***Zoe*: threatened common life**

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ABSTRACT – *Zoe*: threatened common life – In 2017, the dance performance *Zoe*, directed by the choreographer Francini Barros, was censored because its first scene had a naked performer on the sidewalk of the Apolo Theater in Recife. The fact led to a reflection on art as a mechanism to establish a utopia against neoliberal conservatism. This paper aims at understanding how the creative processes of the performance *Zoe* are placed as a micropolitical strategy of resistance to that conservatism. In order to do so, it establishes a dialogue with Agamben, Foucault, Deleuze, Guattari and Rolnik to discuss categories that served as a basis for our argumentative line, like ordinary life (*zoé*), utopian body, heterotopia, culture and subjectivity.

Keywords: ***Zoe*. Utopian Body. Heterotopia. Culture. Subjectivity.**

RÉSUMÉ – *Zoé*: la vie commune menacée – En 2017, le spectacle de danse *Zoe*, dirigé par le chorégraphe Francini Barros, a été censuré, pour commencer par un artiste nu, sur le trottoir du Teatro Apolo à Recife. Le fait a provoqué une réflexion sur l'art en tant que mécanisme pour établir une utopie contre le conservatisme néolibéral. Cet article vise à comprendre comment les processus créatifs du spectacle *Zoe* sont placés comme une stratégie micropolitique de résistance à ce conservatisme. Pour ce faire, on dialogue avec Agamben, Foucault, Deleuze, Guattari et Rolnik pour discuter des catégories qui ont servi de base à cette argumentation, telles que la vie commune (*zoé*), le corps utopique, l'hétérotopie, la culture et la subjectivité.

Mots-clés: ***Zoé*. Corps Utopique. Hétérotopie. Culture. Subjectivité.**

RESUMO – *Zoe*: vida comum ameaçada – Em 2017, o espetáculo de dança *Zoe*, dirigido pela coreógrafa Francini Barros, foi alvo de censura, por iniciar com um performer nu, na calçada do Teatro Apolo, em Recife. O fato ensejou uma reflexão sobre a arte como mecanismo instaurador de uma utopia frente ao conservadorismo neoliberal. O trabalho que ora se apresenta tem por objetivo compreender como os processos criativos do espetáculo *Zoe* se colocam como estratégia micropolítica de resistência a esse conservadorismo. Para tanto, instaura um diálogo com o pensamento de Agamben, Foucault, Deleuze, Guattari e Rolnik, para discutir categorias que serviram de base para esta linha argumentativa, como vida comum (*zoé*), corpo utópico, heterotopia, cultura e subjetividade.

Palavras-chave: ***Zoe*. Corpo Utópico. Heterotopia. Cultura. Subjetividade.**

I

Inside the theater, six friends arrive to a forest at the end of the afternoon. The scene depicts an unknown place to be cleared. The naked friends play, have fun, interact with each other. The night falls and the darkness reveals fears, insecurities, instincts of pleasure, diverse reactions before the threats of nature. Their hidden beasts emerge. With these emotions and affections, the six characters establish a relationship until daybreak.

That is the dramaturgical concept of the dance performance *Zoe*, directed by the choreographer Francini Barros. The performance premiered on June 15, 2017, at the Apolo Theater in Recife, Brazil, in a short season of four presentations, in exchange for the incentive received from the Culture Fund of the State of Pernambuco, Funcultura, for the stage production. In the program distributed to the public, we read: "The animal that looks at me and reveals myself, the condition of my nakedness. On being that and so many other things. Territory, sex, love, pain, pleasure. Pain and pleasure alone. Tonight, here, in this place. *Zoe*".

In the prologue of the dance performance, inspired by the visual artist Laura Lima's work *Puxador*, the naked performer, intertwined with the architectural structure of the theater foyer – in the case of the Apolo Theater, the pillar that supports the staircase leading to the second floor – tries to displace this structure to the exterior world, in an attempt both to humanize the exhibition space and to aestheticize the ordinary life of all of us (Picture 1).

One day after the premiere, which passed without any disturbances, the director of the performance was informed by the theater coordination that the nudity action in the public area was prohibited, in compliance with the current Brazilian legislation, according to which public nudity constitutes an obscene act.

