur, ou les prospérités du vice* (1797). Malheurs de la vertu et prospérité du vice : le libertinage se fait connaître comme une *dénonciation* claire et nette, et comme une *description explicite* de l'assujettissement des consciences et des corps aux dynamiques du «vice» que la société des privilèges impose à ses victimes¹⁴. La violence du plaisir est la caractéristique de cette société peinte par les romans de Sade.

¹⁴ D.A.F. Sade – *Œuvres*. Vol. II. Paris, Édition établie par M. Delon, Gallimard-Pléiade, 1995. *Les infortunes de la vertu* (pp. 3-121); *Justine ou les Malheurs de la vertu* (pp. 123-390); *La nouvelle Justine ou les Malheurs de la vertu, suivie de Juliette, sa sœur* (pp. 391-1110).

17
OF
36



【Rouleau manuscrit des 120 *Journée de Sodome.*】

Le désassujettissement des sujets ne peut se réaliser qu'en se reconnaissant entièrement dans la *logique féroce* de la violence du plaisir (dès lors dite *sadique*), celle propre d'un système social fondé sur l'abus et le non-droit (le privilège), *qui s'exercent sur les corps*. Ce désassujettissement, dans un tel contexte, arrive toujours, Sade le démontre, au niveau d'un *plaisir solitaire et intensif*. Une satisfaction érotique-égotique au dépens de l'autre, duquel on tire du plaisir *par son corps*, sans consensus. Métaphore de la tyrannie subie et ainsi démasquée.

7. Dénonciation du Mal dans le Plaisir

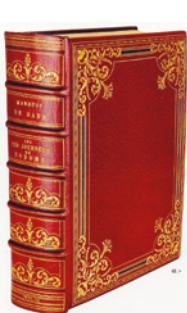
La définition du «sadisme» qui nous donne le même Sade est éloquente: «Les méchants se plaisent au spectacle des maux qu'ils causent, et chacune des gradation de la douleur dont ils absorbent leurs victimes est une jouissance pour eux»¹⁵. Un tel «spectacle» est mis en scène, organisé, raconté dans le roman sadique-libertin ; et c'est, en premier lieu, une dénonciation. Le plaisir est le fruit d'une violence systématique et techniquement organisée (*Les 120 Journées de Sodome*, 1784-1789). Voilà l'effet de scandale, l'immoralité et la «prospérité du vice» déclarés, décrits, observés, commentés. C'est ce qu'on pourrait appeler *le chiasme du Plaisir et du Mal*.

¹⁵ Cf. D.A.F. Sade - *Laurence et Antonio. Nouvelle italienne*, in *Les crimes de l'amour*. Paris, Éd. par M. Delon, Galimard, 1987, p.183.

La dynamique de la violence, qui est une violence avant tout *sociale*, est bien énoncée par l'auteur. Dans l'une de ses confessions à sa femme Renée, en 1781, Sade déclara: «Oui, je suis libertin, j'ai conçu tout ce qu'on peut concevoir dans ce genre-là ; mais je n'ai sûrement pas fait tout ce que j'ai conçu et ne le ferai sûrement jamais. Je suis un libertin, mais je ne suis pas un criminel, ni un meurtrier»¹⁶. Sade met en lumière la *dynamique de l'abus et de l'exploitation des corps* qui, d'ici peu, même la société révolutionnaire aurait héritée et transférée sur le plan des rapports de production économique dans le système de la fabrique industrielle capitaliste et bourgeoise¹⁷.

¹⁶ D.A.F. Sade - *Lettres à sa femme*. Paris, Actes Sud, 1997, p. 229.

¹⁷ Cf. Antonio Casilli - *La Fabbrica libertina. De Sade e il sistema industriale*. Roma, Manifestolibri, 1996.



[Edition des 120 Journées (1931-35).]

18

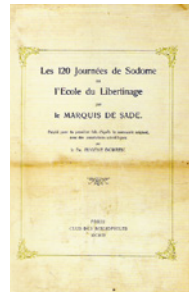
OF

36

19

OF

36



[1re éd. du manuscrit autographe des 120 Journées (1904).]

8. *Bruler Sade?*

Simone de Beauvoir, dans les années 1950, se demanda : *Faut-il brûler Sade?* La réponse a été et c'est évidemment *non*¹⁸. Les œuvres de Sade sont la voix la plus tragique de dénonciation et de *mise en scène* – il n'y pas l'une sans l'autre – de ce que le système des privilèges gardait jalousement caché. La violence abusive du Bien et du Vrai, fausses apparences, faux-semblants du Mal. Sade se fait ainsi porte-parole d'un matérialisme radical et d'une vision antireligieuse, «antiphysique»¹⁹ et contre-épicurienne paradoxale de la réalité. Le plaisir égotique, l'«isolisme»²⁰, dans l'injustice généralisée, engendre, voire doit engendrer de la douleur, qui rédime le sujet (bourreau et victime) des limites de son malheur, constitutif de sa propre nature.

¹⁸ Cfr. Simone de Beauvoir - *Faut-il brûler Sade ? La Pensée de droite, aujourd'hui. Merleau-Ponty et le pseudo-sartrisme*. Paris, Gallimard, 1955 [1972*].

¹⁹ Cf. Jean Deprun - *Sade philosophe*, dans *Œuvres cit.*, vol. 1, p. LXV: «Nous entendons enfin par 'antiphysisme' l'idée que la nature est mauvaise, maîtresse de crime et que la seule façon de la servir (si tel est notre désir) est de suivre son exemple».

²⁰ *Ibidem*, p. LXIV.



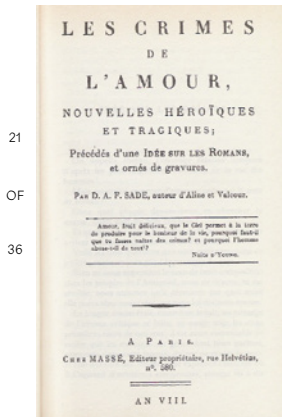
【Simone de Beauvoir (1908-1986).】

C'est une vision *pessimiste* du monde – anthropologie négative qui est commune à tous les grands philosophes matérialistes du XVIII^e siècle, non seulement La Mettrie (D'Holbach, Diderot, Helvétius aussi) – exprimée dans des pièces, romans et récits pour la plupart posthumes et écrits en captivité.

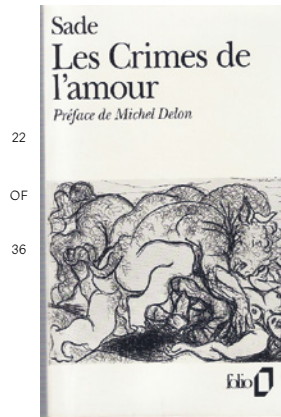
9. *Idée sur les romans*

En 1800 Sade, sorti de prison depuis 1794 à la chute de Robespierre, était en misère. Il avait perdu ses biens et essayait de gagner sa vie avec l'activité d'homme de lettre «respectable». Il avait déjà fait publier (anonymes) ses chefs-d'œuvre libertins. Sade décida donc de donner à imprimer un recueil de «*Nouvelles héroïques et tragiques*»,

précédées d'une réflexion sur la forme-roman: *Idée sur les Romans... par D.A.F. Sade, auteur d'Aline et Valcour*. Le titre du recueil, *Les Crimes de l'amour*, est génitif subjectif et objectif à la fois. Sade y expose *une esthétique du roman libertin* qui aura un grand avenir. Il s'agit, en quelque sorte, du chef-d'œuvre théorique de Sade, le véritable manifeste (et apologie) du roman en général, et du roman *libertin* en particulier, comme étant sa forme la plus parfaite.



【Page de titre des
Crimes de l'amour (1800).】



【Edition critique, par M. Delon (1976).】

C'est dans le droit de ligne de l'affirmation d'une forme-roman générale qu'il définit bien nettement: «On appelle roman, l'ouvrage *fabuleux* composé d'après les plus singulières aventures de la vie des hommes»²¹.

Le roman est un ouvrage d'imagination qui doit susciter un instinct mimétique de *plaisir* vers le récit ou d'*horreur* à l'égard du vice et du mal. *La fiction ici est garantie de réalité*. Sade affirme: «Je dois enfin répondre au reproche que l'on me fit, quand parut *Aline et Valcour*. Mes pinceaux, dit-on, sont trop forts; je prête au vice des traits trop odieux; veut-on savoir la raison? Je ne veux pas faire aimer le vice. Je n'ai pas, comme Crébillon et comme Dorat, le dangereux projet de faire adorer aux femmes les personnages qui les trompent; je veux, au contraire, qu'elles les détestent; c'est le seul moyen qui puisse les empêcher d'en être dupes»²². On a souvent sous-estimé la valeur de cette affirmation, en la reliant à une intention dissimulatrice de Sade à l'égard de la censure : Sade contre lui-même²³.

²¹ D.A.F. Sade - *Idée sur les romans*, dans *Les crimes de l'amour*. Préface de M. Delon cit., p. 27.

²² *Ibidem*, p. 51.

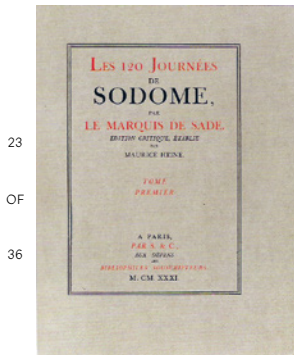
²³ Cf. J. Deprun - *Sade philosophe* cit., p. LXI.

En réalité Sade, à notre avis, entend placer cote à cote morale et «couleurs de l'enfer», pour montrer quelle est la vraie nature, cachée, inavouée et terrible, de l'homme («enfant de la nature») et des sociétés humaines. Sade poursuit dans ce propos: «... et, pour y réussir, j'ai rendu ceux de mes héros qui suivent la carrière du vice, tellement effroyables, qu'ils n'inspireront bien sûrement ni pitié, ni amour; en cela, j'ose le dire, je deviens *plus moral* que ceux qui se croient permis de les embellir; [...] jamais enfin, je le répète, jamais je ne peindrai le crime que sous *les couleurs de l'enfer*; je veux qu'on le voie à nu, qu'on le craigne, qu'on le déteste. Et je ne connais point d'autre façon pour arriver là, que de le montrer avec toute l'horreur qui le caractérise»²⁴.

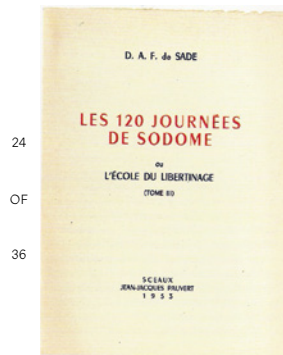
Sade se trouvait, à l'époque, attaqué de toute part par ses adversaires et il conclut, contre eux, en revendiquant ses vues «les plus pures», affirmation qui est à prendre sans dissimulation: «Malheur à ceux qui l'entourent de roses! leurs vues ne sont pas *aussi pures*, et je ne les copierai jamais. Qu'on ne m'attribue donc plus, d'après ces systèmes, le roman de *J...*; jamais je n'ai fait de tels ouvrages, et je n'en ferai sûrement jamais; il n'y a que des imbéciles ou des méchants qui, malgré l'authenticité de mes dénégations, puissent me soupçonner ou m'accuser encore d'en être l'auteur, et le plus souverain mépris sera désormais la seule arme avec laquelle je combattrai leurs calomnies»²⁵.

²⁴ D.A.F. Sade - *Idée sur les romans cit.*, p. 51 (mes italiques).

²⁵ *Ibidem*.



【Édition Heine des
120 Journées (1931).】



【Édition J.-J. Pauvert des
120 Journées (1953).】

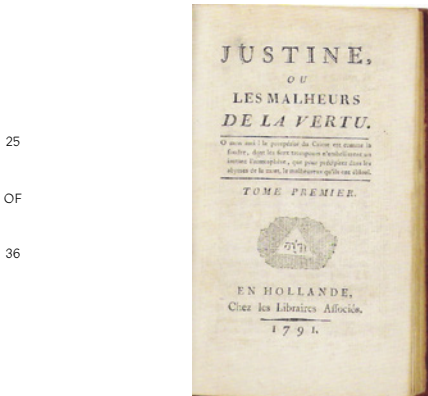
Même par ce dernière mensonge – de n'être pas l'auteur de *Justine*, pour éviter la censure et la prison, d'où il venait de sortir – Sade affirmait l'*universalité* de la forme-roman, sur la base d'une analyse anthropologique des besoins humains fondamentaux. La nature de l'homme, corporelle et fragile, est déterminante: «L'homme est sujet à deux faiblesses qui tiennent à son existence, qui la caractérisent». Partout il faut *qu'il prie*, partout il faut *qu'il aime*; et voilà la base de tous les romans; il en a fait pour peindre les êtres qu'il *implorait*. Il en a fait pour célébrer ceux qu'il *aimait...*»²⁶.

²⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 30.

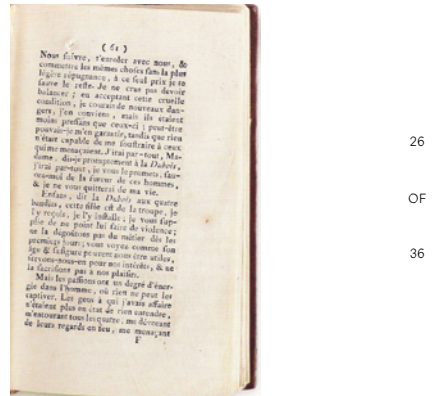
10. Les passions naturelles exprimées dans la forme-roman

Terreur (des dieux) et amour (des hommes) sont les passions naturelles et universelles qui impriment une forme spécifique à la fiction romanesque. C'est une thèse libertine et matérialiste (La Mettrie, d'Holbach : peur et espoir fondements du *fanatisme*, religieux et amoureux) que Sade reprend à son compte et élargit: «Les premiers [*romans*], dictés par la terreur ou l'espoir, durent être sombres, gigantesques, pleins de mensonges et de fictions ; tels sont ceux qu'Esdras composa durant la captivité de Babylone. Les seconds, remplis de délicatesse et de sentiment ; tel est celui de Théagène et de Chariclée, par Héliodore [d'Ephese, III s. ap. J.-Ch.]»²⁷. Sade suit ainsi le progrès génétique de la forme-roman à travers son développement dans le temps. Selon Sade, l'histoire du roman a connu un progrès dans la forme, en évoluant de la peur jusqu'à l'amour

²⁷ *Ibidem*.



[Page de titre de la 1^{re} édition de *Justine*.]



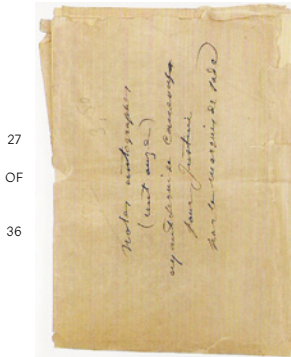
[Page de *Justine*, poinçonnée par la censure.]

Jusqu'à la forme mimétique et passionnée du récit romantique et libertin, celui-ci (*Les crimes de l'amour*), qui constitue la forme suprême, la plus proche du réel, et qui est celle choisie par le romancier libre, le romancier vrai. Ce dernier a ce courage que les autres n'ont pas : celui de mettre en scène les passions les plus outrées, les corps les plus «nus» dans leurs dimensions réelles, d'expériences vécues, à la première personne. Et le lecteur est invité à suivre cette «leçon» évolutive.

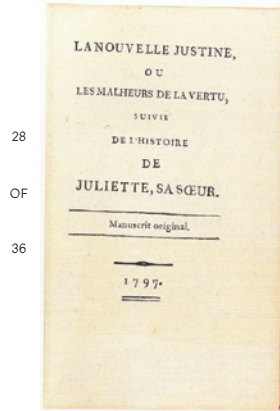
Sade nous offre ainsi une exposition de l'histoire d'un tel progrès du roman, depuis Apulée jusqu'aux contemporains, au *grand modèle anglais*. Les romans sont ainsi jugés et appréciés suivant le critère du degré formel de force d'expression des *instincts corporels*, qui sont à la base du même instinct narratif fictionnel. Le roman anglais et Rousseau y occupent une place de premier rang: «C'est Richardson, c'est Fielding qui nous ont appris que l'étude profonde du cœur de l'homme, véritable dédale de la nature, peut

seule inspirer le romancier, dont l'ouvrage doit nous faire voir l'homme, non pas seulement ce qu'il est, ou ce qu'il se montre, c'est le devoir de l'historien, mais tel qu'il peut être, tel que doivent le rendre les *modifications* du vice, et toutes les secousses des passions; il faut donc les connaître toutes, il faut donc les employer toutes, si l'on veut travailler ce genre; là, nous apprîmes aussi, que ce n'est pas toujours en faisant triompher la vertu qu'on intéresse...»²⁸.

²⁸ *Ibidem*, pp. 38-39.



【Manuscrit autographe de
La Nouvelle Justine (1797).】



【Frontispice du manuscrit
autographe.】

Depuis cette constatation Sade procède à la défense de ses propres choix de poétique et de forme. La supériorité du «roman noir» libertin, qui peint cruellement le vice et la corruption, consiste dans sa proximité majeure à la force authentique de la nature du cœur de l'homme²⁹. «La connaissance la plus essentielle qu'il exige est bien certainement celle du cœur de l'homme. Or, cette connaissance importante [...] on ne l'acquiert que par des *malheurs* et par des *voyages*; il faut avoir vu des hommes de toutes les nations pour les bien connaître, et il faut avoir été leur victime pour savoir les apprécier»³⁰.

