



## GLOBAL BALLET. INSIDE BRAZIL–EUROPE CONFINES

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*The universal is at once what determines its own points as subject-thoughts and the virtual recollection of these points. Thus, the central dialectic of the universal is that of the local as subject, and the global as an infinite procedure. This dialectic is the thought itself.*

Alain Badiou – *Oito teses sobre o Universal*.<sup>2</sup>

### **Humanism, ethnocentrism**

Which values can be called “Europeans”? As a rule, one can say that they overlap the Judeo-Christian tradition and the Franco-German Clarification. Sometimes, the Roman law and the British Liberalism are also included, so that, when one evokes European values, we eventually think on human rights, democracy, tolerance towards the diverse, and opening to other cultures. However, as a matter of fact, these are undoubtedly universalist claims which, though stated as Europeans, are not disobeyed by non-European cultures. On the other hand, one highlights the European character of such principles precisely when the very idea of Europe suffers constant and not always desirable mutations. Already in

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<sup>2</sup> “O universal é o que determina seus próprios pontos como sujeitos-pensamento, ao mesmo tempo que ele é a re-coleção virtual destes pontos. Portanto, a dialética central do universo é a do local, como sujeito, e do global, como procedimento infinito. Esta dialética é o pensamento mesmo.” BADIOU, Alain. “Oito teses sobre o Universal” in *Revista Ethica*. Cadernos acadêmicos. Trad.: Norman Madarasz. vol. 15, n. 2, 2008, p. 41-50.

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the midst of the crisis of the Capitalism, in 1930, the German novelist Ernst-Robert Curtius rationalized his *Essai sur la France* arguing that Europeans should try to rebuilt the common heritage, Europe, and so avoid the “drowning of our civilization”. Soon after, in 1932, while writing a volume dedicated to Aby Warburg, *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages (Europäische Literatur und lateinisches Mittelalter, 1948)*, Curtius himself understood that, in order to save Europe, it would be necessary to save, first, the own Euro-Atlantic dimension of the warburgian method. Actually, on May 1<sup>st</sup>, 1896, Aby Warburg saw the Kachina dance, the snake dance, at Oraibi, the most ancient and remote Hopi village, in Tuba City, Arizona. The experience immediately reminded him of a quote from the second part of Goethe’s *Faust*, “Es ist ein altes Buch zu blättern; von Harz bis Hellas alles Vettern”, in other words, it was about an ancient history, which tells, from Harz to Hellas, we are all cousin-brothers. He had no doubt whatsoever about adapting this same phrase, such as “This is the lesson of an ancient book: the kinship between Athens and Oraibi” (“Es ist ein altes Buch zu blättern, Athen-Oraibi, alles Vettern”), when, twenty seven years later, he graced the heading of his studies on “Images from the Region of the Pueblo Indians of North America”, initially read as a conference on Kreuzlingen Sanatorium, in 1923, to prove his own lucidity and thus regain his freedom, and later stamped, during the war, in 1939, on the *Journal of the Warburg Institute*, in London, followed by the title “A lecture on Serpent Ritual”, a classic that came to reconfigure the studies of arts, memory and politics.

Warburg considered this relation as something discontinuous, derived from a constant mantling and dismantling among dissimilar times, as the split between art and philosophy, for instance, would demonstrate the impossibility of a European culture to master the own object of knowledge. This schizophrenia of Western men, as named by Warburg himself, consisted on a split between an extreme of unconscious ecstasy and a deliberate and rational one, in which both cannot, indeed, entirely master the other. The thought does not elaborate its language and, similarly, art does not think its own power. To say so with the words of a Warburg disciple, Giorgio Agamben:

Aby Warburg launches those researches that only the myopia of a psychologizing history of art could define as “science of image”, since they actually had in their core the gesture as the crystal of the historical memory, their stiffen on a destiny, and the inexhaustible attempt of artists and philosophers (to Warburg, on the edge of madness) to release him from this, through a dynamic polarization. As these researches

acted on image domain, image was also credit as its object. On the contrary, Warburg turned the image (which, for Jung, would still provide the model of the archetype metahistorical sphere) into a decidedly historical and dynamic element. In this sense, the Mnemosyne atlas, left incomplete, with its about one thousand photos, is not a static images' repertoire, but a representation on virtual movement of Western humanity's gestures, from Classic Greece to Fascism (i.e., something closer to De Jorio<sup>3</sup> than to Panofsky); inside each section, each one of the images is first considered as photograms of a film than as autonomous realities.<sup>4</sup>

Warburg would have detected, in his Euro-Atlantic studies of image, that politics is the sphere of pure means, i.e. of the most absolute, aloof, and entire humanity gesture, in one word, of ethics and not only aesthetics. This decision entailed not to moralize about the studied object. An example here is convenient. Adorno, as one will remember, condemned Astrology as a mere superstition, the negative expression of work organization, and, more specifically, of the compartmentalization of sciences.<sup>5</sup> Warburg, on the contrary, on his analysis of Olympic gods as Astral demons, thought from the frescoes of Schifanoia de Ferrara Palace, inspired on Classic Astrology, foresaw, howbeit, that Botticelli received from tradition a set of thematic elements, astrological ones included, which he himself puts at the service of a strong personal creation, whose style depended on a *sui generis* renewal of this same tradition, especially of ancient sculpture, which revealed that Greek gods were dancing their ciranda, on Plato's mode on the most elevated spheres, hypothesis which took him to claim an expansion of the methodological boundaries of art history.

3 Andrea de Jorio (1769-1851), Italian archaeologist and ethnographer, author of *La mimica degli antichi investigate nel gestire napoletano* (1832).

4 'Aby Warburg avvia quelle indagini che solo la miopia di una storia dell'arte psicologizzante ha potuto definire come «scienza dell'immagine», mentre avevano in verità al loro centro il gesto come cristallo di memoria storica, il suo irrigidirsi in un destino e lo strenuo tentativo degli artisti e dei filosofi (per Warburg al limite della follia) per affrancarlo da esso attraverso una polarizzazione dinamica. Poiché queste ricerche si attuavano nel medio delle immagini, si è creduto che l'immagine fosse anche il loro oggetto. Warburg ha, invece, trasformato l'immagine (che ancora per Jung fornirà il modello della sfera metastorica degli archetipi) in un elemento decisamente storico e dinamico. In questo senso, l'atlante Mnemosyne, che egli ha lasciato incompiuto, con le sue circa mille fotografie, non è un immobile repertorio di immagini, ma una rappresentazione in movimento virtuale dei gesti dell'umanità occidentale, dalla Grecia classica al fascismo (cioè qualcosa che è più vicino a De Jorio che a Panofsky); all'interno di ogni sezione, le singole immagini vanno considerate piuttosto come fotogrammi di un film che come realtà autonome'. AGAMBEN, Giorgio. *Mezzi senza fine*: Note sulla politica. Torino: Bollati Boringhieri, 1996, p. 49-50

5 ADORNO, Theodor W. *As estrelas descem à Terra*. A coluna de astrologia do *Los Angeles Times*: um estudo sobre superstição secundária. Trad. Pedro Rocha de Oliveira. São Paulo: Editora da UNESP, 2008.