Silence. Stupefaction. Discouragement. Vulnerability.

Artists from Recife issued a public repudiation note against the censorship suffered, refusing to yield to the unjustifiable, and ill-justified, authoritarianism of theater management. In the next three days of that short season, the director of the performance has turned to the public in the

foyer of the Apolo Theater, accompanied by the artist who performed the scene mentioned above, this time completely dressed. “This is Adelmo do Vale, he’s the performer of *Zoe*. At this moment, he should be here among you doing the following action (the performer is entwined in the ropes attached to the pillar of the theater and performs the action of pulling it out of the theater). But he should be naked. For reasons of censorship, today this scene will not be performed. *Zoe* apologizes”. Both were cheered by the public, faithful to their principles and sympathetic to the situation. After this speech, the theater’s doors opened for the spectacle.

Picture 1 – *Zoe*'s initial scene, based on the performance *Puxador*, by Laura Lima. Photo: Breno César.

According to Giorgio Agamben (2010a, p. 9), *zoé* was the word used in ancient Greece to refer as common life, or “the simple fact of living common to all living beings.” Western philosophers from the antiquity, such as Plato and Aristotle, did not consider the word *zoé* because they were not interested in approaching a simply natural life; their focus of interest and study was on politically qualified life, social life, *bíos*. The two words, *bíos* and *zoé*, would be used by the Greeks to express what we simply call *life*.

Based on that, the scenic research of the *Zoe* dance proposed to think bare life as a poetic and political argument. As a cultural device, the scene aimed at bringing back to life the animal becoming (*zoé*) as the driving force for language, considering that the same language had excluded, by hypothesis of the construction of a social, cultural life (*bios*), our instinct for

belonging to natural life. It was understood by the director and *Zoe's* creators that the construction of language would be in the adequacy of the flows of the movements, the initial pre-reflexive impetus that generated them in a formal codified universe.

The dance performance that we focus is part of a set of artistic events that has been suffering a violent offensive by the current neoliberal conservatism. What are the devices of art that are confronted with the devices of a society that lives on the periphery of capitalism, with a strong moral conservatism and in a delicate moment of crisis of capital like ours? With this question of a more general and broader order, our problematization searches for knowing how the spectacle *Zoe* claims a utopia against the political configurations marked by neoliberal conservatism. The objective of this article is to understand how the creative processes in *Zoe* are presented as micropolitical strategies of resistance to neoliberal conservatism that invests on the spectacle itself in the form of censorship.

To do so, we will develop some considerations about the conception of neoliberal culture and conservatism, followed by reflections on the proposal of a utopian body and common life in the performance *Zoe*, in order to identify some of the micropolitical strategies of this work to destabilize the conservative devices of our current neoliberal policy.

II

Currently a democratic state, Brazil has no official censorship. The Federal Constitution of 1988 prohibits any kind of censorship, whether of a political, ideological or artistic nature (Article 220, §2). According to Edilsom Farias (2001, n/p), “from the point of view of constitutional law, censorship means any procedure of the Public Power aimed at preventing the free circulation of ideas contrary to the interests of holders of Political Power.” The fundamental condition for the exercise of democracy is the free movement of ideas and the pluralism of political, ideological and artistic conceptions.

However, no right is absolute for the constitutional system: either it is limited by other rights, or by collective values of society, both supported by the Constitution. Freedom of expression and information should be in line

with the fundamental rights of citizens affected by opinions and information, as well as other constitutionally protected rights: public morality, public health, public safety, territorial integrity, for instance (Farias, 2001).

This contradiction between the democratic State that protects the right to information and freedom of expression and the same State that limits that freedom by a series of prohibitions under the current constitutional system is part of the conception of democracy as it is thought and practiced by the societies that exert or suffer the impact of neoliberalism, a political and economic system currently hegemonic. It is a system based on its contradictions: it makes war to guarantee peace; it assumes antidemocratic attitudes to guarantee democracy; it interdicts information and freedom of expression to protect that freedom (Santos, 2010; Quijano, 2010).

