



**Cosmopoetics of the
savage spectator**
*Cosmopoéticas do
espectador selvagem*



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Abstract: Based on the analysis of the cinematographic forms of reconstituting history in *Serras da desordem*, *Corumbiara* and *Taego Āwa*, I identify the importance of the figure of indigenous spectators for understanding the images that the films create and mobilize. I argue that the effective, virtual or spectral countershot of indigenous spectators constitutes a discursive device operating in the films and in the relationship they establish with the historical archive. The device of the savage spectator triggers what I call anarchival montage, disturbing the arrangement of the historical archive produced by the violence of genocide and insinuating possibilities of creating a common world.

Keywords: Film; history; indigenous genocides; archive; montage.

Resumo: Com base na análise das formas cinematográficas de reconstituição da história em *Serras da desordem*, *Corumbiara* e *Taego Āwa*, identifico a importância da figura dos espectadores indígenas para a compreensão das imagens que os filmes criam e mobilizam. Argumento que o contracampo efetivo, virtual ou espectral dos espectadores indígenas constitui uma figura discursiva operante nos filmes e nas relações que estabelecem com o arquivo da história. A figura do espectador selvagem desencadeia o que denomino montagem anarquívica, perturbando o ordenamento do arquivo histórico produzido pela violência do genocídio e insinuando possibilidades de criação de um mundo comum.

Palavras-chave: cinema; história; genocídios indígenas; arquivo; montagem.

One of the recurring motifs of the latest cinematic approaches to the history of indigenous people in Brazil are the *indigenous spectators*. Before images that participate in a diversified multimedia archive, constituted along the processes of contact with the whites, indigenous spectators meet with traces of the histories of their peoples and the world, and the effects of this image-mediated encounter radiate over those images and over the possibilities of montage that articulate them in different films. In this article, I discuss how the films *Serras da desordem* (2006), by Andrea Tonacci, *Corumbiara* (2009), by Vincent Carelli, and *Taego Áwa* (2015), by Henrique and Marcela Borela address different historical experiences of indigenous genocides. In these films, the daily lives of different peoples and the evidences, remains and senses of human rights violations and ongoing genocides emerge from procedures of direct record, (re) enactment and fabulation, as well as of resumption, appropriation and displacement of images, which should be understood vis-a-vis the appearance of indigenous spectators and the way white filmmakers take part in this *spectatorial scene* and the sharing of the acts of looking and listening that it makes possible².

Considering that the figure of indigenous spectators operates as a structural instance of mediation between the perspectives of reconstitution of history mobilized by each work, I argue that this mediation operation converts them into a rhetorical figure, which projects their discursive ambivalence on the films: the *savage spectator*. Through the inscription of the figure of indigenous spectators in filmic images, as an effective reverse shot or countershot of other images, and through its denegation to the off-screen, as a virtual countershot of all the images, the figure of the savage spectator disturbs the order of discourse insinuated by the montage of each film, transforms its relations with the historical archive, with the remaining images, which become objects of an *anarchival montage* and the bricolage that defines it, and with the missing images, which make claim to a spectral countershot, inasmuch as they conjure up the ghosts of the missing. What is insinuated between the appearance of *indigenous spectators* in the *spectatorial scene*, of sharing the acts of looking and listening in front of the *archive of history*, and the emergence of the *savage spectator* in the *cinematic*

² This article is one of the results of the research project “Image and human rights,” developed and coordinated by me at Faculty of Communication, Universidade Federal da Bahia (UFBA) (2017-2019), and of previous studies that I carried out in a post-graduate internship in the Graduate Program in Languages and Linguistics at Universidade Federal de Goiás (2016-2017). The ideas contained therein were presented and discussed on different occasions: at the I Intermídia Conference/II Encontro Cinemídia (UFSCar, São Carlos, 2016); at the 1st Photography Colloquium of Bahia (Goethe-Institut, Salvador, 2017), which published an initial version of the text in its annals; in activities promoted by the research groups Projeto Núcleo de Estudos da Crítica (Institute of Letters – UFBA, Salvador, 2018) and Archeology of the Sensible (Faculty of Communication, UFBA, Salvador, 2019). I thank each participant of said events for their attentive listening, criticism and suggestions.

discourse of anarchival montage are the *cosmopoetics of the savage spectator*: the forms of invention (*poiesis*) of the world as a common world (*cosmos*), associated with the historical experience of intercultural contact, untranslatability and opacity.