Le romancier qui connaît son art est comme l'*enfant incestueux de la nature*. Sade conclut, avec scandale, à sa définition de la figure du vrai romancier ou du romancier vrai: «Ô toi qui veux parcourir cette épineuse carrière! ne perds pas de vue que le romancier est l'homme de la nature; elle l'a créé pour être son peintre; s'il ne devient pas l'*amant de sa mère* dès que celle-ci l'a mis au monde, qu'il n'écrive jamais, nous ne le lirons point; Mais s'il éprouve cette soif ardente de *tout peindre*; s'il entrouvre avec frémissement le sein de la nature, pour y chercher son art et pour y puiser des modèles, s'il a la *fièvre* du talent et l'enthousiasme du génie, qu'il suive la main qui le conduit, il a deviné l'homme, il le peindra...»³¹.

²⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 39: «Car lorsque la vertu triomphe, les choses étant ce qu'elles doivent être, nos larmes sont tarées avant que de couler; mais si, après les plus rudes épreuves, nous voyons enfin la vertu terrassée par le vice, indispensablement nos âmes se déchirent, et l'ouvrage nous ayant excessivement émus, ayant, comme disait Diderot, *ensanglanté nos cœurs au revers*, doit indubitablement produire l'intérêt, qui seul assure des lauriers».

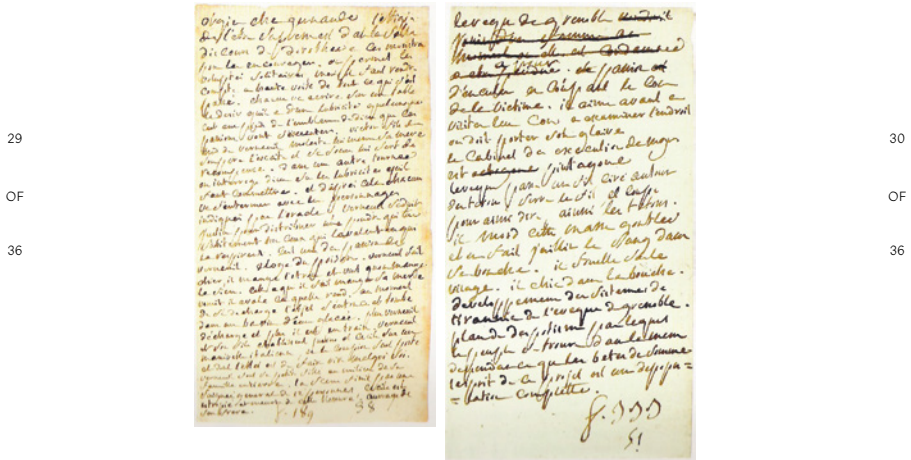
³⁰ *Ibidem*, pp. 43-44. ³¹ *Ibidem*, p. 44 (mes italiques).

11. L'«intensivisme» sadien

La poétique de Sade requiert donc l'excès, le comble, l'outrage même des sens et du corps, comme des moyens pour exprimer la force de la nature, à travers le génie (notion nouvelle) qui la *sent*, l'imagine dans tous ses aspects, même les plus outrés, et la reproduit. C'est ce qu'on a appelé «l'intensivisme» sadien³²: «... Maîtrisé par son imagination qu'il y cède, qu'il embellisse ce qu'il voit : le sot cueille une rose et l'effeuille, l'homme de génie la respire et la peint: voilà celui que nous lirons [...] Contenu d'ailleurs par aucune digue, use, à ton aise, du droit de porter atteinte à toutes les anecdotes de l'histoire, quand la rupture de ce frein devient nécessaire aux plaisirs que tu nous prépares»³³.

³² Jean Deprun - *Sade philosophe* cit., p. LXV: «Nous entendons par là l'idéal du plus grand choc donné ou reçu. [...] le bonheur n'est que dans ce qui agite, et [...] il n'y a que le crime qui agite' (*La Nouvelle Justine*).»

³³ D.A.F. Sade - *Idée sur les romans* cit., pp. 44-45.



[Pages manuscrites de la Nouvelle Justine.]

Pas de règles, donc, pour le bon romancier, mais «d'élaus»: voilà le génie. L'esthétique du corps de Sade implique la rupture des règles habituelles du genre littéraire, au gré de la force de l'imagination mimétique et du plaisir induits dans le lecteur. Il esquisse ainsi ici la notion de *génie*³⁴. Les corps dans le roman sadien se composent ensemble par une sorte d'agencement vital expansif qui les contraint à la fusion dans le comble du plaisir, mimé par le roman lui-même: «Une fois ton esquisse jetée, travaille ardemment à l'étendre, mais sans te resserrer dans les bornes qu'elle paraît d'abord te prescrire; tu deviendrais maigre et froid avec cette méthode ; ce sont des élaus que nous voulons de toi, et non pas des règles ; dépasse tes plans, varie-les, augmente-les; ce n'est qu'en

travaillant que les idées viennent [...]. Je n'exige essentiellement de toi qu'une seule chose, c'est de soutenir *l'intérêt et le plaisir* jusqu'à la dernière page...»³⁵.

³⁴ Ce qui est à rapprocher de la définition qu'en donne, à la même époque, Immanuel Kant, dans sa *Critique de la faculté de juger* (1797), éd. fr. par A. Philonenko, Paris, Vrin, 1989, § 46, p. 138 : «*Les beaux-arts sont les arts du génie. Le génie est le talent (don naturel), qui donne les règles à l'art. Puisque le talent, comme faculté productive innée de l'artiste, appartient lui-même à la nature, on pourrait s'exprimer ainsi : le génie est la disposition innée de l'esprit (ingenium) par laquelle la nature donne les règles à l'art.*»

³⁵ D.A.F. Sade - *Idée sur les romans* cit., pp. 45-46 (mes italiques).



【Frontispice de *La Philosophie dans le boudoir* (1795).】



【*La Philosophie dans le boudoir*
- Planche 1.】

12. Le roman «romantique»

Par ses thèses innovatrices Sade a inspiré un grand nombre d'écrivains romantiques de l'époque (Stendhal, Balzac etc.). L'héroïne de la nouvelle *Faxelange, ou Les torts de l'ambition*, dans *Les Crimes de l'amour* est décrite de cette façon : «M^{lle} de Faxelange venait d'atteindre sa seizième année; elle avait une de ces espèces de *figures romantiques*, dont chaque trait peint une vertu; une peau très blanche, de beaux yeux bleus, la bouche un peu grande, mais bien ornée, une taille souple et légère, et les plus beaux cheveux du monde»³⁶. Après le romantisme, les poètes décadents, et le symbolisme, surtout, s'intéressent à cette *esthétique de l'excès* qui connote l'écriture de Sade et sa philosophie du corps.

L'intérêt du modèle narratif et descriptif proposé par Sade résidait dans le primat accordé au *corps libre* et à une «Nature» amoralisée, en tant que paradigme de vérité et d'énergie vitale qui excède toujours les limites de l'humain, à une époque de générale *pauvreté* créative : «La nature, plus bizarre que les moralistes ne nous la peignent,

s'échappe à tout instant des digues que la politique de ceux-ci voudrait lui prescrire ; uniforme dans ses plans, irrégulière dans ses effets, son sein toujours agité, ressemble au foyer d'un volcan d'où s'élancent tour à tour, ou des pierres précieuses servant au luxe des hommes, ou des globes de feu qui les anéantissent ; grande, quand elle peuple la terre d'Antonins et de Titus; affreuse, quand elle y vomit des Andronics ou des Nérons ; mais toujours sublime, toujours majestueuse, toujours digne de nos études, de nos pinceaux et de notre respectueuse admiration»³⁷.

³⁶ D.A.F. Sade - *Faxelange, ou Les torts de l'ambition*, dans *Les crimes de l'amour* cit., p. 53 (mes italiques).

³⁷ D.A.F. Sade - *Idée sur les romans* cit., p. 47.



【La Philosophie dans le boudoir
- Planche 2.】



【La Philosophie dans le boudoir
- Planche 3.】

33

OF

36

34

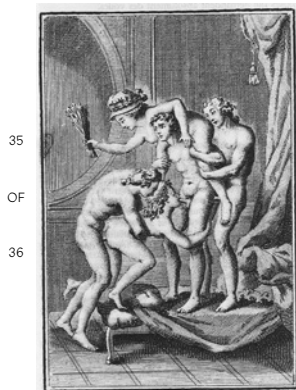
OF

36

Sade s'achemine ainsi vers la formulation de sa philosophie et de son anthropologie pessimiste de la liberté, qu'il va élaborer dans les ouvrages successives. Dans l'hymne «Aux Libertins» et aux «Voluptueux di tous les âges et de tous les sexes», l'auteur de *La Philosophie dans le Boudoir, ou les Instituteurs immoraux. Dialogues destinés à l'éducation des jeunes demoiselles* (1795) ne manque pas de rappeler l'inspiration naturaliste et matérialiste – «antiphysique», comme l'on a déjà remarqué – de cette philosophie³⁸: «Le cynique Dolmancé vous serve d'exemple; allez aussi loin que lui [...] convainquez-vous à son école que ce n'est qu'en étendant la sphère de ses goûts et de ses fantaisies, que ce n'est qu'en sacrifiant tout à la volupté, que le malheureux individu connu sous le nom d'homme, et jeté malgré lui sur ce triste univers, peut réussir à semer quelques roses sur les épines de la vie»³⁹.

³⁸ Très intéressante est aussi la perspective «pédagogique» (paradoxe) de cette philosophie sadienne, comme l'a bien relevé M. Menin, «Sade éducateur La perversion textuelle et les paradoxes d'une pédagogie subversive», dans *Arts et Savoirs*, revue en ligne, n. 13/2020 («Lumières plurielles»). Sous la direction de Rotraud von Kulesha et Catriona Seth), p. <https://journals.openedition.org/aes/2721>, dernière consultation: le 2 janvier 2021 (<https://doi.org/10.4000/aes.2721>).

³⁹ D.A.F. Sade - *La Philosophie dans le Boudoir. Ouvrage posthume de l'auteur de Justine. La mère en prescrira la lecture à sa fille*, dans *Œuvres*. Édition établie par M. Delon, cit., vol. III, p. 3.



35
OF
36

【La Philosophie dans le boudoir - Planche 5.】

36
OF
36



[André Breton (1896-1966).]

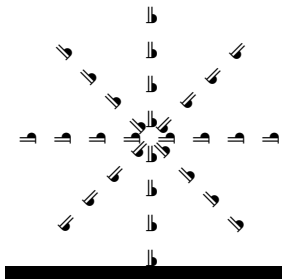
Dans cette direction se prépare déjà l'«avenir surréaliste» de Sade. L'histoire des effets de la philosophie de Sade (les meilleurs effets) s'accomplit avec la redécouverte surréaliste, en France, dans les années 1920-1930, de la part de ces poètes qui, juste après Apollinaire et sa première redécouverte du «divin marquis», au début du XX^e siècle, en avaient admiré et apprécié les œuvres⁴⁰. Ce sont les surréalistes qui ont saisi la portée révolutionnaire et subversive – au sens positif – de la philosophie de Sade. Grâce au travail poético-philologique d'Apollinaire cet avenir surréaliste s'enracine dans l'histoire du nouveau siècle, et inaugure sa réévaluation à l'époque de la réalisation politique effective du projet totalitaire des *120 Journées*, cauchemar sadien d'un «crime historique parfait», à l'époque des nazi-fascismes européens.

Et c'est bien dans le chant et dans la dénonciation de la violence qui s'ouvrent une brèche dans la nuit morale» et là éclosent des nouvelles perspective de liberté, comme l'affirma A. Breton (*L'Air de l'eau*):

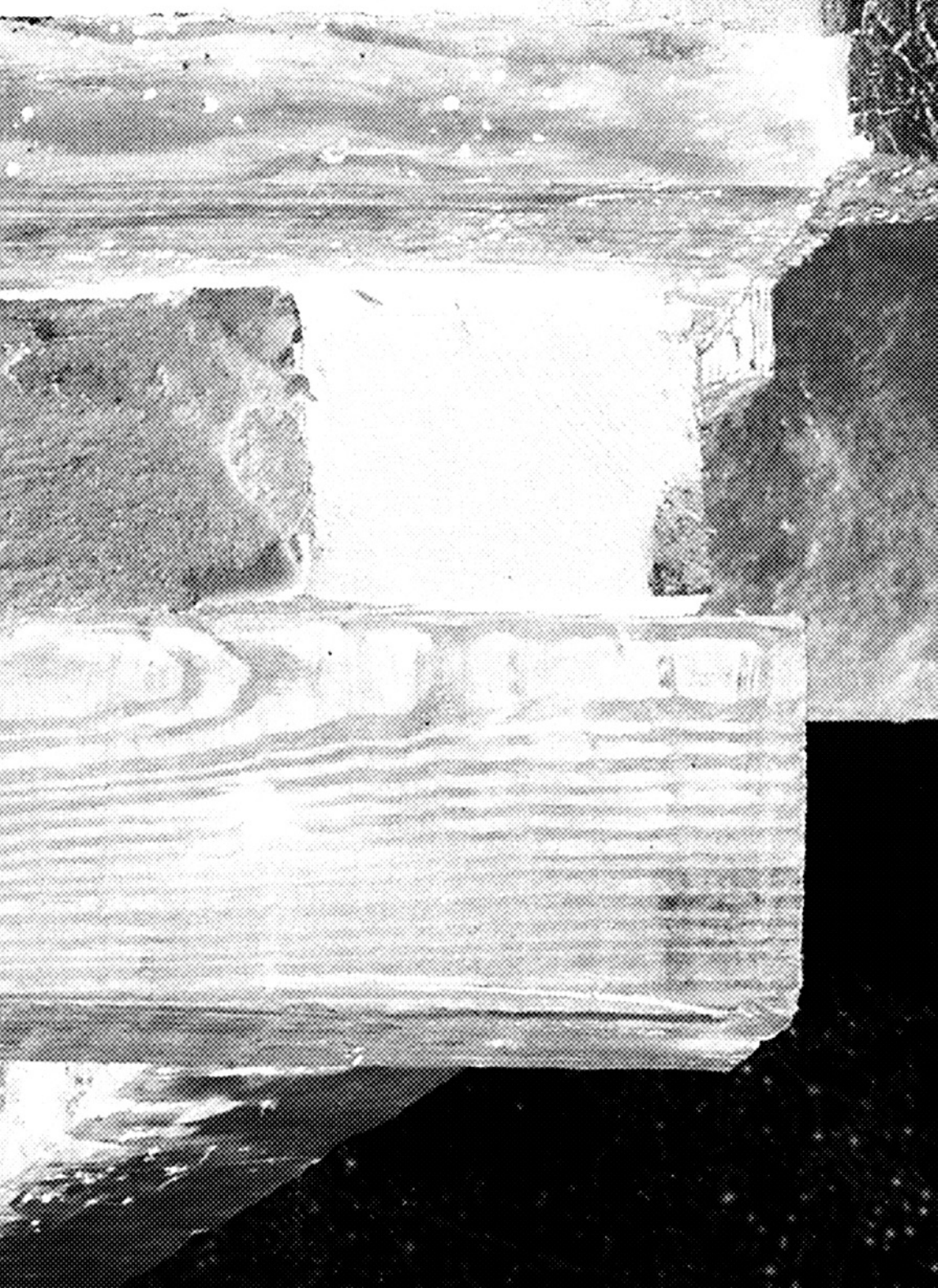
⁴⁰ Cf. *L'Œuvre du Marquis de Sade*. Paris, éd. par Guillaume Apollinaire, La Bibliothèque des Curieux (coll. «Maîtres de l'Amour»), 1909. Introduction de G. Apollinaire [première anthologie de l'œuvre de Sade]; G. Apollinaire - *Les Diables amoureux*, dans *Œuvres en prose complètes*, to. III. Paris, éd. par P. Caizergues et M. Décaudin, Gallimard-Pléiade, 1993, «Notice», pp. 1278-1279; voir aussi : Laurence Campa, «Apollinaire et Sade», dans *Cahiers de l'AIEF*, 1995, n. 47, pp. 391-404.

