

Blankets: Carmen Luz's parangolé in contemporary choreographic thinking

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Abstract

Cobertores (Blankets), by Carmen Luz, has as its reference and poetic intercessor the Hélio Oiticica's *Parangolé*, highlighting the emergence and cartography of choreographic thinking as social criticism and scenic experimentation. The experimentation highlighted choreographic incorporation based on three social markers: blackness as an ethnic difference, youth as an age condition, and the hill as spatial otherness in modern cities, starting from the theoretical approach of dance as body thinking and cartography adopted as a method for ethical-aesthetic production. We used a meta-cartography model as a procedure to analyse the process of providing artistic intercessors by which Luz puts her name to this piece and places the Ethnic Dance Company in the performing arts at the beginning of the 21st century. Memories of this choreographic experience are renewed by two developments, when Luz produces comments about her own career in audiovisual records and when we trigger memories of montages and dialogues.

Keywords: Blankets, Cobertores. Parangolés, Choreographic thinking, Carmen Luz, Ethnic Dance Company.

Introduction

“Would anyone in the audience like to go up the Andaraí hill?”, asks Carmen Luz, the choreographer and director of the Ethnic Dance Company (Cia. Étnica de Dança), in an audience-foyer session shortly after the performance of *Blankets (Cobertores)*¹ (2000) in the first half of 2001, to an enthusiastic and surprised audience at the Cacilda Becker Theatre, in Catete, in the South Zone of Rio de Janeiro. On the temporary seating, between the building's supporting pillars and under the mezzanine that acts as a kind of gallery, none of those present in the audience replied, at least not immediately and neither in the affirmative or negative, to the surprising and unexpected invitation made by the choreographer.

¹ Original name in Portuguese is *Cobertores*.

“Audience-foyer” (*plateia-foyer*, in Portuguese) is a neologism used in the performing arts environment in Rio de Janeiro in the early years of the 21st century mainly in contemporary dance events such as the *RioArte Panorama of Dance* and *Dance Brazil*. During this dialogic practice, conducted after the performance of the show, directors and actors or dancers would talk to the audience about the piece presented. Researcher Roberto Pereira (2000), the curator, together with Lia Rodrigues, of the *RioArte Panorama of Dance* in the year 2000, attributes the neologism to Helena Katz, at the time a researcher at PUC-SP University and a dance critic for the culture section of the *O Estado de S. Paulo* newspaper.

The *audience-foyer* session, as an exercise in conversation, re-dimensioned the experience of the fleeting enjoyment that comes from the performing arts, extending the audience's participation in a contemporary dance piece beyond the contemplation of the artistic work itself. The imaginary action of climbing up the Andaraí hill – a community in the North Zone of Rio de Janeiro, the company's original base – would be equivalent to, during the presentation and at the invitation of the choreographer, the artistic demand to continue involving the audience in the conceptual production of a dance piece. This process, which resizes itself with each connection, referred the audience, back at the beginning of the 21st century, to the work of the environmental nature of modernism that still resonated in the Brazilian performing arts.

Blankets, a primordial choreographic work by Carmen Luz, one of the creators and the manager of the Ethnic Dance Company, debuted in 1998, with a presentation at the *RioArte Panorama of Dance* in 2000. This is probably the most significant record of this work given the reach of the Rio event on the national scene. In the 2000 edition, the *Panorama* included companies and choreographers such as Maguy Marin (France), Tom Plischke (Germany) and Vera Mantero (Portugal), from overseas, and Paula Nestorov, Carlota Portela and Vera Sala among the Brazilian participants.

The presentation of *Blankets* in 2001, at the Cacilda Becker Theatre as well as at the *Panorama* event a year earlier, was performed with a group of dancers emphatically consisting of teenagers and young adults who also acted as collaborators in the creation process. This was one of the versions of the piece, among other pieces produced by the choreographer and presented at different venues including theatres and outdoor venues, in the creation of artistic territories in the urban space of the *carioca*² metropolis (ESPÍRITO SANTO, 2011).