Actually, the Brazilian constitutional system, as well as that of other modern nations, was and continues to be elaborated from the Modernity project, which presupposes respect for and protection of capitalist, colonialist and patriarchal values, which form a normative superstructure for the functioning of the modern state. What escapes this is subject to legal sanctions, a fact that is aggravated by the current state of the social life's judicialization in which we find ourselves.

In the case of the arts, as in other cases, the right to freedom of expression is subject to other rights, as we have seen. If we take as an example the object of our analysis and its prologue, with the naked performer, on the public sidewalk, pulling the structures of the theater, we will see that the argument used by the competent authorities was of moral order (public morality): passersby went to complain to the police by the presence of a naked man in the street. The scene was originally intended to take place in the foyer of the theater. As the strings used by the performer were elastic, the space of the scene stretched to the sidewalk accidentally, since the ropes yielded to the traction beyond the predicted. After the censorship was received by the choreographer, such an argument was made explicit to the coordination of the theater, which, however, did not allow the scene to be performed, claiming to be the foyer of the theater, also, a public space open to free passing.

“There is metaphysics enough in not to think about anything” (Pessoa, 2006, p. 206), Alberto Caeiro once wrote. However, when certain metaphysical categories are mixed up and interfere with the practical (political, economic, cultural) life of individuals, it is worth clarifying their semantic values in order to rethink our own conduct in society. For instance, ethics and moral are two categories often used as synonyms. But this is not what their etymologies reveal, respectively.

According to Ana Paula Pedro (2014, p. 485),

[...] the term ethics derives from the Greek *ethos*, which can present two spellings - *êthos* - evoking the place where the animals were kept, having evolved to the place where the acts emerge, that is, men interiority (Renaud, 1994, p. 10), having later come to mean, with Heidegger, the habitation of being, and - *éthos* - which means behavior, customs, habit, character, mode of being of a person, whereas the word moral, which derives from the Latin *mos* (pl. *mores*) refers to customs, norms and laws, as Weil (2012) and Tughendhat (1999) refer.

In the same direction, Deleuze (2010, p. 129-130) asserts:

The difference is this: moral presents itself as a set of coercive rules of a special type, which consist in judging actions and intentions referring to transcendent values (it is right, it is wrong ...); ethics is a set of facultative rules that evaluate what we do, depending on the mode of existence that implies.

In other words, while moral refers to a set of norms and behavioral principles of a certain society or culture, ethics investigates the principles and values that underlie those norms. Moral is in the scope of the practical values of the daily life of a given culture: how should we behave and live in society? Ethics derives from the speculative stance: why should we behave and live in a certain way, and not another? This question supposes another three ones: Do I want? Should I? Can I?

Aesthetics (including art) and ethics have been seen throughout history as complementary categories. Coincidentally, in Portuguese, ethics [*ética*] is contained in the word aesthetics [*estética*]. We cannot fail to consider the ethical dimension in the artistic creation itself. Artistic creation, as a social fact, is permeated by three questions: Do I want? Should I? Can I? This is where we come across the moral principles of a given society. However, the moral reveals values of some, not of all. In a

complex and multicultural society like ours, each culture will have established its moral principles, even if the values of some cultures become hegemonic and legally protected to the detriment of others. For instance, being naked in a public environment is, in our penal code (Art. 233), an obscene act, even though in many indigenous communities its inhabitants live naked. There would be a great ethical question to put here: why is it obscene and reprehensible to be naked in our society? Let us turn to the answers and we will find in the arguments that the prevailing moral belong to certain segments and social institutions, not to all. Our moral is bourgeois, colonial, Christian and patriarchal. And in Brazil, more than in other societies, that moral expresses a great hypocrisy, because it is necessary to hide what obsessively we want to see revealed.

Thus, the artistic performance must be guided by ethical principles, but it owes nothing to moral. To make a performance by shooting at an unsuspecting passerby transgresses our ethical principle, which is: we must not and cannot terminate somebody else's life for a particular will. But we can (and we should, if we want) develop an artistic performance using nudity, because the performative act suspends the daily life in which we find ourselves and builds expressive frames full of discourse (Picture 2). In other words, in the field of arts, the expression reverberates in a discourse that can question even the moralizing values of the expression. From an ethical point of view, there is no problem in this case, since, in a democracy, the principle of governability must be based on the agency of opinions and points of view, which are the most diverse. A moral principle can never be an impediment if one could (and if one should) express a point of view, even on that same principle. If this holds true for the most varied types of social interaction, why would not it be for the arts, as a form of social interaction, too (Siqueira, 2017)?