To date, insufficient development categories have prevented art history from make its material available to a ‘historical psychology of human expression’ still inexistent. With an overly materialist or mystic attitude, our young discipline blocks a general view of world history. Groping, it tries to find among political history schematisms and the doctrines of genius its own theory of evolution. With my attempt to understand the Schifonia Palace frescoes I hope I have demonstrated that we can only enlighten the major evolutionary processes if we make an effort to enlighten in details a concrete obscure point, and this, for its turn, is only possible from an iconological analysis which is not intimidated by the police control of our frontiers and insists in contemplate Antiquity, Middle Ages and Modernity as interrelated times, studying the autonomous and applied works of art as expressive documents equally relevant (...). The grand new style, which was bequeathed by Italy’s artistic genius, was rooted on the social will to free Greek humanity from the medieval and Latin-Eastern ‘practice’. With this desire to restore Antiquity, the ‘good European’ started his struggle for enlightenment in that era of international iconographical migration, which today – maybe with an exaggerated mysticism – we call the Renaissance times.<sup>6</sup>

He created, thus, a “nameless science” and a specific “knowledge with no specific territory”, precisely located on the extremes of Europe, between Athens and Oraibi. Therefore, it is relevant to remember that, three years before Warburg’s Hopi experience, Tristão de Alencar Araripe Jr (1848-1911) had described something similar in terms of *obnubilation*:

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6 ‘Até hoje, categorias de desenvolvimento insuficientes têm impedido a história da arte de disponibilizar seu material para uma “psicologia histórica da expressão humana” ainda inexistente. Com uma postura exageradamente materialista ou mística, nossa jovem disciplina obstrui uma visão geral da história mundial. Tateante, tenta encontrar entre os esquematismos da história política e as doutrinas do gênio a sua própria teoria da evolução. Com minha tentativa de interpretação dos afrescos no Palazzo Schiafanoia espero ter demonstrado que só podemos iluminar os grandes processos evolutivos se nos esforçarmos para esclarecer detalhadamente um ponto obscuro concreto, e isso, por sua vez, só é possível a partir de uma análise iconológica que não se deixa intimidar pelo controle policial das nossas fronteiras e insiste em contemplar a Antiguidade, a Idade Média e a Modernidade como épocas inter-relacionadas, investigando as obras de arte autônomas e aplicadas como documentos expressivos igualmente relevantes (...). O grande estilo novo, que nos foi legado pelo gênio artístico da Itália, estava arraigado na vontade social de libertar a humanidade grega da “prática” medieval e latino-oriental. Com essa vontade para a restituição da Antiguidade, o “bom europeu” deu início à sua luta pela iluminação naquela era de migrações iconográficas internacionais, que hoje – talvez com um misticismo exagerado – chamamos de época do Renascimento.’ WARBURG, Aby. “A arte italiana e a astrologia internacional no Palazzo Schifanoia, em Ferrara”. *A renovação da Antiguidade pagã*: contribuições científico-culturais para a história do Renascimento europeu. Trad. Markus Hediger. Rio de Janeiro: Contraponto, 2013, p.475-476.

This phenomenon consists on the transformation through which the settlers crossing the Atlantic Ocean passed, and their after adaptation to the physical and primitive environment. Just browse through the chroniclers' pages to recognize this truth. Portuguese, French, Spanish men, they just arrived in Brazil and were interned, losing track of their pinnaces and caravels, they forgot their respective origins. Overpowered by the rudeness of the environment, dazed by the tropical nature, embraced with the earth, each one of them became almost savages; and if a strong settlement, renewed by continuous travels, could not support them on struggle, it would not be rare if they eventually paint their bodies with genipapo and annatto, and adopting ideas, customs, and even brutalities from the natives.

This fact, also sanctioned by Hans Staden, Soares Moreno, Pai Pinta, Anhanguera, and Anchieta himself, attested that such procedure, if not imposed by the environment, at least by refined art, have become a local language, innate (a local enunciation of the subject, and a global enunciation, while infinite procedure, as Badiou would say), from which Araripe concluded that 'the mission of Brazilian thaumaturge, such as they say, on the forests of the South, cannot be explained but by piagas, accepted or skillfully copied, witchcraft, through which he catechized his caboclos'.<sup>7</sup> Now, Walter Benjamin, on his notes about Paris, capital of the European Nineteenth century, also associated *obnubilation* to the eternal return and the emergency of the archaic. The world of modernity, he forewarns, more than once, is a world of strict discontinuity, in which the new is neither the old one that lingers, nor a fragment of the past which returns. It is, otherwise, an intermittent experience which blurs the sight, once the intermittence makes the sight discover a new constellation once we glance towards the space. And this intermittence is the cinematic rhythm's measure, which associates itself to the problem of origins on Baroque arts,<sup>8</sup> an art of overseas expansion, by the way, in which Benjamin detects, at last, an energy in which the past is a shadow; a mist that announces a future and a present which are nothing more than spark that only sheds some light on the evasive instant.

Hence, a regime of visibility and an artistic language are strongly attached; a subjective instance and a legal order. Not by chance, Oswald de Andrade had proclaimed shortly before, in 1928, and not without a certain upstart arrogance, that "without us, Europe would not even have its poor Declaration of the Rights of Men". Even so,

7 ARARIPE, Jr. T. A. *Gregório de Matos*. 2ª ed., Paris: Garnier, 1910, p. 37-8.

8 BENJAMIN, Walter. *Paris, capitale du XIX e. siècle*. Trad. J. Lacoste. 2ª ed., Les Éditions du Cerf, 1993, p. 840.

Oswald could not hide the relative poverty of the so called ‘human rights’, from the 1789 Declaration, once they are just ‘negative rights’ or individuals’ ‘guaranties’ before the new post-revolutionary State-Nation. It would also be relevant to think on Lévi-Strauss’ Brazilian works, which supported, *inter alia*, the Lacanian unconscious theory, averse to phenomenology, such as expressed on the famous lecture about the mirror stage (1936), to be later deconstructed by an anthropologist’s practice such as Eduardo Viveiros de Castro’s or even on one of contemporary theorists (Alain Badiou, Quentin Meillassoux) who think the value of the living after the human finitude. Anyway, at the end of his life, the same Oswald would try to rethink the deep relation which exists among human rights, culture, economy, and fiction. On a text preserved in the University of Campinas’ archives and written in pencil in 1950, the anthropophagite observes:

A man of pedagogic inclinations, graduated by the reading of books which perfumes the first Middle Ages, leaves his home, on the bright sun of a workday, to straighten the world. And instead fairness and justice, he finds, already settled in cities and paths, profit, market, untruth and the unpunished subduing of the weak by the strong.