In the memories from 2001, which remain and persist over time, with flaws and updates, there is a group of dancers with synthetic fabric around their necks and thrown over their shoulders, twirling round and creating images of moving blankets/capes. This choreographic performance – through the interactivity of Hélio Oiticica's *Parangolés* and as

² Native of Rio de Janeiro City.

a referential work – evoked the environmental relationship between the body and the blanket, based on the marginalized, ragged figures that roam the streets of Brazilian cities.

Hélio Oiticica presented the *Parangolés*³ for the first time in 1965, in the *Mostra Opinião 65*, exhibition held at the Museum of Modern Art (MAM), in Aterro do Flamengo, South Zone of Rio de Janeiro and he had prepared a demonstration with his Samba friends from the Mangueira hill. What was supposed to have been a triumphal entrance, with bodies twirling their capes in an environmental experience of this relationship, was prohibited from being displayed inside the museum. This incident is remembered as one of the most traumatic episodes between art and artistic institutions in Brazil (FIGUEIREDO, 2007).

The experience of the *Parangolés*, which the museum institution partially prohibited, summed up Hélio Oiticica's approach to Samba in the 1960s, specifically in the Mangueira hill region, and this approach included the discovery of the body, letting rhythm pass through us and affect us, surrendering oneself to the "dance that is danced", unconcerned with spatial changes or the obligatory, pre-established movements. The concept of *Parangolé*, in this case, sought to extend the sense of appropriation to things found in "streets, vacant lots, fields, the surrounding world, things that cannot be transported", but for which Oiticica would call on the public to participate in (DOS ANJOS, 2012, p.43).

The central thematic issue of *Blankets* (2000), which becomes a trilogy with the later pieces *Clip-se!* (2002) and *Enter* (2004), and in which Carmen Luz invites black youths to participate as dancers/choreographers, is the streets of large cities, from Dhaka in Bangladesh to Rio de Janeiro in Brazil (LUZ, 2013; 2019a).

Being the opposite of our homes, which would be our cosy nests offering the positivity of privacy, the streets are a social space marked by an impression of negativity. The negativity of the streets, which is symbolically related to the presence of the roaming gangs and the image of faceless crowds, translates into a meaningful image of the anonymity of urban populations, like a stranger knocking on our door.

In an anthropological interpretation, and from a Brazilian cultural perspective, when at home people are *gente* ("our people"), but when on the streets what we see is movement, disjointed groups of people, the human mass. The streets are a place of struggle and work, the ebb and flow of life and social contradictions, and, therefore, where one can see the "harsh reality of life" (DAMATTA, 1986, p. 20). On the streets, the indiscernibility of the masses is actualized in distinct forms visible in the anonymous crowds that walk and roam around along their repetitive, routine ways.

³ The *Parangolés* were an experiment in three-dimensional art by the Brazilian artist Hélio Oiticica, in the form of capes and banners/flags with which people would interact as environmental art which first appeared in 1965 at the Rio de Janeiro Museum of Modern Art (MAM).

Anonymity, however, is just the opaque side of a radical social rupture: the silenced conflicts of social class, connected to the abjection of groups to which negativities are historically added in the social imagination. Groups such as *favelados* (slum dwellers), vagrants and madmen called “types” who are idle or in lowly jobs, popular and recurrent figures in city landscapes who, through their daily performances on city streets, challenge the logic of the economically productive world, the peace of a healthy city and the discipline of so-called civilized environments (PINHO, 2021).

Specifically, in the axiom produced by the perversities of the economic and political system, from the mercantilism of the Brazilian Empire to the republican Brazil of today, generic abjection emphatically affects, as choreographic thinking suggests, black bodies.