Picture 2 – *Zoe* Scene. Photo: Breno César.

According to Guattari and Rolnik (2013), the concept of culture is deeply reactionary. Once moral is in the scope of culture, it implies that culture contains a moral dimension. In the words of Guattari,

What characterizes *capitalistic*¹ modes of production is that they do not operate solely in the register of exchange values, values that are of the order of capital, monetary semiotics, or modes of financing. They also operate through a mode of control of subjectivation, which I shall call a “culture of equivalence”, or “systems of equivalence in the sphere of culture.” From this viewpoint, capital operates in a way that is complementary to culture as a concept of equivalence: capital concerns itself with economic subjection, and culture, with subjective subjection. And when I speak of subjective subjection I am not referring only to advertising for the production and consumption of goods. *It is the very essence of capitalist profit to not be restricted to the field of economic surplus value. It also resides in the seizure of the power of subjectivity* (Guattari; Rolnik, 2013, p. 21).

The authors identify, in the history of Western civilization, different attributions for culture, which would assume, according to its social function, different nomenclatures. The meanings assigned to them would not appear successively, but simultaneously in the course of history, representing, in this simultaneity, the category of *hegemonic culture*, captured as an instrument by existing political, economic and social powers.

For the authors, culture would be a mode of semiotization equivalent to the production of power, just as capital is in the equalization of economic and social productions.

For *culture-value*, a sense is assigned that corresponds to a judgment of value on who has or has not culture. It is associated with a sense of hierarchy that attributes ascending value to a supposed *cultivation of the spirit*. In *collective culture-soul*, culture becomes synonymous with civilization. It is a democratic culture in which everyone can claim their identity. Guattari and Rolnik assign to the soul-collective culture an ambiguous character insofar as it lends itself to any ideology or party, indiscriminately. The *commodity-culture* would be identified by the mass culture, which considers all goods as culture, that is, any material or ideological devices that contribute to the formation of the market and the circulation of capital.

For the authors, the questions posed to contemporary culture should present the possibility of their escape from the three semantic fields mentioned, and their insertion into micro and macropolitical spheres that allow to agency singularizations that promote changes in life in both the individual and social sphere.

III

Guattari and Rolnik's conception of culture served as political guide for the process of creating the *Zoe* performance, directing it to produce singularities that could destabilize possible affiliations of the creative interpreters involved in the research, in an indistinction of inheritances and ethnic groups, although the five dancers were black. The process began with the investigation of mechanisms of domestication, of the bodily relation between the creative interpreters, of exercises of recognition of what we should now name *compassion* in relation to ours of the same kind. It was sought to understand the device of the dance scene as a micropolitical attitude by providing agencies capable of producing singularities, promoting other types of aesthetic sensibility that reached not only the dimension of the scene, but also a more human sphere, or, in order to get to the central concept of research (*zoê*), a more *inhuman*, more animal sphere in everyday relationships.

As already mentioned, Agamben's work (2010) served as the philosophical basis for the creation of the scene in *Zoe*. Although the Italian philosopher, throughout his research, did not condition the nakedness to the concept of *zoé* (see Agamben 2010a, 2010b, 2017), the spectacle here in focus took the bare life as a poetic and political argument for the construction of the scene. As Roberta Ramos (2017) quite rightly points out in an article about Francini Barros' work, the images and games of the dancers offer an understanding of life less guided by the principle of *bíos*, a category which Plato and Aristotle regard as the more advanced stage of human evolution. According to the two Greek philosophers, the simple natural life was confined to the *oîkos*, that is, to the house, to the mere reproductive life. Political life (*bíos politicós*), as a public life, becomes the core of philosophical reflections.

In his book *Politics*, Aristotle (2008) recognizes that the advent of language, which has been given the status of “supplementation of politicization” (Agamben, 2010, p. 10), constitutes the mark of the differentiation between politically differentiated human life and animal bare life, in so far as it is responsible for the establishment of dichotomous value judgments, such as good and evil, fair or unfair, right and wrong etc. To *zoé* it is only admitted a pair of opposites: pleasure and pain.