Some might have said the city created a special humanity. And is this special humanity supported by economic and possesses differences that the late knight would find. Amid the patriarchate institutions, what endures the dramatic disillusion of the old and annulled fighter is still the lyrical ideal of the matriarchy troubadour – that radiant Dulcinea who presided for a whole human period of five centuries.

As it turns out, since the end of the late Middle Ages two attitudes have been enhanced in the course of European life. One is still expressed in sentence against accumulation, in the thirteenth century, by the ingenuity of St. Thomas Aquinas. ‘The money only exists to be spent.’ (*Usus pecuniae ipsius*), i.e. not to be capitalized. The other, shortly after that time, in the same beautiful land of Italy, is dictated by the Florentine Alberti, who left one of the best and most complete documents on the late Middle Ages and the beginning of bourgeois capitalism. (...) That good ambition was gone, therefore, that one common to natural people, which, among others, the frontier Germans of the Roman Empire expressed by their adornments, serving sets and jewels in precious metals and stones. Now it is already the pure sound of capitalism with the clear phenomenon which expresses itself at the high conscious of this great Florentine Alberti, highlighted by Werner Sombart’s classic study on the bourgeois. It is the currency accumulation what worries spirits, and the usury enjoyed by it, far from the times in which treasures were piled up, aiming at the metal as the metal, and not its mirific possibilities of transforma-



tion into currency. It is when the Humanist Erasmus speaks out that all men obey the money (*Pecuniae obediunt omnia*). Selfishness is already expressed in this curious adage: ‘Who does not find money in his own bag, let alone will find it on someone else’s bag.’<sup>9</sup>

The two principles of *economimese* are, therefore, St. Thomas Aquinas’, ‘the money only exists to be spent’, and Erasmus’, who curiously names European scholarships, which says that all men obey the money, *pecuniae obediunt omnia*. It is symptomatic, howbeit, that Oswald already detects this conflict between two ways of thinking fiction and politics, law and economics, no less than in *Quixote*, the novel marked by this character, fantasy or mere imagination, who leaves his home to straighten life but, instead justice, he finds, settled worldwide, profit, market, untruth and the unpunished subduing of the weak by the strong. Reading, at that particular time, a Marx’s fragment in which the author states that all physical and intellectual senses were, by alienation, replaced by the idea of property, Oswald writes on the margins that “possessing determines thinking”.<sup>10</sup> Simultaneously, nonetheless, a French liberal-anarchist as Paul Valéry, stupefied before the experience of two followed wars which conflagrate the entire continent, almost sighing, relieved, would say: ‘*L’âge du monde fini commence*’.<sup>11</sup>

9 ‘Um homem de pendores pedagógicos, formado na leitura dos livros que perfumam a primeira Idade Média, sai de casa, ao claro sol de um dia útil, para endireitar o mundo. E em vez da justeza e da justiça, encontra, já instalados nas cidades e pelos caminhos, o lucro, o mercado, a inverdade e a subjugação impune do débil pelo forte.

Houve quem dissesse que a cidade criou uma humanidade especial. É essa humanidade especial amparada nas diferenças da economia e do haver que o cavaleiro tardio vai encontrar. Em meio das instituições do patriarcado, o que perdura da dramática desilusão do velho e anulado lutador ainda é o ideal lírico dos trovadores do matriarcado – aquela Dulcinéia radiosa que presidiu a todo um período humano de cinco séculos.

Como se vê, desde os fins da Alta Idade Média duas atitudes se acentuam no correr da vida européia. Uma é ainda expressa em sentença contra a acumulação, já no século XIII, pela ingenuidade de Santo Tomás de Aquino. “O dinheiro só existe para ser gasto” (*Usus pecuniae ipsius*) quer dizer: para não ser capitalizado. A outra, pouco depois dessa época, na mesma bela terra de Itália, é ditada pelo florentino Alberti, que deixou dos melhores e mais completos documentos sobre o fim da Idade Média e o começo do capitalismo burguês. (...) Fora-se portanto aquela boa ambição, comum aos povos naturais, que, entre outros, os germanos fronteiriços do Império Romano exprimiam em ter adornos, baixelas e jóias em metais e pedras preciosas. Agora já é o puro som do capitalismo com o claro fenômeno que se expressa na alta consciência desse grande florentino Alberti, posto em relevo pelo estudo clássico de Werner Sombart, sobre o burguês. Já é o amedamento que preocupa os espíritos e a usura que dele se usufrui, bem longe dos tempos em que se acumulavam tesouros, tendo em vista o metal como metal e não as suas miríficas possibilidades de transformação em moeda. É quando o humanista Erasmo grita que todos obedecem ao dinheiro (*Pecuniae obediunt omnia*). O egoísmo já se exprime neste curioso adágio: “Quem não encontra dinheiro na própria bolsa, muito menos o encontrará na bolsa alheia”. ANDRADE, Oswald. “O antropófago” in BOAVENTURA, Maria Eugenia (org.). *Estética e política*. São Paulo: Globo, 1992, p. 267-268.

10 DENIS, Henri. “Humanisme et matérialisme dans la pensée de Karl Marx”. *La pensée*, Paris, n. 14, Paris, set-out 1947, p.52.

11 VALÉRY, Paul. “Regards sur le monde actuel” in *Oeuvres*. Ed. Jean Hytier. Paris: Gallimard, 1960, vol.III, p. 923.

### L'âge du monde (est) finie

This idea that *l'age du monde (est) finie*, and that, as predicted shortly after by Alexander Kojève, globalization is indeed post-historical, have caused a series of divergent views on what we should understand as multiculturalism. An Italian professor at Stanford, Franco Moretti; a French author, a follower of Pierre Bourdieu's theories, Pascale Casanova; and even a Harvard's comparatist, such as David Damrosch, define the multicultural culture of *monde fini* as *world literature*. However, one of the most notable references of the American academic Marxism, Fredric Jameson, leans, nonetheless, on a broader notion of *global literature* and, although he had proposed the problematic unified category of *national allegories* for all the Third World's fictions, he eventually stated, concerning the innovative work of a filmmaker such as Andrei Sokhurov,<sup>12</sup> which he illustrated as late Modernism, that it would be not but a simple *non-synchronic equivalent* of literature on the immediate post-War, with the proviso, nonetheless, that it operates, in Sokhurov and other artists such as Manoel de Oliveira, a profound demystification or desecration of the high Modernism cult value, paradoxical idea which, in fact, overturns the previous notion of equivalence. Another Minnesota's comparatist, post-Gramscian Timothy Brennan, has approached the issue in terms of *cosmopolitanism*<sup>13</sup> which would keep a certain relationship with the positions of the active subalternists in United States, like Walter Mignolo, from Duke.<sup>14</sup> But there are also signs of a *literary transnationalism* or *cosmopolitanism of the poor* among the followers of some kind of deconstruction, like Gayatri Spivak,<sup>15</sup> Hillis

12 Cf. JAMESON, Fredric. "History and Elegy in Sokhurov". *Critical Inquiry*, n. 33, Fall 2006, p. 1-12; IDEM. "New Literary History after the End of the New". *New Literary History*, vol. 39, n. 3, Summer 2008, p. 375-387.

