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INTERVIEW HELD ON NOVEMBER 27, 2018

Marcelo Tramontano Igor, I would like us to start by talking from an etymological point of view about the words to participate and to collaborate. When we chose the theme for this edition of V! RUS, we gave a lot of emphasis to the "+" that unites them, and which indicates everything that may be able to connect these concepts. I would like to know your view.

Igor Guatelli These concepts "participate", "collaborate" and the "+" sign suggest that, at first, there is a disassembly so that there can be an assembly. Its outcome interests me because the disjunction of the word was something much explored by the philosophy with which I work. The work of Jacques Derrida, above all, has developed around this disjunction, this disassembly and assembly, this production of gaps, and, at the same time, the possibility of a spacing as re-signification, as a field of assembly that extrapolate the conventional meaning of terms.

By such a strategy, which constitutes a manipulation not only etymological but also topological of the words, this spacing simultaneously distances and approaches the terms. When it pushes them away, it dismembers the words, initiating the construction of new semantic neighborhoods. This strategy is a very fertile field for us to begin to think beyond the more conventional meanings and senses, the so-called common sense. And these two words that you suggest - participate and collaborate - dismembered, at first, and put together starting by the insertion of the addition, put me in a rather interesting field that maybe is the work of the bond.

We can think of how this bond can arise from a desarticulation of what looks like one, which seems to have a limited sense, a conclusion, somehow constituting a truth. We can take this thought to the field of architecture and the city. We can discuss, within our expertise, those truths that seem to remain, historically, related to the city and the field of architecture, seeming to be characteristic of one and the other. At the moment this disassembly occurs, there is the possibility of a rather large weaving beyond what we take as something beforehand, as an already placed truth, often exempting us from thinking.

It is as if, in this process of acceptance of the terms attached to the majoritarian and dominant meaning, we were free to not think, given the stability of the concept itself and its meaning. The moment you dismember it and suggest an etymological deepening, a study of the disconnected words there, each one constructs its own field of significances and significations. I have the impression that by adding the addition sign, it becomes possible not only a remembrance of the word itself but a possibility of semantic adhesions and meanings arising from that disassembly.

If taken to architecture, to the city, the urban, what this work of dissection, dismemberment, disarticulation, aiming at the enrichment of what seems to be already given, solidified, stabilized in an understanding and an comprehension would mean, and where and how, many times, do we construct our knowledge and interpretations of the world without wondering about possibilities still unexplored in relation to this least element? I could call the word a minimum element. What we would still explore as a potentiality of meaning, Derrida called polysemy, a polysemous game in relation to what is already given to us as truth.

Thus, this "+" sign appears, to me, as an addition. It is not only an attempt to assemble the word itself, these fragments that emerge, but an addition of all the new possible meanings that come together in this process of assembly. Getting a little closer to [Gilles] Deleuze, I would say that there may be, at first, a cut of a flow. A flow that is already given in the meaning of the term, of almost naturalized understanding by the word - that word that brings its truth, its signification. This cut in the flow given by the dismemberment can mean new fruition when working with possible assembly: new semantic and meaningful fruition. This cut in - and of - the naturalized flow is the chance of new deviant flows, and unexpected assemblages in relation to these meanings, which are being aggregated and exploited by us through those fragments.

Moreover, this "+" sign means addition, which, in an etymological play, can become addict, addiction. The sum of parts must be at a level to the point of guaranteeing a degree of autonomy of the joined parts. Otherwise, there is the imminent risk of dependence, and hence of some kind of hierarchy.

MT In the call of the journal, we have, in the words to participate and to collaborate, both the "+" sign and two points: parti.cipar + co.laborar. Reading them from the perspective you offer, and thinking of new meanings that might emerge from that reading, what would draw more your attention?

IG Perhaps the very idea of exhaustion, appears there in some way. A work where semantic depletion would consist of a chance of neutralizing a truth or a dominant state. It would be the possibility of emergence of something still unexplored, what we might call an event of the word itself, or of the situation itself, if we bring it to our field of activity.

Derrida had an expression - feu la cendre - that in free translation would be the idea of "burning to ashes." This idea has to do with the work of exhaustion: a process of setting fire to the very term, the word itself, and from its ashes, to see new assemblies or reassemblies to be born, new possibilities that can arise from the ashes or fragments. This is related to the angel of the story of [Walter] Benjamin, when he uses Paul Klee's Angelus Novus to speak of modernity, a storm of modernity, a producer of ruins. For Benjamin, it is from these ruins that the possibility of a reassembly emerges, from the exercise of other assemblies. Other possible realities could thus emerge from these ashes.

