



The Informed Spectator and Research in Arts

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Two small, inspiring books, one by theorist and theater critic Georges Banu¹, and the other by historian and art philosopher George DidiHuberman², reflect on how research in arts is conducted, so as to describe the investigation logics guiding both works. There is an implicit perspective of creating a complicity between spectators of a special kind, those leaning towards the scenic arts with an interest in elaborating a study which mobilizes a living bibliography or an interior bibliography (two of Banu's concepts), i.e., artists and spectacles that have been viewed for a shorter or longer period. The two books bear individual peculiarities, not only in their starting point and in the choice of the object to be analyzed – a text and its numerous stagings, a flamenco dancer and one of his ballets – but also because both works incorporate forms of discourse subjectivity.

Living library

The concept of the informed spectator (*spectateur averti*) is proposed by Banu in *Our Theater, the Cherry Orchard*. In his *Notebook of spectators* (1999) he intends to be faithful to Tchekhov's last work (1904). From 1968 to 1999, spectators see nineteen stagings of the "Cherry Orchard", which takes Banu to stages in Paris, to theaters in European and American cities and to performances in the Avignon Theater Festival.

¹Georges Banu was born in 1943, in Romania. Professor at Paris III - la Sorbonne Nouvelle. Manages the *Alternatives théâtrales* magazine alongside Bernard Debroux. Has published works on contemporary directors - Ariane Mnouchkine, Giorgio Strehler, Peter Brook, Peter Stein, Antoine Vitez, inter alia, and other works on actors.

²Georges Didi-Huberman was born in France, in 1951. Philosopher, historian, art critic and professor at the École de Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, in Paris.

However, he did not neglect the original staging of the *Cherry Orchard*, at the Moscow Art Theater, in 1904, directed by Stanislavski.

The informed spectator's notebook pervades a familiar territory and is organized around a theme and its variations, regardless of the boundaries between text and staging. The following logic is not that of an exegete, but rather a logic much closer to that applied when writing a travel diary, "neither systematic, nor didactic" (Banu, 1999, p. 11). But, Banu states that he does not intend to create the file of a biography, as the idea of a diary suggests. The notebook keeps what one remembers, what is made available by the living memory. It is the memory of the spectator, "which retains mainly the surprise of the first approach or the evidence of a detail, the return of a replica or the clearing of a shadow zone" (Banu, 1999, p. 12). In the end, a prerogative of the spectator's notebook is emphasized, excluding disappointments and recording the memories of moments of trust in which the scene seeks and finds, "in a metaphor or in an unprecedented speech, the complex of the orchard" (Banu, 1999, p. 13). It is an intricate connection between economic and symbolic levels – including a double rescue operation, illusory and fruitless: the economic rescue of the owners of a property, without sacrificing the symbolic reason of their existence: the cherry orchard. In the light of a text that, like everything which is "complex", simultaneously clarifies and obscures a situation, the notebook does not follow the path of the systematic, rigorous deciphering of what is shown and what is hidden, but that of what is implicit, based on the concept of *punctum*, according to Roland Barthes (Banu, 1999, p. 12).

What guides the writing of the book is an intense mixture of its fiction, its stagings and what reemerges from the spectator's life. The cherry orchard is also present in the Romanian landscape, where the orchard's complex expresses the experience of the researcher's mother, deprived of her property by the Russian army during the occupation. Hoping to retrieve their possessions, the two start a journey back to their homeland. But, at that point, it is impossible to recognize the place where his mother lived. Banu synthesizes: "His orchard, in abyss, now only belonged to him phantasmatically. Seen for the last time, [...] it disappears" (Banu, 1999, p. 17).

Another memorialistic view appears when analyzing the theme of speed or the "change in rhythm, in which the story escalates, the desires precipitate, the

victorious have no time to waste" (Banu, 1999, p. 24). The sentence "Such cruelty is unbearable" places Lopkhine in the foreground, but the scene is once more from a family memory. A businessman pays a high price for a painting from his father's collection, another orchard which he went through in life. The spectator, who is the author of the notebook, sees himself in the character Petia, who condemns Lopkhine's celerity when intending to evaluate the price of the orchard quickly. The final sentence in the fragment concerns the spectator and Tchekhov's characters: "Selling is capitulating, failing, so let it all be done without any insufferable precipitation, confronting the rules of the new owners" (Banu, 1999, p. 24).