13 Cf. BRENNAN, Timothy. *At Home in the World: Cosmopolitanism Now*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997; IDEM. "Cosmopolitismo e internacionalismo". *New Left Review*, n. 7, 2001; IDEM. "Running and Dodging: The Rhetoric of Doubleness in Contemporary Theory". *New Literary History*, vol. 41, n. 2, Spring 2010, p. 277-299.

14 Cf. MIGNOLO, Walter. "Herencias coloniales y teorías postcoloniales" in GONZALEZ, Beatriz (ed.). *Cultura y Tercer Mundo. I. Cambios en el saber académico*. Caracas, Nueva Sociedad, 1996; IDEM. "Géopolitique de la connaissance, colonialité du pouvoir et différence coloniale". *Multitudes*, Paris, set. 2001, p.56-71; IDEM. "Posoccidentalismo: las epistemologías fronterizas y el dilema de los estudios (latinoamericanos) de área" in SANCHEZ PRADO, Ignacio. *América latina; giro óptico*. Puebla: Universidad de las Américas, 2006, p.191-217.

15 SPIVAK, Gayatri Chakravorty. *An Aesthetic Education in the Era of Globalization*. Cambridge: Harvard, 2012; IDEM e DAMROSCH, David. "Comparative Literature/World Literature: A Discussion with Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak and David Damrosch". *Comparative Literature Studies*, vol. 48, n. 4, 2011, p. 455-485.



Miller<sup>16</sup> or Silviano Santiago.<sup>17</sup> Concerning the Brazilian critic, the split scene of the contemporary would lead one to distinguish, in his point of view, two policies about time, Proust's involuntary memory and Borges' deliberated anachronism. It is worth to mention, in this quick survey of recognizable positions regarding contemporary multiculturalism, the thesis of a *diasporic* literature, closer to scholar tradition, developed by authors such as Edward W. Said and Homi Bhabha, and another more open to minor literatures, in critics such as Stuart Hall or Josefina Ludmer. In a specifically European context, Étienne Balibar argues, in *Nous citoyens d'Europe?* (2001), that English, considered as a 'world language', could not be Europe's language, and, otherwise, he proposes, to this continental inter-nation, a system, in constantly changing, of hybrid uses (*usages croisés*), which is not so far from what the American comparatist Emily Apter, in his turn, calls a new comparative literature, defined from a *planetary* concept of critique, primarily focused on the disseminated *translatio*, to which, moreover, there are not few Latin American precedents that we could summarize on the concept of *creolization* or enunciative *self-phantasmagorization*, through which one deconstructs, on facts, the formal-ideal universalism of historicist euro-centrism.<sup>18</sup>

All of these hypotheses, although distinct, mark nonetheless the shared idea of the impossibility of a differential time. Globalization, as we know, homogenizes time and space, and very often, in its critique, we redundantly turn to the problem of thinking time, simultaneously marginal and subordinate, but also distant and non-integrate. Therefore, I would like to stress the anachronism problematics as a singular temporal tension field, where the new identity and values of the contemporary scene are ultimately conformed. As we know, the problem of anachronism is largely raised in the post-autonomic culture by the imperative of image.<sup>19</sup> We

16 MILLER, J. Hillis. "How To (Un)Globe the Earth in Four Easy Lessons". *SubStance*, vol. 41, n. 1, Issue 127, p. 15-29.

17 SANTIAGO, Silviano. "O entre-lugar do discurso latino-americano" in *Uma literatura nos trópicos*. São Paulo, Perspectiva, 1978, p. 11-28; IDEM. *O cosmopolitismo do pobre*. Belo Horizonte: Editora da UFMG, 2005; IDEM. *Ora (Direis) Puxar Conversa*. Belo Horizonte: Ed. UFMG, 2006.

18 APTER, Emily. *The translation zone. A new comparative literature*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006, p. 10-11; IDEM. "Untranslatables: A World System". *New Literary History*, vol. 39, n. 3, Summer 2008, p. 581-598. Na example thereof: HANSSEN, Jens. "Kafka and Arabs". *Critical Inquiry*, vol. 39, n. 1, Fall 2012, p. 167-197.

19 ATTRIDGE, Derek. "Context, Idioculture, Invention". *New Literary History*, vol. 42, n. 4, Fall 2011, p. 681-699.

cannot ignore, thus, the seminal works of Georges Didi-Huberman,<sup>20</sup> who has analyzed, in his last works, a phantasmagoric presence, Apollonian-Dionysian, precisely from the first Warburg's art-historical projects. Hence, the expressive formula or *Pathosformel*, as a timeless formula of the representation of humanity's generic experiences, is a pivotal concept, which feeds both the contributions of psychoanalysis and Benjamin's historical method. One of the most erudite Latin American experts on this issue, José Emilio Burucúa, states those formulas as a conglomerate of representative and significant forms, historically determined at the time of their first synthesis, which strengthens the comprehension of the meaning of the represented by inducing an affective field, in which accurate and bipolar emotions that a culture emphasizes as a basic experience of social life are developed. Each *Pathosformel* would thus be conveyed over time by generations which progressively build a horizon of civilization, passing through stages of latency, recovery, enthusiast appropriations and metamorphoses. In short, it is a crucial characteristic of the whole civilizational process historically unique.

Thinking specifically from a Warburg's work, the Nymph's *Pathosformel*, which showed the poignancy of this formula as "the core of human experience that defines the Euro-Atlantic field of Western cultures in the long term", Burucúa highlights its emergency in a recent work of Roberto Calasso<sup>21</sup>, which indeed corroborates Warburg's findings, but one might also add that of Giorgio Agamben, who, from a video of Bill Viola, also recovers the image issue, as developed by Warburg, but crossing it, nevertheless, with Guy Debord's contributions on globalization, understood as the society of the spectacle.<sup>22</sup> Concerning Burucúa,

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20 DIDI-HUBERMAN, Georges. *O que vemos, o que nos olha*. São Paulo: 34 Letras, 2000; IDEM. *Devant l'image*. Paris: Minuit; IDEM. *Ante el tiempo*. Historia del arte y anacronismo de las imágenes. Trad. O. Oviedo Funes. Buenos Aires: Adriana Hidalgo, 2005; IDEM. *L'image survivante*. Histoire de l'art et temps des fantômes selon Aby Warburg. Paris: Minuit, 2002; IDEM e NOUDELMANN, F. "Image, matière: immanence". *Rue Descartes*, n. 38, Paris, Dec 2002, p. 86-99.