Forms of hospitality, weavings of time

One of the most complex moments of the temporal weaving of *Serras da desordem* is that in which we witness the reunion between Carapiru and a group of peasants who welcomed him in the past, mediated by photographs of the interaction that brought them together in the late 1980s. The first part of the film was dedicated to the presentation of Carapiru, still as an unnamed character, and a reconstitution of his history through flashback sequences, without explicit dates, through the enactment of life with other isolated Indians, the massacre of his group, attacked by farmers, and his survival. In general, the Awá-Guajá Indian, who escaped from a massacre by farmers in the interior of Maranhão in 1977, had his first encounter with peasants in the interior of Bahia in 1988, after escaping the slaughter and going through a long lonely wandering (TONACCI, 2008, p. 107).

The reconstruction of the past through enactment comes to an end at the moment of the first meeting between Carapiru and the group of peasants, which will become the reunion mediated by photographs. In the film, the enactment recalls the violence of contact, especially through the expectation suggested by percussive music, and ends with the welcoming of Carapiru and with an ambivalent expression of hospitality: his nakedness is covered by the clothes he gets from the peasants. When the black and white images that shelter the enactment of the first meeting with the peasants give way to the colored images that register the reunion, we see Carapiru and the peasants hugging and talking to each other, despite the linguistic incommunicability that separates them. In the absence of a common language, it is gestures and facial expressions, in the midst of the music of the voices, that make some communication possible, even if precarious, and the photographic images visually condense the remembrance of the encounter and conviviality: a woman, who sits next to Carapiru, brings pictures of when they were together, in the past.

Between the linguistic incommunicability, the precarious communicability of the bodies and the inscription of time in the photographs, the spectatorial scene of the shared act of looking unfolds the multiplicity of times that are interwoven in the plot. At that moment, *Serras da desordem* reveals its game, the terms of its poetics and the conditions of its aesthetics, implying the different times of its narrative in a constellation of perspectives and sensibilities. In addition to making it possible to

reconstruct a narrative that involves the chain of events – broadly speaking: the massacre, the escape, the survival, Carapiru’s encounter with the peasants and the series of encounters that follow, with government agents and anthropologists, with other Indians, with his son (who we will discover to have been the other survivor of the same massacre) and with filmmaker Andrea Tonacci and his team – the film intertwines, merges and confuses the times of events in its own weaving.

The time of the massacre and Carapiru’s survival haunts his reunion with the peasants as an unavoidable memory. The initial encounter and the relationship that followed it now appear in the form of photographs, while the reunion is inscribed in the present of the filming. Carapiru and the peasants become spectators of the photos – which are evidence of the hospitality he was welcomed with in the past – in front of the camera that records the reunion and the recollections that it unleashes, and the film invites its spectator to join them. To understand what is at stake in this invitation, it will be necessary to recognize and question the meaning of the act of seeing together and the effects of the possibility of being with indigenous spectators before the images and the world, before the archive of history, for white filmmakers and the spectators supposed by their films.

Temporalities of the image, configurations of the common

In the 1970s and 1980s, the diffusion of the first handset video equipment for household use increased the possibilities of seeing and hearing together, specifically in indigenous contexts. One of the most important technical characteristics of video technologies, in this sense, is the abbreviation of the necessary time interval between the moments of capturing and of viewing images (up to the extreme of live broadcast and closed-circuit transmissions). This reduction in the time needed to be able to see and hear recorded images made it easier, especially since the emergence of VHS, what was already consolidating itself as one of the most important practices of visual anthropology, engaged documentary and community video: the restitution of images to the represented subjects.

In indigenous contexts, this diffusion of the act of seeing and hearing together, which results from the greater ease of restituting images after the advent of video, triggers two fundamental effects. On the one hand, the demand for the restitution of images extends to the material that constitutes the heterogeneous archive of the history of colonial domination of indigenous peoples. On the other hand, contact with the images unfolds in the claim that the indigenous people themselves become creators and subjects of representation, in addition to being represented

(that is, objects of representation, according to the colonial structure) and spectators (following the restitution of images). Amid the resonances of these effects, the emergence of indigenous cinemas is anticipated, but their reverberations are paradigmatically inscribed on the lineage of what Clarisse Alvarenga (2017) calls “contact films.”