*Le marquis de Sade a regagné l'intérieur du volcan en éruption
D'où il était venu
Avec ses belles mains encore frangées
Ses yeux de jeune fille
Et cette raison à fleur de sauve-qui-peut qui ne fut
Qu'à lui
Mais du salon phosphorescent à lampes de viscères
Il n'a cessé de jeter les ordres mystérieux
Qui ouvrent une brèche dans la nuit morale
C'est par cette brèche que je vois
Les grandes ombres craquantes la vieille écorce minée
Se dissoudre
Pour me permettre de t'aimer
Comme le premier homme aima la première femme
En toute liberté
Cette liberté
Pour laquelle le feu même s'est fait homme
Pour laquelle le marquis de Sade défia les siècles de ses grands arbres
abstraits
D'acrobates tragiques
Cramponnés au fil de la Vierge du désir (1934)⁴¹.*

⁴¹ André Breton - *Le Marquis de Sade*, dans *L'Air de l'Eau*, dans *Œuvres complètes*, to. II. Paris, éd. par M. Bonnet, Gallimard-Pléiade, 1992, p. 756.



socially
inequality crosses
these places



Nuno Faleiro Rodrigues

E07

AMERICANISM AND FORDISM: REPETITION, HABIT, AND IDEOLOGY

In “Americanism and Fordism,” Antonio Gramsci argues that the mechanisation of production is more difficult when performing intellectual tasks.¹ Referring to the scribing of texts before the advent of mechanical printing, he contends that the manual copying of the original manuscript is performed more efficiently if the scribe “forgot,” or was ignorant about, the content of the text, able therefore to fully focus on the technical task of graphic reproduction. As Gramsci claims: “The worker’s interest in the intellectual content of the text can be measured from his mistakes.”² Medieval scribes failed to automatically reproduce manuscripts because the copying process was not completely mechanical; they had “too much time” to reproduce the original. Within the context of planned industrial production, Gramsci foresees a contrasting condition. Through repetitive mechanical actions, the factory worker will potentially free his mind and can even become, at least spiritually, anti-conformist. Manual habit can free the spirit.

¹ See *Americanism and Fordism* in Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks* (London: Lawrence and Wishart), pp. 279–318. This claim is advanced in the section titled *Taylorism and the Mechanization of the Worker*, pp. 308–310.

² *Ibid.*, 309.

In today’s digital life, it is not just possible but almost unavoidable to reproduce words, images, and sounds mechanically, without paying attention to content. The endless and almost effortless reproduction of information and the capacity to disseminate it, by the click of a button, on a global scale, makes manual reproduction either a luxury or something belonging to a distant past. “Users” become ideal copyists, able to reproduce informational content automatically. The Ideal Copyist is everywhere: in the workplace, at home, and in the spaces in-between, cutting and pasting at will, as the effortless replication of words, texts, images, and videos colonises day-to-day life. But what if there is no one reading what is being mechanically reproduced? What if copying is the purpose of copying? Here, there would be no copies coming out of reproduction, as if the latter had freed itself from production. If that were the case, the possibility of a non-conformist industrial worker could not be posited, as mechanical reproduction would spread beyond the confines of the work environment, free time occupied with a kind of repetitive mechanisation of the mind. Brute manual repetition and the acquisition of habits can free the mind insofar as it allows the latter to do something less mechanical and repetitive. Here, we can think of a kind of inverted situation where the body is no longer subjected to repetitive gestures in the work environment, as the mind becomes ever more mechanical and repetitive.

In a world without readers but only copyists, mechanical reproduction ceases to be the means of producing particular objects with a particular content. Rather, it forms a continuum of discreet gestures that become the “content” of lived experience. Following the empiricist position, habit is born out of the *experience* of repetition (the repeated experience of an association of two different experiences in a specific order). For instance, habit can be an experiential sedimentation of the repetitive *act* of copying, and, in this sense, we are already in the domain of reproduction—the production of habits—before we are inside the conditions of material production.³ From this standpoint, we see, touch, and hear repetition before we *act* habitually. Certainly, without the repetitive act of copying, there can be no experience of the copying itself as an experiential habit, but what we want to emphasise is that the repetition of experiences constitutes a phenomenal antechamber that makes the mechanical reproduction of actions possible. Experiential habit precedes, and grounds, the repetition of actions. Before entering the factory plant, the mechanical industrial worker is already inscribed in the assembly line of everyday life, primarily not by the endless, repetitive, dull gestures that structure it, but by the way these already occupy free mental space.

³ David Hume defines habit as the repetition of an association of different experiences. He contends that habits or customs ground human reality, conferring stability and predictability to experienced life.

We can return to a classic scene on manual repetition and industrial production, the famous assembly line of *Modern Times* (1936), and play it backwards. Playing a factory worker in a factory assembly line, Chaplin is pushed to tighten two large nuts at an ever-increasing speed. Having the urge to scratch his arm and, after, distracted by a fly hovering around his face, he struggles to cope with the intensity and repetitive nature of the task. When he has a break, his body, which had been through endless repetitive gestures, takes some time to adjust to the new “free” conditions, and endures a kind of mechanical-spastic performance, until it finally calms down. This incapacity of the body to adapt to intensive and repetitive work is seemingly solved by the mind, and Chaplin becomes obsessed with his tightening task, plunging into the production line belt; later, he is obsessively determined to tighten large buttons on women’s dresses, as if there was nothing else in the world but loose nuts. Once his mind conforms and invests fully on the manual task, he is reduced to a blind tightening machine. Finally, he is taken to a psychiatric institution.

As the worker is yet a body and a mind not fully compliant to industrial production, in this scene we witness a kind of first encounter between a form of production and the undisciplined workforce in its spastic response to primitive accumulation. But the encroachment of economic planning on all spheres of everyday life changes the mind and the body of the worker. It must change the mind and the body of the worker. Through the habitual sedimentation of associations that makes industrial economic planning resemble the laws of nature, the individual is already a worker even before

entering the factory plant. In his mind, he is already repeatedly tightening those large nuts, and when the task arrives his body is ready. The arrival of a new form of economic organisation, one based on industrial automation and relocation, does not necessarily result in the liberation of the worker's body and mind from mechanical repetition. It is rather the case that, as industrial manual work tends to decrease in the so-called post-industrial and post-Fordist economies, everyday automated repetition ceases to be perceived as an extension of industrial production to manifest the sheer force of habitual discipline. Geographically, manufacturing plants are relocated elsewhere so that the family-factory, the school-factory, and the leisure-factory can remain, rooted in their mechanical repetitive splendour.

The image of the copyist without the reader renders visible the interrelation of two distinct phenomena: it links crude mechanical repetition to habitual experience (and actions) as it places the former in the "natural" terrain of everyday life while divesting it from economic constraints. In other words, it brings brute repetition closer to subjective experience as it pulls it away from the immediate imperatives of economic production. It is an image that makes undiscernible "cultural" mores and brute mechanical repetition. One can point out that erasing the reader from the copying process is a rather rhetorical and pointless move, since the image of mechanical repetition outside the economic sphere, or, more generically, reproduction outside production, is socially in-existent and theoretically useless. But that is beside the point. On the one hand, there are "social regimes" of repetition that cannot be reduced to economic reasoning. On the other hand, we should always consider the seeming autonomy of reproductive habit in relative terms. Marx's well-known expression "the dull compulsion of economic relations," often quoted to highlight the autonomy of the economic sphere within the capitalist mode of production and the worker's structural dependence on selling its labour force in the market, stresses the repetitive and compulsive nature of economic survival. By highlighting the industrial nature of free time, the figure of the ideal copyist is an image that helps reposition dull compulsion as a stabilising mechanism in the service of the "pure" reproduction of lived experience.⁴

Partially, "Americanism and Fordism" revolves around the non-repressive mechanisms deployed to regulate the worker's mind and body, that is, the "psycho-physical adaptation" demanded by the new socioeconomic process of production coming from the USA. In this notebook, Gramsci addresses the question of social adaptation to the new modes of economic planning that laid somewhere outside the confines of the factory plant, closer to domestic life and the moral values that inform it, even if he briefly claims that this new subject is constructed in and around the site of production. For Gramsci, these new conditions required the development of a new "type of man suited to the new type of work and productive

⁴ In the paragraph where the expression can be found, Marx refers to the dull compulsion of economic relations as a complementary force to education, tradition, and habit. Here is the full quotation: "It is not enough that the conditions of labour are concentrated in a mass, in the shape of capital, at the one pole of society, while at the other are grouped masses of men, who have nothing to sell but their labour-power. Neither is it enough that they are compelled to sell it voluntarily. The advance of capitalist production develops a working class, which by education, tradition, habit, looks upon the conditions of that mode of production as self-evident laws of Nature. The organisation of the capitalist process of production, once fully developed, breaks down all resistance. The constant generation of a relative surplus-population keeps the law of supply and demand of labour, and therefore keeps wages, in a rut that corresponds with the wants of capital. The dull compulsion of economic relations completes the subjection of the labourer to the capitalist. Direct force, outside economic conditions, is of course still used, but only exceptionally. In the ordinary run of things, the labourer can be left to the 'natural laws of production,' i.e., to his dependence on capital, a dependence springing from, and guaranteed

in perpetuity by, the conditions of production themselves. It is otherwise during the historic genesis of capitalist production. The bourgeoisie, at its rise, wants and uses the power of the state to 'regulate' wages, i.e., to force them within the limits suitable for surplus-value making, to lengthen the working-day and to keep the labourer himself in the normal degree of dependence. This is an essential element of the so-called primitive accumulation." Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. 1, Chapter 28, "Bloody Legislation Against the Expropriated, from the End of the 15th Century. Forcing Down of Wages by Acts of Parliament", in *Marx and Engels Collected Works*, Vol. 35 (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1975), p. 726.

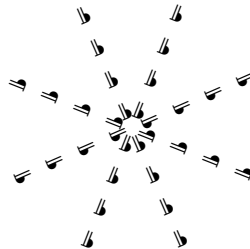
⁵ *Americanism and Fordism*, p. 286.

⁶ We can argue that, to a certain extent, *Americanism and Fordism* investigates naked ideological processes that relate to Fordist planification before being fully established. They are moments in the infancy of a new mode of capitalist organisation not yet hegemonic. Ideology, here, constitutes the "psycho-physical" regulatory mechanism for the construction of a new man (subject/worker). "In America rationalization has determined the need to elaborate a new type of man suited to the new type of work and productive process. This elaboration is still only in its initial phase and therefore (apparently) still idyllic. It is still at the stage

process."⁵ Concerned with the emergence of a new kind of planification of production in the USA and the challenges that applying it in Europe would involve, Gramsci starts by laying out some of the most important problems that this shift entails. Of the topics that he enunciates, three deserve our attention: first, the "question of sex," that is, in more current Marxian terms, the function of social reproduction within economic production; second, Gramsci stresses the need to investigate if the new model of economic planning is merely conjectural or if it represents a necessary moment in the history of capitalist development; third, he stresses the need to investigate whether these transformations occurred firstly on the level of economic infrastructure or whether, on the contrary, they started from the "outside," through the construction of a new juridical framework. By stressing these three topics, we can sense the enormous ambition stated in this notebook, which, like most of the other prison manuscripts, is fragmented and sketchy. More than discussing the enunciated topics at length, Gramsci draws a kind of chart of a problematic to be further analysed. What is remarkable in Gramsci's scheme is that the question of production planning is addressed not so much through economic analysis (although there is a section on high wages and finance) and management techniques (despite a brief reference to Taylorism), but in the domain of social reproduction (the family), moral values (for instance, the function of puritanism and prohibition in the USA of the 1930s), and the sedimentation of new habits. This is because, Gramsci explains, beyond economic and managerial efficiency, the development of a new model of production requires the production of an equilibrium of new modes of coercion and persuasion; the formation of a new social milieu based on the right balance between consent and force. Coercion can be imposed economically and legally, the force of law and the market; persuasion, on the other hand, can be economic (high wages), legal (contractual bonds and other forms of voluntary legal agreement), but is always underscored by ideology. Moreover, as Gramsci points out, in modern societies, coercive force without consent is unproductive. The regulation of primal libidinal forces, "sexual instincts" and "animality," require the construction of an ethics and the fabrication of traditions and habits that make mores and virtue "superstructural" functions of economic planning. Above all, economic planning is a problem of consensual reproduction, that is, of ideology. But ideology is itself constructed as a complex problematic, composed of different fields and functions, not necessarily harmonised into one unifying system. It is within the multi-layered and contradictory compound of ideological mechanisms that the "corporeal" regulation of the subject, based on the dull compulsion to repeat, must be framed. Repetition becomes the site of naked ideology.⁶

¶
¶
¶
¶

of psycho-physical adaptation to the new industrial structure, aimed for through high wages. Up to the present (until the 1929 crash) there has not been, except perhaps sporadically, any flowering of the 'superstructure.' In other words, the fundamental question of hegemony has not yet been posed." (*Americanism and Fordism*, p. 286).



in the rhythm
of breathing



Nayia Yiakoumaki

E08

<https://www.whitechapelgallery.org/exhibitions/killed-negatives-unseen-images-1930s-america/>

KILLED NEGATIVES: DEPICTING POVERTY, STAGING PROSPERITY



【Arthur Rothenstein (1915–1985), Untitled.】

1
OF
13

A famous photographic commissioning project that took place in the US in the 1930s was revisited, and thus a new aspect of it was revealed, through a curatorial initiative at Whitechapel Gallery's Archive Gallery in 2018. The exhibition *Killed Negatives: Unseen Images of America in the 1930s*, which took place from 16 May to 26 August 2018, presented to the public, for the first time, a surprising reality.

The original commissioning project, known as the "FSA commissions," derived from the New Deal, a big funding programme involving many strands across the economy. This programme started during the Franklin Roosevelt administration, after the dramatic American financial crash of 1929. The New Deal aimed at creating safeguards on the banking industry and was an effort to re-inflate the economy from 1933 to 1939.

The original project is infamous and has played a significant part in marking an important moment in the history of photography, and the history of America in general, as well as constituting a celebrated moment of photojournalism.

The focus of this short photo essay, which is in essence a long caption to the photographs presented, is the selection process (a process of censorship in essence) that was deployed in order for the project to be delivered to government officials and the American public successfully, and thus for this new history to be created.

One of the state bodies involved in delivering the New Deal was the Farm Security Administration, which took on the responsibility of recording the farmland and administering financial support to the farmers.

Poverty, a state previously imagined as a result of weakness of the individual or an organisation and mainly happening in the urban centres, now had to be re-framed. For the first time, there was a social recognition of widespread rural poverty and, hence, the need for the New Deal. Seventy-eight percent of the US rural population was experiencing poverty. Although, on the one hand, the ones who were poor before the crash (i.e. the chronically poor) were considered immoral, dangerous, and personally weak, the population of the deserving poor became the face of the FSA.

There was a huge financial investment in the project which lasted several years. For the government officials, though, the support given to the farmers was not enough on its own; the aid process had to be recorded and proven, and consequently widely disseminated to the public.

Deserving poor families had to apply and when accepted they could become "clients" of the FSA. The business-driven word "client" is used frequently in all the documentation, instead of "farmer," "family," or "individual." The criteria for accepting a farmer on the programme is not clear. We only know that this was decided after interviews conducted by FSA's local administrators sometime on site, where people lived. Some studies report that black families were found "unfit" more frequently than white families; as a result, black families had to be uprooted rather than helped to stay.

People appear in those images locked in dire poverty, living in the humblest of circumstances, often as sharecroppers performing backbreaking work, picking crops, planting trees, etc. Sometimes, people who are struggling are juxtaposed near others who are more comfortable and living in better conditions. What we see is working people, calloused hands, domestic labour, and tired feet. This is hard work, making it clear to all viewers what it once meant to be "dirt poor."

During the FSA project, famous photographers were commissioned by Roy Stryker, the director of the programme. Some are among the most celebrated American street photographers of the 20th century—for example, Dorothea Lange, Walker Evans, Ben Shahn, Carl Mydans, Arthur Rothstein, and others.

The purpose of the original commission was twofold. Objectively, it was to record the farmland and farmers living there, and in essence to record the financial assistance offered to farmers by the FSA. However, a broader and more long-term goal was based on the fact that, by presenting the recovery of the farmers, these photographs could bring back hope to a country shattered by the financial crisis. Because of the way it was done, essentially, the brief was to photograph poverty but only so that it could be eventually staged or "faked" as prosperity, and I will explain how.

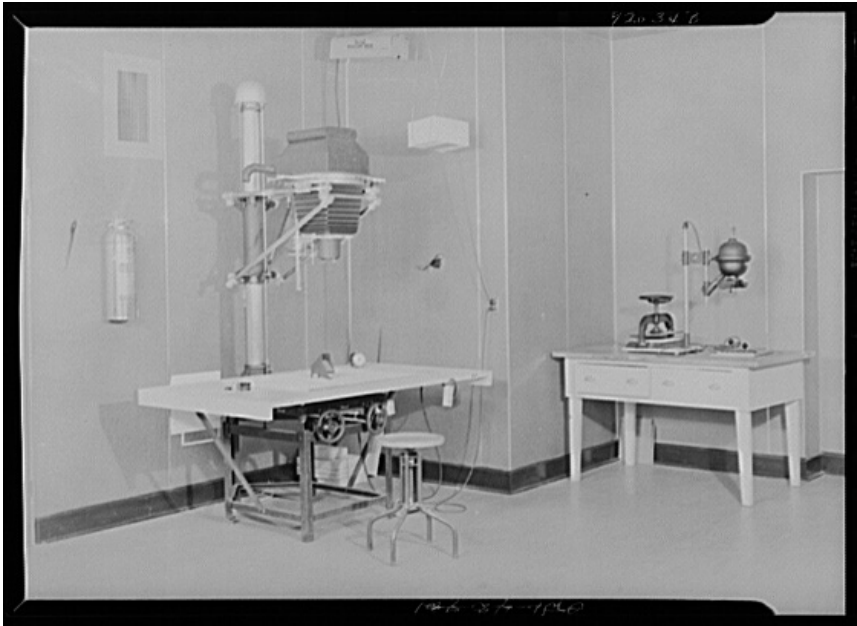
Roy Stryker was heading the photographic commissions for the FSA. Whilst he was approaching and inviting photographers to take on the commissions in different parts of the country, he was also funding state-of-the-art photographic darkrooms. These were equipped with the latest apparatus and had trained technicians in place. When the photographers were sending their films from the countryside to the FSA, the facilities enabled the FSA to process them quickly and progress to the selection and then the printing of the final photographs, which would be ready for publication in selected national press, such as *Life Magazine* or *Picture Post*.