21 Cf. CALASSO, Roberto. *La follia che viene dalle Ninfe*, Milan: Adelphi, 2005.

22 Cf. AGAMBEN, Giorgio. *Ninfe*. Torino: Bollati Boringhieri, 2007. In a 1975 essay, "Aby Warburg and la scienza senza nome" (included today in *La potenza del pensiero: saggi e conferenze*. Vicenza, Neri Pozza, 2005), Agamben reasoned that the "good god" which, according to his famous saying, "is in the details", it was not for Warburg a tutelary god of art history, but the dark demon of a nameless science from which we started, only today, to glimpse the traces. Anyway, as Agamben himself recalls, Warburg was aware that European culture is only the result of conflicting tendencies, even schizophrenic, a process in which, as far as these astrological guidance attempts, we should seek neither friends nor enemies, but strictly speaking, symptoms of a constant pendulum and bipolar oscillating movement, which goes from the magical-religious practice to mathematic contemplation, and vice versa.

the author is not unconscious of, as one can say, the *a-historical* and *a-chronic* uses of Warburg's theory made by his British school disciples, such as Fritz Saxl or Erwin Panofsky.<sup>23</sup> However, in his view, the question that arises is this fundamental split between two times or two rhythms. In this regard, it is relevant to recall the analysis of Boaventura de Sousa Santos, anthropologist who states that contemporary Brazil conflictingly tries to integrate three temporalities:

The first is the narrative of social exclusion (one of the most unequal countries in the world), the landowning oligarchies, the violent *cacique* political power, the restricted and racist political elites, a narrative which backs to the Colony and has been reproduced on ever-changing forms even today. The second narrative is the claim of participatory democracy which backs to the past 25 years, and had its highest points in the constitutional process leading to the 1988 Constitution, the participatory budgeting on urban policies in hundreds of cities, the President Collor de Mello's impeachment in 1992, and the creation of citizens' councils in key areas of public policy, especially in health and education in all levels of State action (local, state and federal). The third narrative is only ten years old and relates to the vast social inclusion policies adopted by President Lula da Silva since 2003, which led to a significant reduction in poverty, the creation of a middle class with high consumerist bent, the recognition of racial discrimination against African descent and indigenous populations, the affirmative policies, and the expansion on the recognition of *quilombolas* (maroons) and indigenous territories.

**What has happened since President Rousseff took office was a slowdown or even stagnation of the last two narratives. And as there is no empty space**

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23 'Because the ones we just call representative and significant forms, vectors of an emotional constellation, are the necessary intermediate in any process of passage or transfer between the rational-technological spheres and the magic that, according to Aby Warburg's historical theory of culture (replicated in this sense by the anthropological theory of General Bronislaw Malinowski), is the prototype of any practice of permanence or cultural change. It can be said that the history of a civilization, according to Warburg, could be described almost exclusively in terms of conflicts, reconciliations, coexistences and fighting between the *ratio* of scientific enlightenment, associated to the technical domain of nature, and the analog comprehension that leads us to believe in a magic and consoling unit of the world, far beyond the principle of non-contradiction. The *Pathosformel*, taken to the fullness of its significant and emotional intensity in terms of aesthetics, would then be the links that, even in times of most fierce struggle between technological and magician men (...) or in moments of overthrow of rational systems which cause the major crises of the economy and society, save and make possible the minimal communication between the *logos* and the emotional analogies, the relationship that preserves the unity and continuity of human life or culture.' BURUCUA, José Emilio. *Historia y ambivalencia*. Ensayos sobre arte. Buenos Aires: Biblos, 2006, p. 12-3.

in politics, this left wasteland has being tapped by the first and oldest narrative which has enjoyed a new strength under the new guise of capitalist development at all costs, and the new (and old) ways of corruption. Ways of participatory democracy have been co-opted, neutralized in the major infrastructures and mega projects, and failed to motivate the younger generation, orphan of integrated family and community life, dazzled by the new consumerism or obsessed by its desire. The social inclusion policies sold out and no longer meet the expectations of those who felt deserving of more and better. The quality of urban life has deteriorated on behalf of prestigious international events which absorbed the investments that should improve transports, education and general public services. Racism showed its persistence in the social fabric and among police forces. The murder of indigenous and peasant leaders has increased, demonized by political powers as ‘obstacles to development’ only because they fight for their lands and livelihoods, against agribusiness, and mining and hydroelectric mega projects.<sup>24</sup>

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24 ‘A primeira é a narrativa da exclusão social (um dos países mais desiguais do mundo), das oligarquias latifundiárias, do caciquismo violento, de elites políticas restritas e racistas, uma narrativa que remonta à colônia e se tem reproduzido sobre formas sempre mutantes até hoje. A segunda narrativa é a da reivindicação da democracia participativa que remonta aos últimos 25 anos e teve os seus pontos mais altos no processo constituinte que conduziu à Constituição de 1988, nos orçamentos participativos sobre políticas urbanas em centenas de municípios, no impeachment do presidente Collor de Mello em 1992, na criação de conselhos de cidadãos nas principais áreas de políticas públicas especialmente na saúde e educação aos diferentes níveis da ação estatal (municipal, estadual e federal). A terceira narrativa tem apenas dez anos de idade e diz respeito às vastas políticas de inclusão social adotadas pelo presidente Lula da Silva a partir de 2003 e que levaram a uma significativa redução da pobreza, à criação de uma classe média com elevado pendor consumista, ao reconhecimento da discriminação racial contra a população afrodescendente e indígena e às políticas de ação afirmativa e à ampliação do reconhecimento de territórios quilombolas e indígenas.

O que aconteceu desde que a presidente Dilma assumiu funções foi a desaceleração ou mesmo estancamento das duas últimas narrativas. E como em política não há vazio, o espaço que elas foram deixando de baldio foi sendo aproveitado pela primeira e mais antiga narrativa que ganhou novo vigor sob as novas roupagens do desenvolvimento capitalista a todo o custo, e as novas (e velhas) formas de corrupção. As formas de democracia participativa foram cooptadas, neutralizadas no domínio das grandes infraestruturas e megaprojetos e deixaram de motivar as gerações mais novas, órfãs de vida familiar e comunitária integradora, deslumbradas pelo novo consumismo ou obcecadas pelo desejo dele. As políticas de inclusão social esgotaram-se e deixaram de corresponder às expectativas de quem se sentia merecedor de mais e melhor. A qualidade de vida urbana piorou em nome dos eventos de prestígio internacional que absorveram os investimentos que deviam melhorar transportes, educação e serviços públicos em geral. O racismo mostrou a sua persistência no tecido social e nas forças policiais. Aumentou o assassinato de líderes indígenas e camponeses, demonizados pelo poder político como “obstáculos ao desenvolvimento” apenas por lutarem pelas suas terras e modos de vida, contra o agronegócio e os megaprojetos de mineração e hidrelétricos’ SANTOS, Boaventura de Sousa. “O preço do progresso”. *Carta maior*, São Paulo, 19 jun. 2013.

