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## THE BIFURCATIONS OF TIME: Considerations on three temporal forms in Andrea Tonacci's film *Serras da desordem*

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## Abstract

This article aims to verify a few inscriptions in time in the film *Serra da Desordem* (2006), by Andrea Tonacci. For this purpose, we use three different conceptual contexts: Deleuze's notion of crystal-image and double time; the issues related to supermodernity and the concept of non-place coined by Marc Augé; and Noël Burch's idea of temporality arising from the structures of aggression. Finally, we consider the forms of mirror time, depleted present and brutalized present.

### Keywords

Serras da Desordem; Crystal-Image; Non Place; Supermodernity; Structures of Aggression.

## Introduction

The film *Serras da desordem*<sup>1</sup> (2006, Andrea Tonacci) holds a position of key relevance within Brazil's cinematography, despite the fact it was released little over a decade ago. The film awakens the interest of both critics and scholars. But why should one employ any further efforts in a film with an already considerable literary production?

First, *Serras da Desordem* constitutes a beautiful example of a multifaceted film, full of ellipses and nuances suggesting several interpretations. Thus, the material is far from being fully explored. Secondly, because this article aims to dig into the film regarding the surprising temporalities it presents. To achieve that, we resort to three different conceptual universes: the crystal-image and the problem of the two temporal in Gilles Deleuze; the questions related to the Supermodernity and the non-place in Marc Augé; and the temporality resulting of Noël Burch's structures of aggression. Employing these references as a starting point, we identify the forms of mirror time, depleted present, and brutalized present in the film.

It is necessary to consider the difficulties of working with bibliographic sources of different nature and areas such as the philosophy of Gilles Deleuze and anthropology of Marc Augé. Particularly, with regard to Deleuze, in which the usually found difficulties are added to the project of overcoming the representation that animates the philosopher's work. In *Plato and the Simulacrum*, a text from *The Logic of Sense* (2000), Deleuze makes a Nietzschean interpretation of Plato's work when he proposes the reversion of Platonism through the emergence of simulacra and the disentanglement of the hierarchy between the model and the copy. His project considers the Nietzschean criticism as the core of his own criticism to representation – "the history of the long error is the history of representation" (Deleuze, 1988, p. 471). A detailed revision of these issues is not within this paper's frame, however, such questions will animate our argumentation implicitly.

I watched *Serras da Desordem* for the first time upon its theatrical release and it impressed me greatly. For this paper, I have resorted to old remarks I had written at that time as well as to other viewings of the film in digital video platforms. The story of how the film was made, all its trajectory since its initial draft up to its final cut, interesting as it is, was not considered in this article. I took the actual film as an object and disregarded the intentions that did not come to fruition, working with my own cinematic experience and a theoretical repertory I judged fitted my ideas, leaving even Andrea Tonacci's<sup>2</sup> point of view in a secondary position.

The film presents a complex course of action. We will follow a chronological summary of the events depicted in the film. *Serras da desordem* recreates the journey of Carapiru, a member of the awá-guajá indigenous people, one of the only ones to survive the massacre perpetrated against his tribe in Maranhão in 1978. Carapiru escapes the carnage and begins to wander around Brazil's countryside, alone, for approximately a decade, surviving symbiotically with rural communities, yet, always avoiding direct contact. His epic journey ends when he surrenders himself to the inhabitants of a small community in the town of Angical, in Bahia's extreme West region. The news reaches the authorities and attempts to rescue him are made, still, Carapiru resists, he wants to live amongst that community, which in its turn, takes him in. The indigenous man and the community are, at last, convinced and Carapiru is sent to be under the tutelage of sertanista<sup>3</sup> Sydney Possuelo. His adventure gains notoriety by the media. Carapiru's

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<sup>1</sup> Film credits can be accessed in the Cinemateca Brasileira's website: <http://bases.cinemateca.gov.br/cgi-bin/wxis.exe/iah/?IsisScript=iah/iah.xis&base=FILMOGRAFIA&lang=p&nextAction=Ink&exprSe arch=ID=035027&format=detailed.pft>

<sup>2</sup> About *Serras da desordem*'s production process, look up Tonacci's interview granted to Daniel Caetano (Caetano, 2008).

<sup>3</sup> Sertanista is a person whose job demands that they travel through Brazil's non-urbanized countryside

story undergoes a shocking twist when Benvindo, one of the translators employed with the task to identify his origins (by using the language as a criteria), recognizes Carapiru as his father – Benvindo is another survivor from the tribe's massacre. The film recreates, employing the past's dramatization and documental footage, the massacre, the circumstances of Caipiru's rescue, as well as his current reunion with the people who have followed his drama up close. It also depicts his daily life in the tribe he currently lives in. Still, he seems to be misplaced in his new tribe. A conflict arises between Carapiru and other awá-gujá, upsetting him greatly. He takes off all of his clothes, grabs his weapons, and disappears into the woods surrounding the tribe, where he finds the film's crew.