2

OF

13



3

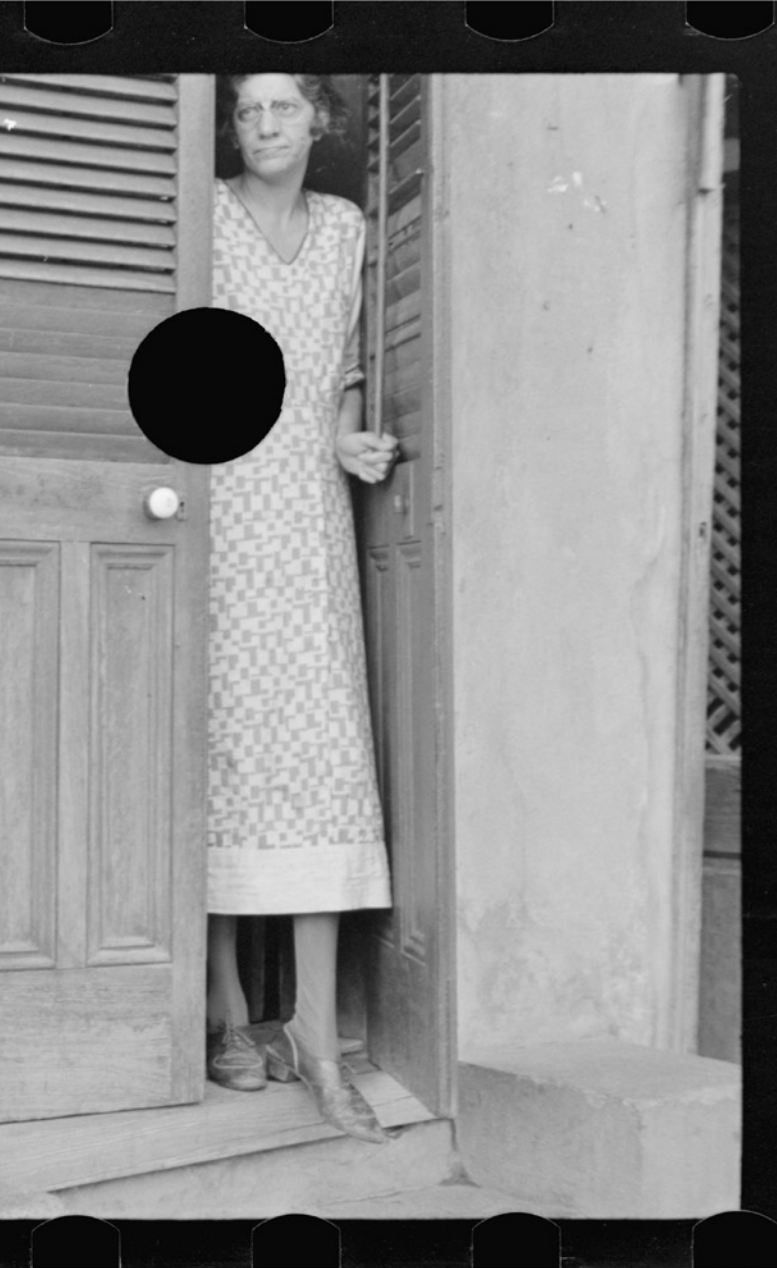
OF

13





[Ben Shahn (1898–1969), Untitled photo, possibly related to: Resident at Amite City, Louisiana.]



4

OF

13

What the exhibition at Whitechapel Gallery revealed for the first time to the public was the methodology deployed in selecting the final images and thus creating this famous history: both the commission briefs as well as the selection methods that Roy Stryker put in action were ruthless. Photographers were paid a good salary to travel and take their pictures, and were obliged by strict contracts to send all of their rolls of films on a weekly basis back to the FSA. The careful staging started from the brief they would give out to the photographers, followed by specific shooting scripts. The brief was very specific, and the "shooting scripts" were sent to them for every project they were undertaking. These scripts were written carefully, instructing that the photographic shots should be returned and always following the same pattern, which created a narrative of progress and improvement. The first instruction was to depict the situation as a harsh condition (instructions include descriptions such as "take photographs of animals with perched tongues" or "position families in order of age"); as the instructions continued from 1 to 10, the photographer was told to follow specific guidelines and to progressively show how the farmers were becoming "happier," "more well-off," and all-in-all contented, due to the FSA funding.

The situation was very contrived and it is very difficult to see how the photographers could use the camera as a political tool and express what they were thinking about the situation they were witnessing. The worse part is when it came to select what was to be kept, Stryker and his assistants would select the images they felt true to their brief but all the other images were punctured through with a hole puncher, and rendered unusable for the future. In the exhibition we included approximately 70 images of the thousands of killed negatives (as they called them) that exist as well as important documents from the FSA that attest the nature of the commission which was to a certain extend extremely controlling.



7. Chart showing agencies transferred to Resettlement.

SHOOTING SCRIPT FOR FARM DEBT ADJUSTMENT

1. Grain elevator - or any crops rotting in fields. (to illustrate no markets-too much surplus)
- ★ 2. Courtroom scene (farmer's seeking relief at law)
- ★ 3. Sheriff's sale (farm and home lost - ropes hanging from barn door)
- ★ 4. Milk blockades - dumping - rioting - trucks tipping over, etc.
5. Farmer or farmers dumping milk at home.
- ★ 6. Federal Government shot (Congress in Session)
7. Chart showing agencies transferred to Resettlement.
8. Worried farmer (going over accounts, etc.)
9. His farm (run down - in disrepair - implements idle in field, etc.)
10. Farmer seeking credit (coming out of a building (not necessarily a bank.))
11. Farm Debt Adjustment Committee (whole group)
12. Two FDA committeemen calling on farmer.
13. FDA meeting - committee - creditor and farmer-debtor.
14. Show creditor's business house - store - bank- or something similar.
15. Debtor and Creditor signing adjusted agreements - smiling.
16. Farmer and creditor leaving building - shaking hands.
- ★ 17. Chart showing scale down of that particular debt.
- ★ 18. Chart showing national picture of adjustments.
19. Back on farm - saved - relieved and happy.

★-We have these shots OR access to them.

[Shooting Script for Farm Debt Adjustment, Library of Congress.]

SHOOTING SCRIPT FOR FARM DEBT ADJUSTMENT

1. Grain elevator - or any crops rotting in fields. (to illustrate no

6

OF

13



[Russell Lee (1903–1986), Untitled photo, possibly related to: Mr. Tronson, farmer near Wheelock, North Dakota, 1937.]

7

OF

13



[Ben Shahn (1898–1969), Untitled photo, possibly related to: Family of rehabilitation client, Boone County, Arkansas, 1935.]

8

OF

13



[Carl Mydans (1907–2004), Untitled photo, possibly related to: Transients clearing land. Prince George's County, Maryland, 1935.]

9

OF

13



[Arthur Rothstein (1915–1985), Untitled photo, possibly related to: Negro rehabilitation client, Tangipahoa Parish, Louisiana, 1935.]

This meticulous documentation of the violent act of destroying the negatives, under the justification of "selection," was itself very carefully recorded. Perhaps this was part of the success of the civil servant senior administrator—not only to deliver but to show that he had prevented the public from seeing unfit images! The destruction of the negatives, of course, made it impossible for the images to be ever used again, either by the photographer, or press, especially press which was critical of the Roosevelt administration.

10
OF
13

RA-100M-3	MYDANS	August, 1935
	Danish Landroes boar. Prince George County. Beltsville.	
RA-100M-4-5		
	Killed	
RA-101M-1-2		
	Killed	
RA-101M-3		
	In the potato laboratory. Prince George County. Beltsville.	
RA-101M-4		
	Same as above.	
RA-101M-5		
	Killed	
RA-102M-1-2-3		
	Killed	
RA-102M-4		
	Cleaning greenhouse roof. Prince George County. Beltsville.	
RA-102M-5		
	Killed	
RA-103M-1		
	Killed	
RA-103M-2		
	Lettuce. Prince George County. Beltsville.	
RA-103M-3-4-5		
	Killed	
RA-104M-1-2-3		
	Killed	
RA-104M-4		November, 1935
	Part of Experimental Farm. Prince George County. Beltsville.	
RA-104M-5		
	Killed	
RA-105M-1		
	Killed	
RA-105M-2		August, 1935
	Testing relative soil moisture. Prince George County. Beltsville.	
RA-105M-3		
	Same as above.	
RA-105M-4-5		
	Killed	

[Caption sheet for Carl Mydans's negatives, Library of Congress. It shows that the censored negatives were listed as "killed" and marked as such, one by one.]

But why were the images censored? After considering all the documentation, the author and curator of the exhibition came to the conclusion that, apart from the very few occasions where there were obvious technical errors, the people depicted in all the other cases, the human body in its environment, were either too poor or too healthy. Neither of these conditions was desirable, as the project wanted to reveal the *transformation* of the body, from a battered entity to a recovered entity. What was needed more than anything else was not to depict the body but to show the process of improvement. Perhaps, slums where black communities lived and that Carl Mydans photographed repeatedly were too realistically poor, and the Mexican refugees that Dorothea Lange stayed with and recorded daily were somewhat too hopeless to make the case. The FSA wanted a particular type of photographer who would follow instructions and depict poverty and the poor body as something temporary that can easily develop into something more prosperous. Dorothea Lange was sacked and rehired three times by Roy Stryker because she was not delivering what they wanted. At the same time, she was a good photographer and a feisty person, so she stuck to her guns and was always taken back.



[John Vachon (1914–1975), Untitled photo, possibly related to: County supervisor talking with FSA client. Coffey County, Kansas.]

11

OF

13

Today, we have to think: how do photographs which are testaments to censorship and to the impediment of the photographers' freedom of expression become contemporary images? These are images which, seen today, inside a contemporary art gallery, have a twofold impact on the viewer: at first, they shock and alert us, but at the same time they attract us significantly.



[Carl Mydans (1907–2004), Untitled photo, possibly related to: Healthy white children, Washington, D.C.]

When *Killed Negatives* were brought inside the Whitechapel Gallery and viewed by art audiences, they became conceptual, abstract, and mesmerising, regardless of what we were actually witnessing and of the violence and censorship that was revealed about the method of their production.



[Arthur Rothstein (1915–1985), Untitled.]

11

OF

13

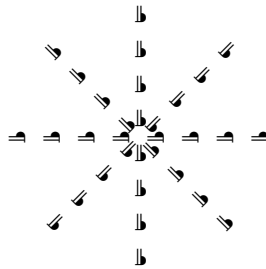
13

OF

13



[John Vachon (1914–1975), Untitled, possibly related to: Wife of a resettled farmer, Roanoke Farms, North Carolina]



transformed
into modes
of repression



Emanuel Cameira

E09

CAN THE STATE FALL IN LOVE? NOTES ON THE SOCIAL INSERTION INCOME (RSI)

Because it suggestively triggers a debate, I find it pertinent to begin this essay by recalling an impressive passage from *Éloge de l'amour*, a 2001 film by the French-Swiss director Jean-Luc Godard: at a certain point, there is a reference to a big-eyed girl “who delivered a true speech about the state and about the impossibility of the state falling in love...” Let us consider this figure of speech as a dynamo to examine a particular form of state action as far as the production of well-being is concerned.

Pierre Bourdieu stated—and I underline it here—that the state, in all countries, seeking to establish itself as the main source of decision-making and power,¹ “is to a certain extent the trace in the reality of social conquests,” even though it is an ... ambiguous reality. It is not adequate to say that it is an instrument in the hands of the ruling class. The state is certainly not completely neutral, completely independent of the dominant forces in society, but the older it is and the greater the social advances it has incorporated, the more autonomous it is.”² Well, welfare states exist in every way, shape, and form. Notwithstanding the fact that “all the governing parties in the Western countries have won their majorities more or less explicitly under the banner of welfare-state objectives,”³ different states can be seen to comprise a unique model of social policy and similar institutions, with relatively different origins and development paths. In fact, these are long processes of social structuring or orchestration—the very national specificities of social and economic (re)composition, which, *sensu lato*, justify the existence of different models of welfare states. However, such does not prevent the creation of more or less coherent policy constellations that end up generating social protection geographies, regimes, or “worlds”⁴ of welfare states (in *Les trois mondes de l'État-providence: Essai sur le capitalisme moderne*, the Swedish Gøsta Esping-Andersen made an important, albeit limited contribution in that sense, looking at the forest and not so much at the trees), leading to, as I was saying, the construction of standard ideals (after Max Weber), which are key to defining comparability criteria and identifying analytically relevant dimensions.

Indeed, Esping-Andersen said—two decades ago already—that “more than 100 years have passed since Bismarck conceived modern social policy, and 50 since the foundations of the welfare state were laid in war-torn Europe. These two historical moments mark the emergence of modern European ideas of civilisation and social justice,”⁵ whose essential properties / main foundations were the safeguarding of employment (the

¹ Cf. Bertrand Badie and Pierre Birnbaum, *Sociologie de l'État* (Paris: Éditions Grasset & Fasquelle, 1979).

² Pierre Bourdieu, *Acts of Resistance: Against the New Myths of Our Time* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1998), p. 33.

³ Jürgen Habermas, “The new obscurity: The crisis of the welfare state and the exhaustion of utopian energies,” in *The New Conservatism: Cultural Criticism and the Historians' Debate* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994), p. 54.

⁴ Gøsta Esping-Andersen, *Les trois mondes de l'État-providence: Essai sur le capitalisme moderne* (Paris: PUF, 1999).

⁵ Gøsta Esping-Andersen, Um Estado-Providência para o século XXI: Sociedades em envelhecimento, economias baseadas no conhecimento e sustentabilidade dos Estados-providência europeus, in Maria João Rodrigues (coord.), *Para uma Europa da inovação e do conhecimento: emprego, reformas económicas e coesão social* (Oeiras: Celta Editora, 2000), p. 79.

Keynesian matrix), the extension of intervention programs to the middle class (not limited to laborers), and a concern for basic social rights—all fundamental aspects of citizenship. It should also be noted that the development of the political structure of the welfare state entailed a progressive integration of all individuals into the space of citizenship, as well as social cohesion, which may be compatible with or legitimise the architecture of capitalism. Yet, in the context of economic and financial austerity that was experienced in the 1970s, along came a movement that tended to dismantle the original purposes of welfare regimes. Indeed, what seems to stand out in Western industrialised countries is no longer, then, a universalisation of the status of citizens (in this respect, one should always bear in mind Denis Diderot's maxim: "To have slaves is nothing; the most frightful thing is to have slaves and call them citizens"), but, on the contrary, the emergence of a new category of outcasts, of individuals excluded from that status.

Despite being part of the European landscape, Portugal has special characteristics when comparing the dissemination of social policies with the welfare state's scope. Considering the tripartite classification of different worlds of welfare state as formulated by Esping-Andersen, the Portuguese version does not align with any of the proposed models, namely: the liberal or Anglo-Saxon one; the continental/corporate (conservative) one; and the social-democratic or Scandinavian one. In fact, it is part of a fourth cluster, together with Greece, Spain, and Italy (the Southern European model, conceptualised by Maurizio Ferrera, Anton Hemerijck, and Martin Rhodes), as it follows "with regard to poverty ... the Anglo-Saxon pattern, [in which] the levels of social protection provided by lean welfare states are scarce, [and in which] possessing few skills is associated with poverty and social exclusion."⁶ Since "the traditional conception of social rights proves ineffective to address the problem of exclusion",⁷ the welfare state would find itself at a kind of deadlock or crossroads. Today, in Portugal—a country of profound inequalities which, until the 1974 democratic transition, neglected the construction of its own welfare state (when it started here, those of other countries were consolidating)—a considerable percentage of individuals (21.6 %, according to 2019 PORDATA data⁸) have *incomes below at-risk-of-poverty thresholds, and live in severe material deprivation or in households with very low labour intensity*. Many of them are forced into multiple contexts of social exclusion. There are two types: the "traditional poor," including elderly people struggling with poverty pensions, underpaid and unskilled workers, "making ends meet" on odd jobs in the underground economy, subsisting on (informal, "on a non-mercantile basis"⁹) family and community mutual aid networks—the welfare society theorised by Boaventura de Sousa Santos in *Pela mão de Alice. O social e o político na pós-modernidade*; and the "new poor," those who have been made vulnerable by chronic unemployment and constant job uncertainty, those who cannot get a first job, single-parent households, immigrants, those who have fallen into the trap of delinquency, etc. These population sections do

⁶ Maurizio Ferrera, Anton Hemerijck, and Martin Rhodes, *O Futuro da Europa Social: Repensar o Trabalho e a Protecção Social na Nova Economia* (Oeiras: Celta Editora, 2000), p. 3.

⁷ Pierre Rosanvallon, *La Nouvelle question sociale. Repenser l'État-providence* (Paris: Seuil, 1995), p. 10.