The pursuit of the hypothesis according to which it is possible to perceive in the text the demand for a "balance between parabolic opening and realistic rooting" (Banu, 1999, p. 18) causes the collation of stagings for the perception of how to attribute different sets of colors to the spirit of time. According to Banu, the *Cherry Orchard* is "a revealing work, which brings out, as in Chemistry, a number of mutations that cross the century" (Banu, 1999: 18). One of the possible ways of understanding this comparatist element of the traveling theoretician lies in the characters: Petia, the student, through several stagings, acquires different tones that range from Andrei Serban's hysterical Leninist militant to the dreamer who foresees failure before setting off to battle, leaving the illusion of the century to the spectators (Banu, 1999, p. 18).

But, the dimensions of time proliferate beyond the confrontation with the story. Back to his erudite routine, Banu finds himself to be a visitor of a cherry orchard when walking into old libraries and encountering an anachronistic beauty, "which then becomes a transitory refuge, the suspension of market laws and a slowdown" (Banu, 1999, p. 22). Theater and books are once more named as forms of resistance to rapidity and efficiency; states of time that are established in order to cruelly banish nostalgia.

The multiple facets of time in the play could yet be observed in a scene – Liuba's arrival. In brief paragraphs, Banu reports the different solutions proposed by directors to answer a question: how to satisfy an expectation and confirm an event? Images are collected: in Strehler's staging, Liuba enters the scene with the attitude of a great actress who enters the entirely white house. Stein, on the other hand, prefers to make Liuba evolve as in a dream – an ecstasy of reunion

– whereas two other directors prefer to present the character as a woman wrecked by age, alcohol and tobacco (Banu, 1999, p. 50). After the arrival, it slips into an opposite theme: Liuba's shasty departure and exile. The images of the actresses' silhouettes on stage are replaced by the researcher's free meditation on escape as an inability to take some of the following attitudes: resigning one self to a distant determination of fate, finding answers in the present and solving persistent anxieties. In the exile, there is anger as well as the felony of escape. When returning to the character in the scene, Banu perceives her as a comedian disguising a defeat. The contrasts or ambiguities are emptied, as in Brook's, Strehler's and Efros' stagings, which only expose the seductive glow of the woman, hiding the witness of failure. Only one actress, in Zadek's staging, presents the splendor as an illusion.

The widest comparatist view of the stagings comes from the question "Is it necessary to represent the cherry orchard?" which unfolds into another question: "Is it or is it not necessary to represent the ghosts? Should they be given flesh, to make the invisible visible?" According to Banu, the solutions proposed by the directors "are not solely personal, because they bear signs of esthetic combats, of negations and affirmations of an era" (Banu, 1999, p. 28). In order to compose the answers to these questions, Banu organizes a sort of gallery of scene images in the first part of his notebook. The notes indicate a specific ability or training on the part of the spectator, who should proceed as if they had a camera-eye, capturing fragments of scenes, putting together archives or a collection, in order to select some and create series afterwards.

Whereas the original production, at the Moscow Art Theater, shows the cherry trees through window panes, and Stanislavski subtly integrates flowers and fragile branches into the walls of the house, Banu prefers to regard the cherry orchard as a subjective experience, and the entire house, partitions and living beings participate in the complex of the orchard. An antinaturalistic crispation, however, makes the orchard plainly mental, showing its echo but not its presence, as in Pintilié's staging, in which white and burgundy alternate, producing the chromatic effect of a present/absent orchard. Strehler converted the orchard into a veil/curtain of dead leaves involving the room and the scene, producing an echo chamber, which registered and communicated the state of the feverish characters to the public. Transparency and lightness become an

obstinate refusal to represent the orchard. In Lassale's staging at the Oslo Theater, oneiric images of a sublime orchard are projected on the children's bedroom. What could have been a surprising technological performance in former times, receives acute criticism from the spectator Banu. There is the loss of a matter indispensable for both the ghosts and the orchards, destroyed with an ax. The evocative perspective of the text is, therefore, well developed in Brook's productions, who entirely abolished the images of the orchard so they would shine freely. Also in productions staged by Zadek, who only shows the images poorly to prove the inability of the scene to reproduce this place invested by ghosts, an imaginary orchard, a deceptive orchard (Banu, 1999, p. 30). Other metonymic embodiments of the orchard, as William's, in Tokyo, - a single tree as the pillar of the world - contrast with the feelings of the informed spectator, pursued by the feeling of absence.