## Mirror time

*Serras da desordem* is a complex film when it comes to the different temporal issues it employs. The first layer is the reenactment of the past, of the awa-gujá tribe's massacre, to which Carapiru belongs. Let's take the sequence depicting the tribe's daily life that follows the film's opening sequence. As the tribe moves through the woods in a search for a new place, they settle in an area coveted by the industrial civilization. This long sequence lasts nearly eighteen minutes and ends with the tribe's massacre led by a group of armed men. The indigenous routine is shot in color, and even the assembly of a group of armed men, the abduction of Carapiru's son, and Carapiru's return to the tribe upon hearing the gunshots are in color. However, the massacre is filmed in black and white (B&W)<sup>4</sup>. What until then appeared in the film as the reenactment of the past – all the time (in color) the tribe was shown prior to its decimation – assumes, due to the use of B&W only in the shots depicting the attack, an uncanny quality, whose solution arises by the assumption of the two-temporal dimension in this entire sequence, in which, a past and a present intertwine within the same images of the indigenous tribe acting in their own daily life. The coexistence of these two extremities of time that displays in the image a past and a present due to the alternation of B&W and color (and the multiple sources of image<sup>5</sup>), grants *Serras da desordem* one of its most complex and identifiable qualities<sup>6</sup>.

The first images presented in *Serras da desordem* address and clarify the uncertainties regarding the temporal coordinates in the rest of the film. Prior to Carapiru's arrival at the community that took him in, we can see several shots in B&W as he wanders around after the massacre. The film is the one to promote his reunion, decades later, with the small district's old inhabitants, using now images in color (at 41min41sec). But is the current community – to which both younger generations, who didn't know Carapiru, and the older ones who have witnessed the events in the past, belong – that stage his arrival in the past. After an *Incra*<sup>7</sup> employee's failed attempt to retrieve Carapiru, the State sends the sertanistas Sydney Possuelo and Wellington Figueiredo with the same mission, both of them playing themselves.

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(the sertão), engaging, when necessary, with indigenous peoples in a state of isolation or under exterior threats.

<sup>4</sup> Like many procedures in cinema, the convention states that images in B&W would be associated with the past while images in color edited in a sequence or belonging to the same dramatic context would express the present, is arbitrary, based, perhaps, in the own evolution of cinema.

<sup>5</sup> *Serras da desordem* used: Kodak Vision 250 — 5246 and Eastman Double X — 5222 negatives; cinematic cameras (Arriflex BL 35 Evolution and Arriflex 35 IIC), MiniDVD Digital (Sony DCR-VX 1000, Sony DCR-VX 2000 and Sony Ccd Trv66 H18) and HHB Portadat PDR 1000TC (information from the final credits).

<sup>6</sup> Tonacci's interviews point out that the B&W images in *Serras da desordem* were thought of as a way of expressing Carapiru's inner life, highlighting their difference from the objective images of the film (Oliveira, 2008, p. 77). However, it seemed to us that the temporal bifaciality could not be discarded from the film as it exists, nor would the B&W images of the *Serras da desordem* be justified exclusively by its subjective use (an example would be the attack on Carapiru's tribe, shot in B&W, being one of the rare scenes in which he doesn't appear), hence we insist on this interpretation.

<sup>7</sup> National Institute for Colonization and Land Reform (Instituto Nacional de Colonização e Reforma Agrária).

Possuelo looks for Carapiru and finds him standing next to the window of the community's school. These sequences are shot in B&W, in contrast with the following sequences, shot in color. Carapiru visits the district's current school, images that precede the interviews with the town's inhabitants, in which they share their accounts on his arrival in the community. This is followed by other shots which depict Carapiru's interactions with the district's inhabitants; they dance, he teaches them how to use the bow, etc. Then, something changes unexpectedly. There is an abrupt cut between the medium long shot framing the townspeople in color and the close-up on Carapiru's face in B&W (at *1h10min27sec*). He looks distressed (the cut in the image is followed by the cut in the sound, that goes from a murmur to almost total silence): the same people from the previous shot are in this one, in the same setting, but now the image is in B&W and they reenact Carapiru's departure that took place in the past. The car trip to Brasília, still in B&W, would show Carapiru's rescue in the past, but the shots turn into color mid-sequence, and an updated and current atmosphere (established also by the music and the landscape) takes over the sequence<sup>8</sup>. Thus, the simple alternation between the shots, B&W to color, gains a new potency upon including this game between past and present through the continuity of the elements within the discontinuous *mise-en-scène*<sup>9</sup>.