⁸ *Contemporary Portugal Database* (accessed on 25 January 2021). Last updated on 9 December 2020.

⁹ Boaventura de Sousa Santos, *Pela mão de Alice. O social e o político na pós-modernidade* (Porto: Edições Afrontamento, 1994), p. 64.

not fully enjoy their social rights and, in some cases, at an empirical level, give substance to a notion of social exclusion whose success lies “precisely in the fact that, in addition to not implying quantification (a characteristic of the concept[s] of—absolute, relative—poverty which refer[s] only to the lack of resources), emphasises a crisis of social links, while referring to the problem of economic inequalities.”¹⁰

¹⁰ Pedro Adão e Silva, “O rendimento mínimo garantido e a nova questão social,” in *Sociedade e Trabalho* 3, Ministério do Trabalho e da Solidariedade, October 1998, p. 36.

I now return to Bourdieu and to his idea that “the dominated groups in society have an interest in defending the state, particularly in its social aspect,”¹¹ thus assuming that, over the last three decades, in Portugal, we have witnessed a definition of social policies (an ambition to produce well-being which, according to several authors, is part of the genetic identity of EU states) with a view to putting an end, through active means—those of insertion—to the realities of poverty and exclusion. These “active” and/or “passive” ends of any policy area are situated in a continuum, as is the case of the mediatised **Social Insertion Income**, with anti-poverty projects, support for job creation, or multiple targeted programmes, in the sphere of professional training, health care provision, etc. (Note that the variable “employment” becomes the threshold as it allows for crossing, in political and social terms, various fields, such as competitiveness or inclusion, in certain circuits, but more specifically in the labour market.) At a certain point, this continuum triggered a transition in favour of the first pole that materialised through a triple activation. Firstly, that of the state, its institutions and public services: from a political angle, a responsible, civilised state commits to active field work and does not limit itself to addressing specific needs through the mere payment of subsidies, but rather seeks to subsidise and enable job creation, e.g. by granting hiring incentives. Secondly, that of the civil society: relevant social actors, such as unions, schools, companies, and local development associations. And finally that of the beneficiaries themselves, who have undergone reconversions through training and employment dynamics—therefore, results-oriented. To make people but also institutions responsible is a fundamental aspect in producing policies that are intended to be *active*, characterised by two other structuring axes: a territorialised focus capacity, more sensitive to the idiosyncrasies of the contexts and groups these policies are aimed at, for forging partnerships and adapting/customising measures (for example, through the creation of technically competent local services); and the—typically modern—exercise of reflexivity, to the extent that it is up to the state to comprehensively understand the realities it intends to defend and repair, as it puts forward (Bourdieu again) “an economics of happiness, which would take note of all the profits, individual and collective, material and symbolic,” against “a narrow, short-term economics.”¹²

¹¹ Pierre Bourdieu, *Acts of Resistance*, p. 41.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 40.

It is true that the vision underlying the current design and implementation of such a measure as the **Social Insertion Income** (which, it should be noted, should not be seen as *a subsidy for doing nothing*—this is the narrative of a political-partisan quadrant whose ideology is based on blatant

social Darwinism) shows a remarkable distance from the way the corporate system saw social protection. The latter favoured either charitable aid, assuming that any adult without sufficient means of support would have their community or their family as safeguards to provide for elementary needs, or pensions, mainly for former industry or public service employees, in case of disability, illness, or old age. By nature, the current vision followed from post-1974 welfare expansion, when the state extended its range of social support to general workers, providing, in addition to the aforementioned ones, unemployment and non-contribution benefits (widows', widowers', orphans', or old age pensions). Therefore, it is important to emphasise that this policy of granting cash benefits to citizens and families in extreme need, with none or very little work income—seeking nothing more than to ensure any individual's minimum economic resources (universalist dimension)—only came into existence in Portugal in 1996, with the approval of Law no. 19-A of 29 June, under the title **Guaranteed Minimum Income**. According to Luís Capucha, “Portugal was the second-to-last country in the EU to establish the minimum income, thus taking a decision others had already made: Denmark, Germany, and the Netherlands in 1961, '62, and '63, the United Kingdom in the 1960s as well, Belgium in 1974, Luxembourg in 1986, France in 1988, and the Autonomous Communities of Spain in the late 1980s.”¹³ The strategy of looking for ways to resolve poverty and exclusion that went beyond the welfare tradition that had existed until then—obviously without disregarding the need to control disorder and social conflicts and, as a consequence, to strengthen the legitimacy of the current political model—resulted in the creation of the aforementioned policy, which, after a pilot stage, was permanently implemented in Portugal in July 1997 (only after Law no. 13 of 2003 passed did it become known as **Social Insertion Income**). It thus established itself as the ultimate example of an *integration right*, like those that had been created to redefine the welfare state's scope of action by expanding the range of social rights recognised by the state itself. In *The New Age of Inequalities*,¹⁴ Pierre Rosanvallon and Jean-Paul Fitoussi make considerable efforts to dissect different types of rights: *freedom rights*, conventional civil and political rights; *credit rights*, related to the pure function of the state as compensation provider; and *integration rights*, which aim, as the term itself indicates (is it [not] in contradiction to the girl's speech in Godard's film?), to integrate into society those who will benefit from them. In the case of the **RSI**—that is, in exchange for variable monetary provision according to the economic framework of each applicant (I will later look into the possible semantic implications of the acronym)—the latter are “forced” to accept a proposal/contract put forward by public authorities for integration into working life (not necessarily a job). Such is the (double-edged) way to value the intervention of individuals in the social body—an intervention which can materialise in areas as disparate as old age support or health services, professional (re)qualification, etc.

According to December 2020 data released by the Portuguese Social

¹³ Luís Capucha (coord.), *Rendimento mínimo garantido: avaliação da fase experimental* (Lisbon: MTS/CIES, 1998), p. 3.

¹⁴ Pierre Rosanvallon and Jean-Paul Fitoussi, *A nova era das desigualdades* (Oeiras: Celta Editora, 1997).

Security services, there are 211,540 citizens with legal residence in Portugal aged 18 or over, more women than men, who receive the **Social Insertion Income** every month. They reside mainly in Porto (55,885 beneficiaries), Lisbon (41,849), Setúbal (21,165), the Autonomous Region of the Azores (14,593), and Aveiro (9,185). What is at stake here is a benefit whose average value amounted to 119.07 euros per beneficiary, or 261.96 euros per household.¹⁵ As is the case today in the European sphere, the preservation or (partial) dismantling of the logic of the welfare state are under debate. Likewise, market regulation is proposed as a supposed remedy for its gaps or inefficiencies, especially in countries like Portugal, where the state has yet to consolidate its functions. One must not disregard that, in creating and maintaining the **Social Insertion Income**, the state has renewed its policy design modalities toward social justice as it favours a less bureaucratic or vertical line of solidarity intervention—taking into account that the **RSI** enables territorialised monitoring, carried out by Local Monitoring Commissions that function as links among multiple agents from local, ministerial (education, health, employment...), and civil society.

¹⁵ Cf. <http://www.seg-social.pt/estatisticas> (accessed on 25 January 2021).

After all that has been said from a sociological-Panglossian perspective, the time has come to consider the acronym **RSI** and to challenge it in view of what essayist Jean Clair writes in “Euphemisms,” a text from his 2001 book *La Barbarie ordinaire : Zoran Music à Dachau*:

... the incessant euphemism which characterised the language of the III Reich and which nowadays characterises the vocabulary of raw economic rationality: one will speak of “defattening” where one previously alluded to people who were reduced to unemployment; the image is that of a machine whose impurities are removed. Relating to the body, however, the “defattening” painfully evokes the *Figuren* of life in concentration camps, where the daily caloric deficit reduced the prisoner's life expectancy to fifty to sixty days. In contemporary society, without a doubt, the result of this “defattening” is neither spectacular nor rapid, nor as tragic. Today, people are not allowed to starve; they are just left on the edge. But it is nevertheless just as cruel: the homeless and the social integration income recipients, drowned in the crowd, almost invisible, are a “soft” version of the *Kretiner* in the society of abundance.

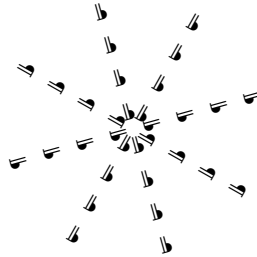
The habit of deploying abstract acronyms to designate the people who used to be called “poor” or “vagabonds” also reveals a use of abbreviation that was one of the features of the language of the III Reich “No previous style of language,” notes [Victor] Klemperer, “made such an exorbitant use of this procedure as Hitlerian German. Modern abbreviation is installed whenever one technicises and organises.” No previous style at all? Reading reports issued by ministries, official bodies, or “communicators,” we can replace “Hitlerian German” with “modern French”: the infection has contaminated every mind. It is an ordinary Nazism, without a doubt, distilled, less virulent

than its model; a Nazism, however, that is equally as deadly in the long run. Whoever uses an acronym not only euphemises reality but also embraces a comforting feeling, owing to a special knowledge of belonging, as an initiate, to a particular community. The concern for brevity, indispensable as it is to technical rationality, thus meets the mystical feeling of belonging to a select circle, while preventing the need to acknowledge a painful reality.¹⁶



This long quote, as I stated, is from Frenchman Jean Clair. But, I argue, it could also be the girl's speech in *Éloge de l'Amour*.

¹⁶ Jean Clair, "Eufemismos," in *Flauta de Luz — Boletim de Topografia* 1, January 2013, pp. 35–36.



Resisting
the trap
of fear



Mohammad Salemy & Rômulo Moraes

1. A Quick Genealogy

E10

A CLEAN BREAK FROM IDENTITY POLITICS

01

Identity politics is back, or perhaps it never went away. At the same time, some people think of it as a trend which sooner or later will disappear. For those of us who have been around long enough to remember the 1990s and its culture wars, it seems as if history is repeating, or we are caught in a Groundhog Day-like time loop. This also means that perhaps identity politics is here to stay, and, unlike a new fashion, it won't be abandoned for a new mode of politicality. These topics cannot be discussed if we don't confront the prehistory of what, in the late 1980s, was coined, particularly by its detractors, as identity politics.

02

Some like to start the historical timeline for the rise of identity politics with the events of May 1968, placing it adjacent to the mid-century developments in world economy which have been labelled “post-industrial neoliberalism.” Identity politics is known to be synonymous with what social movements, meaning struggles for race, sex, and gender equality, which comprise the bulk of the post-war social upheavals in the United States and elsewhere. What we argue here is that perhaps these developments have a longer history or that their prehistory must be placed when they had not been visible yet, on the outer forms of social developments.

03

Before reflecting on history, we would like to present an axiom around which we will weave a group of historical and theoretical facts in order to better understand the phenomenon at hand. Accordingly, identity politics is the symptom of the age of inauthenticity and the pressure of the cybernetic society for the automation of subjectivity, a process which began long ago, with the Industrial Revolution.

04

During the course of the 20th century, there was a synthesis between emancipatory struggles for human equality amongst social classes and amongst different races, sexes, genders, etc. This board base call for mass equality between all human nodes in the societal system, societal network, regardless of their specificities or apparent limits, is what we would like to call “cybernetic democracy,” granting equality among all members of the human race. Our story begins when this general, worldwide impulse was fused with its opposite double: a need to resist mass alienation and homogenisation by insisting on authentic individuation as the most fundamental human quality, protecting singular subjectivities despite the crushing forces of industrialisation, urbanisation, and mass media and culture, despite the larger universal demand for equality.

05

While the communist revolutions in certain parts of the world promised to tackle these complex and contradictory sets of problems all at once, the left or the Jacobins in the Western world, especially after World War II, began to defer these mostly social problems to the spheres of the individual.

06

One cannot escape linking this trend to the increasing global popularity of Heidegger, via his French admirers like Sartre, Merleau-Ponty, Levinas, and later on Foucault and others. While, politically, the French were finally overcoming Nazism with the help of the Americans, Heideggerian thought in *Being and Time*, crucial for the question of identity, was quickly mixing with the prevalent communist-socialist and anarchist tendencies in the intellectual world. As a prominent intellectual and member of the French Communist Party, Sartre represents this new breed of Western existential communists very well.

07

The emerging Heideggerian left in the Western hemisphere was increasingly interested in identifying similarities between the ways communism and capitalism were handling the operations of power and social organisation in two different parts of the world.

08

This post-war trend paralleled the rapid rise of modern art, literature, and humanities scholarship both in the continent and abroad, in the United States—as we know, with a great amount of it encouraged and funded by American foreign policy institutes. Fuelled by the Cold War, this particular brand of western leftism began to fuse its traditional demand for economic equality and liberation of colonies with the quest for the triumph of individuals against systemic hierarchies, a theme that informed much of the high and mass culture produced in the West for world consumption.

09

It was only a matter of time before the existential communism of the West emphasising the individual was radicalised and repackaged as a rebellious youth culture in the events of May 1968.

10

Since then, identity politics has been gradually evolving in a growing process through which the universality of the cybernetic process of massification across the globe sides with its economic aspect. Globalisation is mitigated by the self-segmentation of masses away from the geographic and culturally specific form of nation-states into new categories that cut across the old borders.

11

The internal structure of cancelling is pretty easy to devise. Anyone eventually imbued with an attentive gaze to social processes, from social theorists like Suhail Malik to popular youtubers like Contrapoints, can already break down this procedure without much difficulty at this point. First, there's an accusation, which is separated from the fact itself and backed-up by a fine line of—in many cases positive, in others not so much—suspension of criticality (which is well represented in mottos like "believe victims"). Then there's an abstraction or generalisation of the fact pertaining the accusation, so as to transform a specific act into a conceptual category (homogenising the complex assemblage of a situation into a plain, serviceable, and deeply moralised notion or image: racism, anti-Semitism, etc.). Finally, there's an essentialisation of this moralised notion in an attempt to embed it to the personality of the accused part itself (a person who misgendered a transgender or made

an offensive remark towards them, for example, becomes a transphobe at its core, that is, in its absolute individual essence).

2. The Sacrificial Pact

12

A lot of the structure of cancelling and its dissemination is, of course, a result of the failure of constituted justice systems in bringing about the fairness it promises in the cybernetic dimension. The technical development of our means of communication makes it so that the constant trading of information and the topology of the general *locus* of public conversations becomes too dynamic, too fast, to be grasped by these conventional frameworks of law. In its tentative reconstruction of a repression system capable of moral arbitration on these virtual spaces, “cancel culture” can be understood as a somewhat spontaneous urge for regulation of both speech and performance, in a time and place in which formal justice failed to do so. It reaches people with which the established methods of governance won’t mess, and corrects institutional biases, Kafkaesque bureaucratic rules, and other bad heritages from the Enlightenment.

13

There are, however, various important elements of the modern justice system that social media trials disband with, sometimes for the lack of an intentional, thoughtful, engineering of its practices (since they are often result of an impromptu outrage) or lack of interest in the most precise discrimination possible (since they are often mixed with an irrational will for vengeance).

14

One factor this sort of gang tribunal misses from the actual court system is the differentiation of magnitudes of abuse, for example. Cancel culture produces an equalization of punishments so that any slight sexual misconduct can be placed alongside serial rape and other types of brutal crime. This is not only unfair to those who committed the slight misconduct, for obvious reasons, but also to those who committed the brutal crime and will then be viewed under a more generous light than they deserve, while paired with less violent offenders.

15

Another element of the formal justice system that is still to be adapted by the cancelling mobs is the possibility of redemption, of absolution. While formal justice prescribes a temporal extension to punishments, from which should follow (if we are the least bit abolitionist) a reintegration to society, cancel culture is a social exile with no expiration date, especially in a time where every mistake is archived for easy access. Alas, there's an impossibility for the cancelled part to apologise, because the apology is always public, always mediated by a crowd, and so it always ends up sounding like a meticulously forged pursuit of excusation—a PR stunt. Nonetheless, if it is impossible to honestly apologise, the demand itself for an apology must be insincere too; it serves no function, in that context, if not to make the accused part submit, to shame it even further into a state of humiliation. In this case, forgiveness only comes with forgetting, and forgetting itself is also too gentle a way of dealing with actual lunatics and criminals.

16

The third aspect of cancel culture that pushes it away from formal justice system and towards sectary forms of lynching is the incapacity to read nuanced behaviours and positions, a need to coalesce intricate networks of meanings into a formulaic, pre-arranged, single-level, usually affect-based linguistic order. Cancelling works through that binary morality that strictly autonomises the good and the evil to then try to purge the evil or to purify the good by destroying everything that's evil about it. That is why there is an infectiousness to cancelling, whereas everyone who sides with the accused part or refuses to participate in the trial debate is rapidly seen as a collaborationist—and we soon journey from the “banality of evil” to the evilness of banality. However, true goodness is a mixed compound boiling up with eventual evil wills in it. Any attempt to forcibly avoid the evil emergings, to silence evil or bracket it under a segregated bubble, will only make it brew under the cover of

conscious, dialogical discourse. This is the sort of behaviour that creates excluded communities of radicalised teenagers: what Kenneth Burke pejoratively characterised, commenting on the censoring of *Mein Kampf*, as a mutual deprivation through inattention.