Another thing that catches my attention, in this etymological and topological manipulation of words and terms, is the prefix "co", which keeps us in the field of bonding. To put ourselves "co", next to something, is, for example, the possibility of an exercise of detachment from our own subjectivities. When we open ourselves to dialogue, whether with another or with something beyond what we have already worked with, whether in a transdisciplinary, interdisciplinary, in a transreality, there is a contamination of fields, worlds, beings that, in my view, represents an enrichment.

I do not understand "co" as a complete adhesion, but as a necessary junction of individuations, so that there is this contamination of worlds. This work, however, would involve friction. It is not a perfect junction, where differences would be nullified or erased, but where, precisely, friction could arise. This "co" along with these frictions indicates the possibility of construction. It is not only validation, it is not only the confirmation or abandonment of my world for the sake of another world, but it is precisely from the work, from the friction, from this problematic junction that perhaps a third, a fourth, or other countless possibilities could emerge.

This work of the "co" would thus represent a possibility of departing from what I already have as truths in my already consolidated world, that is, a domain field already. In the process of contamination, there is a chance

not only of emergency but perhaps of chaotization of some worlds, a semantic chaotization capable of provoking an even greater complexity of one's own thinking and reality. It would be a work of de-creation of an already given reality. Somehow, this "co" also represents a "de" because, being contaminated by another, it may constitute the chance to describe one of the realities, or both, to construct other realities.

MT Would it be possible to participate and collaborate without having chosen to participate and collaborate? I think here of almost compulsory forms of participation, such as the non-conspicuous generation of information for online computer systems, or even ways of being in the city and being unintentionally supportive of various things happening in the public space. From your point of view, would this be a collaboration, a participation?

IG [Martin] Heidegger said that we do not think the world, but that it is the world that gives us a chance to think. Then what comes to me suddenly - often in an insight (un-veiling, revelation and cover-up at the same time) or a degree of unpredictability such that it does not suppose an earlier choice - that which at one point captivates me and mobilizes me brings the chance to think and think beyond what I already think. It would be like thinking the unthinkable.

So I would say that, yes, it is possible to work collaboratively, "co" with something, as long as it represents an instant of mobilization. We fall here in an untimely time of Deleuzian intensity, the time that [Gilles] Deleuze calls an aionic, which somehow activates me, even though I am not waiting for it, even though I am not selecting what I should consider or not, nor what I should approach, but that is what comes to me, all of a sudden. In a Heideggerian language, we can say that this comes as a possibility of a clearing, a clearing of being, because it brings an insight. Through this moment, from this insight, one presents the chance to live, the time of permanence, enough for a slower work of building something.

We are here moving, therefore, in two times: one is the time of the arrival of something, with an intensity that enables an insight. It is the time of estrangement, like the Unheimlich by [Sigmund] Freud, capable of provoking in myself a certain strangeness. The other is the time of dwelling, this slower time in which I allow myself to think and build something from what arrives.

MT In a collaborative work, that is, in this process of de-creating realities and constructing previously unforeseen realities, in simultaneous and distinct times, how can we approach the question of authorship, so dear to fields that deal with creative processes?

IG I am not here operating in a field of idealities, but I would say that all work involving this "co", this "being with/or", constituting a co-author, should not immediately presuppose full adhesion. In order to construct other possible understandings and interpretations of the world, there must be a friction, a friction, as well as a certain abandonment of positions. A new position that arises with the junction is neither one domain nor the other. It is a domain yet to come, as if we enter a process of becoming when we associate with someone or something.

In co-authorship, none of the fields would prevail with respect to each other, nor would there be an attempt of calming joint these worlds, for it is a work of imbrications of thought, possible by friction. Thereafter, there is a chance of enrichment in the emerging collaborative work of this co-authorship, or co-participation. The "co", as a process not totally adherent between parties, would be the bet in a process involving dissidents, mixtures and hesitations, aiming at the construction of still-tantalizing realities.

It is like a synapse that articulates while it separates, guaranteeing that Derridian spacing. This synapse, this hyphen, is what creates a connection but also ensures a gap, a spacing. And this gap is a vital void for something to arise in the construction of this bond, in that slower process of dialogue, of co-authorship, of joint.

That's why I started talking about disjunction. The bond - this synapse, this articulation - needs to be a closeness and represent an alignment of worlds but, at the same time, it needs to guarantee a separation of

those worlds that come into contact. There should not be total adhesion to the point of erasing the differences. The raids, this work of deferral, are fundamental in the process of dialogue and participation.