It is in this context that we should understand the emergence of projects like *Video in the Villages* (*Vídeo nas Aldeias*), founded by the indigenist and documentary filmmaker Vincent Carelli in 1986, as he resumed an idea of the director of *Serras da desordem*: “As early as in the 1970s,” writes Carelli (2011, p. 46), “filmmaker Andrea Tonacci sought CTI [Indigenous Work Center, a NGO where Carelli worked], with the ‘Inter Peoples’ proposal, an intertribal communication project through video.” Referring to the footage among the Nambiquara that would result in the film *A festa da moça* (1987), Carelli (2011, p. 46) emphasizes one of the consequences of the temporality of this media: “The interesting thing about the video was the possibility of showing immediately what was being filmed and allowing the image to be appropriated by the Indians.”

Among the Nambikwara, the act of seeing and hearing together triggers a restless desire and an intense process of retrieval and reinvention of indigenous identity:

after several performances to adjust their image, they decided to perform the nose and lip piercing ceremony, a practice abandoned more than twenty years ago. It was a cathartic experience, far beyond initial expectations, that demonstrated the power of the tool and the apparatus. (CARELLI, 2011, p. 46)

This inaugural experience establishes “a routine of recording and screening that would become the central methodology of the project: the immediate feedback from shooting and the self-reflection on the images of themselves, that would accompany all subsequent productions” (MARIN; MORGADO, 2016, p. 91).

In the contact between whites and indigenous people that marks films such as *Serras da desordem* and projects like *Video in the Villages*, the act of getting together to see and listen to the images does not entail the production of a sense of “we” in the spectatorial scene, but opens up a space for the articulation of different configurations of the common. If, generally, as Jean Toussaint Desanti³ claims (2003, p. 31), “‘seeing together’ consists of introducing oneself, more often through speech, sometimes by simple gesture, sometimes by simple ‘common look’ (without saying anything), in a space that is always in the process of constitution,” in contact

³ I thank Henrique Codato for indicating Desanti, in another context of debate.

films and in the intercultural relations that constitute them, the act of seeing and listening to images of themselves and the world, shared by subjects from different cultures in the process of making the films, and by spectators, in the process of their dissemination, must be understood in relation to different levels of relevance, associated with forms of belonging that configure different experiences of the common, without full convergence, without a definitive sense of “we.”

First, it is necessary to circumscribe the common of indigenous recognition, which is related to the construction, attribution and claim of singular indigenous identities. Here, the figure of indigenous spectators appears before fixed and moving images that represent, in some way, their own image, restituting it to them while it is re-invented as the image of a collectivity, a community. Seeing together is to see oneself with oneself and with one’s own people, as if before a mirror; listening together means listening to oneself among the voices of one’s own people, the sounds of bodies, environments and inhabited landscapes, the music of performed rites. The indigenous spectators become subjects of themselves, so to speak, claiming social and historical agency, inasmuch as together they see and hear their images, whether these are made by others or by themselves.

Indeed, the Video in the Villages productions and similar initiatives find their momentum in the positioning of indigenous spectators as spectators of their own images, but the movement that unfolds from this momentum demands their recognition as spectators of the world. In this sense, it is necessary to circumscribe the common of historical belonging to the same era, which is related to a supplementary movement of identity inscription (the common of indigenous recognition and the “appropriation of the image by the Indians” as “self-reflection on the images of themselves”) in a web of differences (the common of historical belonging). What is at stake in this other configuration of the common is the differential process of the appearance of indigenous communities in the midst of other communities, with whom they share, however, an epoch. Here, the indigenous spectator appears as a spectator of the world, that is, of fixed and moving images that represent the intermediate space for the cohabitation of communities and alterities. Seeing together is to see oneself with others and to see the immeasurability of others; listening together is to listen to oneself among voices in foreign languages, noises from other places, music from other rites.

The relationship between the act of seeing and listening together as the basis of common experience associated with the recognition of indigenous identity, on the one hand, and as a foundation of common experience associated with historical belonging

to the same epoch, on the other, is a dialectic relationship, and the two meanings of the act coexist and compete, alternating in their predominance, in each case, each image, each montage. Between the temporalities of the image and the configurations of the common, the always partial sharing of the acts of looking and listening reaches its most profound effects when it displaces the established perspectives and disturbs the dominant orders. When it triggers the reinvention of indigenous identity, among the Nambiquara, for example, the experience of becoming spectators of themselves leads the Indians to a shift in their collective perspective about the practices that define their identity, disturbing the then dominant trend, of abandoning the practice of piercing nose and lips. When the recognition of historical belonging to the same period is triggered, and indigenous spectators become spectators of the world, what is at stake is the possibility of displacing prospects for the reconstitution of history, in the past, and for the reconstruction of existence, in the future. In this game, each spectator is invited to participate in an open configuration of the common, irreducible to cultural identity and epochal belonging, which insinuates a common world yet to be invented and, like any work of art, according to Gilles Deleuze (2006, p. 324), calls on “a people who does not yet exist.”