Once more, the traveler's discourse speaks louder. He remembers having been a witness, alongside a loved one, of the moment in which the cherry trees blossom in Japan. The comment makes experiences converge: "it is necessary to see thousands of cherry trees in flower to experience, as a spectator, the seduction exercised by them on the other side, on the characters' side" (Banu, 1999: 31).

Despite the unactable memory, the informed spectator acknowledges, however, in a staging by Peter Stein, the enchantment the cherry orchard produces. Behind the curtain, opened by Varia, the orchard appears "in all its captivating splendor... sexy and "grand" (Banu, 1999, p. 31). Discussing the matter of extreme literalness, the theorist refuses any hypothesis of naturalism in the Steinian option, because what shines is the supreme phantasmal experience. After the sequence of brief analyses, the nuclear question of the Notebook is formulated. Representing or not representing the orchard only accepts one answer: "Not at all" or "Entirely". According to Banu, any intermediate solution is disappointing as it wouldn't meet the supreme challenge: the challenge of the invisible reached by the visible (Banu, 1999, p. 32) plainly achieved in two historical spectacles: in the white staging of Giorgio Strehler and in Peter Brook's polychromic carpets.

Thinking when remembering and challenging others' opinions are prerogatives of the notebook, prerogatives of time/space travel. Differently from critics and their urgency to emit judgment, informed spectators are allowed to wander and

extend time, to offer the reader their thoughts in progress. This is clearly perceived in a beautiful sequence in which Banu makes a theme cut in his living library to approach the theme of death in Tchekhov's work (Banu, 1999, p. 33). The researcher starts from the memory of Otomarkrejca's spectacle, in the seventies: in act two, a white cloth falls over the small pieces of furniture designing the various rooms; with this scenography resource, the volumes become similar to tombstones, converting the house into a potential necropolis. In the image created in the scene, the chandelier remains lit, which indicates the refusal not only to separate the interior from the exterior, but also death from life (Banu, 1999, p. 36). Contrary to the ambiguity of the first spectacle, in other staging death is imposed more aggressively, the graveyard occupies the core of the stage and furniture and tombstones co-exist with the living. Efros' proposal aims to achieve the resistance of a realistic esthetics, which had just become debased in the seventies' Russia. His petrifying esthetics intended to free Tchekhov's work from this through a strong symbolism. Differently, Zadek respects the didascalia of act two, without attributing any scenographic relevance in particular to it. It is the image of the character Firs around the tombstones that becomes the emblem of the death that ambushes and dominates him.

The interested spectator is allowed to have access to the relation between the images produced by directors and an image captured in a letter from Tchekhov, which stated, about the beginning of act two, that the stones would be there to receive the crushed cherries like blood drops (Banu, 1999, p. 37). Tchekhov wrote the play when already stricken with tuberculosis. Therefore, death is a personal experience that blends with the writing. Shared finitudes. Finishing the play and waiting for the end of life or the end of the comedy of life. The researcher-collector unites the fragment of Tchekhov's letter, the photograph of a house in Bucharest, given by a friend, in which the dilapidated beauty of the old construction predominates, and also Zadek's staging, which portrays the deterioration of the house with rests of borrowed materials from old theater sets, different doors, mismatched chairs and china. The images of the real-life properties and the images reconstructed on stage become equal in their condition of memory residues.