According to Agamben (2010), Foucault recognizes as an advent that marks the thresholds of the Modern Age the entrance of natural life into the mechanisms of state power, beginning a new phase in the history of humanity, characterized by the politicization of bare life, since advances in the technical, human and social sciences have enabled the protection, authorization or extinction of human life according to political demands of control. Politics became biopolitics as each animal life, bare life, came to be controlled, manipulated, and became a political game. In the face of threats to the state functioning, the new biopolitics endeavored to produce the *docile bodies* it needed.

Foucault points out two paths of biopolitical research: the study of the political techniques with which the state exercises its control, and of the technologies of production of subjectivities, which allow subjects to relate to their own identity and to their own consciousness. Subjects who are not destabilized are easy targets for state power, well-constructed and delimited

territories, with no areas of vulnerability. They are, therefore, considered to be facilitating mechanisms for the establishment of power and control.

It is a paradox: it is by exclusion that life is constituted in politics. In Agamben's words (2010, p. 15), "bare life, in Western politics, has this singular privilege of being what on whose exclusion is built the city of men." If, for Aristotle, *pólis* is a rational and teleological creation, that aims to promote *good living* (the *beautiful day*, *euemería*), why politics has disconnected from that aim and the *beautiful day* has never happened? According to Agamben, the nature of sovereign power itself, which, contrary to what Foucault thinks, is not a concept annulled by modernity, but is currently present, promotes the forgetting of this ultimate goal. As the government has the power to rule over chaos, deciding on life and death of the subjects, it is always within and outside the legal system at the same time. Thus, there is a denial of the contractualist theory according to which the *polis* emerges from a consensus among men.

Following this line of reasoning, Agamben argues that the Foucauldian thesis should be revised insofar as a *zoé* inclusion in the *pólis* is much older than the French thinker believes. The consequences of this fact and its progression over time is that bare life progressively coincides with political space. Exclusion and inclusion, *bíos* and *zoé*, become indiscernible.

Concerning *Zoe* performance, a question that was posed to the choreography was how to produce, in the scene, this zone of *bíos-zoé* indistinction. As we have seen, for Aristotle (2008), *zoé* is imprisoned by the mechanisms of control and by the emergence of language control. Voice and language, issues of speech for the Western philosophers of language – Austin, Wittgenstein, Cavell, and others –, what Merleau-Ponty would call speaking speech and spoken speech; what Deleuze would contextualize as language and constituted speech. It is a constant problem of Western philosophy and a constant problem of art. Considering the principle that dance is language, how can we articulate voice and language to liberate *zoé* from exclusion?

In the process of rehearsing, desires, repulses, threats of territory, sexual impulses, hunger, compassion for the pain of the other, and threats of species survival came to light; in short, diverse instincts that remind us of our primary condition of being alive. The arguments were selected for the

humanization of movement writing and dance discourse, with the aim of constructing a dance scene in which all were creators, interpreters and spectators, immersed in the same state of rescue, experimentation or simple observation of the becomings which permeate us given our animal condition. The construction of language in *Zoe* began to seek the introduction of a heterotopia that admits bare life, free of the exclusion that includes it in the lives of men. *Zoé* as the first mote for creation.

The discussion opened by Foucault (2013) with his concepts of utopian body and heterotopia helps us to understand the creative path in *Zoe*. Since the body corresponds to a place (*topía*) without recourse to which we are condemned, it is the reverse of utopia. However, Foucault himself admits that our body does not allow itself to be reduced so easily, presenting its fantastic zones, placeless places and deeper places that go beyond the contour of the surface of the skin. Our body is, at the same time, ponderable and imponderable; visible and opaque. Contrary to his first hypothesis that the body opposes utopia, Foucault (2013, p. 12) comes to a beautiful metaphor that expresses well his conclusions: "In any case, one thing is certain, the human body is the leading actor of all utopias." Utopias radiate from and return to the body, simultaneously making it a utopian body. The body of the dancer, for instance, in Foucault's perspective, consists of a body enlarged in a space that is both interior and exterior. Ultimately, he admits that

My body is, in fact, always elsewhere, connected to every other place in the world, and in fact, it is somewhere other than the world. For it is around it that things are arranged, it is in relation to it – and in relation to it as in relation to a sovereign – that there is an above, a below, a right, a left, a front, a back, a near, a distant (Foucault, 2013, p. 14).