Potentialities of lack, opacities of history

Any attempt to reconstruct the history of the oppressed, “to brush history against the grain,” as Walter Benjamin writes (1968, p. 257), remains haunted by missing images. When Tonacci reconstitutes, in *Serras da desordem*, the journey of Carapiru after the massacre that separated him from his Awá-Guajá ethnic group in the late 1970s, the filmmaker addresses the Indian’s survival through images that fill the gaps, without, however, completing them. These supplementary images result, in Tonacci’s film, from three fundamental procedures – enactment, appropriation of archival images, and direct record – whose effects of meaning are distributed between the past and the present in an unstable and eventually undecidable way.

In the plot, enactment predominates in the opening part of the narrative, which reconstitutes successively the moments prior to the attack, the massacre itself, the capture of one of the indigenous children, and Carapiru’s escape and solitary survival. The enactment establishes a regime of fictional fabulation and creates a sense of diegetic closure, converting images filmed in the present (filming began in 2001) into representations of the past (enacted events took place in and after the end of the 1970s). Some traces of the present remain visible, however, preventing the closure of the diegesis in the enacted past: looks towards the camera, which recall the

presence of the apparatus in front of the filmed people; small parallel gestures, which confuse the fictional intentionality of the fabulation through the hint of fragments of space and time that escape it; dissenting smiles and postures, which interrupt the dramatic sense that dominates the enactment.

In its singularity, the massacre of Carapiru's group and his trajectory as an isolated survivor, which would remain unimaginable without the supplement of enactment, are part of a broader historical process, which the montage of *Serras da desordem* seeks to condense, after the initial sequence where the fictional regime of fabulation predominates, through the disjunctive and discontinuous articulation of archival images taken from films and video recordings, to the sound of songs that encode some of the discourses and meanings of the construction of the Brazilian national identity. In part, this "inventory of images that forged the identity (or identities) of the country," as Luís Alberto Rocha Melo writes (2008, p. 34), brings together "cliché images that condense an era," as argued by Ismail Xavier (2008, p. 14): on their surfaces, the archival images make visible traces of a persistent national narrative, which goes back to the articulation of Brazilian identity during the period of military governments (1964-1985), and operate the contextualization of the diegetic time of the events, which were narrated by the images of the enacted massacre, before the emergence of archival imagery.

As the archival images represent visible aspects of the expansion process of the so-called national society during the military governments, the montage seems to aspire to the proposition of a critical interpretation of its content. Thus, the relationship that is established with the images of the enactment of the massacre is not only that of contextualizing their diegetic time, by recalling some of their most common clichés and the visible saturation that characterizes them. The montage that articulates archival images disturbs the clichés of the time, displacing their usual senses, both in their relationship with each other (in an axis of thematic and conceptual associations that juxtaposes, with density and irony, signs of the expansion of the agricultural frontier, glimpses of the political history of the national state, symbols of national identity, among other cinema and video images) and in their relationship with the images recorded in the present, between the enactment and direct recording (on an axis that inscribes the meanings of the archive in the displacement that destabilizes them in the present).

If *Serras da desordem* results from the search for images that supplement the missing images from the history of Carapiru and of the ongoing indigenous genocides in Brazil, the choice not to translate his recorded statements – and, therefore, not to

explore their possible meanings, as well as what he might have to say, perhaps, if he were prompted to do so – highlights one of the limits of this search, the constitutive opacity that delimits its effects. The opacity of Carapiru and his speeches reproduces, in the plot of *Serras da desordem*, a limitation of the film’s mode of production and the associated process of narrative construction. Tonacci recognizes this limitation when he states, in an interview (2008, p. 117), that there was no discussion of the script with Carapiru, and the Indian did not take part in the construction of the narrative, “he only told the things that happened to him” and dedicated himself to filming, having been “the source and the actor” of the plot (TONACCI, 2008, p. 120).

The choice not to translate Carapiru highlights the constitutive opacity of the film’s way of looking and is consistent with the investment of *Serras da desordem* in the radical otherness that it attributes to indigenous subjects, condensed in the phrase of indigenist Sydney Possuelo that haunts Tonacci’s film: “the Indian is another humanity.” The film draws its momentum from the limitations to which this sense of radical otherness is related, using the lack – of images, which the film partially supplements, but also of language and communicability, which the film does not directly confront, but intensifies – as fuel for its interrogation of history.