The production of *Blankets*, in addition to the emphatic presence of teenage and young adult male and female dancers, was characterized by the fact that the cast did not come from dance schools, much less from a classical ballet or modern or contemporary dance background, but rather from a mixture of social projects and political activism established and operating in a hillside community in the troubled metropolis of Rio de Janeiro, and notably with the presence of black male and female dancers.

The choreographic work demonstrated, in that context, the emergence of a discursive condition: the spatial aspect of the hill as a place for the production of artistic awareness, the ethnicity of the black bodies as the memory of a meaningful ancestry, youth as a potential for choreographic incorporation and contemporary dance itself as a field in the process of opening up to poetic experimentation.

These were the conditions into which Carmen Luz was placing young people from the hillsides as a unique experience to train and experiment in the performing arts, and specifically in contemporary dance. In this choreographic cartography, Carmen Luz, who prefers to use the term *scenic poetry* to *thinking in images* (LUZ, 2019a), evokes her intercessors in the artistic creation process: Hélio Oiticica, Lygia Clark, James Brown, Abdias do Nascimento, Conceição Evaristo, Leda Martins, Heloísa Buarque de Holanda, and Solano Trindade.

In a cartography syncopated by distinct moments which are stretched out and connected over a long period of time, the choreographer brings us, in the memories of her biography, close intercessors from before her artistic career: her tailor father (a sewer of interpretations), her housewife mother (seamstress of family ties) and her great-aunt (daughter of *Oxum*⁴, her godmother and the provider of her affective memory of the dance movements in *terreiros*⁵) (LUZ, 2019b).

⁴ Goddess of the fresh water of rivers, love, feminine power, beauty and wealth in the Umbanda and Candomblé faiths.

⁵ Candomblé or macumba places of worship.

Meta-cartography: The dance that triggers memories and a text

At the methodological level, with a qualitative approach and with bibliographical and documental research procedures, we depart from the categorization of dance as *body thinking*, in Helena Katz's view, to an interdisciplinary conceptual proposition in the field of communicational semiotics (KATZ, 2005).

Dance, in this theoretical construction, is categorized as a cognitive process in which the choreographic process, as we intend to argue, is actualized insofar as it presents a demand for interceding bodies which also only actualize themselves as bodies that dance when triggered by a choreographic exteriority in its discursive function.

From this perspective, dance is one of those processes whereby the body's manoeuvres evoke countless flows of information that cross into and constitute consciousness, demonstrating the ways and the intensity with which a subjectivation experience gains through actualization. The paths that a choreography invents in a given body emphasize the creative processes that are, in fact, cartographic processes, kinds of maps in production, poetry emerging from experience, along paths that are sometimes tortuous and virtuous, and which the external environment engenders in a particular relationship with the cognoscente body.

Cartography, therefore, consists of cognitive boundaries, but also of mystical, ritual and symptomatic constructions (GUATTARI, 1992). The path of choreographic subjectivation, by highlighting a method that invents itself along the way – the very exercise of mapping, teleology without a precise objective – must consider the ways in which the external environment works under the conditions of producing a certain existence.

The outside world, as an exteriority in the constitution of consciousness, suggests a multi-componental relationship in the aesthetic paradigm of subjectivity proposed by Guattari (1992) in which various elements, human and non-human, constitute the emergence of choreographic thinking as the process of subjectivation and the production of a cartographic method.

A cartography that is created as a method gains emphasis in *Blankets* to the extent that a mental map is constituted between choreographic thinking, intercessors (artistic, family, environmental, and social) who intervene in the creative process, until it achieves materiality by means of the dancing body and then affects the consciousness of an audience.

Carmen Luz unfolds this choreographic map in subsequent years, as she comments on her artistic creative experience with the Ethnic Dance Company by means of testimonials (LUZ, 2013; LUZ; LIMA, 2017; LUZ, 2019a) that re-dimension the memories of unrecorded or inaccessible work, as is the case of *Blankets*.