MT Could we say that, within the framework of the construction of the city, it is from this relation that emergencies could arise?

IG I bet a lot on this, in this articulation of worlds that seem unlikely - "uncompossible" worlds. To move places, situations and dynamics of the city from its most banal and visible evidences, I bet on the closeness and articulation of what does not seem compatible, even if it brings a degree of uncertainty about the results. I am very interested in the mismatch in this adjustment. This machine cannot become a functional machine because it has a degree of dysfunctionality, it is not perfect. It is not perfect in the work of our reason, in our rational and ideal world - ideologies, perhaps of an ideology, of presuppositions - because the articulation between its elements would be problematic for connecting worlds or apparently disparate elements.

This process would build a non-utilitarian machine - and then I am operating in the machinic field of Deleuze -, whose operation is not known very well, nor what it can produce, because that is not given either. So what elements would these be in the city, in the urban, which, if approached, if articulated, would be such that the not perfect junction between them would bring a possibility of hiatus, or of a functioning capable of causing unforeseen emergencies?

Therefore, this machine is not built to produce something that we already know. It is a producer of unpredictability, but also not completely random. There is in it a chance to construct something, say, with loose ends, whose uniqueness is not guaranteed. It would be the production of a noisy dynamic that, through these loose ends, could see other dynamics emerge. I am talking about a rhizomatic field that can arise from these ill-made joints, inadmissible in our degree of ideality, of reason. They are joints not yet glimpsed, not given as a possibility, but which may perhaps constitute fields to be explored.

If Deleuze understands the capital as a molar machine, a macro machine, then I bet a lot on the bond, the articulation - that leads to emergence - of those micro machines that produce micropolitics, micro-realities, that is, of other realities that are not what we already know. I say this bearing in mind the machines of the sculptor Jean Tinguely, which are contraptions whose joints are not foreseen and do not create a consonance. I would say that they are dissonant articulations, which do not fit perfectly and which, in principle, serve no purpose in our utilitarian and functional view. But there is a great chance that a playful field - in the best and most potent sense of the word - emerges from these non-functional, non-utilitarian machines, such as the Tinguely machines.

What would be this work of the junction, of this problematic union, noisy of disparate elements, of these multiplicities? These gears do not seem to be produced to fit, but to frictional work. There is in them a disjoint junction, composing a dysfunctional machine, and precisely from this there is a chance of the play field, not captured by labor. It would be another work, playful, located in another fragment of labor - labor, of collaboration. A work where authorship, or co-authorship, would not be moved by a goal put a priori, but would simply be a game of collaboration, of articulation, of being together, of staying together the time to produce something. Not to achieve something, to get to something, but simply to the process of producing something.

This work, which I would situate in the field of play, is not the work of high productivity applicable, of results, according to the logic of the world in which we are inserted, but a bet on a playful work, a game in the best sense of the term, where ends are not a goal: the end is being built during the process itself, and perhaps there is no such end.

MT This work, which is more process-oriented than product-based, also has another side, its painful side, which may be perceived in the notion of conflict you mentioned.

IG Yes, when I speak in friction and in a work that does not presuppose an immediate and complete adhesion of the parts, I am talking about a painful work. It is a work in which there is the difficulty, which brings the possibility of an advance in relation to what we already know, to a world in which we already operate with a certain ease, in which we already know how to transit because it is already known. So, this painful, frictional work would be the fundamental condition for the slow and problematic construction of

something consistent, because it rightly presupposes a certain struggle, an involvement and an advance, which are not easy. This term "painful" must be understood as a rough field, not smooth, that will cause friction.

MT How do you think the "co", the "do with" and the "do together" in Architecture and Urbanism?

IG All my intellectual production has always been in the sense of moving away from my subjectivities, understood here as a reading and evaluation of things from a purely personal point of view. It has always been an attempt to open me up in dialogue with other fields of knowledge. When you present to me the collaboration and this exercise of "co", of "being together", "being with", I think that is a fundamental work for the architect and urban planner. This professional is often a self-absorbed professional who works with his own subjectivities, a demiurge or an ex-machina god who imagines that he always has the solution to a determined problem, because he considers himself self-sufficient.

My work, on the contrary, has always been a work where cognitive production, of understanding or possible interpretations of our reality, or repositioning of our profession and field of action, came from the "co" the "being next to", of a work of putting itself in dialogue. And, often, in a transdisciplinary, interdisciplinary dialogue, beyond what seems to be our own area.