There are other moments in the film in which the lack of definition between the past and the present is even more dubious, for both continuity in the elements in the shots and in the *mise-en-scène* can be seen. Such as the sequence in which Carapiru hits a pig with his arrow or the waterfall sequence<sup>10</sup>, which are much more complex formally. But the kitchen sequence (at *50min19sec* until *56min42sec*) seems to be the most paradigmatic regarding this issue. It begins with a beautiful fusion between the image of a net used to dry the fish and the wooden roof of the house in which the family who hosted Carapiru lives. The family's matriarch cooking lunch, Carapiru, the couple's young daughters, and some other young children take part in the scene. The *mise-en-scène* progresses undisturbed: we see the images that portray a continuum of small daily gestures (except for the occasional inserts of a film in B&W<sup>11</sup>), having as its differential the alternation between the images in B&W and in color. This sequence's last shot, in color, shows the interaction between Carapiru and the family. The following sequence, in B&W (at *56min43sec*), begins with the matriarch leaving the kitchen (wearing the same clothes and haircut of the previous sequence), taking the food to the table at which Carapiru and other family members sit. Unlike the previous sequence, there is a clear past reenactment, since the matriarch talks as though he still lives

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<sup>8</sup> Of course, there are moments in the film in which the convention that establishes B&W for past images and color for present images is taken as a reference. Such as in Carapiru's run on a long dirt road (in B&W, *33min46sec*), a metaphor for his solitary wanderings after his tribe's massacre. In the testimony (in color) of the couple that hosted Carapiru in Angical. In the passage between the sequence of the reenactment of Carapiru's capture by the community of Angical in B&W, and the reunion of Carapiru, decades later, with the residents of the community, in color. Or, in the sequence of Carapiru in Sydney Possuelo's house: taken to Brasília, he stays at the sertanista's house for a while. The images in the present, from the visit to Possuelo's family promoted by the film, are in color, but when they talk about past events involving Carapiru, such as when he hid food for fear of scarcity, or when he was sick upon his arrival and refused treatment, the images are shot in B&W, obeying convention.

<sup>9</sup> *Mise-en-scène* is a French expression that literally means *to stage*. its consecrated meaning in cinema involves the broad notion of general organization of space and time in a film, that is, the general conception of the film, which includes visual composition (scenery, scene objects, lighting, etc.), the rhythm within the filmed material (duration of the scenes), the actors performance, etc.

<sup>10</sup> It would be worth effort to do the decoupage of this sequence in its complexity: at *34min12sec* we see establishing shots in B&W of Carapiru as he emerges in the midst of the Brazilian savannah after his journey. The film then goes on to a succession of five very short waterfall shots (in color); a shot of Carapiru near the waterfall (in B&W, with sound continuity); another shot of the waterfall (perhaps a stock footage in B&W) merging with a longer traveling shot framing the (same?) waterfall also in B&W, and at the end of the movement, it finds Carapiru. Then there is a quick shot of the waterfall (with a rotating propeller) in color, followed by a B&W shot (with the same rotating movement) of Carapiru on his back, followed by a B&W shot of him still with his back, the same movement, but closer-up. After these shots, five more short shots in color, with fusions between them, of the waterfall.

<sup>11</sup> Despite our efforts, we were unable to locate this film's references.

with them: "he [Carapiru] won't go, Luiz. He doesn't want to be took [sic]. I want him to stay here". She then speaks to Carapiru: "you're gonna stay here with us, right?"

## Mirror time: the crystal

The alternation between the past and the present in *Serras da desordem* expresses a double image, a mirror or a kaleidoscope, making it the fundamental structure that supports the entire film. In effect, taking the image sources and the montage process, *Serras da desordem* is a prodigal film when it comes to producing images which Gilles Deleuze calls crystal-image. But what does a crystal-image entail? We shall find it in the "indivisible unity of an actual image and 'its' virtual counterpart" (Deleuze, 1990, p. 99)<sup>12</sup>. In a first moment, let's consider the relation between actual and virtual as one of the orders of time: the actual takes place in the present that is happening while the virtual is in the preserved past that insists in the present as a memory. Therefore is necessary that the crystal-image "be both the present and the past, still present and already past, at one time, at the same time. (...) The past does not precede the present which it is no longer, rather, it coexists with the present that once was" (Deleuze, 1990, p. 99)<sup>13</sup>. Wouldn't that be the case of *Serras da desordem*, in which the past's dramatization and the present's experience revolve around each other? There are no images of the past that would be actualized in the shape of a new present, taking Carapiru's memories as a starting point, such as flashback, instead, there is the indiscernible coexistence of the past and the present in the reality proposed by the film.