Two decades after the debut of *Blankets*, with one of the first records of this choreographic work appearing in the *RioArte Panorama of Contemporary Dance 2000*

catalogue, memories of this social activism and choreographic experimentation with young black teenagers and the hillside residents continue to produce a continuous artistic cartography, in the process of constant actualization, through Carmen Luz's memories which are recorded and registered in the form of texts (written and oral) and digital images.

Based on these media sources, provided here in a documents-monuments perspective (LE GOFF, 1996), which require technology to talk about dance and record the possible utterances in an exercise where the choreographer attempts, autobiographically, to think and speak of herself as an artist – requiring a meta-cartographic process created through a similar procedure.

In this procedure, the choreographer herself, by means of her talks and her audiovisual records, is an intercessor in the writing of this article which unfolds in the analysis of her own work as if she were giving us a “counter-gift”, as described by Marcel Mauss (2003), in the form of a cartographic text in return for the artistic piece as a gift received.

We therefore resort to the memory of images from the presentation of *Blankets* in 2001 at the Cacilda Becker theatre, which we attended in person, bringing it into the present in the Bergsonian form of memories (BERGSON, 1999), triggered by the memories of seeing and hearing the choreographer at that time in the beginning of the century.

Given the scarcity of documental records of *Blankets*, the media technological advances that emerged in the years that followed allowed Carmen Luz to continue her interlocution with an audience that had formed around her artistic work, in addition to the *audience-foyer* sessions from two decades ago.

It was necessary to turn Carmen Luz's radical thinking into a kind of intercessory form in the emergence of this text through the sensations that are prolonged in the memory and produce the feelings of movement in time and which are laid out, in the memories of *Blankets* and in the choreographer's testimonies, in what we intend to categorize as a metacartography: a writing path that actualizes itself only insofar as it works by connecting to another created path, i.e. the performance of the piece itself, and allowing the text to thus establish its own cognitive and sensitive map.

Blankets, and its images of swirling and flying capes, acts as an agent for our own *parangolé* and methodological intercessor, insofar as it affects our perception and memory, promoting and providing the necessary conditions for the emergence of an essay in its written form. The more the choreographer talks in interviews, the more is brought back to the present time not just in terms of the dance, but also what is said about the act of choreographing it, bearing in mind that *Blankets* is devoid of accessible audiovisual and photographic records.

Having an intercessor, as an eloquent and effective image, is equivalent, according to Deleuze (1992, p. 151), not necessarily to a starting point for the expenditure of energy, nor to a possible search for an origin, but rather, using the surfing metaphor of getting energy from

the waves, a “way of putting it into orbit” or “getting amidst”. Hélio Oiticica, Carmen Luz’s intercessor; Carmen Luz, the reason for and intercessor of this essay. The choreographer puts her name to a dance, which triggers the writing of a text about the dance itself.

The body’s “text”, which is actualized by the dancing body, gains through continuous actualization as we activate the author’s own memories through the production of written speech which attempts to unfold, in the form of text and not without mishaps and stutters, the performance seen at the Cacilda Becker Theatre, in Catete.

Body-environment: Osmosis and compositions

“Donated blanket”, “vagrant’s blanket” – these terms, found in common high street stores in Brazilian cities, generically define a low-cost blanket, characterized by the recurring grey colour and made from leftover fabrics from the textile industry and discarded plastic bottles. This product, technically, is made by putting natural and synthetic fibre material into a press which compacts them together resulting in a coarse fabric which, despite being industrialized, is not considered to be very durable.



Blanket made from pressing natural and synthetic fibres (photo: Yuji Gushiken)

In general, a “donated blanket”, commonly called *seca-poço* (“well-drier”) in some regions of Brazil, is the only material resource that many homeless people have to rely on to face the discomfort of the sidewalks and the cold of the nights out in the open air. Another tactical use for them, also for protection, is to use the blankets to make an improvised tent under which many people precariously reside on the streets of Brazilian cities.

