

I am a diversity of people, as each one of us is. The contemporary subject is exploded, they are several. When you are surprised, it is because you are another, we are being another.
TUNGA.

As an artist, I know the work that I make very closely; the pieces, the performances, I know each detail of each element of it. I focus on looking at the relations, those which can come from anywhere; a smell, a food, a song, a drawing. Everything is meticulously tied together. The moment it is finished, and I think I know everything there is to know about it, I realize, that as a matter of fact, I don't. This is the moment of not knowing, the moment that I start learning from it. This is the moment in poetry that I am interested in. I can do all the readings, I can understand all origins, I can sow together all relations, but there is always a moment when it presents itself as an unknown, it imposes itself as an enigma or a mystery. In a way, my work, or my making, always tends towards this surprise. This surprise, of seeing the world as a mystery, is what makes me widen it, what makes me try to understand this world in a deeper way.

What I am trying to say is that sometimes $A + B$ do not equal C ; sometimes it equals something else. In my opinion, what happens in poetry and in art is the possibility of joining the heterogeneous and finding (in two things that have no relation to each other) something else, something that is produced by this meeting. I believe that modernity is in a way characterized by this meeting, a lucky meeting between two things that have no relation and that together produce a new meaning. For me, the ability, maybe even the vocation of art, is to use this "conjunction energy", which can present itself as an object, or a poem (the joining of two words), or a musical chord (where two completely different notes produce a new and unusual effect) but also, making a generalization (and I think that is what one should do with art), is to take anything and everything that is a poem and say it is not only a poem, it is life.

I believe that what we are talking about is, par excellence, the energy of love, love is the energy of conjunction for us humans. If there is any reason for us to do poetry, it is to create possibilities of having diverse relations, of being surprised at the conjunction of what is heterogeneous. If we humans understand each other, it is not by the homogeneity that we have, it is by our differences. As Tunga explained in the quotation above, we are all unique and diverse, we are all completely different from one another, although we are all identical. Poetry tries to find this unity in the diverse, this possibility of putting the diverse together, in harmony and by doing so, creates meaning. If we generalize this idea, I think that art has a positive role in society.

It is no wonder that we sing together, for example. When two people sing together or dance together, there is an understanding of this nature. It is worth making art for it. There is a will for this to happen, a very close faith, which gives us a reason to do it.

I think we have a fabulous heritage in Brazil, we have had an experience - under a European matrix of course - but one that was radically different from that of other places, and that can contribute immensely, today more than ever, to the understanding of the contemporary world. The cultural diversity that has been a part of our country since the beginning of the last century, formed, or formalized a kind of modernism where other values were included in those organized or thought by modernity. For example, movements like constructivism, arrive in Brazil and deal with the presence of corporality, the presence of the body. They are thought of not only as a visual experience but as an experience of the moving body opposite that. This is the experience of Lygia Clark and Oiticica, for example. Other experiences of a different nature bring social heterogeneity to the center of modern thought. In a way, we were impelled to think of a model where all this heterogeneity would fit. And this is what is happening to the world. In Europe, the presence of Arabic people in France or Germany, immigrants that were brought for labor and ended up building a part of the society, that have brought in other cultures that have to be incorporated into the model, for example. We have this experience, we have been going through this for the past one hundred years, and we think in a much more advanced way than these cultures said to be hegemonic. I believe we have something to teach, we have something to say, we have a lot to learn, but we also have to be heard. It is a dialogue of equals. It is not in the sense of copying. It is not a question of doing it "better" in the way of. It is a matter of using principles, which are the same, because we have a European heritage, but we have things they do not have. The dialogue needs to exist in this dimension.

In a way, it does, and I think it's effective. Obviously, it is not all roses, because independently of the world of ideas, these things also circulate in the world of interests, of cultural hegemonies. Saying no to these cultural hegemonies and making it possible to speak together, in the same status, as equals and bringing in novelties that are not imposed by these cultural hegemonies, that is the fight, that is where art has to be.

We inherit the world; the world is ours and we have the right to be and to practice any culture. All the cultural practices are valid, no one is better than the other, each one is more suitable for you or for me or for a group of people. The will, the desire to create hegemonies of cultural practices is a desire of domination, and against this desire of domination we do art, we impose poetry. It is important to remember, we have the right and the duty to accept and to be able to enjoy any kind of practice, those that come from dominant countries even, because they are legitimate, but we also have the obligation to refuse all that is *imposed* upon us. Subjectivity today seems to be something we build with money, we are made, not of what we like any more, we are made of what we *think* we should like. People represent themselves with this cigar, with that wine, with such clothes, living in this place,

with such a car. It seems to me that advanced capitalism has disposed of the “exploded subject” so that he/she must pass through corporations to create subjectivity, in order to represent himself/herself. This means giving up the possibility to invent oneself by oneself. Which is what you do when you make a poem, when you make a song or when you put together your repertoire. It is a phenomenon of capitalism that does not want, does not to authorize, subjectivity as something that is your own. Your subjectivity is rendered by the media, by a society of consumption that forces you to mount yourself in a way. You sell your time to have money, so that you can get back to being you. That is where poetry can create change.

People *are* something, before being what others want them to be. I think this practice, which I call poetry, but when I say poetry, it can be anything, the arts, architecture, any doing, a dance for example, is this awareness of intention, that makes you realize that you are unique, that each of us is unique. You do not need others to be what you are, on the contrary.

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1 translated from Portuguese