17

Cancel culture forgoes the dialectical overcoming of evil by banishing its enemies and counterparts to an otherworld of silence and hidden intellectual inbreeding, like the leper valleys of older times. At the same time, it is the weaponisation of identity politics that turns the commitment to public claiming as a model of democratic accountability for powerful people into a sadistic spectacle and instrument of power negotiation with these exact same people. The answer from the powerful players is then to just accommodate identity politics into the social architecture they are already comfortably sitting in, so as not to change anything unsuperficial in the conditions of power and, simultaneously, not be sent to this cultural limbo of cancelling. Art institutions, for example, will turn into platforms for divergent agencies to leverage with elites, while these same elites still maintain a certain quota of dominance over them. Harmless compromise.

18

Meanwhile, on the other end of the spectrum, blocks of disaffected and alienated individuals will start to use this voicing opportunity to discharge past and collateral resentments on one another, even if they are collected from personal anecdotes or if they only reinforce an oppressive class relation, instead of reversing or re-synthesising it. The poor end up eating themselves, instead of eating the rich.

19

In René Girard's mimetic theory, violence is a measure taken to deter the escalation of rivalries that result from the imitation of desires. For him, we desire because the desire of others instils in us a perceived value of the desired objects; desire is, then, triangular. This leads to others becoming models of desire and to an unnoticed internal mediation against those models' secondary qualities, which are confounded with the very objects they desire. In the long run, a number of individuals desiring together (that is, a society) will suffer a fast eruption of reciprocal hate and looming conflict until, says Girard, it finds a subconsciously agreed-upon scapegoat that will be sacrificed for the appeasement of the whole. This founding murder (preferably, of an innocent) by the sum of individuals acts as a primordial signifier that justifies any of these individuals' desires beyond the scope of their mimetic inclination towards one another, instituting a new order of collective consciousness

20

and empty peace. The community can now recall the event whenever it is needed to stop the outbreak of violence—down to when the significance of the sacrifice is forgotten and the rivalries start to pop up again. This is a history of human culture.

The tenets followed by partisans of identity politics, in their recourse to the hivemind of unengineered collective justice, just as well guarantee the permanence of social hierarchies through the use of the scapegoating mechanism, and not the other way around. Without the all-too-primitive scapegoating mechanism, class tensions could actually exacerbate to the point of change, perhaps, or moral and ideological divergences could be better situated between one another in a deontic space via the dispute for consent in the game of giving and asking for reasons. Instead, cancel culture appeals to a magical violence that only reaffirms the status quo. In this sense, contemporary social media resembles once more the tribalism of archaic societies, in their uncoordinated panic and search for its resolution in the sacrifice that should induce the gods to intervene. The only difference is, as Girard proposes at one point, that now this sacrifice is made in the

name of victims. If the modern justice system is built upon the defence of victims from the collective murder they are destined to, cancel culture persecutes and creates new victims in order to protect another victim which this justice system failed to protect. With “believe victims,” we go from the immolation to the glorification of innocents, and from the glorification to the immolation of perpetrators, ultimately solving nothing.

21

From Warhol's famous epithet according to which everyone would soon have five minutes of fame follows, then, the "Milkshake Duck theorem," according to which everyone shall have five months of cancelling immediately after those five minutes of fame. Liberals think they will achieve a utopian society by expelling dissidents and victimisers, but now they are only making themselves victimisers too, as well as individualising collective problems, reducing structural harms to personal ones. They are starting to immolate their own while leaving oligarchs in their thrones and giving right-wingers the mythology of censorship they so desperately need to validate their paranoias. Worst of all, practising partisans of identity politics raise the moral bar a little bit more, push it a little bit further, every day, to the point where phantasmal acts or just mere takes that have some originality, and thus break the established dogmas of the left, now have to be

22

scrutinised to check if they fit the paradigmatic state of things or if they are scandalous, instead of being absorbed into a constant, dialectical movement of adaptation.

The future of cancelling appears as the only thing it can be: static apocalypse.

23

In *Postscript on the Societies of Control*, Deleuze created the concept of “control society,” borrowing from Foucault’s “disciplinary society” in order to better describe current models of state and behaviour. For him, we were starting to transition from disciplinary societies to control societies in the 1980s and 1990s, and would soon dive into a new phase he then tried to describe.

3. Contemporary Art and Social Media as Spaces of Control

24

In control societies, wrote Deleuze, power is becoming decentralised to the point of the individuals, who then operate sanctions upon each other, without the need of external surveillance or formal structures of punishment. Power has been dissolved into the different strata of sociabilities. And that doesn’t mean it has disappeared; it has only become invisible, foreshadowed, since it is everywhere and being regulated by no one in particular. The advantages of this total collectivisation of authority, from the point of view of society’s powerful players (such as government officials, CEOs, etc), is that it is now possible to anticipate behaviours, estimated from probabilistic mechanisms based on an enormous gathering of data—given by the individuals themselves. Governance doesn’t need to reinforce a dynamic of oppression if the individuals conduct their lives in a way that relies on these constant checks-and-balances to keep going forward (and

25

isn't that the rationale behind moralistic authoritarians?). For Deleuze, these processes of mutual recognition, acquiescence, boycott, and penalty, characteristic of neoliberal societies, are rooted in neurotic and schizophrenic modes of subjectivisation similar to the fascistic ones. In today's social media, it's the interaction between profiles that creates valuable units of information, those that interest powerful players. People are deliberately enslaved by a network of data-gathering that only serves to perfect the gathering itself, in a positive feedback loop, without a foreseeable external goal.

26

We'd argue what Deleuze described as "control society" is the bulk of today's post-cybernetics, post-internet relations. The functioning of social media doesn't submit to legal terms and traditional cultural habits, but to a company-developed software architecture, to its UX design, adapted by uncontrollable and cross-analysed amounts of small day-to-day exchanges of meaning. This can be verified especially in the artworld, where mutual sanctions have become the main way of regulating and encoding sociabilities.

27

Post-internet is not, as Marisa Olson has claimed, the summary of contemporary conditions for the production of art and culture, nor is it simply a label that identifies the emerging worldview resulting from the internet's integration to the general fabric of human activities. It is also not just an adjective that describes the internet's new status as the referential hyper-object of objectivity. Post-internet should also be considered as a whole different technology of being that is accessible simultaneously by the social world and the individual, I and We. Post-internet is not the state of the society of multiduals, as one would hope, but the global government of networked individuals.

28

As we know, and as Marx once lamented, history repeats itself, first as a tragedy and then as farce.

29

The first wave of identity politics' popularisation from May 1968 up until the 1990s did not have its own genuine media forms outside of the academic networks. To propel identity politics' spread using the media belonging to the previous age (such as the books press, radio, and television networks, etc., all marked with centralised and top-down ontologies) was impossible. The new round of identity politics, the one most young people can identify with, however, has found its own media in the internet and its offspring, social media; hence the virulent spread of identity politics amongst the masses.

30

Why we haven't been able to see and intervene in these processes earlier can be seen as a twofold process. On the one hand, as we detailed above, the Western left has openly participated and promoted these developments or has found a way to cope with them only at the expense of its own demise. On the other hand, those who have tried to do something about neoliberalism and its practices have lacked a clear idea of what they are dealing with. They have mostly misunderstood neoliberalism as a cultural system rather than as a techno-economic one, wrongly requiring a cultural affront based on identities and ethics—strategies whose contents are but the fuel that has been feeding the very same system they have been trying to combat or contain.

31

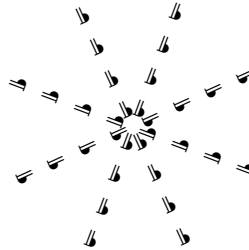
The call for meaningful art combined with the political catastrophes of the late 2010s caused contemporary art to go from zombie abstraction to social justice realism. The difference between the way horizontal social movements (associated with women's rights, queers' rights, people of colour's rights, etc-) played out in the artworld in the 1980s–1990s compared to the situation today is that they represented a real push from the bottom. These movements were genuinely expanding the aesthetic horizon of art and injecting it with new and unheard-of ideas. Compare this to today, when the puppet masters of the political turn in art, under the guise of intersectionality, decoloniality, and so on and so forth, are mostly white educated professionals from the highest echelons of art administration in Europe and the USA. Unfortunately, these top-down reforms mostly lack new ideas or aesthetics and are more concerned with making the demands of the 1990s political art

part of the institutional structures already in place. By enforcing the poststructuralist ideology of the 1990s into the artworld's general worldview, this process is reducing contemporary art into contemporary anthropology, and in some extreme cases into the anthropology of contemporary art itself. This new anthropologising overhaul, which has racial, gender, and geographical decentring characteristics, of course, is providing a lot of opportunities for some PoC to advance in the highly competitive marketplace of contemporary art (both in the terms of financial and symbolic capital). But it cannot be mistaken for a true Copernican Revolution, because most of these PoC are from affluent and/or educated middle-class backgrounds themselves, people whose only role is to replace their otherwise white but also affluent and/or educated middle-class colleagues in positions of power. So, on the surface of the art world, you might see a lot of new faces who

32

are women and have pigment or look and dress differently and are speaking of feminism and postcolonialism and queer theory, etc., but what you face in reality is a simple change of guards, from a white educated middle-class to a global educated middle-class.

Educated middle-class “professionality” remains as an impenetrable centre to the art world.



33

“Can we already grasp the rough outlines of the coming forms, capable of threatening the joys of marketing? Many young people strangely boast of being ‘motivated’; they re-request apprenticeships and permanent training. It’s up to them to discover what they’re being made to serve, just as their elders discovered, not without difficulty, the *telos* of the disciplines. The coils of a serpent are even more complex than the burrows of a molehill.”



divided
into production
modes



Cristina Susigan

There is a mass destruction
weapon in use every day, all over
the world, without an excuse of
war: this weapon is called
hunger.

[MIA COUTO,
ESTORIL CONFERENCE,
2011]

E11

IN A LAND THAT YIELD EVERYTHING, WHAT DO YOU HUNGER FOR?

After arriving in Terra Brasilis, Pero Vaz de Caminha sent a letter to King Manuel I on 1 May 1500. Published in 1817, it is considered to be Brazil's founding document, and describes the wonders and charms of the newly "discovered" or "found" land, depending on the historical narrative. The letter reads as follows:

Till now we have been unable to learn if there is gold or silver or any other kind of metal or iron there; we have seen none. However, the air of the country is very healthful, fresh, and as temperate as that of Entre Douro e Minho¹; we have found the two climates alike at this season. There is a great plenty, an infinitude of waters. The country is so well-favored that if it were rightly cultivated, it would yield everything, because of its waters.²

¹A province in Northern Portugal.

² Pero Vaz de Caminha, in Stuart B. Schwartz and Clive Willis (eds.), *Early Brazil: A Documentary Collection to 1700* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

The first part of this essay's title—"In a land that yields everything"—refers to Caminha's letter, in both a good and a bad sense. Good produce was harvested therein, but bad strains also grew in this land of fuss and hustle. The founding letter indicates a problem that would persist for centuries to come. The second part—"what do you hunger for?"—comes from a 1987 song by Arnaldo Antunes in which he sings: "We don't want just food/ We want food/ Fun, and art. ... What do you thirst for?/ What do you hunger for?" Two different interpretations are possible. The literal one would relate to food "hunger," in view of this grand, fertile land, with flashy, abundant leaves and fruits. Outside this naive framework, the being that resides therein is hungry for freedom, for public policies, for reviewing structural gender, race, or social erasures; a cry that comes from the gut.

In the book *Hunger: The Oldest Problem*, Argentinian writer Martín Caparrós states:
If you, dear reader, take the trouble to read this book, if you are swept up and it takes you, let's say, eight hours to read from beginning to end, around eight thousand people will have died [of starvation]. ... Maybe you think that, in general, not to know who these people are, not to know

how nor why they have died, would be best. (Just so you know, in the thirty seconds it took you to read that paragraph, eight or ten people died of hunger—only eight or ten, that's not so bad, is it?)³

³ Martín Caparrós, *Hunger: The Oldest Problem* (Brooklyn, London: Melville House, 2020), p. 22.

Over 714 pages, Caparrós writes about people who work for a living under precarious conditions, but also about those who use food as currency. As Eduarda Neves stated at the opening of Tomato Project, "As in Bong Joon-ho's film *Parasite*, poverty has a smell. The same smell." In this essay, we will highlight some references to reflect upon poverty, hunger, and inequality.

Pictorial representations: an introduction

The representations of Realist painter Jean-François Millet were criticised at the time of their making for his depiction of rural workers from many areas. Specifically, *The Gleaners* (1857) presents a broad idea of how to represent, depict, and write about destitution, about poverty. Invariably a matter of concern to the upper and middle classes, for they felt threatened, the piece proved a scandal. By the end of the 19th century, the dominant class regarded this work as an homage to the labouring class, alluding both to a then-recent event—the 1848 Revolution—and to the rise of the Socialist movement, and as a reminder that, in case of a working-class uprising, the upper class would be overthrown. Therefore, employing Foucault's docile-bodies method, it was imperative that bodies were controlled and repressed by the bourgeoisie. That was the general feeling at the turn of the 18th century: that man should follow a new economic and political order where there was no room for thinking about oneself, about one's position in society or even in the world. The docile worker is more productive and less lazy. According to Foucault,

... discipline produces subjected and practiced bodies, "docile" bodies. Discipline increases the forces of the body (in economic terms of utility) and diminishes these same forces (in political terms of obedience). ... disciplinary coercion establishes in the body the constricting link between an increased aptitude and an increased domination.⁴

⁴ Michel Foucault, *Discipline & Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (New York: Vintage Books, 1995), p. 138.

In a completely different time and space, let us focus on Brazilian artist Candido Portinari and his 1944 work *Migrants*. Depleted of natural resources, a number of moribund beings leave the deserted hinterland by dusty roads. Aesthetically, but not only, Portinari engages in social reflection. He represents mass migration from Brazil's Northeast to the Southeast (mainly São Paulo): a flight from famine depicted in a crude way. Today, metaphorically speaking, migration persists, from the suburbs to the city centres—slum life, precarious or clandestine sheds, waking up at 4 AM to start the *migrant* daily routine. The very same "docile" bodies, objectified bodies, are comprised in the subdued working masses that carry the aforementioned "poverty smell."

Writers, painters, creators, and thinkers have reflected and reflect upon the topic of poverty. Theirs are but aesthetic views, inevitably, arousing emotions in readers and viewers; a mere glimpse of transcendence from the comfort zone, unable as they are to change the state of affairs; the globalisation of a status quo of hunger and poverty, as states Milton Santos:

Because of these installed geopolitics, proposed by the economists and imposed by the media, man is not the centre of the world; rather, money is. This situation has opened up barbaric gaps where one can easily let children, elders, and adults die.⁵

⁵ Milton Santos, in *Encontro com Milton Santos — ou o mundo global visto do lado de cá*, DVD, directed by Sílvio Tendler (Caliban Produções Cinematográficas: 2006).

A Brazilian geographer, Santos could be regarded as a clairvoyant. Focusing on poverty and the disadvantaged, back in the 1990s, he stressed a reality that still preys on us today—not only in Brazil, but also all around the world. Should we compare the aforementioned pictorial representations, dialectically, on the one hand, there is an unfolding of Millet's criticism towards the bourgeoisie in the late 19th century, after the beginning of industrialisation, the exodus of working bodies from the countryside to the cities, and the decrease of life expectancy—a human mass enfolded in quasi-slave labour. As for Portinari, on the other hand, back in the 1940s, migration meant a search for a better life, fleeing from depleted fields to exhausting cities. And nowadays it is digital technology, and so-called entrepreneurship, that enslaves thousands of people. In the first half of the 20th century, Josué de Castro raised topics and issues such as hunger and underdevelopment, stressing how urgent it is to combat social inequality and to allow for human betterment via unremitting, profound social change. Thus he states: "There is but one kind of true development: human development. Human, development factor, human beneficiary of such development."⁶

⁶ Josué de Castro, in Anna Maria de Castro (org.), *Fome, um tema proibido: últimos escritos de Josué de Castro* (Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira, 2003), p. 105.

21st-century gleaners

Respigar is a fairly unknown Portuguese word: it means "to collect wheat ears left behind after the harvest," which is different from the French verb *glaner*, which means "to collect leftovers crops," or even from the English verb *to glean*. Essentially, *respigar* is not about collecting debris—debris as waste disposed of by others, most of the time in landfill, or in "dumping grounds." It is not about collecting food thrown or given away by restaurants either. Rather, it is about gathering good produce that has been neglected by someone who considers it unsuitable, or useless.

Gleaning has biblical origins. In Leviticus 19: 9–10, God said to Moses: "... you shall not wholly reap the corners of your field, nor shall you gather the gleanings of your harvest. ... you shall leave them for the poor and the stranger." In Ruth 2:15–16, yet another mention: "Let her glean even among the sheaves, and do not reproach her. Also let grain from the

bundles fall purposely for her; leave it that she may glean, and do not rebuke her.”⁷ Thus, a divine precedent was set over the fair distribution of resources among everyone.

⁷ Both from *New King James Version* (New York: HarperCollins, 1982).