This dialogue is not proper to architecture, it is not proper to urbanism. We will only slowly stop killing our profession if we recognize the contamination that architecture and urbanism are capable of promoting. A contamination of worlds from transdisciplinary dialogues, suggesting other realities, other possibilities of the world. They are invisible worldliness perhaps, insufficient for us, but which, if worked in the light of, or with, other fields of knowledge, other understandings become possible. In these realities, we often find and present ourselves in a closed form, one-dimensional, that we discard often what seems to be inappropriate to the architecture and the urban.

I see this in the academic field, within the university itself. It is not for the architect to philosophically think the world, with history [different from thinking historically], philosophy, or sociology. This attitude, in my view, is an impoverishment of the profession itself and of our field of activity. It is not a preservation: it is an impoverishment.

MT Moving now a little the focus of our reflection, we see today, in Brazil and, in particular, online social networks - and not without a certain surprise -, very disappointing results of efforts, undertaken over decades, to build in the society the notion of participation, of collaboration, of being and doing together, of giving up some personal projects for the common. Networks are perhaps the locus where we believed that this collaboration could be done in a more plural way, better connecting groups that hardly connect in the concrete space, but what we see today is that these groups have gradually become entrenched. From this perspective of participation + collaboration that we are discussing here, could we say that the networks mirror painful frictions that occur on the scale of a nation?

IG In the political field, we have seen adherence by consonance. There are groups that are forming and building their joints from an already given goal. The parliamentary seats themselves are, for me, a maximum expression of this. There is already an intention put a priori, and these people organize and constitute as a machine strong enough to make feasible what is already placed, that goal. From the point of view of instrumental reason, therefore, everything there must be done to achieve that end, and no matter the means. This is a modality of joining groups, building these dialogues, but perhaps the problem is precisely there, in building an already regulated integration, which already exists in some way.

Even in groups that emerge as micropolitical - often micropolitical of resistance and contestation over macropolitics - these integrations are made vertically, using a term by Milton Santos, where there is a hierarchy, rule, and regulation. I do not see there, in any way, an integration. An integration, in my view, is premised on the questioning of the presuppositions [of what is pre-supposed], and a work based on assumptions and positionings that will emerge during the process itself. These assumptions cannot be put by someone beforehand, simply by joining or not.

What I'm trying to emphasize is just the opposite. I am talking about a work of bonding and collaboration where the assumptions, still insufficient, are not presuppositions. They would be positions that still deserve a

more time-consuming, more solid, more complex construction, which would mean, again taking Milton Santos, a horizontalization of this collaboration. The friction, the deviations, the gaps will arise if the goals are not placed a priori. If placed from the beginning, there is a movement of obedience, of a certain subjugation of the subject in relation to these presuppositions. It is not through obedience subjugation that a more effective collaboration is to be built. This process will continue to be that of a hierarchical work, as it always existed in the capitalist logic, in the economic logic of the world. We have only begun to build a more horizontal, less vertical process of collaboration when something comes up in an instant, motivated by some situation that was not set beforehand, something capable of generating mobilization and collaboration in the authenticity of the moment

For [Michel] Foucault, there is a great difference between collective assemblages of enunciation, where, from the collective one is stated something, and assemblages of enunciation of the collective. The first, in a certain way, is that in which, from the collective, it is stated something, and the second, on the contrary, is the one in which, from statements, collectives are produced. I prefer to bet on those collective assemblages capable of stating something.

MT One last question: Does the future look promising?

IG I am a reader of [Friedrich] Nietzsche, and Nietzsche's will for power was so much stronger, the greater the difficulty. This exercise of potency, this "beyond man" - unlike the man who is subjugated, the man already appeased -, would not be a superman, which is a misunderstanding. This "beyond man" would be the exercise of a power, although we do not know that we have it. And the exercise of this power comes with difficulties. No wonder Nietzsche invited us to walk in the night, not in the light. Not on a sunny day, but in the night.

Promising? I see a country that presents itself to us, from now on, with enormous difficulties to be worked and faced, and perhaps now we can see the capacity, the will, the exercise of a power. Maybe a power that we have not yet had a chance to exercise, and who knows, we still do not even know it. I would say that it is a dark time, but somehow a suitable medium for the exercise of this power as resistance, as an act of creation, as a re-creation of realities, as repositioning, as another work. A painful labor, but, for that very reason, a more potent labor.