Based on this diagnosis, Sousa Santos concludes that, if it is expected consistency of the transformation process, it is necessary that the two most recent temporalities (the participatory democracy and the intercultural social inclusion) should no longer be a topic of rhetoric and resume the dynamism that they once had. Otherwise, is base temporality who will write the history of contemporary Brazil, blurring cultural difference and criminalizing those for which progress without dignity is a merely symbolic retreat.

### **L'âge du monde fini: elle commence enfin!**

In fact, the issue of anachronism sheds some light on the status of the present, this slow present of which Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht<sup>25</sup> speaks. It is indeed a time split into, at least, two speeds: a regime (territorial), which generates effects of overprint and ambivalence (extra-territorial) and, therefore, produces changes not only in the idea of history, but also in the very historical consciousness. But the phenomenon also marks the emergence of a new temporal consciousness, where the former (of any time) is somehow already present and operates, here and now, with the poignancy of the current. In this complex present, both the deletion and the rigid boundaries of discrimination coexist, i.e. its abolition, but also, paradoxically, its reinforcement. Ludmer defines this present as a local regime of global character, with nothing outside itself, which seems to dominate the current public imagination, as it not only produces presence, but, simultaneously, it

also allows thinking the difference.<sup>26</sup>

But we back, then, to Valéry diagnosis: 'L'âge du monde fini commence.' He states that something ends, but also states that something starts. Let us think about what starts. One of the theorists who have expressively contributed towards the dis-ontology of the literate autonomy truth through the urgency of the image, which implies a deepening of the concept of human rights, because it includes memory and justice in this list, is the aforementioned Georges Didi-Huberman. In his exhibition *Atlas. How to carry the world on his back?*, he rescues the concept of imagination (fantasy), conceived by Goya while Spain suffered the Napoleonic invasions. It is from this concept, elaborated in the most absolute adversity, that Goya thinks up his theory of art.

Imagination would be somehow Goya's *pharmakon*: it is indeed this 'universal language' that fits everything, for the worse or better, for the worst of the *monstra* as much as for the best of the *astra*. Imagination abandoned by itself, it is the worst, 'produces [then] impossible monsters', and allows the proliferation of 'mistakes and extravagances' of a 'civil society' in the hands of 'ignorance or interest'. What should one do to affect its critique? Censoring it is precisely what Inquisition does: one obscurantism against another result unfair and inoperative. In any case, anthropologically speaking, no one could 'suppress' the images or the imagination, which completely conforms man. Consequently, one needs to occupy so dangerous terrain and summon *the imagination with the reason*, its false enemy. In short, imagination is not repealed: we have to carry it – like Atlas carries the heavens to become his expert par excellence – and

25 GUMBRECHT, Hans Ulrich. *Lento presente: sintomatología del nuevo tiempo histórico*. Madrid: Escolar y Mayo, 2010.

26 LUDMER, Josefina. *Aquí América Latina*. Una especulación. Buenos Aires: Eterna Cadencia, 2010.

charge it to a desk or a blade engraving. Task which is performed from a reasonable option, a 'combination' which already designates the most important figurative artifice as an assembly of diverse and confusing things which, 'artfully arranged', allow a painted or engraved image reach the universal. Goya 'monsters' have nothing at all of the personal outburst, sentimental or frivolous, that would suggest a misreading of the word *fantasy*: they are the work of an artist who understood his work as an 'anthropology from the image's point of view', that is, a reflection that takes its method of its object, imagination conceived as a tool – reputable, technically elaborated, philosophically constructed – of an authentic critical knowledge of the human body and spirit. This is, hence, the art designed by Goya as a true philosophic critique of the world, and, in particular, of that 'civil society' to which he refers in the *Diario de Madrid*. To take on such a challenge, it is appropriate to act dialectically on two fronts at the same time: for his critical activity, the artist must do righteous frameworks of the reality he observes, and, therefore, of the truth of which he wants to give testimony; for his aesthetic activity, fantasy takes the liberty of making mounts between the most disparate things.<sup>27</sup>

27 'A imaginação seria de algum modo o *pharmakon* de Goya: ela é efetivamente essa "linguagem universal" que serve para tudo, para o pior e para o melhor; para o pior dos *monstra* tanto quanto para o melhor dos *astra*. A imaginação abandonada por si só, isso é o pior: "produz [então] monstros impossíveis", e deixa proliferar as "extravagâncias e desacertos" de uma "sociedade civil" nas mãos da "ignorância ou do interesse". O que fazer para acometer sua crítica? Censurá-la é precisamente o que trata de fazer a Inquisição: resulta injusto e inoperante um obscurantismo contra o outro. De todas as formas, antropologicamente falando, ninguém poderia "suprimir" as imagens ou a imaginação, a qual conforma completamente o homem. Consequentemente, será necessário ocupar tão perigoso terreno e convocar a *imaginação com a razão*, sua falsa inimiga. Em suma, não se revoga a imaginação: temos que *carregá-la* – como Atlas carrega o céu para se transformar em seu especialista por antonomásia – e *recarregá-la* a uma mesa de trabalho ou uma lâmina de gravura. Tarefa que se realiza a partir de uma opção razoada, uma "combinação" que designa já o "artifício" figurativo mais importante como uma *montagem* de coisas diversas e confusas que, "engenhosamente dispostas", permitem que uma imagem pintada ou gravada alcance o universal. Os "monstros" de Goya nada têm, em absoluto, do desabafo pessoal, sentimental ou frívolo que sugeriria uma má leitura da palavra *fantasia*: são obra de um artista que entendia seu trabalho como uma "antropologia do ponto de vista da imagem", ou seja, uma reflexão que toma seu método do seu objeto, a imaginação pensada como ferramenta – idônea, tecnicamente elaborada, filosoficamente construída – de um autêntico *conhecimento crítico* do corpo e do espírito humanos. Esta é, então, a *arte* pensada por Goya como uma verdadeira *crítica* filosófica do mundo e, de modo particular, dessa "sociedade civil" à qual se refere no *Diário de Madrid*. Para assumir tamanho desafio, será conveniente atuar dialeticamente em duas frentes ao mesmo tempo: por sua atividade crítica, o artista deve fazer justos *enquadramentos* da realidade que observa e, por tanto, dessa *verdade* da que deseja dar testemunho; por sua atividade estética, toma a liberdade, a *fantasia*, de fazer *montagens* entre as coisas mais díspares.' DIDI-HUBERMAN, Georges. *Atlas ¿Cómo llevar el mundo a cuestas?* Trad. Maria Dolores Aguilera. Madrid: Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, 2010, p.89-91. In this regard, see the interview to Catherine Millet, "Georges Didi-Huberman : atlas : comment remonter le monde". *Art Press*, nº373, Dec 2010, p. 48-55 ou a resenha de Juan Antonio Ramírez, "Posicionamientos (*Cuando las imágenes toman posición*)". *Revista de libros de la Fundación Caja Madrid*, n. 149, May, 2009, p. 32.