Practiced in Europe since the Middle Ages, gleaning was at first proper to folk who worked the fields gleaning corn cobs and wheat, mainly for allaying hunger and poverty in wartime or for exchanging them for other sources of nourishment (mostly in the 18th and 19th centuries). Today, however, as pointed out by Agnès Varda in her 2000 documentary *Les glaneurs et la glaneuse* (The Gleaners and I), it has become a social and collective act—it is still practiced in France, mostly by women, as it has evolved into a form of conduct. The gleaners of contemporary society can be divided into three groups: those who pick discarded produce that is not the ideal size; those who look for leftover supermarket food; and, at the end of the chain, those who rummage through dustbins for something to eat. That is Brazil’s case, where the act of collecting *leftovers* is a familiar image: gleaners with carts or bags on their backs, like workhorses, collecting what capitalism no longer wants. Discarded by consumerism.

Through the concept of *gleaning*, we will now look at the 1960 book *Child of the Dark*, by Brazilian writer Carolina Maria de Jesus, who made poverty and hunger the connecting thread of a literary career that has often been revisited over the last years. A black single mother of three and refuse gatherer who lived in the favela—a way of life that ensured her survival—she also wrote in her spare time. The young journalist Audálio Dantas was the one who “discovered” Carolina de Jesus, while he was writing a story about the Canindé favela, on the banks of the Tietê river, where semi-urban and suburban chaos takes control. Over the last fifty years, the favelas, not so big a problem at the time, have increased in number and variance, be it wooden shacks or masonry houses, through which, in turn, these garbage dumps multiplied. As Carolina points out: “I classify São Paulo this way: The Governor’s Palace is the living room. The mayor’s office is the dining room, and the city is the garden. And the favela is the backyard where they throw the garbage.”⁸ Then, she writes about the people who live there: “I’m in the garbage dump and those in the garbage dump either burn themselves or throw themselves into ruin.”⁹

⁸ Carolina Maria de Jesus, *Child of the Dark: The Diary of Carolina Maria de Jesus*, trans. David St. Clair (New York: New American Library, 1962), p. 34.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 39.

In twenty grim notebooks, Carolina offers a view from within the favelas which was criticised by its inhabitants, who felt exposed by it. For it was not a romanticised narrative, but rather one about human suffering, about man subjected to the most despairing, humiliating predicament. This testimony has an authenticity and a paradoxical beauty to it, and hunger is the main character. De Jesus started by publishing some excerpts in *Folha da Noite*, in 1958, and later on in the magazine *O Cruzeiro*, before releasing the book in 1960, which has since been translated into thirteen languages. In it, taking on a poetic tone, Carolina gives hunger a colour: if, in Bong Joon-ho’s *Parasite*, poverty “smells,” *Child of the Dark* reveals its colour: yellow.

The word *fome* (hunger) derives from Latin *faminem*; albeit a grievous problem, it is never contextually isolated. Hunger occupies a historical position in the world. Whenever and wherever people go hungry, there is an array of circumstances that lead to it. As a social construct, hunger does not exist by itself. According to Caparrós, no disease has

ever killed as many people as hunger; no scourge has been as lethal: a means for the people's capitulation. According to De Castro, around 1960:

First and foremost, it is paramount to work to eliminate from contemporary political thought this erroneous idea in which the economy is considered as a game and someone must always lose to allow others to always win. It is necessary to make the economy an instrument of balanced distribution of the goods of the earth, so that in our time the bitter definition that Karl Marx had given it in the last century, when he spoke of the sciences of human hardships, can no longer be applied to this science.¹⁰

¹⁰ Josué de Castro, *Fome*, p. 66.

Going back to Carolina's notes, it is relevant to highlight how lucidly she analyses Brazil's political class and businesspeople. At a certain point, she criticises the then Brazilian president Juscelino Kubitschek, comparing him to a bird that "is living in a golden cage called Catete Palace,"¹¹ while likening the *favelados* to cats. When cats are hungry, they eye the cage:

¹¹ Maria de Jesus, *Child*, p. 35.

Who must be a leader is he who has the ability. He who has pity and friendship for the people. Those who govern our country are those who have money, who don't know what hunger is, or pain or poverty. If the majority revolt, what can the minority do? I am on the side of the poor, who are an arm. An undernourished arm.¹²

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 36.

The act of gathering/collecting is described in detail. Counting pennies to buy food or even subjecting herself to collecting leftover food from dustbins far exceeds the basics of medieval gleaning. Analysing Millet's canvas, one perceives that the gleaners perform a task designated by the local commune to the destitute. Nonetheless, there was dignity. There was a code of conduct. A horseman signalled that the harvest was still underway; when finished, the gleaning was to begin. In Carolina's big city, not even this right was respected: "... the slaughterhouses threw kerosene on their garbage dump so the *favelados* would not look for meat to eat."¹³ Once more, with his lucid writing—before globalisation, underemployment apps, and social networks—Josué de Castro argues:

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 45.

One of the most constant and effective factors of the reigning appalling social tensions is the economic imbalance in the world, with the resulting social inequalities. It establishes one of the greatest dangers for peace, such as the tranquillity of order, the deep economic gap that exists between economically well-developed countries, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, insufficiently developed countries. The gap is becoming more and more highlighted, intensifying social dissension and generating unrest, uneasiness, and political and ideological conflicts Although the economic development of each country must constitute a national responsibility, it is indisputable that without a

broad international cooperation it is very difficult for this development to proceed at a worthwhile pace in the underdeveloped countries, in order to preserve the political and social balance of the world.¹⁴

¹⁴ Josué de Castro, *Fome*, p. 157.

During the massacre, be it symbolic or literal, in a society that is described not by its difference but rather by serial, manufactured individuals—thoughts and bodies from a single aesthetic, trapped by screens, on screens, standardised still in the womb by an ideal stereotype—human condition moves towards its own capitulation. There will be no redemption, as the Reformed church preached, or as the acting Neo-Pentecostal church claims. Rather, this manipulated being, entangled in the neoliberal discourse of “being,” will eventually self-destruct, without realising that, in idolising those who seek to end it, it actively contributes towards such destruction.

By way of conclusion

Poverty that bends the body. Manifest poverty or misery that most do not want to see. Joon-ho's “smell of poverty.” From the soup kitchen to the soup of the underprivileged in Milan, the richest city in Italy, as Italian writer Antonio Scurati points out in his article “A cidade mais privilegiada da Itália está agora na fila do pão” (The most privileged city in Italy stands now in line for bread), at the beginning of the covid-19 pandemic:

I regard these sad men and women, incongruous with themselves. I look at them. They are adult men and women, yet over their masks they show the scared look of children in need. They arrived totally unprepared for their encounter with history and were part of the most affluent, protected, long-lived, well-dressed, nourished, and cared-for piece of Humanity to set foot on the face of the Earth, and now, in their fifties, they stand in line for bread.¹⁵

¹⁵ Antonio Scurati, “A cidade mais privilegiada da Itália está agora na fila do pão,” in *Mein Fenster zur Welt* (org. Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung), 2020. Available on <https://observador.pt/especiais/milao-a-cidade-mais-privilegiada-de-italia-esta-agora-na-fila-do-pao/> (Accessed 15 March 2021).

This is not a case of poverty on the margins of society, of hungry and invisible bodies, wrapped up in frayed blankets or consumed by drugs, seeking charity, in the darkness, to satisfy their most basic need: eating. Rather, these people are the ones who used to have everything: the children of the system they worship as to a God. And he continues:

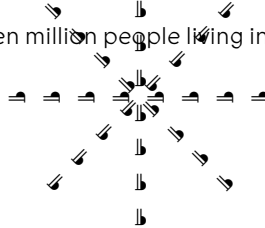
Their lifelong learning was a lengthy attainment of television unreality. They were twenty when they watched, from their living rooms, the first live-television war in human history, thirty when they were hit through television by media terror, forty when the odyssey of the land-damned debarked on their holiday beaches. All fateful encounters that they could not miss. The great scenes of their existence were consumed in media events, they were room warriors, bathers on the beaches of migrants,

veterans traumatised by the nights spent in front of the television. And now they stand in the bread line.¹⁶

¹⁶ Ibid.

Pandemic. Post-pandemic. Empathy. Putting ourselves in someone else's shoes. And the phrase that is repeated to the point of exhaustion: the "new normal" or the "return to normality"—but only if such a return involves turning a blind eye to the manifest poverty, disparities, fragilities, and unbridled consumerism that capitalism has brought upon our planet. There is no reason and nowhere to return. This crisis—a structural one—has produced a crater that condemns the poor to contamination and death, as it combines the indifference of economic systems with the suffering, diseases, or lack of solidarity one encounters in EU countries, the United States, or Brazil.

And I so conclude: twenty-seven million people living in extreme poverty in Brazil. 21st century. March 2021.



an inequality
that is also
transmissible



João Oliveira Duarte

E12

THIS BODY, THIS POVERTY: ANDY WARHOL'S 1969 EXHIBITION

Exhibition Raid the Icebox

In 1969 the RISD, in Rhode Island, was having some financial difficulties. The school had a program for disadvantaged students which had a considerable weight in the global budget, the deficit for the school and the museum was increasing and the annual conservation costs of the museum had become almost unbearable¹ (many of its pieces were deteriorating in storage, as Robbins describes)².

One of the strategies devised by Robbins in order to tackle the financial problems was to invite known artists to set up exhibitions using the materials the RISD had in storage – in particular Andy Warhol, already a known artist at the time, and with the purpose of luring Dominique and Jean de Menil, wealthy art collectors³ that could help the RISD in its financial difficulties.

¹“By the time Robbins initiated *Raid the Icebox* in 1969, the RISD Museum was in a rather precarious position on a number of fronts. Financial stability, for example, was a point of great concern for the museum and school alike. Reports from the treasurer show that RISD went from a surplus of \$38,134 in 1967 to a deficit of \$180,482 in 1969.” (Musteata, 2016, p. 219)

²“With the exception of the most famous and expansive articles in the collection, entirely too much has been allowed to deteriorate for conservation is an expensive and unglamorous item in the pinched museum budget.” (*Raid the Icebox 1* with Andy Warhol, 1969, p. 12)

³“For Robbins, who was hoping to lure the de Menils to become ongoing patrons of the museum, it must have been a difficult tour. The wealthy collectors saw valuable works not only neglected but deteriorating, and a director/custodian faced with the unglamorous task of raising the necessary funds to repair, clean, mount, catalog, and properly preserve them all.” (Huberman, s/d)

“What would happen, Mr. de Menil wondered, if some contemporary artist were to choose an exhibition from our reserve? If the only organizing principal would be whether or not he liked whatever he saw? Would the result be different from having a storage show chosen by a curator? Or by anyone? If the artist who selected the material were strong enough, would he impose his personality on the objects? If he were famous enough, would it not oblige the curious to look? Might his attitude not do violence to the true nature of the objects? The idea was no sooner proposed by Mr. de Menil than it was accepted. Andy Warhol agreed to make the exhibition.” (*Raid the Icebox 1* with Andy Warhol, 1969, p. 15)

What is interesting about this exhibition in which there were no pieces by Andy Warhol (but the RISD had in storage one of Warhol's *Race Riot*⁴) is, first of all, the proximity it has, but also the distance it bears, with the collecting drive of Warhol⁵. It recalls evidently the 1977 *Folk and Funk* exhibition, when Andy Warhol showed part of his collection, the Sotheby's auction at the time of Warhol's death, the *Time Capsules* (with its confusion between art works and document), where collecting and hoarding have become almost

impossible to distinguished and, last, a picture of Warhol's dining room shortly after his death in 1987 (image 1), where collecting, hoarding, chaos and archive are now undistinguishable.

⁴ "One of the biggest surprises for Warhol was finding one of his own works (a silkscreened painting of a southern civil rights clash), sharing a rack with two Charles Hawthornes and one Zoltan Speschy." (Raid the Icebox 1 with Andy Warhol, 1969, p. 24)

⁵ See, for example, the texts collected by John W. Smith in *Possession Obsession*, particularly Michael Lobel's *Warhol's Closer*.

[Image 1 - Andy Warhol's dining room.]



However, it's not only the proximity between *Raid the Icebox* and Warhol's known unstoppable collecting urge that interests us. Besides or beyond this proximity, we can see in *Raid the Icebox* an archival dimension, which ultimately transforms, or collapses, the museum into an archive.

This sharp division between archive and museum is particularly evident if we look at the discourses of Daniel Robbins and Dominique de Menil in the catalogue and compare them with the actual exhibition. There seems to be, between the first two and Warhol's exhibition, a huge, and ironic, difference to which contributed to a great extent the refrain (*ritournelle*, to use a concept from Deleuze and Guattari) Warhol kept repeating⁶ and, of course, the strange choices he made regarding the exhibition⁷. But let's look first to what Dominique de Menil says about the *Raid the Icebox*.

⁶ "Warhol wanted the entire shoe collection. Did he mean the cabinet as well? «oh, yes, just like that». But what about the doors? Would he allow people to open and close them? «spectator participation», Warhol murmured. Robbins was startled. No curator, he said, would have thought of exhibiting the shoes "just like that". (*Raid the Icebox 1 with Andy Warhol*, 1969, p. 17)

⁷ Those baffling choices are pointed out by David Bourdon, who accompanied Warhol in the several visits he made to the RISD.

1. KATABASIS

The division is sharp and clear, in order to highlight two very different spacial logic. One of the first images of the catalogue is not a painting or a sculpture but a lock (image 2), marking a clear division between two very different spaces (the space of the museum and the space of the "icebox", the storage, or the archive). Between one and the other there seems to be no relation whatsoever, as if this lock marked a kind of absolute and insurmountable border. In order to pass from one to the other, particularly from the museum to the "icebox", one feels one must accomplish certain tasks, strange rituals, a certain type of rules and administrative procedures – one has to become a ghost. To the "blank" space of the museum, a modernist dream in which *everyone* can enter (given the ideal of equality), one must oppose this strange space, close and yet separated from the museum, this heterotopic space that seems to allow only ghosts and shadowy figures:



"Heterotopias always presuppose a system of opening and closing that isolates them and makes them penetrable at one and the same time. Usually, one does not get into a heterotopian location by one's own will. Either one is forced, as in the case of the barracks or the prison, or one must submit to rites of purification. One can only enter by special permission and after one has completed a certain number of gestures." (Foucault, 1986, p. 26)

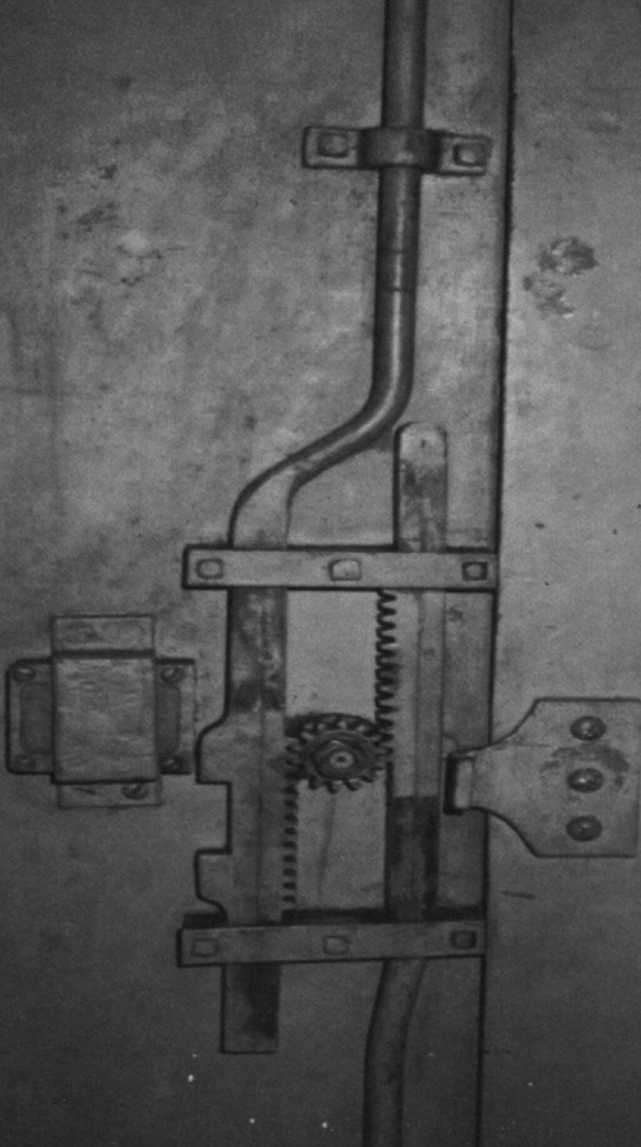
As Foucault points out, both the museum and the library are heterotopias. Or, to put it in a more rigorous way, the museum and the library are heterochronias, that is, heterotopias that relate first and foremost to time. They have, as do all heterotopias, a relation to space. However, its specific difference lies in its relation to time, particularly in the way

they try to subtract themselves to the passage of time. They pretend to be an accumulation of time, in itself devoid of time,

“a sort of general archive, the will to enclose in one place all times, all epochs, all tastes, the idea of constituting a place of all times that is itself outside of time and inaccessible to its ravages, the project of organizing in this way a to its ravages, the project of organizing in this way a sort of perpetual and indefinite accumulation of time in an immobile place”

This lock marks a division between two different types of heterotopias, two different spaces that are always already on the brink of collapsing, the museum becoming an archive.





[Image 2 - One of the first images of the catalogue.]