The low-cost blanket, as a material resource, has a functional link with the body of the marginalized and vagrant populations that roam day and night on the city streets. It is estimated that, in Brazil, the population of homeless people is 101,854, of which 40% are in cities with more than 900 thousand inhabitants (NATALINO, 2016). Marginalization, in addition to the economic and social class aspects, is associated not only with the first, biological skin, but also with this second skin, the blanket of pressed fibres, which is implemented as an artifice of a socially fragile body.

Thus, following the traces left by Carmen Luz in her way of *thinking in images*, it is through the phenomenological perception of the skin – the biological and the artificial – that one can also scrutinize the nature and culture of a body, how it reacts, resists and survives social structures, and specifically the black body, now as a social issue and a condition for critical thinking within choreographic thinking.

If, in the hardships of material reality, the cheap blanket is an element that is added to the marginalized body and provides it with presentification, a precarious condition of being in the world, in *Blankets* (the dance piece) the garments used in the composition of the piece become a constituent element of body movements and choreographic phrases producing a sequence of images. When the dancers move around, spinning their capes, it is uncertain if it is their bodies that are acting on the blankets or if the blankets provide the basis for triggering the bodies.

Body and blanket become structures with which Carmen Luz, through *thinking in images*, creates a choreographic process. Body-blanket, the environmental relationship now working as a kind of composition becomes the reason for social criticism and a condition for artistic creation. Wearing the cape-blanket, moving the cape and being moved by it, spinning the body on an imagined axis, a kind of zenith or nadir, by itself: all of these actions evoke a dynamic that establishes the dancer's experience in the midst of the material environment that surrounds them.

In Carmen Luz's creative process, dressing the blanket reinvents dressing the cape-*parangolé*, a participatory procedure and the creative apex of anti-art, in which Hélio Oiticica argued for the "greater and total meaning of the work" (OITICICA, 1986). In the vortex of the *Parangolés*, "envelope-emblem of the hillside resident", the relationship between artist and participant is not the frontal relationship of a spectator at a show, but rather the production of complicity, an oblique and clandestine relationship: "fish from the same shoal", wrote Waly Salomão (2003, p. 37).

Between Carmen Luz and Hélio Oiticica, between whom the interactive work of Lygia Clark crosses over (MILLIET, 1992), together recreate the so-called inter-corporeal space not only between the blanket/cape and the dancers, but also in a spatial and temporal extension between two creators interested in the poetic dimension of the experiments, each in their own

time, but both occurring in the hillside communities of Rio de Janeiro: Hélio Oiticica on the Mangueira hill; Carmen Luz on the Andaraí hill.

If there is an autopoietic-cartographic organizational principle in this interface (MATURANA; VARELA, 1995; GUATTARI, 1992), whatever the mechanism in operation is and given the production of new poetic references, it also occurs in the conjunction of blanket and body. The reference is not, therefore, made present by each unit's structure but rather by the agency process between them, a type of declaration that makes Carmen Luz's choreographical thinking unique.

In the piece *Blankets*, the blankets that give the show its name are not mere costumes or stage props, as a superfluous illustration of an artistic concept, as something is seen purely to just occupy the performance area. On the contrary, the blankets become constituent elements in the composition of the blankets-bodies piece. It's not by chance that *Blankets* explicitly incorporates and activates Hélio Oiticica's *parangólés*-capes.

In the audience-foyer session in 2001, Carmen Luz told the surprised audience that *Blankets* had the "mark of the black body, the body of the *favela*". The audience's surprise then, at the beginning of the 21st century, was due to the fact that the dancers were mostly teenagers, residents or regulars of the dance project coordinated by the choreographer on the Andaraí hill and none of them, at least not at that time, was a professional dancer.

But what, generically, could this black body be that inhabits the *favela* or sleeps under blankets in the open air, but which, by producing its own event, epistemically incorporates a choreographic process that Carmen Luz was speaking about? The choreographer and activist would later clarify in an interview, years after this performance, that the topography of the hill, as a modern element and constituent of the artistic creative process, affects the dynamics of body movement.