In contrast to the extensive circuits of psychological memories or dreams, the crystal-image, contracts itself, precisely within the smallest circuit connecting the images "that glues the actual image to a type of double, symmetrical, consecutive, or even, a simultaneous double" (Deleuze, 1990, p. 87), that is, its immediate virtual image will serve as the actual image's reflection. There is, however, a 'coalescence' between them. There is the formation of a bifacial, actual, and virtual image" (Deleuze, 1990, p. 87 e 88). It is a depiction that doesn't return to an object, but rather absorbs and (re)creates its own object constantly: in each return, Carapiru's journey appears not as the solution, but as the enigma, once that both faces of the crystal-image, the actual present and the virtual past, even though differing amongst them, won't stop switching positions. After all, where does the fictionalized dramatization of the past, of Carapiru's life in Angical, end and where do the actual accounts, the documentary on Carapiru's visit to the community that took him in begin?<sup>14</sup> Those are images in which we find "a reverse and a right side which are perfectly reversible" (Deleuze, 1990, p. 89). That's why such images are called double, mirror, dramatization images par excellence, for the actor and their role – or, in accordance with the film, the non-

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<sup>12</sup> The relationships between the actual and the virtual permeate Deleuze's thought explicitly or implicitly, constituting an important demarcation in his works (Alliez, 1996; Lévy, 1996; Zourabichvili, 2004). "Deleuze's question has always been that of a material and virtual image of Being-Thought, of rhizome and of immanence" (Alliez, 1996, 40).

<sup>13</sup> Pierre Lévy (1996) distinguishes *the actual* and *the virtual* from the real and *the possible*. The real consists of the most comprehensive and immediate dimension. The possible is what has not yet become real, although it is predetermined by the contingencies of its locus of realization, and its realization occurs necessarily by similarity (representation). The relationship between the actual and the virtual is given by differentiation. The virtual is not predetermined, but disposes of reality. "From the being of the sensible to the sensitive itself, from the visible to its condition, if it is led to a virtual which is no less real than it is actual" ("De l'être du sensible au sentiment du même, du visible à sa condition, on est reconduit à un virtuel qui n'est pas moins réel que l'actuel" (Martin, 2005, p. 60 - our translation); the virtual is pure power (virtual comes from the Latin *virtus*, deriving *virtualis*: force, power (Lalande, 1999)) that challenges identities. So, the actualization of a virtuality gives rise to the new, it is of the order of creation. "A production of new qualities, a transformation of ideas, a true becoming that nourishes the virtual" (Lévy, 1996, p. 16-17). In fact, the actual is the present point on which a cloud of virtualities moves toward singularity. "Every actual surrounds itself with ever-renewed circles of virtualities, each emitting another, and all surrounding and reacting on the actual" (Deleuze, 1996, p. 49).

<sup>14</sup> "We never know which Carapiru we see on screen: the actor or the character? Both, or neither, ever, fully?" (Cohn, 2008, p. 43-44).

actors in *Serras da desordem*: who actualizes themselves in a scene and who haunts, while potency, the filmed material, the daily life, or its dramatization?<sup>15</sup>

The image and its reverse are formed by the pair actual/virtual, which can, in its turn, transform into other avatars that embody the same bifacial relationship. It is the same circuit where the pairs limpid/opaque and seed/environment roam. Still conditioned by time, the relationship between actual and virtual, gains, thus, new qualities that no longer restrict it to the present and to the past. Indeed, what is important is the crystalized relationship, the unstable mirror, bifacial image, in which the coalescence between its two distinguished faces tends to exchange positions amongst themselves, becoming indiscernible. In effect, the crystal-image isn't only the shortest actual/virtual circuit, but also entails the complete dimension of time "the small crystal clear germ and the immense crystallizable universe" (Deleuze, 1990, p. 102), in the bifurcation of the time between the present that forces, with its passage, the emergence of the future, at the same time that it preserves itself as a past just as soon as it stops being it. "The time consists in this rupture, precisely it, and the time that *sees itself in the crystal*. The crystal-image is not the time, but we see the time in the crystal. We see the perpetual foundation of time, the non-chronological time within the crystal" (Deleuze, 1990, p. 102). What we see in the crystal is the time in its integrity – Deleuze would say, we see the direct image-time and not a representation of time.

*Serras da desordem*'s grandiose mirror structure has its germinal expression in the film's first sequence, in which Carapiru finds himself alone in the woods resting on some palm leaves after making a fire. This sequence is connected to the last but one sequence (just before Carapiru's last lines) in a long circuit containing his entire epic journey: Carapiru finds the film's crew in the middle of the forest in order to shoot what would be, in the montage, the opening sequence, displaying, thus, the entire cinematic dispositive: cameras, crew, technical instructions.

Deleuze seems to have a predilection for the relation between the seed and the environment, between the small core and the crystal that grows around it, while he discourses about the film within the film<sup>16</sup>. By highlighting in a heteroclitic and unstable manner that there are different dramatization temporal levels in the same images, by not hiding the option for the reenactment of historical events with the people who have, themselves, undergone the experiences chosen to be recreated, *Serras da desordem* assumes itself as a film that documents its own epic journey (a film about making a film) which is following its main character, Carapiru, both by reviving his memory of the massacre and the events connected to it and by introducing him in the same location decades later.