The critical and biographical miniatures of Georges Banu on *The Cherry Orchard* contaminated, from the first reading, my writings as spectator before the

research corpus, which I have had, access to in recent years – spectacles whose dramaturgies are based on narrative literary texts by Portuguese and Brazilian directors. The decision of composing a living biography begins on a night in 2002, when watching, in Palmela, near Lisbon, the spectacle *Big Soul*, enacted by *The Group (O Bando)*, based on one of the Tales from the Mountain, by Miguel Torga. The traveler's perception indicated the importance of the geography, the landscape outlined when crossing the Tejo, a route to be repeated for years. The spectator's memory, then, starts to cope with the distance necessary to the analysis of the object:

Three years earlier, a staging by *the Group* had led me to take along a beautiful path towards Vale de Barris, in Palmela. We were welcomed by members of the group, and guided to a plateau behind the building that serves as headquarters for the Company, to sit on one hundred white canvas deck chairs like the ones on ships. There we watched *Big Soul*, based on a text by Miguel Torga (*New Tales from the Mountain*), which narrates the unexpected confrontation between Big Soul and Abel, who, without hesitation, thwarts Big Soul's impulse to kill, and Isaac, the survivor from Big Soul's hands, who puts an end to his tormentor's life. The main character rides a bicycle in a vertically projected hemispherical structure; attached to the iron footbridge, we recognize a window, a door, chairs, a platform – like a bed frame turned upwards – as a base on which the scenes are developed by the actors, who move in space, suspended by ropes and pulleys. The *Roofless*, "a street where the Galician wind still lives, whistling restlessly all year", becomes an image which preserves the reference to the route up and down the slope, not only for those who seek the assistance of Uncle Big Soul, but also the character himself when setting off to the dying man's house, when his family wishes to shorten his sufferings.

The machinism, the music – singing and instrumental music by Jorge Salgueiro – played live, produced the oneiric effect intended by director João Brites, who, in the programme, already pointed Marc Chagal's universe as a visual reference for the spectacle. Reclining and protected with covers from the spring wind blowing from the Sado river valley, surrounding the Palmela Castle cliff, we were taken to a unique and ravishing place. The boundaries of this theatrical space were set by the scene machine, which, in the dark background of a sky with few stars, supported the actors and operated in full view of the spectators. An object-machine, whose use very remotely refers to the tradition of machinism, hidden in the basements and in the warp of old theaters. Anti-illusionist, the scene machine is converted into the construction of a strong imaginary space. We, spectators, are dragged into the dream. We leave the dirt floor of Vale de Barris to a space of imprecise contours where bodies and feelings float, at times submitted to, at times freed from the blackness of death (Werneck, 2005, p. 290).

The perception about the multiple variations that the relation between dramaturgy and space receives from the group is a result of an investigative practice that occurs on printed pages, either in works that serve as a starting point for the text, either in works that provide concept references for the staging

of a play. However, the effort to describe the stagings does not leave out the sound of memory, which consists of layers, pervaded by repeated images. Thus, the informed spectator gradually builds a series that has to do with the physical insertion in the spaces where spectacles are staged and create receptacles in them. In these new landscapes, the darkness of the night, the manipulation of the elements Earth, Fire, Air and Water — besides the platforms raised at a distance from the ground — create paradoxical ways of deviation and acceptance, establishing new bonds between actors and spectators, both taken by the experience of dislocation and by the experience of destabilization of preconceived roles (Werneck, 2009, p. 11).

The analytical task seeks images, looking for correspondences and disagreements, similarities and dissimilarities, which are expressed in mutation and return movements. Time is revealed in multiple temporalities, dispersing the rigorous chronology of the historical series, one of the ideas that Banu's notebook proposes as research practice. My notebook records three more spectacles of the group - *Head of a headless nail* (2007), *Head of a headless nail* (2007), and *Inner road* (2010). In all spectacles, the night, already constructed as an image, decanted by memory, became the entrance to a time doomed to escape, which, as soon as the spectacle begins, loses its cosmologic dimension and acquires another, material, theatrical, pointing to duration, a temporality in which imagination exceeds limits. On the threshold of real space and fictional space, the image of the night indicated the suspension of an era and the beginning of another, the basis for a theatricality overloaded with resources – stage machine, wardrobe, in which numerous sources of reference intersect, the maximum investment on the research of orality and physicality (Werneck, 2012, p. 231).