If the body is always elsewhere, we can understand it by being able to establish its own heterotopias. As a precise and real place, the body can create utopian places, outside everywhere: they are spaces aimed to neutralize, dilate or purify the limits of our own socially shaped bodies, in a sort of mythical and real contestation of the body that we were allowed to live. In performing arts, for instance, the body can suspend the space of daily life and create other places, producing realities that denounce all the rest of reality as illusion, or generating spaces as perfect as imperfect is our petty and everyday reality (Foucault, 2013, p. 28).

When Foucault associates the body with the figure of the sovereign, in order to address the body as the zero point of the world, where paths and spaces intersect, it reminds us of the Nietzschean conception of willpower, a force that drives us to go beyond own limits (Nietzsche, 2009). How much can a force do? As the force becomes dominant, it opens us to new horizons, new passages, new paths, new *possibilities of life*.

This utopian body, establishing heterotopias from the will to power, was the point Francini Barros wanted to reach in the creation of her *Zoe*. We will see more in details below on the methodological path of this project and its micropolitical perspective.

IV

Next to the dancers, in the laboratories for *Zoe*'s scenic writing, the motives for the creation were established in the sense of providing the members, through the practical experiences of movement, with opportunities of sensible corporal experiences through the different senses that we have. It was sought to locate and identify becomings, pains, desires, sensations, mapping them in the body for the development of corporealities not committed to the stereotyped forms of movement, but rather to the flows of energy generated at different levels of intensity. The construction of the involved corporealities also happened from the use of techniques of dynamic meditation, the practice of yoga's *asanas*, of improvisation exercises in group, all with the intention to sharpen the perceptions and the micro perceptions.

Those images, movements, scattered elements were mapped from a cartography of desire. The choreographer and dance performance director, like an anthropophagus, tried to provide a language to affections that asked for passage, and devoured those that seemed to it possible elements for the cartography composition that became necessary (Rolnik, 2006, p. 23).

Picture 3 – *Zoe* Scene. Photo: Breno César.

In order to reach the core of the movement of bare and natural life throughout the process, five problematizations were presented that encouraged the dancers to become aware of the potentialities, not only aesthetic but also micropolitical, of the body. They were:

1. How deeply can we feel somebody else's pain, the other, the third person; in the case of art and life, the pain of any other? Do we distrust our ability to feel compassion?
2. Starting from an informal conversation about the supposed *purity* of children – would not evil be a dimension both implicit and explicit in humanity? Considering the history of the Coliseum, wars and other social atrocities, where would the cruelty come from: from a social and civilizing process or from our inner animal?
3. From the Eastern spiritualization processes that believe that from meditation and awareness, whose apex would be the enlightenment of being, as a way of transcending the beast, the animal instinct that exists in each one of us.
4. From the experience of motherhood, the instinct for the preservation of the species – how do we react to the image of the black child who sucks the withered breast of the skeletal mother? The certainty that the child is not healthy enough to cry. In her mother's eyes, the presentiment that the end is approaching.

5. On the ever-present question of Western philosophy, concerning the exchange or resignification of words. This body or that, with or without hyphen, flesh, corporealities etc., under the risk, or the evidence of never being as poetic or philosophically efficient as Guimarães Rosa, who invents words and meanings from the necessity of language. Of those who see through their own eyes and yet are seen.

In her cartography of desires, the choreographer was concerned to identify and erase, in the movements experienced by the dancers, the culture systems of submission, which, for Guattari and Rolnik (2013), influence us when we wonder, when we tell and love, what makes the word *culture* a trap that prevents us from thinking of processes as modes of singularization. Culture thus turns to reproduce the historical meanings that justify the censorship suffered by artistic processes that present themselves as modes of construction of sensibility and of creativity producing new subjectivities. By the way, it was precisely this type of culture that led the Apolo Theater managers to take preventive measures against the opening scene of the dance performance, the day after its premiere.