As a spectator of himself and his own people, Carapiru remains opaque, and the film amplifies and displaces this opacity by representing him as a spectator of the world, while walking through Brasília and, compellingly, when watching television at Possuelo’s house. Faced with images of the world, the reverse shot of Carapiru’s face is disturbing, and its opacity becomes an opening. The game of temporal weaving that intertwines past and present is articulated with Carapiru’s inscription as “another humanity”: in the constellation of perspectives and sensibilities that the film mobilizes, he condenses the opacity of untranslated speech and the revealing potentiality of what remains outside discourse, untranslatable to the extent of its *savagery*. Carapiru emerges as paradigmatic instance of the *savage spectator*, because his countershot is irreducible to the order of film narrative, whose montage it propels. The savage spectator is an ambivalent form of mediation, which is inassimilable to the archive of history, anarchic in the face of the ordering of world elements that defines cinema as a document, introducing in the film an inventive opening before which Tonacci recognizes he must stop, as if he were facing an abyss that, however, his film makes it possible to imagine and re-imagine, endlessly. His revealing opacity condenses the unimaginable as an experience of the potentiality of images, inside out.

Anarchival montage, political ontology

In the most recent cinematographic approaches, the figure of indigenous spectators can be defined as the reverse shot or countershot of the images that archive history. Sometimes, as in the initial sequence of *Corumbiara* (2009), which recapitulates the beginning of the Video in the Villages project, indigenous faces follow the images that occupy the screens of television sets, inscribing (within the shot) or concatenating (through montage) shot and countershot. However, the countershot condition of the figure of indigenous spectators unfolds in a metaphorical sense, defining a formal principle of both the cinematographic poetics and the construction processes of the films: the indigenous faces operate, in this sense, as a virtual countershot of all images, even if they do not appear as an effective countershot in the montage or framing.

As a virtual countershot, the figure of the indigenous spectators shifts the perspectives of relationship to the historical archive of their peoples and the time we share. In *Serras da desordem*, effectively, Carapiru, as metonymy of the indigenous countershot, instigates the film's forms of montage, its interrogative tension and projective destabilization of the historical archive. In addition to the enactment that supplements the unimaginable massacre and genocide with invented images, the film explores forms of what I have been calling *anarchival montage*⁴, reinventing the existing images of history, unsettling the principle of organization that archives them (that assimilates them into the national narrative), seeking to shift their senses and rip the veil of opacity they extend over the history of the indigenous genocide. In short, *Serras da desordem* articulates enactment and montage to supplement the missing images of the indigenous genocide with invented images, which make imaginable what would have remained unimaginable, and reinvented images, which disturb the legacy of the constitutive opacity of the Brazilian national community in the face of indigenous peoples.

The production of the opacity of national imagination in relation to indigenous peoples constitutes a performative process that operates through the daily updating and reiteration of a foundational violence. The making of the unimaginable articulates genocide and its forgetting, the massacres and the destruction of its tracks, traces and evidences. In this sense, *Corumbiara* (2009) constitutes a counter-narrative of the Brazilian national identity and stems from the search

⁴ For an initial discussion of the conceptual field around the notion of anarchival, see Ribeiro (2019, p. 135-177).

for the missing images of the massacre of isolated Indians that took place in the homonymous homestead, located in Rondônia, which was denounced by the indigenist Marcelo Santos in 1985. The gathering of evidences of the massacre and, above all, of the survival of isolated Indians in the region is critical to the fulfillment of legal protection claims, which would prevent the continuation of genocidal acts. In the next decade, what Vincent Carelli called “impasse of the hole Indian” is at the center of one of the most complex moments of the counter-narrative of *Corumbiara*, leading the search for missing images to its limit.

In the film, we see and listen to part of the conversation between Vincent Carelli and Marcelo Santos, in 2006, and we watch the attempt to contact the “hole Indian,” which occurred in the previous decade. His refusal of contact is evident, intentional and undeniable, while the search for video images of the existence of the Indian requires that Vincent, Marcelo and the indigenist Altair Algayer (“the German”) continue to insist, since, as Vincent’s voiceover says: “the Indian will only legally exist if we get an image of him.” The attempt to register images of his existence operates as a way of inscribing the “hole Indian” in the Brazilian national narrative, as updated by the State’s legal apparatus, and depends on an active disrespect for his refusal of contact. The paradox deepens when the Indian tries to attack Vincent. “He only tried to strike me because of the camera,” says Carelli, who, shortly afterwards, observes the irony: “it is the camera that made him exist before Justice.”