In this body-environment relationship, the "way of walking", in the steep landscape of twisting and nameless alleys, would already imply the use of corporeal vocabulary, like a habit installing itself into daily routines. Movement, once incorporated, gains the status of a habit, as a process of repetition over time and a kind of law that the body engenders as knowledge. Everyday motricity is epistemically entwined as a law that the body creates for itself as it travels over the alternately paved and unpaved ground, in the to-and-fro along narrow passages and the up and down of the slopes, of which there are perhaps more than a thousand, that form the steep environment of the *Carioca* hillside communities.

The hill's topography becomes the environmental condition, the contemporary aesthetic repertoire and structuring condition of symbolic production, for the inscription of the body's movement. There would be, therefore, a kind of pedagogy of everyday life, a poetic potential in the day-to-day skills, in which the process of body awareness is profoundly affected by

topographical (natural) and urban (cultural) features of the environment, notably the urban environment.

It is commonly said that when an individual who lives in a *favela* and moves around the hillside learns how to dance samba steps, this is a kind of modern condition for the production of knowledge that exists in the relationship between the body and topographical characteristics of the urban space.

This epistemic relationship, by constituting popular imagination, did not go unnoticed by Hélio Oiticica, a middle-class artist who spent a long period of artistic residency on the Mangueira hill, an urban spatial condition and historical context that led him to the creation of the *Parangolés* as the culmination of his insistent search for an interactive artistic process between the body and the environment (OITICICA, 1986).

In Carmen Luz's choreographic thinking, which has Hélio Oiticica as its primordial intercessor, the blankets are simultaneously presented as a material repertoire in the precariousness of abandonment and a pretext for choreographic thinking. The blankets-*parangolés* become elements that, in the creation of a corporeal vocabulary, favour the development of choreographic phrases imagined by their author.

More than a starting point for social criticism, the blankets – the objects – relate to the choreographic work as a constituent quality: the blanket engenders the second skin of the body, marginalized in the streets, as well as being the material that affects choreographic thinking and the driving power of the dancing body. There is, in this interface, a process that does not allow for a separation between the body and the blanket, as if they were two materials of a different nature.

Part of the knowledge of the marginalized body on the streets is its ability to protect itself – physically and psychologically – beneath the “donated blanket” which becomes more than a blanket: it becomes the re-dimensioned production of a new finitude between a subject and the environment that surrounds it. And it is this metaphorical production, a symbolic production, that allows for a tactical exit in this struggle for survival. The metaphor as substitution, the blanket as an artifice that protects and defines the limits of a fictional body in between nature and culture and, in the artistic field, the *scenic poetry* as a creative episteme and the exercising of symbolic power.

The fragility of the body holds, as a recurrent discursive condition in Western and Christian culture, the biblical narrative of original sin. The nature of nudity, a symbolic image of the first Old Testament narratives, takes on a negative connotation in this new human condition, now divorced from divine support. After the loss of Paradise, clothes become the enunciative mark of a new corporeal condition.

Exposed to nature, clothing gains the status of artifice and begins constituting a code that is inscribed in the body, which formally modulates it. The other skin, in the new corporeal

condition, appears and it will reproduce itself as an archetype in different cultures, having as its common point and one of its references, divine history in its Christian version, the creation of the world.

Among the ancient Greeks, as Plato reports in *The Republic* (1997), the fiction produced by the body focused more specifically on the soul: different minerals – bronze, silver and gold – were the adornments that indicated the virtues of the inhabitants of the *polis* (the Greek city).

Nowadays, the fictional body is actualized as scientific and technological production, in which the mineral kingdom, more than being part of the imagination and the soul, is already embedded in the biological body in the form of the most varied prostheses. Thus, technology is incorporated not so much in the form of the alchemist's brimstone (*sulphur*) of the Middle Ages but based on the silicon of the most advanced scientific and technological thinking of modern times.