The position counts as a settlement of Didi-Huberman himself with the British Warburg school, because while Panofsky makes the critical discourse rests on the constants of *compares*, Didi-Huberman's Deleuzian Warburg, and even that Goya-Nietzschean Baudelaire he proposes in *Atlas*, find, in the key of *disparis*, i.e. the disasters and absurdities of war, a way to reconfigure the relations between image and history. Therefore, another Baudelaire arises from this operation à la Godard, who is neither phenomenological, as Sartre's, nor post-modernist, as Jameson's. Baudelaire, as Didi-Huberman reminds us, insists upon the constant paradox of Goya's compositions, always surround by the *fantasy of contrasts*, where the comic is awful; satire, an astonishment; and bestial face, pure humanity par excellence; with such emphasis he proposes us to see, in these Goya's boiling figures, something akin to strict samples of chaos.<sup>28</sup> Hence, Didi-Huberman considers history not as an empirical factionalism, but as an archeology of sensibility, and, at that point, he indeed rescues the gesture of a certain edge, the Bertold Brecht's, Marcel Broodthaers' or Gerhard Richter's *atlas*; the El Lissitzky's or Robert Rauschenberg's mounts; the Brassai and Breton's involuntary sculptures. The intention is, almost mimicking *tablets'* operating logic, for which it is in fact indifferent the horizontal or vertical operation, to dismantle the table (*tableau*) crystallization, as an autonomous effect of the artist's action, and, projecting it on horizontality, consider it just a table (*table*), where the critical assembly operations can make *tabula rasa* of two crucial principals of autonomism: the visual unity and the temporal immobilization. The idea is therefore to recover heterogeneous spaces and times that do not cease to meet, to face, to cross or even to amalgamate themselves.<sup>29</sup> As it turns out, precisely the opposite of Franco Moretti, who still thinks the atlas in vertical key.

In Didi-Huberman's case, however, to secure a post-autonomic approach, it is mandatory to suspend the traditional concept of art, and even the concept of painting, always formally considered as *work of art*, an effect almost residual, in which everything has been previously accomplished, to propose, on the other hand, the concept of *table*, which would be otherwise a *device* (Foucault, Agamben) in which everything can still start, always. The table is an *operative field of the*

28 DIDI-HUBERMAN, Georges. *Atlas*, *op. cit.*, p. 93.

29 Cf. HERTBRECHTER, Stefan. "Plus d'Un: Deconstruction and the Translation of Cultural Studies". *Culture Machine*, Vol 6, 2004.

*disparate and mobile*, of the heterogeneous and open. Its epistemological antecedent, the Warburgian *Bilderatlas*, due to the device function as an assembly table always modifiable, allowed the critical to multiply, accurate or divide the notions concerning to the great over determination of images, which psychoanalysis made overwhelming, and even diagnostic, with the Rorschach test. Shuffle the cards and divide, dismantle and reassemble the order of images, on an operating table, in order to configure almost divinatory affinities, capable of perceive time's work in the visible world: this is what Didi-Huberman called *atlas*. The concept rests, moreover, in one of a certain "Chinese encyclopedia", Borges',<sup>30</sup> revisited by Foucault, from which the author extracts the elements that allow him to postulate the Western episteme, the one that regulates the relations between words and things. To Didi-Huberman, however, the Borges' table, as in Murilo Mendes poem in which the author reads the Arnolfini's alliance according to van Eyck, "The painting", do not rest only on a frame screen that organize *per se* the perspectivist grid and malice. Before, otherwise, they evoke certain compilations of Chinese draws or Japanese pictures, such as Hokusai's, breaking Western classificatory parameters. If, on the one hand, this procedure ruins the painting (the *tableau de la littérature*, in which Derrida, in his turn, could not fully insert Mallarmé), or what is the same, the customary system of knowledge, on the other hand it also frees, satirically, a laugh able to raise the cultural discontent, since he comes from an enigmatic background of not-knowing: the Real in history.

Now, this undermined authority, which precisely fix the form of relations between seen things and enunciated words, made the painting (the work of art) a space to see what we say, but where we also could not say or even see the distance between objects and language. This distance is what a Franco Moretti has no clue. Hence, in the first pages of *The Order of Things*, Foucault then name the Borges' table as an "atlas of the impossible", a heterotopy which is nothing but a disorder of the world that makes fragments of an infinite number of possible orders flicker, on the random dimension of the heteroclitite, space of crisis and deviation, capricious insertion of incompatible places and heterogeneous times, activated only by socially dissociated devices, however easily penetrable. They are, in short, concrete imagination's machinery, which create a space of

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30 BORGES, Jorge Luis. "El idioma analítico de John Wilkins" in *Obra Completa*. Buenos Aires: Emecé, 1974, p. 706-9.

illusion that exposes the real as a space even more elusive than the actual space of the most recalcitrant fantasy. In this perspective of decompartmentalisation, the Didi-Huberman (Borgean-Foucauldian)'s atlas works as an operative field capable of implementing, epistemically as well as aesthetically, ethically and even politically, an impugment of space both mythical and real, in which processes our political imagination, where human rights, multiculturalism and even *gender* would be completely modified. In short, it is relevant to stress in this regard the fourth law concerning the universal, as enunciated by Alain Badiou:

We call 'encyclopedia' the general system of predicative knowledge inherent to a situation, i.e. what we know about politics, about sex, about culture or arts, on the techniques, and so on. Certain things, statements, configurations, discursive fragments, are not decidable regarding their values as described in the encyclopedia. They have an uncertain value, floating, anonymous; they constitute the encyclopedia's borderline. It is everything that is subdued to the 'maybe yes, maybe no' system; of which one can talk endlessly, under the rule, a very encyclopedic one, of non-decision.

Such is the case, for instance, of the undocumented. They do not have the documents which certify their European or regular identity. The word 'illegal', as warned by Badiou, designates the uncertainty of the value, or the non-value of value. People who are local, but not actually global. Hence, subjects to expulsion, which means they are possibly exposed to the non-value of the (labor) value of their presence, what makes an event be essentially what decides over an encyclopedic undecidable zone, one outside the law, one out of human rights, an anachronism prior to 1789.<sup>31</sup> Considering this paradox, it is impossible to draw an unmistakable limit between Brazil and Europe. And, even regarding European studies, to draw this clear boundary becomes a useless task. The culture, the *multi-culture* is only possible due to the concept of *confines*, according to which reality is not a plane of homogeneous consistency, but a high heterogeneous extreme, 'un contesto che è simultaneamente un doppio, se non molteplice',<sup>32</sup> or to quote Nancy, *singular-plural*. The confines Brazil–Europe draws a total reversibility between positivity and negativity, between *Factum* and *Fictum*, between