The relationships between the video image and what it represents is invested here with the indexical sense that defines the ontology of the photographic image (BAZIN, 2005), understood as one of the technical foundations and as one of the matricial components of film and video, allowing the recording to operate as proof of the existence of its referents (DUBOIS, 1990). At the same time, in other moments of *Corumbiara*, the reconstitution of the conflicting conditions under which isolated Indians are contacted involves the use of photographic and videographic images, whose indexical relationship to their referents is distorted and diluted due to the recognition of their situation of production and appearance, on the one hand, and its modes of exposure and circulation, on the other. The images of the first contact with the Kanoê – whose production followed the ethical respect for the Indians’ decision to make contact, according to the deliberation of Vincent, Marcelo, Altair and two journalists who accompanied them – later circulate in the television show *Fantástico* and in newspapers – where they are exposed in an exoticizing fashion. The indexical sense seems to prevail: “In view of the images, proof of the existence of the Indians [...],” says Vincent’s voiceover,

“the Federal Court decrees the interdiction of the area.” However, a war of images unfolds, based on the exploration of the indexical relationship between image and referent and in the manipulation of the mode of appearance (in direct record) and exposure (in the montage) of the Indians as photographed subjects. Vincent continues:

The farmers, with their lawyers and deputies, set up a real operation to sell the version of the “Indians planted by Marcelo.” A former Funai employee and three Cinta Larga Indians go to the village, meet the Indian and her mother. They dress them both, pose for the picture that would be proof of the farce. The newspaper *O Estado de São Paulo*, which had secured the scoop of the first contact, publishes the farmers’ version, and never granted us the right to answer.

The association between the maintenance of the ontological investment in the indexical relationship between image and referent and the interventions on the appearance of the represented subjects and on the exposure of their images that circulate in the news media requires the recognition that the indexical relationship appears within a relational situation that surpasses it, and the images are exposed in contexts of circulation that re-signify them. In addition to the indexical ontology of images (which can be distorted), it is necessary to recognize what Ariella Azoulay has been describing, based on the study of photography, as its political ontology: “the ontology of being-together, of an encounter, whose traces the photograph [and, by extension, every image based on the indexical matrix] bears and renders present” (2012, p. 119), in the “civil political space” (2008, p. 12) that is configured between the people and instances involved in the recording act: the apparatus, the person who triggers it, the recorded subjects, the image and the spectators.

When he remounts the images that he himself produced and the interventions to which they and the people represented in them were subjected to in the images promoted by the farmers, Carelli reveals the disputed character of the archive. For the filmmaker’s images to radiate their potentiality for disturbance and thus be able to operate as evidences of the indigenous presence in the disputed area, in the municipality of Corumbiara, it is not enough that they appear as indexes, based on the ethical respect for the indigenous people represented in it; its exhibition and, therefore, its montage, needs to be carried out in tension with its archival capture. *Corumbiara* needs to withdraw them actively from this archival capture, which favors the reproduction of the farmers’ version, restituting to the images which Vincent recorded, by means of the anarchival montage that articulates them into the film, not only the forcefulness of its indexical sense (according to the photo-ontological

matrix to which video is indebted), but also its situational pertinence (according to the “civil contract,” which in Azoulay’s terms is the political link that every image establishes between the subjects involved in its production and in its circulation) and its potentiality for disturbing the archive.

Corumbiara’s anarchival montage, which reveals the overflow of the index by situation (in the context of appearance of the image) and by montage (in the context of exposure of the image), leads, however, to a paradox that corresponds to the very limit of the political link that is at stake in images of contact, in general, and in images produced in situations of refused contact, in particular. This is the place that the “impasse of the hole Indian” occupies in the film’s plot: the refusal of contact, in the situation and time of filming, still in the 1990s, defines and limits the scope of the act of looking, converting the attempt to build a political link into violence, while the mode of exposure and montage of images of the “hole Indian” in the film seeks to interrogate the violence that produced them.

This impasse stems from the structural blindness of any foreign gaze to indigenous experience. The refusal of contact inscribes the opacity of indigenous history to the established perspective of national history in the form of a dispute over visibility itself: the “hole Indian” refuses visibility and claims what can be recognized as a fundamental right of isolated Indians, in general, and also potentially of any indigenous subject: the right to opacity, invisibility and non-participation in the national narrative. Although legally impossible, unrecognizable and unthinkable from the perspective of the State, this right finds a civil and political space of relevance that *Corumbiara* is able to circumscribe only insofar as it defines it negatively, as a kernel of opacity that digs holes into the archive of history, whose gaps include, in addition to the images that are lacking as a result of the making of the unimaginable carried out through genocidal acts and the erasure of their tracks, the images that are lacking as a result of the eventual indigenous refusal.