## The depleted present

Deleuze inherits from Henri Bergson (1990; 2005) the attention to the temporal dimension he develops in his two books about cinema. The first book's main theme is the image-movement and the

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<sup>15</sup> The mirror image, the mirror, is the crystal image par excellence. But the mirror images, as well as the actor/character set, in no way exhaust the territories of the actual/virtual relationship. Deleuze, using the work of the writer Herman Melville, adds to the two previous elements the ship and its two crystalline faces: the one above, visible and subordinate to the order and the hierarchies, and the one below, below the waterline. "But it seems that the clear face actualizes a kind of theater or dramaturgy that takes hold of the passengers themselves, while the virtual one enters the opaque facet, and is actualized at once in the accounts of stokers, in the diabolical perversity of a crew chief, in the monomania of a captain, in the secret revenge of rebellious blacks, is the circuit of two virtual images that never cease to be actualized, and do not stop repeating themselves" (Deleuze, 1990, p. 93).

<sup>16</sup> Regarding the film within the film, Deleuze emphasizes productions in which "the seed and the mirror are once again resumed, one in the piece being done, the other in the piece reflected in the piece" (Deleuze 1990, p. 96). It is somewhat surprising that Deleuze should at this point highlight the films about money as necessarily being part of the film-themed film series. "Movies about money are already, though implicitly, films within the film or about the film"; "the film is the movement, but the film within the film is the money, it is time. The crystal-image thus receives the principle that founds it: relentlessly relaunch the unequivocal, unequal and unequal exchange, of image against money, of time against images, to convert time, the clear facet, and money, the hidden facet, like a top on its tip" (Deleuze, 1990, p. 99).

representation of time in cinema, chronological and attached to the present (Deleuze, 1985); the second book is centered in the image-time or, in other ways, in the direct presentation of the time that affects the cinematographic image, making it non-chronological and subject to all sorts of divergent and disjunctive series (Deleuze, 1990)<sup>17</sup>. The crystal-image is the image-time's first whole aspect in the Deleuzian approach. As we have seen, the crystal-image exposes a bifacial image in which we see a past and a present as they coalesce, with all of the past's might overflowing the present. However, we must now focus our attention back to one of the mirror image's faces, the one centered in the present in order for us to inquire about other matters found in *Serras da desordem*.

This takes us to the problem of spatiality. Marc Augé (2012) addresses it<sup>18</sup> by countering the *place* (*anthropological place*) with the *non-place*. The anthropological place is the dimension of the (co)existence and the memory, encompassing both the domestic and public spaces. The public space acts through lines and intersection of such lines (roads intersections, parks, etc.) and condensation areas (community and religious centers, monuments as expressions of the perennial, a diffuse social and meaning web that grants coherence to the current actions accomplished by our ancestors). Its statute is ambiguous, depending on the relationships established with others and the territory: even if actions are carried out according to cognizable formats (guided by definitions such as historical, identitary, and relational), and that its disappearance establishes itself as a crisis, it is a space both concrete and symbolic, partial or mythical.

Augé's critic main issue resides in the changes brought about by the acceleration of time and the destructuring of day-to-day life by the demands of contemporary capitalism. Indeed, the growing pressure for consumption, the fluidity of international capital, and the circulation of people (may it be due to easier means to relocate or the migratory waves), among other factors, promote the individual's loss of references and their detachment from their territory. Augé calls this stage of capitalism supermodernity, identifying in the non-place its privileged *locus* that arises from the dismembering of the anthropological place. Three excess components define the perception in the supermodernity. The first is of the order of time, the *factual superabundance*, that affects the understanding of the present, generating an incessant search for the conjuncture's meaning. The second one is the *spatial superabundance*, which causes an effect of relative spatial compression due to the speed of the means (such as transportation, e.g), but even more disturbingly, due to the simultaneity of the events and their mediatization. And, lastly, the *individuation of the references*, the overvaluation of the self.

*Serras da desordem's* general context, in its power lines, refers to what Augé calls supermodernity. The massacre of the *awá-guajá's* tribe is the atrocious response to an incompatibility which the film relentlessly depicts and that opposes the existence of the indigenous cultures to the unstoppable advances of the interests that aim predatory exploitation — in the context of the region's disorganized

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<sup>17</sup> Deleuze identifies the image-movement, roughly, with the classic cinema, while the image-time would arise with the modern cinema. The distinction between image-movement and image-time is not only nominal, since they constitute themselves as images of a different nature. This echoes the differentiation of nature and not of intensity that Henri Bergson traces in *Matter and memory* (1990) – on which Deleuze relies completely for his books on cinema – between the perception and the action connected to the matter, on one hand, and the affection close to the temporal dimension, on the other.