The contemporary, however, is the era of the superposition of eras, each with its temporal experience of duration. Between the imaginary gold of the Greeks and the silicon of today's technologists, still lies the fabric – a mixture of cotton and acrylic – of cheap blankets covering marginalized bodies which inherited neither the Greek imagination of gold nor the contemporary fable of silicon.

It is as if the reality of abandonment on the streets were a fable, much closer to the narrative of a tragedy, as it clashes with the enchantment produced either by the mythical imagination of ancient times or by the technological imagination of contemporary times.

Blankets, by Carmen Luz, highlights the social contradictions: on the one hand, the misery of the world and social abandonment and, on the other hand, the possibilities of actualizing the body and inventing choreographic thinking according to the conditions of subjectivation between the environment and something that becomes present as a dance that is seen and, therefore, affects our consciousness.

The blanket-*parangolé*: The nature of the artifice

The cheap blanket that covers the bodies of homeless people sleeping on the sidewalk, invisible to society and lacking the empathy of the general public, is the same cape that produces the ghostly figures that wander day and night through the city streets. In the daily life of modern cities, this is the image of the socially constituted body of marginalized segments, like the difference that knocks on the door and quietly settles itself in the city establishing an invariably silent presence.

In *Blankets*, body and blanket are not two independent pieces, rather they function as if one were an inherent quality of the other in the construction of these urban figures. In a possible metaphor, thinking through images and taking the *Parangolés* as a reference in order

to interpret modern cities, the blanket is the other dimension of the body that seeks to establish itself along the edges of the environment.

If it is an artifice, a kind of minimal resource in material precariousness, the cheap blanket, grey over urban grey, blends into the body that inhabits the city. It is characteristic of the artifice to become a complement to the object that supports it – as in the structural relationship between noun and adjective, since the adjective confers a quality on its referent noun.

But, given the characteristics with which objects can be linked to one another, perhaps it is convenient to ask whether the qualifying adjective cannot also have a vocation to become a body, as if its quality could become so characteristic of the object that it might be confused with its actual nature.

When a complement confers a quality, whatever it may be, on an object, what it causes is within the scope of a change in intensity: consciousness traversed by the objectivity of the world includes its subjectiveness to subjectivity by the forces of the external world. In a network, crisscrossed by comings and goings that who knows where from, it is no longer known if a body in this hybrid composition, of the body-blanket type, initiates a new state or if it has been initiated by some other instance of the environment.

It is no longer known how much of the body is inscribed in the objectivity of the world or how much of the world is present in it. What becomes evident, in the case of the bodies on the streets and their cheap blankets, is that this relationship, although attributing another symbolic status, reaffirms the insistent maintenance of the *status quo* in which black bodies – historically and to this day – continue to suffer the same agonies suffered ever since the formation of Colonial Brazil.

With the blanket that covers it on the street, the wandering body may undergo a mere change of intensity as the cheap fabric, by physically and symbolically protecting the body, plays the role that an adjective has on a noun: attributing some kind of quality to it. If the object that attributes quality to the body is merged into the very body to which it attributes some typological quality, perhaps it is much more a matter of a change in nature.

Performing arts, permeated by sociological criticism, also affect the question of whether the body, admittedly hybrid, is necessarily of another nature. In the emergence of choreographic thinking, the demand from the bodies is for a change of degree in which the body is being fabled in artistic creation. The body that changes its nature still retains traces of a disjunctive condition, contemporary per se, in which there is a past that does not pass and a future that is still being actualized.

This relationship between the subject and the world of things is what is called subjectivity in an environmental perspective. Therefore, subjectivity is not just linearly the discursive mark of the subject's enunciation in the environment that surrounds it. Rather, this subjectivity, given

the structuring condition of the environment on the individual, potentially shapes the modes of agency that a body manages to engrave in, or in spite of, the structure and the social system.