The emphasis on bare and natural life came to mean, in the practice of the construction of scenic language, an attempt to produce and articulate procedural singularities. Becomings, instincts, sensibilities not shaped by perception, different modes of relation, possible forms of world were recovered. In this writing of movements, the group sought to distance the dance from the current modes of culture through the introduction of other modes of semiotic production that present other forms of life without prior characterization, by an aesthetic and therefore ethical sensibility.

Admitting culture as the representative of the *bíos*, of the qualified life, it is subject to the moral judgment that frames the language in the sign and, in this, the adequacy between signifier and meaning. The choreographer's greatest care and effort in composing her scenic writing were not to allow rational work over language to overlap the potentiality of the experiences presented by the available bodies of the dancers. It would be to fall into the trap of culture, in which life is ruled by the empire of *bíos*.

Zoe's micropolitics has already begun to express singular desires and needs, even before being integrated into the systems of semiotization of the

bíos scene of the dance, through the valorization of our animal survival instincts, of the satiation of hunger, of the pleasure and reproduction instincts, the conquest of territory, the preservation of the species itself. From the laboratories with problematizations of the process, the relation of the performers among themselves and with the daily modes of production of the work began to change.

In Foucault's perspective (apud Deleuze, 2010, p. 127), the subjectivation does not consist of the determined forms of knowledge or the coercive rules of power; "These are facultative rules that produce existence as a work of art, at the same time ethical and aesthetic rules that constitute modes of existence or lifestyles." Considering this conception of subjectivity, the process of *Zoe*'s creation invested in new ways of existence, with an aesthetic and an ethics oriented to the natural and bare life.

It was in the process of singularization proposed in *Zoe*, in the plural subjectivities deriving from them and in its sharing with the public that the possible agencies located the micropolitical power of the work. For Guattari and Rolnik (2013, p. 38), "the guarantee of a procedural micropolitics can only – and must – be found at every step, from the assemblages that constitute it, in the invention of modes of reference, modes of praxis."

In *Zoe*'s final scene, the performers, naked and devoid of any other action than looking into the eyes of the spectators, showed that the scene did not deal with the sharing of their individualities, but rather with agencies that could be established from the subjectivities lived, which were only consumed there, in that space, by relation, in the register of the social (Picture 4).

V

In some instances, the ongoing censorship suffered by the micropolitically powerful artistic processes in the country today are part of the choir of the dominant subjectivity in revealing it. It is not necessarily a denouncing of the constitutive moral of the cultural sphere on the part of these works, but rather of the evidence of their unfoldings, which, from a micro sphere to a macropolitical one, multiply the power of the becoming which they announce. In the view of Guattari and Rolnik (2013), any macropolitical revolution precedes other productions of subjectivities.

That was the case, for instance, of the arrest of *Trupe Olho da Rua's* actor Caio Martinez Pacheco, who was performing the spectacle *Blitz - The Empire that Never Sleeps* in a square in Santos/Brazil. It portrayed the state power and of the national media (October 2016). This was the case of the Paraná state artist and performer Maikon Kempinski, known as Maikon K., who was arrested by the Federal District Military Police during the presentation of *DAN's DAN* performance (July 2017). The artist performed naked, inserted in a transparent plastic bubble, and before being released from the 5th Federal District Police Station the next day, he had to sign a detailed obscene report.

It was also the case of the closing of the exhibition *Queermuseu - cartographies of the difference in Brazilian art* by Santander Cultural, in Porto Alegre/Brazil, after the controversy that raged in the press and social networks (September 2017). The LGBT+ exhibition was accused of promoting blasphemy against religious symbols, as well as encouraging bestiality and pedophilia. In Rio de Janeiro, the exhibition would take place at the Art Museum of Rio de Janeiro - MAR, but it was censored by the mayor of the city, Marcelo Crivella.

That was also the case of the legal sanctions suffered by Wagner Schwartz from Rio de Janeiro, with his performance *La Bête*, presented by the Museum of Modern Art (MAM) of São Paulo at the Panorama Show of Brazilian Art, an interpretative reading of Lygia Clark's *Bicho* (September 2017). A fragment of the presentation in which a woman and her daughter child manipulated the naked artist was exposed on the internet in isolation, devoid of the context of performance, and the artist was stigmatized as a pedophile. The public in general, politicians, fundamentalist religious leaders, and right-wing extremist groups began their public attacks that turned the artist into a social monster.