If, generally speaking, the virtual countershot of indigenous spectators displaces the meanings of existing images and reinvents them, by means of anarchival montage procedures, the paradoxical countershot of the “hole Indian” seems to claim the end of every archive and of the very possibility of archiving history, recalling that, as Benjamin writes (1968, p. 256), “There is no document of civilization which is not at the same time a document of barbarism.” The “hole Indian” consists of one instance of the Indian as “another humanity” in *Corumbiara*, like Carapiru in *Serras da desordem*, and its revealing opacity retains a cosmopoetic potentiality. In disturbing the transparent organization of the archive (in which the legal claim based on the

images captured by Vincent remains captured), the “hole Indian” hints at the savage and abysmal experience of creating other worlds. Faced with the abyss that opens a hole into filmic discourse and remains impossible to grasp, Vincent stops filming, and all that is left for us do is to imagine and re-imagine the otherness that escapes.

Ontology of ghosts, spectral countershot

In recent films about the history of indigenous peoples and the genocidal acts perpetrated in Brazil against them, the ontology of the photographic image and the images derived from its indexical matrix, such as film and video, is inseparable from a phantasmagoric relationship with the missing and the absent, which Derrida (2006) might lead us to understand as part of what he called *hauntology*. The ontology of ghosts supplements in the films the ontology of the indexical relationship, which unfolds on two levels: on the one hand, in their relationship with reality, the photographic, cinematographic and videographic images mobilized by the films constitute indexes of what they represent; on the other, in their relationship with other images that make up the historical archive, the images of the films are instances of what Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin (2000, p. 45) called “remediation,” defined as “the representation of one medium in another.”

The establishment of relationships between images from different media allows filmmakers like Tonacci and Carelli to investigate the history of the genocide of indigenous societies, which leads them to developing procedures for appropriating and reframing previously existing images. Thus, remediation defines a crucial part of the ontological relationship of films with reality and the world, in addition to the realism attributed to photography, film and video as representational media. To the representation of reality is added the representation of images from other media. It is significant that the images that trigger the making of *Taego ãwa* also operate in this double register, within the plot of Henrique and Marcela Borela’s film: they are both concrete images restituted to the ãwa (Ava-canoeiro) from Araguaia and images shared with the film spectator by means of several remediation movements.

In addition to photographs and documents, the restituted archive includes video records saved on VHS tapes. The making of the film will expand the archive with the addition of other photographic images, as well as newspaper and journal articles, aimed at enabling an approach to the history of the ãwa from Araguaia, from the violence of the first contact in 1973 to the claim for land demarcation, which remained open when the film was released, in 2015. Thus, amidst the records that anchor the

exhibition of the history of the *Ãwa*, as it is reconstituted based on indigenous voices, the film inserts archival images, through an anarchival montage that intensifies up to effectively inscribing the images in a shot-countershot relationship with the indigenous gaze. At this point in the film, *Ãwa* spectators watch a screening, and what is revealed as its content is a sequence that gathers images of political and religious authorities interspersed with images of Indians taken from Western movies, under a soundtrack of noises and music that refers to the genre, known for its relations with the genocidal violence of colonial expansion over indigenous peoples.

The anarchival montage of the Western sequence in *Taego Ãwa* must be understood vis-a-vis the problem of the relationship between indexical ontology, political ontology and the ontology of ghosts. In fact, the indexical-ontological relationship with reality partially explains the importance of photography and the devices for producing technical images that derive from the photographic apparatus, such as film and video, for denouncement of and for the work of memory around genocides, crimes against humanity and other types of human rights violations that pervade the history of indigenous peoples. It is by proving the existence of evidences of violations of rights that, in different contexts, photographic, cinematographic and videographic images can operate as part of processes of claiming rights, such as the original territorial rights of indigenous peoples, that the 1988 Constitution seeks to ensure. At the same time, as the Western sequence shows, in view of the missing images of the dead and the absent, that is, given the impossibility of the index, the reinvention of images by anarchival montage seeks to make it possible to imagine the unimaginable, to render into images what would have remained forgotten. The political ontology that supplements the indexical ontology of images depends on the conjuration of the ghosts of the missing, which operates as a spectral countershot.