<sup>18</sup> The problems concerning spatiality arising from the industrial society's advancements have been approached from other points of view. Michel Foucault – in his text *Other spaces* (2012), in working heterotopias as the oblivion of differences in favor of the affirmation of the same in the process of consolidation of western social formations, emphasized the spatial dimension as the focal point of the anguish experienced in the capitalist nations of the end of the 20th century. On the other hand, Manuel Castells (2000), with the concept of *space of flows*, thinks the spatial organization as the dominant element for the understanding of the urban social formations in the contemporaneity. The spaces of flows relate to each other in the informational (data transmitted with the information technology), social (the decision centers that form the networks of communication and dominance), and space (the spatial ordering dictated by the command organizations associated with the financial elite) dimensions. Spaces of flow would oppose the spaces of places, where effective physical contiguity ensures the autonomy of meanings and social functions in places of dwelling, transit and living. There is between the two instances, all kinds of social, class, and economic-financial power demarcation.



occupation, motivated greatly by the construction of the *Transamazônica*<sup>19</sup> highway. The period of time that encompasses Carapiru's decade-long lonely journey throughout the inner corners of Brazil is suppressed to favor a series of quick shots (as a matter of fact, a montage from *29min54sec* to *33min54sec* conducted by a samba song), a kaleidoscope condensing the Brazilian life at that time by presenting the actions of the military government and its effects on society<sup>20</sup>.

There are, at least, two important elements in the film that relate directly to the supermodernity. The first one is television. We experience the mediatic interpretation of Carapiru's drama through the televised news. But it's also through television that Carapiru experiences another universe, the universe of spatial compression and excess of information to which he undergoes at Possuelo's house. It is the same kaleidoscopic effect of the montage used as a device for the passage of time, except this time it's Carapiru who watches flabbergasted the images showing the indigenous' revolting against *Funai's*<sup>21</sup> ineffectiveness to protect them against land grabbers, gold miners, and timber mobsters, and the barricades over the tracks as an attempt to stop the train from passing through. The second element is, precisely, the train. At the end of the 19th century, the locomotives were a symbol for the notion of progress in the main capitalist countries. In the film, the train appears in two different ways, as a mean of transportation, shrinking the distance, and, mostly, as the presence of an exterior and overwhelming power. The image of a cargo train of a mining company that travels through indigenous lands (at *17min50sec*) is the first insert of a foreign element to the life of Carapiru's tribe to appear. The train here doesn't express at all the idea of progress (a positivist idea, nevertheless, but was employed during the developmentalist phase of the military regime), but the one of dismantlement of the traditional life instead.

The contraction of the genuine experience to spatial coordinates disconnected from affective bonds and temporalities that impose a depleted present would lead the supermodernity to articulate in non-places from the increased circulation of people and consumer goods, consisted notably of stock spaces (the resorts, but also refugee camps, invaded lands, etc.) and transit spaces (highways, airports, commercial centers, ATM's, etc.). The devastated land that once was a forest becomes the non-place of Carapiru's journey. Precisely the coded relationships and the constructed identities are diluted in the non-place occupied by him. His historicity is absent in the same proportion as his present is depleted and the space where he wanders becomes transitory par excellence because in it neither the collective memory nor the interpersonal ties of his community condense anymore. "A world, thus, promised to the lonely individuality, to the passing, and to the fleeting" (Augé, 2012, p. 74).

The space constituted under the signs of impersonality, of passage, and of the purely functional (airport, highway, supermarket, etc.) defines the non-place as much as the fluid connections that are maintained<sup>22</sup> in them. But ultimately, it is the connections that will define the boundaries between place

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<sup>19</sup> Conflicts over land ownership and exploitation around the Transamazonica date back to the period of its construction during the dictatorship's governments (Pereira, 2013). CAI Transamazônica research activities' Analytical Report presents a survey of the region's conditions in this century (CALVI et al., 2011).

<sup>20</sup> This is one of the best examples of *Serras da desordem's* nuance-filled montage, visual commentary, and surprising shots, with images of the forests destruction, the construction of the Transamazônica highway and Jorge Bodanzky and Orlando Senna's film *Iracema, uma transa amazônica* (1974); of the repression of protesters, from General Newton Cruz to the screams and from the death of Captain Carlos Lamarca; of indigenous people, of workers and of miners in Serra Pelada; of huge ships, ports, and cargo trains carrying iron ore; of hydroelectric plants, of industrial production and of windmills flying in the wind; commercial breeding; the collective funeral of dead workers and the horrified face of Christ; *candomblé* and interiors of baroque churches; the crowd at a football stadium and a rally by former President Lula; of *escolas de samba* and carnival balls; buildings and favelas; and, finally, of the present and the past of Rio de Janeiro.

<sup>21</sup> National Foundation for the Native Peoples (Fundação Nacional do Índio).

<sup>22</sup> Non-places are also established by the explication of linguistic arrangements: words, texts or symbols that prescribe, forbid or even inform (such as traffic signs or warnings that dictates behaviors). Such arrangements promote constant interactions with institutional and idealized moral people (Augé, 2012, p.89).

and non-place, which interpenetrate according to the relationships we ascribe to them and the functions within them. Both, place and non-place, are “fugitive polarities: the former is never completely erased and the latter is never fully realized – palimpsests in which the shuffled play of identity and relationship is continuously re-inscribed” (Augé, 2012, p. 74). These are all the fluid passages Carapiru experiences: he is integrated to the community that welcomed him, but unable to communicate in the language of its inhabitants; he feels displaced in the tribe where he was reinserted, although he shares a foundation culture with its members; etc.