2

OF

5

However, it's not just this division between two different spaces, two different heterotopias, that seems interesting – two spaces that carry two different set of rules, that define themselves in relation to one another.

If one reads the texts by Dominique de Menil and Daniel Robbins in the catalogue one finds a curious rhetoric: Warhol's visit to the storage area of the RISD museum are incursions into a world of forgotten things, as if a living desecrated this world of dead things in order to bring something from this world to the world of the living.

“We went to storage. Appalling, stuffed storage. *Here paintings are hung floor to ceiling on racks, but no one can see them, can even pull the screens, because everywhere are painting stacked against the walls, against the screens. Sandbags on the floor prevent the works of art from slipping. No one can be allowed in here, for there is no place to step; one can hardly turn around without endangering a precious object.*” (Raid the Icebox 1 with Andy Warhol, 1969, pp. 8, emphasis added)

To this sheer accumulation of time – in a place in itself devoid of time –, this “sort of general archive”, a “place of all times that is itself outside of time” and, more importantly, “inaccessible to its ravages”, Robbins and Dominique de Menil are going to find a space of “paintings stacked against the walls”, in which everything had become impossible to see. A place in which what we see is, exactly, the *ravages of time*: objects stacked one against the others, dust engulfing everything, damaged art works, a fundamental disorder, consequence of time itself.

We have, then, the accumulation of time, of all times and places, in one particular place: the museum. This museum as heterotopia, however, is in itself divided into two domains, two different if not altogether contradictory spaces: on the one hand, we have this continuous time, the accumulation of objects that constitutes history; on the other, however, we have the ravages of time, an accumulation, not of time, but of debris; and what is interesting is the fact that, while Robbins and Dominique de Menil are always trying to merge these two spaces (after all, the archive to them is nothing but a place where we can find secrets), Warhol is always opening up the divide by bringing debris and historical residues to the place of the museum; therefore, while Robbins and Dominique de Menil are always trying to transform the archive into a museum, Warhol collapses the museum into the archive.

“Like a bewitched castle in the fairytales of old, the world of art lies asleep. To break the spell unusual gifts or thorough preparation is needed. Occasional good is not enough. Sunday visitors roam museum galleries lost and bored. And people lived for centuries near to Greek ruins without being aware of their beauty. Callousness is the norm.

It takes ardour, curiosity, patient to attune our ears to the «Voices of Silence». It takes oracles and priests No one would have approach the Eleusian mysteries without initiation. The mysteries of art require initiation too. If critics and scholars can open many doors, only seers and prophets open the royal gates.” (Raid the Icebox 1 with Andy Warhol, 1969, p. 5)

This type of discourse by Dominique de Menil is, in part, shared by Daniel Robbins. He doesn't speak of prophets or seers, but he speaks of a historical consciousness, a link binding all the art works, which will be in some part shared by Robbins, bears some interests to us, given the ironic distance at which Warhol will place himself.

Dominique de Menil speaks of an allure, of oracles and priests, seers and prophets, of a *katabasis* – a descent into hell – that retrieves something long forgotten. And Warhol, in some part, accomplishes that, he “raids the icebox”. But whereas Dominique de Menil and Daniel Robbins speak of secrets and treasures⁸ – they expected Warhol to retrieve treasures from the storage room –, giving us a long story of familiarity⁹, of belonging, Warhol places before us another story, a story made of debris, of leftovers, of objects whose survival is due only to chance¹⁰. Not everything was a debris or a leftover – but the “cellar effect” we are going to speak of gives to any object this particular taste. However, several of them were just that, debris: the chairs, for example, were just kept for spare parts, with no value whatsoever. To Dominique and Robbins story made of secrets to be found, of prophets and seers, Warhol opposes a senseless dissemination made of leftovers and debris.

⁸ “Every collector dreams of the finds he might possibly make in the dark recesses of some country barn, or the back corner of a sleepy shop. Put your hand down and come up with a Rembrandt etching! Find a Tiepolo in your embassy! We read about such discoveries often, they never fail to make news and captivate the attention of even the public that does not consider itself actively involved with art.” (Raid the Icebox 1 with Andy Warhol, 1969, p. 12)

⁹ The reference to Malraux's *Voices of Silence* points in that direction. There's a known photograph taken by *Paris Match* in which we can see Malraux surrounded by photographs of all the works of art he used in *Voices of Silence*.

¹⁰ “Then a modest but charming Cézanne was found, a still life with apples. «Yes, we'll take the Cézanne,» Warhol said. «Is that a real Cézanne or a fake one? If that's real, we won't take it!» (Raid the Icebox 1 with Andy Warhol, 1969, p. 24)

2. THE REFRAIN

One of Andy Warhol's most known features was his strange, machine like interviews.¹¹ They were not ways of deceiving, of eluding the others – one cannot say that he lies, but one also cannot say the opposite. They were ways of *refusing*, of *withdrawing* himself – ways of refusing to be determined by language, to be the subject of speech. Nicholas de Villiers, studying the different strategies taking place in Warhol's interviews, speaks of tactics¹², and gives us a taxonomy of all the different strategies Warhol took in order to avoid speaking, even while speaking.

¹¹ A machine, yes, but just as the machines that Deleuze and Guattari speak of in *Anti-Oedipus*, this machine is always broken, always producing nothing but noise. Just one example out of many: “do you have any special theory of film? Serious? Theory. Huh? Theory. Steery? T-h-e-o-r-y. Oh, theory?! Yes. No.” (Goldsmith, 2004, p. 173)

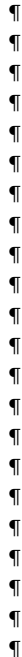
¹² “I prefer to maintain an emphasis on Warhol's opacity as a specific discursive tactic not immediately linked to questions of invisibility or disclosure.” (Villiers, 2012, p. 91)

“What I propose is that we read with rather than against Warhol's discursive tactics, that we view his persona as a significant “work” in itself, that we take his word regarding his desire to be a machine

or that if we want to know who Andy Warhol is we should look at the surface (“If you want to know all about Andy Warhol, just look at the surface of my paintings and films and me, and there I am. There’s nothing behind it.”), and thus not reduce his opacity to a transparency, a comforting reflection with which we can identify, or a depth psychology. For me, Warhol’s queer opacity is an attempt to baffle, stymie, or sabotage particular functions of truth, individuality, and authenticity.” (Villiers, 2012)

We must look at the surface, says de Villiers, we must not try to reduce Warhol’s opacity to the transparency of meaning – but what constitutes this surface and why should we begin by saying that it’s opaque? The problem with tactics, with opaqueness, is that it gives too much to meaning. Instead of speaking of tactics we could say that Warhol’s interviews consist of two different series: one in which the interviewer follows a particular logic, with its own set of rules one must follow, and another, typical of Warhol, that consists of constantly retreating to a purely mechanical plain. It’s a question of procedure, then, and not of tactics, of attempting anything, and it’s a question of looking at both sides of the interview as different procedures, different mechanical logics.

David Bourdon tells a curious story regarding a shoe collection (image 3-5) that existed at the RISD, in which Warhol keeps repeating the same sentence – as a kind of refrain. In a somewhat similar fashion, this story concerning the shoe collection shows the same procedure as the interviews, the same type of retreat, the same language that says nothing.





[Image 3 - Shoe collection (*Raid the Icebox* catalogue).]

3

OF

5

“Warhol wanted the entire shoe collection. Did he mean the cabinet as well? «Oh, yes, *just like that*.” But what about the doors? Would he allow people to open and close them? «spectator participation», Warhol murmured. Robbins was startled. No curator, he said, would have thought of exhibiting the shoes «*just like that*»(...)

Back in his office, Robbins informed the curator of the costume collection that Warhol wanted to borrow the entire shoe collection. «Well, you don't want it all» she told Warhol in a rather disciplinary tone, «because there's some duplication.» Warhol raised his eyebrows and blinked.” (Raid the Icebox 1 with Andy Warhol, 1969, pp. 17-20 emphasis added)

Just like that: this curious sentence withdraws Warhol from every kind of decision. (indeed, one could venture to say that it's a sentence that withdraws itself from every kind of language). “Just like that” is a decision to leave everything untouched, of adding nothing of its own, a “pure announcement of appearance” as Giorgio Agamben says:

“*Aggello* and *apaggello* are verbs that express the function of the *aggelos*, the messenger, *who simply carries a message without adding anything*, or who performatively announces an event (*polemos apaggellein* means «to declare war»). The Skeptic does not simply oppose aphasia to *phasis*, silence to discourse; rather, he displaces language from the register of the proposition, which predicates something to something (*Iegein ti kata tinou*), to that of the *announcement*, which predicates nothing of nothing. Maintaining itself in the *epokhe* of the «no more than», language is transformed into the angel of the phenomenon, the pure announcement of its passion.” (Agamben, 1999, p. 257)

“Just like that” is something of the order of this announcement that is neither positive nor negative, limiting itself to an “intimation of Being without any predicate” (ibidem).

But doesn't one feel also that this sentence makes it impossible to answer to it, that is, that no one could carry on talking after it, that no one could continue speaking after it was enunciated? “Just like that” ends all discussion, makes language impossible and imposes itself as a monotonous repetition (one imagines Warhol in the storage rooms fascinated by the chaotic accumulation of debris¹³ and constantly repeating the same sentence). “Just like that” announces that there is nothing more to be said, that nothing more *can* be said. Isn't that what happens in Robbins office with the curator of the costume collection? “Well, you don't want it all (...) because there's some duplication”. But “just like that” doesn't tolerate any kind of reply, it imposes itself and leaves nothing to be said.

¹³ One of the *Time Capsules* contains several pictures Warhol took of the storage rooms. One sees from them that “just like that” was almost always accomplished and that the dim light, the archival ambience, fascinated Warhol.



[Image 4 - Shoe collection (*Raid the Icebox* catalogue).]



“Just like that” functions as a formula in which one reads an absence of intentionality. As Deleuze’s *Bartleby*, “just like that” is “devastating because it eliminates the preferable just as merciless as any nonpreferable” (Deleuze, 1998, p. 71). It seems to prefer; it seems to say that Warhol *prefers* things to be “just like that”. However, the sense of the sentence goes in a different direction, it says that Warhol prefers *not to prefer*, prefers to remove itself, to retreat from language, prefers not to make any kind of choice¹⁴. It’s the difference between the one who is tired and the one who is exhausted. The tired cannot accomplish anything, but everything remains possible. The exhausted, however, has lost every relation to the possible – and when he accomplishes anything this is beyond any kind of possibility.

¹⁴“I would prefer nothing rather than something: *not a will to nothingness, but the growth of a nothingness of the will*. *Bartleby* has won the right to survive, that is, to remain immobile and upright before a blind wall. Pure patient passivity, as Blanchot would say.” (Deleuze, 1998, pp. 71, emphasis added)

“Exhaustion is altogether different: you combine the set of variables of a situation, provided you renounce all order of preference and all organization of goal, all signification. It is no longer so as to go out or to stay in, and you no longer make use of days and nights. *You no longer realize, even though you accomplish*. In shoes you stay in, in slippers you go out. That does not mean that you fall into indifferenciation, or into the celebrated identified contraries, and you are not passive: *you press on, but toward nothing*.” (Deleuze, *The Exhausted*, 1995, pp. 3-4, emphasis added)

“Just like that” is Andy Warhol’s formula for a passivity beyond all intentionality and sense.

But it is not just a question of language, even if it plays a substantial part of Warhol’s oeuvre – Nicholas de Villiers doesn’t say it, but it could be defended that the interviews are a continuation of Warhol’s oeuvre and, more importantly, that they have one possible key of understanding his works. One example of the contamination between Warhol’s formula and *Raid the Icebox* is the “cellar effect” of the exhibition at the RISD (when on view in New Orleans before returning to the RISD, Warhol had the visitors enter the building though the basement storage area).

“The entire show was dimly lit so as «to give a cellar effect». The main gallery featured an accumulation of crates against one central wall, next to a collection of paintings hung so closely that their gilded frames touched. In the center of the room was an immense, fragile-looking wooden storage rack with an assortment of packed, wrapped, and piled objects. A tall ladder stood in a corner, in front of another group of paintings. A third gallery included a series of metal screens – extracted directly from storage – with paintings hanging on them, while additional paintings leaned against each other on the wall, sandbags nearby. Some umbrellas hung from the ceiling while others were stuffed in with the shoes.” (Huberman, s/d, p. 18)

“Just like that” doesn’t limit itself in telling us something about the objects Warhol choose – the rigorous way they are translated from the storage areas to the museum, but also

what he choose, all those debris of time, almost all of them devoid of value. It also tells us about the ambience, a sort of atmospheric quality Warhol seems to have intended. And this ambience is the “cellar effect”, the dim light in which all those objects are bathed, but also the cramped space, the sheer accumulation of junk. Time itself is nothing but this senseless accumulation of random objects, without any purpose, without any bond between them except pure randomness. They are objects that exhausted all possibility – not only in the sense that they are in some way useless, but also in the sense that in some cases their survival happened by accident.



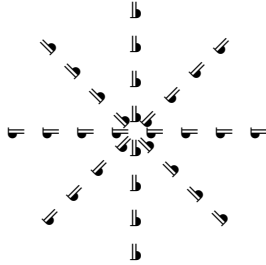
[Image 5 - Shoe collection (*Raid the Icebox* catalogue).]



5

OF

5



the alimentary body
combines all delusions





Tres mujeres arquean sus espaldas para recoger las sobras de la cosecha diaria. Antes del ocaso, retiran una a una, con sus manos, las espigas de trigo olvidadas. Con el permiso del capataz.

La dureza del trabajo campesino, rural y humilde, se manifiesta como una sombra que avanza hacia el primer plano envolviendo la pobreza de quienes están autorizadas a recoger, de forma agotadora y concienzuda, apenas el grano sobrante.

La fatiga, la pesadez y el esfuerzo que acusan estos cuerpos, contrasta con el brillante resplandor de la gran recolecta, ordenada y abundante, que se adivina al fondo, hacia el horizonte.

Jean-François Millet. *Las espigadoras*, 1987.



Sentadas frente la pared, cuatro mujeres descubren sus espaldas. Sus torsos desnudos y expuestos se abandonan a la acción de un brazo armado con agujas y tinta.

El muro vacío que observan estas trabajadoras sexuales adictas a la heroína, blanquea -o quizás no- la crudeza del momento en el que un trazo impreciso y tembloroso se marca de forma incisiva y permanente sobre su piel. Por el precio de una dosis.

La atmósfera cargada del cuarto, asfixiante y austero, se tatúa también en la escena. Como la línea, que no es más que un gesto gráfico mínimo. Pero nos muestra la realidad miserable e indeleble de quien lleva el horizonte a cuestras.

Santiago Sierra. *Línea de 160 cm tatuada sobre cuatro personas*, 2000.

TOMATO PROJECT

BODY.
WORK.
POVERTY.

VISUAL
ESSAY

DANIEL MOREIRA E
RITA CASTRO NEVES

VE02











VE03





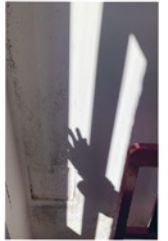
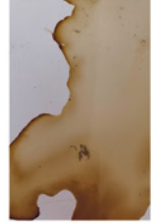


Residir. Residere = -Re + sedere.

Que aqui habito; que aqui me acho; que aqui me faço sentir; que aqui me manifesto;
que aqui me sento;

“Prefácio que pode servir como modo de utilização” ou como convite a uma narrativa
de uma residência impermanente num lugar-tempo

VE04





EDITOR & CURATOR

Euarda Neves

ARTISTS

Alexandre Osório
Amarante Abramovici
Artur Barrio
Bartosz Dolhun
Catarina Leitão
Celeste Cerqueira
Darja Shatalova
João Leonardo
João Tabarra
Katy Bentall
Nuno Ramalho
Reinhold Zisser
Sérgio Leitão

ESSAYS

Cristina Susigan
Emanuel Cameira
Giulio Verago
João Oliveira Duarte
Juan Luis Toboso
Luis Lima
Mara Montanaro
Mohammad Salemy
Nayia Yiakoumaki
Nuno Faleiro Rodrigues
Paolo Quintili
Rômulo Moraes

VISUAL ESSAYS

Alexandra Costa
Bárbara Flores
Daniel Moreira e Rita Castro Neves
Maria Covadonga Barreiro

GRAPHIC DESIGN

Luís Sousa Teixeira

PHOTOGRAPHY

António Alves
Artists
Manuela Matos Monteiro

EDITION

Centro de Estudos Arnaldo Araújo, ESAP-CESAP

FIRST EDITION

Porto, June 2022

PRINTING AND BINDING

Guide — Artes Gráficas, Lda.

PRINT RUN

200 copies

LEGAL DEPOSIT

500345/22

ISBN

978-972-8784-99-7



FCT

Fundação
para a Ciência
e a Tecnologia



esap

Escola Superior
Artística do Porto

SATH SEÇÃO AUTÓNOMA
esap TEORIA
E HISTÓRIA



DÍNAJO
G A L E R I A



REPÚBLICA
PORTUGUESA
CULTURA

CULTURA
Δ NORTE

This work was funded by national funds through FCT - Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia, I.P., within the projects UIDB/04041/2020 and UIDP/04041/2020 (Arnaldo Araújo Research Centre)