Constellation of images

Still in search of art research texts that use discourse subjectivity, a study is selected in which there is the practice of diary writing. In a bibliographical note at the end of the book *Le Danseur des solitudes*, Didi Huberman informs that it is part of a longer work in progress about the art of the *cante jondo* (*hondo*). The deep singing of flamenco music, and the diaristic writing results from the meetings with dancer Israel Galván between 2004 and 2005, three in Seville (at a festival, at a seminar and at the dancer's studio), and two in France, in Marseilles and Arles. But there is another chronology in this writing; it is in the dating of the chapters

(08/10/05; 08/23/2005; 08/31/2005; 10/10/2005),³ therefore produced during, precisely, one month, following the sequence of the last meetings with Galván, filmed by Pascal Convert, plastic artist and documentarist.⁴

There are four chapters, structured so as to intensify the proximity to the Sevillian *bailaor*, but at the same time demanding a move towards the titles of a library organized along the Warburgian lines. In search for new and wider bonds between dance and its good neighborliness, "aiming to awaken increasingly richer perspectives, complicity, familiarity and correspondences in the reader" (Samain, 2012, p. 35). Didi-Huberman starts from the spectacle *Arena*, which he watched at the *La Maestranza* Theater, during the Dance Biennial, and he returns numerous times, each time amplifying his comprehension on Israel Galván's dance solo.

The initial proposition is to suspend the idea that the only purpose of dancing is to be in a group and to verify the ways through which people dance their symbols, affections and beliefs to transmit, in the long term, their cultural forms and their psychic and bodily movements. When considering art according to human gestures, however, this approach ends up separating dance from other kinds of art such as architecture, sculpture and painting. And, positively, the essay gears towards the overcoming of the isolation of the arts, thinking with Nietzsche, who sees, in popular or tragic dancing, the exemplary possibility to watch "living images" rise (Didi-Huberman, 2006, p. 13).

The meeting with Israel Galvan is narrated by Didi-Huberman a year after the encounter in Seville:

He danced, alone. Not that he showed off and outshone others less virtuous than him to perform a solo, no. Not that he simply evolved without dance partners. He seemed, instead, to dance with his solitude, as if it were, fundamentally, solitude as a friend, that is, complex solitude, filled with dreams, ghosts and memory. Thus, he danced his loneliness, creating a multiplicity of a new genre (Didi-Huberman, 2006, p. 15).

The flamenco dance reaches the public mainly as Spanish ballet, integrating a range of dances with the names of the stars. But, Israel Galván returns, when

³ Blanchot indicates that, in the intimate diary, the calendar is the demons, the inspiration, the composer and the vigilant. When writing a diary, we put ourselves momentarily under the protection of common days. Putting our writing under that protection means also protecting ourselves from our writing, submitting to the "happy regularity that we promise not to threat" (Blanchot, 2005: 270). The library, the atlas in the Warburgian sense used by Didi-Huberman, goes without the protection of the calendar.

⁴ In his website, he presents himself as "archeologist of architecture, of the childhood, of the body" (<http://www.pascalconvert.fr/>).

dancing accompanied but alone, to the center of what fundamentally constitutes the art of the *baile* flamenco. It is about a *bailaor*, an artist of jondo (*rondo*) dance, of profound dancing (Didi-Huberman, 2006, p. 16).

To expose what are spatial solitudes, the hypothesis is: "the dancer isolates himself **to be many**, he does not build one for himself, a unit or a group; he creates multiplicity with his own moving body – a singular multiplicity, one could say" (Didi-Huberman, 2006, p. 17). The enchantment is complete when the historian discovers the dancer offers him a strong philosophical question.

The descriptions of Galván's choreographies fill beautifully written pages on which total attention to this singular multiplicity is perceived, such as the distinction between reserve and sparkle, between showing and appearing, concepts, which indicate how he creates the conditions to say everything about his own absence. According to Didi-Huberman, Galván escapes from the cultural collage of references from modern dance, which would use a little of Pina Bausch and Merce Cunningham. His power comes from an idea inherent in dance, linked to bullfighting by tradition. Nevertheless, it imposes figural extension and beauty never seen before (Didi-Huberman, 2006, p. 43).