A memory, in a Bergsonian interpretation, is only realized to the extent that a consciousness selects, on the plane of memory itself, the past that is of interest to it and actualizes it in the present (BERGSON, 1999). On the other hand, this recurrence of the past presents a notion of presentness, that feeling of being in the world, as a sign that the world was also inscribed within a given consciousness.

Thus, subjectivity has a conjunctural aspect that occurs as a process in its historicity, in which there is a back-and-forth, a movement between a consciousness and the reality that is presented to that same consciousness. The idea of process, as if it were constantly actualizing the permanence of structures, displaces subjectivity from the plane of mere enunciation to inscribe it in a broader plane: that of cognition.

Hence, we can say that subjectivity is related not only to the discursive structure that is meshed into the signical plot, but that as it is constituted it becomes part of this coming and going, as an affectation of the world on the body and, therefore, in a given consciousness. This plot is equivalent to saying, in terms of the experience-*parangolé*, from Hélio Oiticica's work, that the more the world makes a difference to an individual, the more the individual can, at least in theory, make a difference to the world.

Capturing moments, "filing" them in the form of memories and functionalizing them according to a poetic project: here, between Hélio Oiticica's *parangolé* and Carmen Luz's *blankets*, lies the way in which subjectivity is engendered from objects and intercessory environments available for any use, notably poetic. A twirling of capes or blankets-capes, each of them a way of making the body-environment agency work.

Final considerations

In 2021, almost in 2022, more than two decades later, we still haven't climbed the *Morro do Andaraí*, at the invitation of Carmen Luz made in the already distant beginning of the 21st century, at the Cacilda Becker Theatre in Rio de Janeiro, since we had to climb, in that decade, another hill, *Rocinha*, on the other side of the Tijuca National Park. However, we can gain access to the director's presence in her many statements given over these two decades of choreographic production, in the formats of interviews and audiovisual conversations.

Carmen Luz accessed Hélio Oiticica and his *Parangolés*, almost forty years after the *Mostra Opinião 65* exhibition, as primary intercessors in the creation of *Blankets*, perhaps the most emblematic work of black youth's participation in a contemporary dance experience. Teenagers with no formal dance training became intercessors of Carmen Luz's choreographic thinking, as she invited young dancers, many of them still teenagers at the time, to wear the *parangolé*-blanket.

The choreographer, theatre director and filmmaker extended the process of artistic creation as she began to give interviews about her art to journalists and cultural producers. Media technology became an intercessor for Carmen Luz by expanding a present time that insists on extending itself as a memory. In the *audience-foyer* session in 2001, the choreographer and activist invited the audience to act as an intercessor in an experience that was then emerging in the contemporary dance scene in Rio de Janeiro and Brazil.

There are many ways of connecting and producing a cartography as a method, not necessarily reproducible by its uniqueness, which is configured and emerges when there is no actual map with defined directions but one with paths to be potentially created. *Blankets* is one of those pieces that emerges as a creative process and gains longevity through memory, as choreographic thinking and the dancing body, which ride on each other's backs, and through the material and immaterial possibilities available in the environment in which they find themselves.

Carmen Luz's cartographic process highlights the long-lasting tension between what the social structures of a given historical time cause to emerge or to make rarer, and what, on the plane of desire, contrived with various intercessors, becomes presentifiable as a way of acting and building a path between structures, with them or in spite of them.

When we look back and notice a path that has already been found, particularly in the experience of a choreographic method, we notice that it appears as a kind of signature in which there are two aspects: the choreographic thinking that imagines a body and the body that dances and actualizes the choreographic imagination, a relationship that gives rise to the actualization of the method.

To the extent that a body becomes an intercessor for another body, thus having the condition of having dance, in the end, over this long process spanning two decades, at least in our case, there is one detail that is missing: climbing the Andaraí hill and, at last, accepting Carmen Luz's invitation, although, as far as we know almost twenty years later, the Ethnic Dance Company has moved and set up an artistic residence in the region of Maracanã, on a fixed or itinerant basis.

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