Coexisting with a persisting disconnection with his memory and having the space ahead as the scenery of his own journey, Carapiru occupies his particular *excess of disconnection* in relation to the successive spaces with which he maintains little or no identity connection — Brasília, the space created by the TV crew, the film set, the house of the sertanista (and its devices that he doesn't know how to use, such as the toilet, cutlery, etc.) —, the non-places where he becomes a contemplator of his contemplation, “as if the position of the spectator constituted the essence of the spectacle, as if, definitely, the spectator, in the position of spectator, was their own spectacle” (Augé, 2012, p. 81). Therefore, “the traveler's space would be, thus, the archetype of the *non-place*” (Augé, 2012, p. 81). Be it as a traveler or an immobile observer, immersed in a perpetual and depleted present, Carapiru occupies the series of non-places through which he travels throughout the film (the wandering itself being imposed on Carapiru by the film, the most ablaze non-place occupied by him), experiencing the loneliness arising from the depletion of the senses (historical, identity and relational) attributable both to the spectacle and to him, as a spectator of himself.

## The brutalized present

Carapiru had a chance with the community that hosted him. His return, promoted by the film, takes place as a reunion between old friends: he interacts with the former residents who show him pictures in which he appears next to the locals, they take strolls and bathe in the river with him. Thus, repeating the same ambiance that Carapiru had within his tribe shown in the images from the beginning of the film. But this community is not really his, he is foreign to the townspeople's customs – the couple who housed him speaks of his naked wanderings. There are signs that something is not going well. The film accompanies him on his return to the indigenous community where he moved in after being rescued, we see him on the plane and on the train. He is bored and seems lost in these environments that confirm the destructive force of non-places. *Serras da desordem* opts for the typical dubieties of the crystal-image, which does not prevent from presenting the facts that have occurred (and those that occur) through its *limpid* face, but something clearly escapes the film, there is an *opaque* face on the back of the crystal. The various aspects that characterize the crystal-image in *Serras da desordem* seem to find its center in an opacity inhabited by Carapiru, in his blatantly depleted present. Even though the *seed* (from the film under construction) results in an unmistakable mirror image, it is around the indiscernibility between the *opaque* and the *limpid* facet of Carapiru's character that the film constructs some of the procedures that Noël Burch called *structures of aggression*.

Burch (1992) studied the use of mechanisms of aggression to the spectator's sensitivity by cinema “as a form of a structural component” (Burch, 1992, p.153). Moral pain and even physical pain (for example, caused by certain montage processes that affect the human eye apparatus' sensitivity) would be some of the elements to be worked on in cinema in order to promote an aesthetic experience, provided that the result arises not of an unconscious empiricism, but of an intellectually conceived structure. The result would *be a wave of cinematic shock*, as advocated by Sergei Eisenstein in his kino-fist, which would say “more respect for form than for the creation of a dreamlike atmosphere” (Burch, 1992, p. 153). What is important is the form (that is, the way a content is presented, being form and content interdependent and even inseparable from each other) and the sense of abstraction that would preside over the aesthetic

(largely rhythmic) effects arising from the structures that work with the spectator's malaise, using aggression and violence as a starting point.

In the car (shot in B&W, ambient sound, at *1h15min57sec*), after being rescued by the sertanistas Sydney Possuelo and Wellington Figueiredo, a shirtless Carapiru smiles and shows serenity. But his face quickly changes after Figueiredo comments about him: "a distant, lost look...who knows where he's wandering, right? What's going on in his mind?" A song pops up on the background and takes up all of the sound space. Carapiru is in the same car, this shot is the continuation of the previous, but now he wears a shirt. The afternoon advances and Carapiru's face becomes increasingly tense, stern, while vehicles, mainly cargo trucks, drive by in the opposite direction. In the midst of the devastated forest, bigger fires appear. Carapiru seems tired and his face gives the impression that the sense of what he is doing here, participating in a film, escapes his grasp. One notices the same discomfort and lost gaze he displays on his way home: at an airport's optical shop, where his son buys sunglasses, in the airport lounge while waiting to board, or in the cockpit of the plane. The camera does not hesitate to frame him in these moments of discouragement.

But at no point in the movie Carapiru seems as stunned as in the sequence where he wanders through the Monumental Axis of Brasilia (at *1h30min21sec*). He appears alone in the scene, distressed, or even annoyed, as he looks around, rubs his face and speaks on his tongue, composing an image resembling delirium (which is emphasized by background music). In the elevator of Brasilia's TV Tower, Carapiru feels cornered while the camera faces him frontally in an intimidating close-up. In the belvedere, he looks at the city below while, in a detail shot, he drums his finger tensely on the tower's parapet. Carapiru's body is hunched, with his back faced to some tourists, and he resumes to nervously drum his fingers on the parapet while looking to the side as though he were looking for something. The sequence seems to jump from the film, and does not contribute to elucidate Carapiru's epic journey; its function lies in the very dramaturgy imposed to him, which presupposes some embarrassment to both Carapiru and the spectator. Symptomatically, the sequence is preceded by an independent shot of a computerized brain tomography (at *1h30min19sec*) as an anticipatory warning which, by the way, had already been evoked by the sertanista: "what goes through his head?"