31 DIDI HUBERMAN, Georges. *Peuples exposés, peuples figurants*. L'œil de l'histoire, 4. Paris: Minuit, 2012.

32 VECCHI, Roberto. "Nazioni/nazionalismi" in *Abbecedario postcoloniale*. Macerata: Quodlibet, 2004, p. 198.

before and after, between here and there. The confines Brazil-Europe suggests an origin which is neither destination nor foundation. It is a way to leave totality, truth and universality acephalous of all judgment. And Europe lives this contradiction. It believes itself as the owner of humanist values, but it makes the continent the relentless enemy of a hypothetical extra-community anti-humanism, forgetting that Europeans such as Sade, Nietzsche, Flaubert, Dostoyevsky, Foucault or Deleuze, who indeed broadened the concept of human to include the most abject and sordid aspects of our condition.<sup>33</sup> Georges Bataille is perhaps the one who best understood that, in the contemporary scene, the war precipitates biopolitics as administration of life, which demands the complete absence of sensibility. On the unreasonable and heartbreaking character of the non-purpose catastrophe, the explosive immensity of time can therefore be recognized, since it introduces a post-historical time, which is nothing more than the regression of man to the state of nature. As man and humanism can no longer expand in time, because they are both gone, now time is expanded, gone global. Nevertheless, the universal existence remains unlimited, and, therefore, with no rest: it does not close or terminate life in a waterproof casing, but instead opens and incessantly relaunches it in the infinity's restlessness. Agamben, accepting but also partially refuting the bataillan reading, would state that a thought which aims to be beyond Hegelianism cannot find ground against the negative dialectics and its speech on the experience of negativity with no use. It should, instead, find an experience of language that does not

assume any more negative anchor,<sup>34</sup> but a complex character, which says the subject (the sovereignty) should be there where it cannot be, or vice versa, which says the subject can only miss right there where it should appear, as shown in Lacanian tradition. This issue accelerates and overlaps dissimilar times, stressing, moreover, the passage of the world-system to authoritarian capitalism.<sup>35</sup>

Coincidentally, the German philosopher Boris Groys, a professor at the New York University, draws a striking profile of such a paradox:

Consequently typical Europeans oscillate between fantasies of omnipotence and a chronic inferiority complex. As soon as they assert humanism as a universal truth, they seem to have the world as their feet, because they embody all of humanity. As soon as they conceive humanism as a specifically European value, however, they see themselves as weak, unfit for combat, easily hurt, unprotected, surrounded by a sea of human rights violations, injustices, horrors – abandoned, defenseless, in the face of the antihumanistic alien. Their own humanism transforms from the highest value to a structural weakness, the crucial disadvantage in the wars

33 COLEBROOK, Claire. "The Context of Humanism". *New Literary History*, vol. 42, n. 4, Fall 2011, p. 701-718.

34 AGAMBEN, Giorgio. *A linguagem e a morte*: um seminário sobre o lugar da negatividade. Trad. H. Burigo. Belo Horizonte: Ed. da UFMG, 2006, p. 74.

35 Decolonization after 1945 and the military operations of the Cold War give an idea of how quickly this world order melts. In 1947, India and Pakistan will drop the alliance of the British Empire; after 1953, the French withdrew from Indochina; most African States get their independence in the course of the fifties and sixties; in 1974, the remains of the Portuguese world Empire evaporated. In 1990, with the collapse of the Soviet Union, disappears from the scenario old Europe's missionary power; and its quick collapse, without further delay, send the last European States either to capitalism or chaos. As for China, its transformation does not imply in itself a world project, although it continues to be important because this country questions, on a large scale, the separation between capitalism and democracy. Cf: SLOTERDIJK, Peter. *En el mundo interior del capital. Para una teoría filosófica de la globalización*. Madrid, Siruela, 2007, p.198.

between cultures. Because the dominant discourse on European identity asserts both things – that humanistic values are universal and that they are particular to Europe – the European psyche is incurably torn between moral superiority and paranoid fear of the other.<sup>36</sup>

Groy's paradox draws a situation of relative community lightness. The current communities (Europe, Brazil, even those who are dedicated to 'European studies') become volatile and ephemeral, almost inconsistent, open to compelling setup processes and constant reconfiguration.

Art today is thus social and political on a purely formal level, because it reflects on the space of the assembly, on the formation of community, and does so independently of whether an individual artist has a specific political message in mind or not. But at the same time, this contemporary art practice demonstrates the position of the alien in today's culture in a much more adequate way than the standard political discourse does. Because I as an individual cannot take in the whole, I must necessarily overlook something that can only be evident to the gaze of others. These others, however, are by no means separated from me culturally: I can imagine them in my position, just as I can imagine myself in theirs. Here the interchangeability of bodies in space becomes evident – that interchangeability that determines our civilization today as a whole. The familiar and the alien are constantly exchanging places – and this global ballet cannot be stopped at will because this constant exchange of places offers the only way to distinguish the familiar from the alien that remains open to us.<sup>37</sup>

In this tension between capitalism and democracy (or in the simple and disturbing idea that democracy is against democracies, as proposed by Jacques Rancière), through which passes today the relationship between Europe and its others, facts illustrate fiction: considering that Europe has never existed, actually only national imperialisms in mutual competition, Paul Valéry considerations in the '1930s and, more radically, the Peter Sloterdijk's theory of spheres, in recent years, conclude that the very European community became possible only when all member states entered the post-imperial situation. This terminal post-history,

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36 GROYS, Boris. *Art power*. Cambridge/London: The MIT Press, 2008, p.175.

37 IDEM. *ibidem*, p.182. Ver; ainda, PROZOROV, Sergei. "Russian Postcommunism and the End of History". *Studies in East European Thought*, vol. 60, n. 3, Reviewing Perestrojka, Sept. 2008, p. 207-230.



à la Kojève,<sup>38</sup> would be a time without past or future, mainly bio-political and contingent, that works as supplement-time, as if history still had the chance to a sort of epilogue or recapitulation, in which their fragments might still be available on a mounting table, for the use value of the impossible, and in which the very question of the animal, as relevant in the twenty-first century (Derrida, Bhabha, Nancy, Virno, Agamben), would be the rest that Western idealism (humanism, rationalism, normativism) leaves as legacy to the contemporary thought, where the divisions between animality and humanity still exist, but not as dialectic to be overcome, but as inescapable aporias in which nature and culture become recurrently undecidable.

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38 Analyzing the colonialism under European perspective, Kojève highlighted three main issues. First, a donor or distributor colonialism should be thought, instead of a appropriative and extractive one; next, one should not bet on finished products, but investing in local production of materials, to ensure full employment and, finally, that this donor capitalism should primarily encompass the entire Mediterranean region, which, in the long term, has given fresh signs of economic vitality, without spreading in other more distant regions. Contrary to the current policies of the troika, Valéry also centered his attention on the Mediterranean basin as far as Derrida in *L'autre cap*. See KOJÈVE, Alexandre. "Perspectiva europea del colonialism." Trad. Manuel Vela Rodríguez. *La Torre del Virrey: Revista de Estudios Culturales*. n. 1, Eliana (Valencia) 2006.