Lastly, although the cases are not exhausted, the persecution and censorship in several Brazilian states suffered by the spectacle *The Gospel According to Jesus, Queen of Heaven*, by Natalia Mallo, with the transgender actress Renata Carvalho as a transgender Jesus (August 2017). The play had already been banned, by court order, from appearing at SESC Jundiaí in September 2017 and in Salvador, also by court order, in October of the same year. In May 2018, it was censored by the city of Rio de Janeiro and, in July 2018, banned from participating in the Garanhuns Winter Festival,

although the performance had been guaranteed by the initiative of artists from the State of Pernambuco (Siqueira, 2018).

All these cases reveal that the aesthetic and political power of the performances runs into a conservatism characteristic of a State with a colonial past, present today on the periphery of capitalism, with strong neoliberal orientations. The arguments used by interdicting bodies are usually moral (public morality). Of all the examples mentioned, the only one that was censored on public morality grounds, but not of a sexual nature, was that of *Trupe Olho da Rua*, which, by putting the Brazilian flag upside down, showed “disrespect for the social symbol” (Alves; Hernandez, 2016, n/p).

History, according to Foucault, surrounds us and delimits us; it does not say what we are, but what we are about to differ; it does not establish our identity, but dissipates it for the benefit of the other that we are (Deleuze, 2010, p. 119).

From the Deleuzian reading of Foucault comes the following consideration: to what extent are we condemned to face the power by submitting or seeking to stop it? To produce a fold in the relation of force upon itself would rather surpass this force, causing it to affect itself, not other forces. To double the force means to duplicate it, allowing us to resist or even remove from censorship, from the moral imposed upon us, by altering the coercive character of the rules presented, producing possible alternatives.

This is what happened to most of the artistic activities mentioned, including *Zoe*. Censorship, whether by legal deliberation or by state determinations, is constituted by force lines that provoke a fold in the censored artistic actions. All these works were, in one way or another, interdicted, but the act of censorship had an opposite effect to the intended one: there was a greater demand for these productions, immediately after they had been censored. The repercussion of these cases in the media not only strengthened the survival of these works, which remained active and present in places where they have not yet undergone some interdictor act, but above all favored the power of discourses generating new discussions, new thoughts, new ideas.

However, this does not allow us to recognize the harmful effects of misguided and extremist opinions emanating from social media by ignorant

and decontextualized people. In the case of Wagner Schwartz, for instance, socially transformed not into any criminal, but into a pedophile, a hideous crime, his personal life has turned into hell. Once having received more than 150 death threats, the artist had to sleep every day in a different place, for fear that his address would be located. In addition, he had to deny countless times to his family and friends those postings announcing that he would have had committed suicide or that he would have been killed, among other serious problems faced. No performance justifies the artist being transformed into a martyr.

With all this, we see that the concern is shifted from what we say or do to the way of existence that our actions imply and its micro and macropolitical consequences, causing censorship not to make work unfeasible, but paradoxically potentializing it as the generator of other lines and social, aesthetic and ethical agencies.

Picture 4 – Final scene of *Zoe*. Photo: Breno César.

From *Zoe*, the proposal for the constituted language was to split the words of dance to extract from them only other possible statements. From *Zoe's* critique, the production of folds allowed the spectacle to escape from the merely moral critical values of the event, based on its simplistic arguments, to extract from it visibilities and lines of escape for art in general and for *Zoe*, specifically.

Note

- ¹ “Guattari adds the suffix ‘istic’ to ‘capitalist’ because it seems necessary to create a term that can designate not only the societies qualified as capitalist, but also sectors of the so-called ‘Third World’ or ‘peripheral’ capitalism, as well as so-called socialist economies of the Eastern countries, which live in a kind of dependence and contradiction of capitalism. Such societies, according to Guattari, would function with the same politics of desire in the social field, in other words, with the same mode of production of subjectivity and relationship with the other ...’ (Guattari; Rolnik, 2013, p. 413).

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