The text "*Arena or Spatial Solitudes*" is about recording formal choices, through which the artist's ways of being are revealed, where modesty and discourse laconicism are ingrained, deserving this synthesis by the scholar. "...he would like to know how to appear that way without seeing himself as such"; "he never announces he is going to be sublime"; "his body produces formulations in which the *pathos* remains, in front of us, but in suspension, like floating in the shadow" (Didi-Huberman, 2006, p. 22). Gradually there is the unfolding of a hermeneutic coil summoning Valéry to the writing that leads to Beckett's *Quad*, until we finally reach the spectacle *Arena*, whose dramaturgy is oriented by the poetics and esthetics of the works of José Bergamín, Spanish writer and poet, devoted to bullfighting. Between bullfighting and dancing, Israel Galván searches for something that is equally distant from the wound and from beauty (Didi-Huberman, 2006, p. 38).

When facing a sequence of movements of deviation or change in direction, of elusive contact, of departure from the usual grace of the body that is conscious of the dance, the critical gesture then leads to the comparison between the new esthetics of the Sevillian *bailaor* in flamenco dancing and the esthetics imposed by

Juan Belmonte on the art of bullfighting. Above all, both are related to the night, to the shadows, to obscurity (Didi-Huberman, 2006: 46), subsequently outlining parallel themes referring to the emptiness necessary for him to hear himself performing the steps. A question made to Galván about the shadows produces a significant answer: when he dances, "the air is simply his flesh" (Didi-Huberman, 2006, p. 48). The confrontation between the statement and the description of the spectator allows for the construction of the hypothesis according to which the *aire* (Spanish word for the unattainable, limitless air) is a psychical material of fear and of the assumption of risk (Didi-Huberman, 2006, p. 48).

The excerpt reveals another interest for our deconstructive reading of the written research registered in the book: Galván, who adopts the path of not knowing: humility, laconicism and innocence, which were revealed in some interviews given to the scholar, is, according to his spectator, a wonderful sage of invented and refused gestures. It is about having an insight into a contemporary work, retrieving its "unconscious knowledge" according to the rhythmic of the flamenco *compás* and the silent musicality of the tauromachic *suertes* (Didi-Huberman, 2006, p. 50). There is a somnambulism in his dancing, which has nothing to do with the state of possession by the gods or with romantic hysteria.

Therefore, Galván performs to Didi-Huberman as an anachronic dancer. The cinema, from Eisenstein to the Matrix, or even Tai martial arts movies (Didi-Huberman, 2006, p. 50), reconfigures the immemorial depth of his art. However, his body still holds the memories of other bullfighters, always poeticized by Bergamin, an author that allows Didi-Huberman to create associations with Garcia Lorca, Alberti and Michel Leiris, San Juan de La Cruz, Bataille. The Warburgian library constantly produces the expansion of thematic and geographic frontiers of art history (Agamben, 2009, p. 17).

As references are amplified, it is necessary to narrow the scope of the observation lens. The art of multiplying and subtracting is in dancing as well as in the way the dancer speaks. The interested spectator shows their proximity with the dancer's body and uses the testimony discourse:

Seeing Galván dance is discovering, in the size of a body, the conflict between fluidity and accentuation. It is watching someone who forged – at what price? We do not know (...) – a great art of disjunction. We are under the impression that Galván imposes himself the dangerous logic of the bullfighter – confrontation, isolation, rupture – inside his own body, his own gestures. He is alone with his conflicts. He is separated by his conflicts. Alone, he is, therefore, multiple (Didi-Huberman, 2006, p. 86).

The analysis goes on to the ways of dismounting movements and gestures which, together, impose both the sublime and the “dignity of fear”, and the grotesque of fear when it becomes panic (Didi-Huberman, 2006, p. 89). Didi-Huberman sets off once again in search for new images and the memory summons great burlesque artists (Harold Lloyd, Charles Chaplin or Buster Keaton), in a gallery which also integrates Galván’s memories about burlesque flamenco shows that were remarkable to him. The path along the distinction between the concepts of comic and gracious leads not only to Bergson’s writings, but also, obviously, to the cinema, to the writings of André Bazin, where a new perspective is found for the idea of “finishing”, now as in killing repeatedly, with the intensity of repeated stops (Didi-Huberman, 2006, p. 97).