If Carapiru, as a survivor of a massacre, whose voice remains inaccessible, since it is not translated, represents the revealing opacity that operates at the heart of *Serras da desordem* and its relationship with the archive of history; if the “hole Indian,” with its refusal of the order of visibility in which the claim of indigenous rights can be anchored, represents the revealing opacity that haunts *Corumbiara* and marks the limit of every archive; if, in short, the figure of the savage spectator instigates the anarchival montage of existing images, the assassinated *Ãwa* Indians to whom the Western sequence of *Taego Ãwa* refers delimit the blur of unimaginable that remains beyond the very opacity of survivors, the impossible countershot that no translation would be able to make accessible and which, nevertheless, haunts the film experience. In *Corumbiara*, the virtual countershot to which belongs the figure of indigenous

spectators interpellates each spectator from the limit demarcated by the refusal of the “hole Indian,” while the dead at the massacre of the Corumbiara homestead belong to the spectral countershot to which Carelli’s narration and the filmic plot he composes seek to do justice. In *Taego Āwa*, the virtual countershot of the indigenous gaze gives shelter and momentum, at the same time, to the anarchival montage that allows us to imagine, with the remaining images, the meaning of the missing images, which are, however, invisible, bound to the spectral countershot of the missing.

Savage anarcheology, cosmopoetic potentiality

The effective, virtual or spectral countershot of indigenous spectators can be conceived as the origin of an outbreak of “savage thought,” as recognized by Claude Lévi-Strauss (1966, p. 220), before the images from the multimedia archive that the films retrieve. Indigenous spectators continue to operate as a figure of otherness and do not become, in any of the films, subjects of representation, remaining framed as represented subjects who, at the same time, affect the subjects of representation, the white filmmakers who are the directors. Given the images of history, the films propose a “science of the concrete” which acts, as Lévi-Strauss (1966, p. 16) writes, “from the starting point of a speculative organization and exploitation of the sensible world in sensible terms.” Anarchival montage is, in this sense, a form of bricolage:

an activity which on the technical plane gives us quite a good understanding of what a science we prefer to call ‘prior’ rather than ‘primitive’, could have been on the plane of speculation. This is what is commonly called ‘bricolage’ in French. [...] The characteristic feature of mythical thought is that it expresses itself by means of a heterogeneous repertoire which, even if extensive, is nevertheless limited. It has to use this repertoire, however, whatever the task in hand because it has nothing else at its disposal. Mythical thought is therefore a kind of intellectual ‘bricolage’ – which explains the relation which can be perceived between the two. (LÉVI-STRAUSS, 1966, p. 16–17)

Just like the *bricoleur* facing the objects at hand, what defines the first movement of the films analyzed before the remaining images is their retrospective character. Where the *bricoleur*, as Lévi-Strauss (1966, p. 18) writes, “has to turn back to an already existent set made up of tools and materials,” the anarchival montage turns to a previously existing set of images, which are seen and listened to together with indigenous spectators, in the spectatorial scene of sharing of the acts of looking at and listening to the historical archive. If the *bricoleur* should, in view of an already

existent set at his disposal, “consider or reconsider what it contains and, finally and above all, [...] engage in a sort of dialogue with it and, before choosing between them, to index the possible answers which the whole set can offer to his problem” (LÉVI-STRAUSS, 1966, p. 18), the anarchival montage considers and reconsiders the images that remain, in dialogue with them, with the violence that founds them and with the survivals that find shelter in them, to find the possible answers that these images suggest for the problem of rewriting history against the grain.

The rhetorical figure of the savage spectator triggers anarchival montage as the foundation of a heterogeneous cinematic discourse, which *Serras da desordem*, *Corumbiara* and *Taego Āwa* develop in order to displace the perspectives of reconstituting history in the past, and reconstructing existence in times to come, addressing the abysmal unpredictability of the future. This discourse does not belong, at least not necessarily, to the effective indigenous spectators we find in the films and who, somewhere, may have found or will come to find the images, but to the diffuse figure of the savage spectator, a fiction of contact, which haunts them with its disturbing gaze, capable of looking with different eyes, with its inconceivable listening, capable of cracking languages, recognizing voices and songs, backing up noises. The savage spectator is a fiction of contact, and the restless relationship that it unleashes between and with the images, in the films discussed, is an open, inventive relationship. The fiction of the savage spectator and the revealing opacity that characterizes it condense a cosmopoetic potentiality, insinuating, by means of the disturbance and disorder that constitute any invention (the *poiesis* of anarchival montage), ways of creating a common world (the *cosmos* as sharing), which will have remained unimaginable amidst genocide.

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