If in the sequence of Carapiru in Brasilia we find him confused and tense, in his adoptive tribe, to where he had been taken and definitively settled, his state of mind is closer to that of depression. The film alternates (at *1h43min18sec*) images of Carapiru returning home with images of a television newsreel of the time of his insertion in this indigenous community. The newsreel's voice-over tells us that Carapiru smiles, receives a warm welcome and seems to be happy to be living in an *awá* tribe again, where other native Brazilians from the region were living. The sequence is followed by shots of the natives bathing in the river, images that possibly belong to the same batch of *takes* edited at the beginning of the film, evoking the harmonious interactions between the members of Carapiru's original tribe – another example of mirror image.

But what was set up as a return to the idyllic life Carapiru led before the massacre turns out to be illusory (the sequence begins with a plaque with the word *danger*). The images of the indigenous village, at first plain and bleak, increasingly show a hostile and disturbing ambiance for a non-indigenous audience or out of context, creating an obvious discomfort in those who watch them: children wearing long, ragged shirts, a boy makes an air-rifle gesture with his hands as if he were shooting at someone lying on a hammock, a pile of monkeys are shaved and then roasted, a child picks up a dead monkey by the tail and smashes it against the ground, a detail shot shows the monkeys already roasted, several dogs been mistreated, a toddler who still hasn't learned how to walk holds a knife almost his size, one child threatens another with a machete, and a boy hits the camera lens with an arrow in his hand. The contrast with the way the village at the beginning of the film is depicted is blatant.

Carapiru's daily life, just like his community life, is utterly bleak. He is filmed constantly alone, isolated from the others, and doesn't interact with anyone, even when there are people near him. He

is never caught taking part in any activity in the tribe and doesn't seem to be integrated into any group, even during celebrations and games. He eats alone while his fellow tribesmen cook lunch (the monkeys) collectively. His body language is of someone melancholic, refractory, and once again, the film places him in an opaque zone<sup>23</sup>. The only moment in which he interacts is during an argument with other members of the tribe, shortly before leaving the village, distressed as the coati tied with a rope to a tree trunk that the film displays insistently. And like the trapped animal, all that is left for Carapiru is this other side of his present, as it becomes more brutalized<sup>24</sup>.

## Final Considerations

The opacity of Carapiru's character in other moments of *Serras da desordem* – in contrast to the limpid face of the crystal when he acts nicely and sociable – is also linked to the inability to communicate. Not being a Portuguese speaker, his loneliness at various moments in the film is the result of the language barrier (in the community that hosted him in the past, in the contact with the sertanista Sydney Possuelo, etc.). Carapiru has lived his whole life in his language, his imprisonment and last refuge. There are moments in the film when he is caught talking to himself, absorbed, seeming to have a vision or to be hallucinating, as shown in a scene in the community that hosted him, leaning against the door stand (at 46min35sec).

If the game between the opaque and the limpid bifurcates the wandering character of Carapiru, the final limit of the film, its larger envelope, is equally split: the fictionalization of the past in *Serras da desordem* is perennially crossed and confused by the documentary impulse (in the present) which records his return to the places where he had been after being rescued by Possuelo, which makes the film evolve as an immense crystal of time. But if the idea of dissolution ends up being the most poignant in the film, it is because the discussion of the supermodernity according to Augé, considering the social contradictions of that region of the country (and of Brazil as a whole), is less related to the exacerbation of access to facts or to the overabundance of means (although such factors exist among the more prosperous extracts) than to the resulting violence. This is the ultimate meaning of the loss of references Carapiru must bear, which impels him to a depleted or brutalized present from which, surely, the sense and meaning escape him.

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<sup>23</sup> Ismail Xavier writes about Carapiru: "there is a zone of silence, an opacity (for us) in his experience of the scene. There is the enigmatic content of physiognomy, beyond what the more direct sociability requires" (Xavier, 2008, p.17).

<sup>24</sup> The isolation and sadness with which Tonacci films Carapiru at this moment does not correspond, in fact, to what the native lived in his adoptive community. It was a dramaturgical choice. For example, in the scene where Carapiru eats alone while his companions eat the monkeys, his isolation was for medical reasons, he was with tuberculosis, as Tonacci himself revealed in an interview, he was not excluded by some social incompatibility (Cohn, 2008). Cohn emphasizes in his work the weakness which Carapiru displays in the scene, as well as the non-protagonism on its own life story before the film.

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