Many bullfighters have filled the pages of the study, in which Galván’s spectator is allowed to criticize Bergamin’s point of view, whereas the latter prefers Joselito’s style, curved lines and rapidity, to Belmonte’s, predominantly slow. From the critique to the poet, the researcher leaps into the formulation of a surprising hypothesis about the static dynamism of Juan Belmonte: being a statue and a man in front of a bull could only be perceptible when imposing a new observation technique on the public, to which only the invention of the cinema could contribute (Didi-Huberman, 2006, p. 111).

Galván, to Didi-Huberman, retrieves this static dynamism forged by Belmonte in the arena and displayed in movie theaters as a time fragmentation device – the photographs are still, but the development of the film makes all things dance before our eyes, even those which at first seemed static (Didi-Huberman, 2006, p. 113). Therefore, it can be stated that “Galván only stops dancing by time fragmentation, a frozen image and while mounting the scene, when a privileged moment is produced, an event: a kind of leap where depth and humor merge. The great art of the *finishing*, this way of “finalizing in beauty”, makes Galván a contemporary of different fields and eras, between immemorial survival and anticipation of our more contemporary expectations. The scholar recovers the concept, the dancer is anachronistic, moving gracefully around today’s world (Didi-Huberman, 2006, p. 126).

The last entry in the diary, “*Temples* or temporal solitudes”, is about the great art of rhythm. The bullfighter (Belmonte) and the dancer (Galván) are once again compared in the formula of paradoxes; the time paradox – the fleeting

slowness; the movement paradox; the consistence paradox, the strength paradox. Dancing is to be in combat with the music while being man and animal, the body of a faun. Didi-Huberman does not hold back, which is a prerogative of the sincerity of the diary, and confirms a Nietzschean impression –Galván is a dancing god (Didi-Huberman, 2006, p. 161).

The invitation is made to confirm Didi-Huberman's appraisal: just look at the dancer's hands. After an astonishing sequence, which describes the numerous movements of the *bailaor's* hands, he admits, comparing them to the movements of a guitarist, who cuts (*finishes*) or sweetens (*moderates*): Galván knows how to capture time with his hands (162). The last text of the diary ends with a sort of interrogative thank you: how is it possible to be surprised nowadays? Before such a deeply tauromachic choreography of *Arena*, before such truncated, however so smooth gestures, when Galván makes us experience a "flavor of time", where do we recognize something like a contemporary birth of tragedy?

The Warburgian model of analysis developed by Didi-Huberman is presented as a horizon of reference conjunction. Both in the study on Galván's dancing and in his successive texts on James Turrell's installations, gathered in *L'Homme qui marché dans la couleur*, critical mobility is exalted, far beyond the extreme semiological view that refers to the composite demand to write, act, dismount and create simulacra of objects.

Holding a book by Didi-Huberman at the beginning of a study is to be carried away by the associations that can be produced by a concept, by the memory of readings, by the possibility of entering a disjunction to break the representational paradigm of art, as formulated by Rancière "suspension of any ascertainable relation between an artist's intention, a fragile form in a place dedicated to art, the spectator's viewpoint and a state of community" (Rancière, 2010: p. 86). The researcher may be conducted by multiple sensoriality regimes and create their own archeology projects in a spectacle, getting closer to the elaboration of a critical fiction.

Therefore, on the limits between fiction and critique, I wrote a brief text about the staging of *Portuguese Letters*, in 1991, and Jules Verne's *Journey to the Center of the Earth*, by Bia Lessa, in 1993, while at the same time engaging in a larger research study. Although Bia Lessa's collection of spectacles constructed from literary texts during the nineteen eighties and the nineties is significantly

rich, the decision to favor two of the director's experiments sought to expand the concept of desertification proposed by Jean Pierre Sarrazac to enunciate one of the components of the esthetics of theatrical performance at the end of the twentieth century. The various operations of reversibility of the scenic area designed by Bia Lessa in the theaters of the *Centro Cultural do Banco do Brasil*, in Rio de Janeiro, indicated the origin of the concept, which should be extended to its geographic origin and its manipulations in the "site specific" modality of installation, like in James Turrell's works. The comings and goings around the concept and its surroundings, where literary texts are also installed, create the productive vicinities that both strengthen the critical gesture of the informed spectator and make it surprising.

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