

WORKING ON! RELATOS IMAGINARIOS: MEDIA CULTURAL INPUTS AND OUTPUTS

Villaplana, Virginia

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Action theory/alienation/art Base and Superstructure/body/bricolage Class consciousness/code/culture industry Deconstruction/difference/discourse [democracy] ethnic-ethnicity/ethnocentrism/exchange-value False consciousness/feminism&Post-/forces of production Gender/genre/grand narrative Hegemony/historicism/hypothetico-deductive method Identity/ideology/indexicality Jangle/job/juxtapose Label/language/law Mass media/ metaphor/ minority Narrative/none/norm Other/outer/overview Post-industrial society/prejudice/production Queer theory/quorum/quoteRace-racism/Representation/role-rule Self/stereotype/simulacrum Technology/time/transformation Use-Value/utopia-nism/urgency Value-freedom/verify/violence Watchdog/worldview/wriggle free Yarn/yielding/you?ll Zero+Ones/zigzag/zoom in

► Biopower, however, is power over life itself: the power to add to life, to make it grow and to manage its growth. All this makes biopower a necessary technology for a capitalist society which requires worker bodies which can be regulated.

► Panopticism then regulates the new relationship between humans and technologies that industrialization requires. In this passage, Foucault clearly indicates that this mediation occurs between the production apparatus and the individual; that is, the relationship begins with the supposition that a clear boundary exists between 'man' and 'machine.' The manufacture and maintenance of this boundary may be panopticism's most significant operation. This boundary maintains the capitalist fiction of the free-willed worker who controls the machine to transform his labor into value. In the control society, however, this fiction is no longer required. Information technologies seamlessly intersect with other desiring-machines in the production of our will. "When I use a word," Humpty Dumpty said, in rather a scornful tone, "it means just what I choose it to mean — neither more nor less." "The question is," said Alice, "whether you can make words mean so many different things." "The question is," said Humpty Dumpty, "which is to be master — that's all." (Alice in Wonderland, by Lewis Carroll). The question, as Humpty Dumpty says, is who has the power to create the dominant and hegemonic sense of the discourse. And for feminist theory and critique, as for Alice, "the question" is whether it is possible for the concept of power to have meaning and to be constructed in a new way. Feminist theory and critique, from whatever perspective - philosophical, political, aesthetic, sociological - has always made it abundantly clear that to the discourse of the dominant power is opposed the counter-discourse of the "revolt". To look for and reflect on the experience of this revolt in the culture of the image, in the words of philosophy, and in contemporary narratives is our objective in the current work. A cultural revolt is a synonym for dignity, as Julia Kristeva comments in her most recent book, "Intimate Revolt: and the Future of Revolt". It means thinking of a new way of representing relationships of power, identity, subjectivity, the sex/gender system, and the construction of audiovisual narratives. It proposes taking a subversive look at the discourse of today's society, dominated by globalization, speculation, nihilism, xenophobia and sexual violence. In this sense, as Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari put forward in their essay 'Rhizome', "History is written, but it is always written from the point of view of the sedentary and in the name of a united apparatus of the State, even when nomads are the subject." The art of narrative implies working with experience, which, with the

development of industrialized forms of the communication, production and reproduction of experience which emerged in the late 20th century, has been replaced by Information; a balancing act which, given the need for a reading, audiovisual analysis and reorganization of images, would demand the possibility of an organization of memory and experiences which is conscious of these mechanisms as far as collective history is concerned. It is on this point, viewed from a gender perspective, that the work is focused, presenting a new look at the problematic links between such terms as: Narrative, Audiovisuals and History. Further, establishing connections between intertextual and cultural practices in the face of representational forms which infer the construction of the subjects; and going beyond the lines which delineate borders and establish History as a chronology of facts. The notions of memory, history, information and collective experience in this working proposal are drawn from cinematic and televisual narratives via a discourse of advertising and the information age. 'The machines of information and communication operate at the heart of human subjectivity, not merely in the bosom of its memories, of its intelligence, but also of its sensibilities, its affections and unconscious fantasies.' Félix Guattari, in "Chaosophy". To think up this sentence presupposes a reflection on all subjects and, more concretely, the feminine subject. This, then, will be the fundamental objective of the work: to reflect on the construction of the feminine subject, and therefore on the masculine, by means of audiovisual narratives. Audiovisual narratives, let us not forget, which are part of the beginning of this new millennium. Which implies approaching these stories in the context of new technologies. Recovering the concept of the subject means transformation in philosophical and sociological perspectives which, since structuralism, functionalism and systemic theory, have been announcing the death of the subject. This last concept, its construction in this new mediated culture where reality and fiction form a hybrid discourse, situates us in the problematic between Modernity and Post-Modernity. As such, to research the return of the subject and the notion of subjectivity requires that we situate ourselves in a continuous position with regard to the media and the technological age. Feminist theory and critique claims that it cannot remain on the margin of this philosophic and mediatic debate without thinking about what the creation of this "new subject" means, in the feminine as in the masculine, and the consequences of its redefinition; because we cannot overlook the fact that every audiovisual text constructs identities and forms part of a model of representation appropriate to its social, political and culturally determined moment.

performative ACTS OF READING AND WRITING.

1. Moving things [from the place of reading and books] and changing the place of things [from the place of reading and looking].

... I wanted to propose to you an investigation [recherche] into the history of a word, a still very partial, very localized history. That word is multiplicity. There is a very current use of multiplicity: for example, I say: a multiplicity of numbers, a multiplicity of acts, a multiplicity of states of consciousness, a multiplicity of shocks [Ébranlements]. Here multiplicity is employed as a barely nominalized adjective. And it's true that Bergson often expressed himself thus. But at other times, the word multiplicity is employed in the strong sense, as a true substantive, thus, from the second chapter of Time and Free Will onward, the number is a multiplicity, which does not mean the same thing at all as a multiplicity of numbers*.

Over the last few decades, we have witnessed, in the field of cultural, media and artistic practices (from different flanks), the repetition and reaffirmation of the discursive asseverations which western thought inherited from the Enlightenment, that is, the organisational reduction of thought into opposites: nature/culture, public/private, masculine/femenine, sex/gender. Definitions and socio-cultural hierarchies which do not conceal the humanist dimension that the project of modernity allowed us to glimpse after the great breaches opened up by post-modern theories in western thought and which, nevertheless, now lead us to a consideration of the gaze through reading. In this sense, whilst we might well understand reading and the gaze through the act of writing, it is no less true that their mediation has historically had recourse to different registers of writing, whether through systems and codes of signs forming part of the typewriter, the schematic design of the software for a word processor, databases for consulting archives (crossed by their

indexes) or the hypertext construction of messages in which image, sound and word converge. As we were saying, register of writing (analogic or digital) through the sign because the relations between signifiers can spring from an act resembling consultation and the relation between: words, terms, concepts, ideas and/or images produced during the reading of different texts. Not in vain does Gilles Deleuze's invitation in the quotation above point to a cognitive search which, starting from the diversity of meaning of the term "multiplicity", takes on a historic, philosophic and psychosocial sense (in relation to the position of the subjects). And not in vain do we note that Deleuze proposes this reading from another text, in this case *Time and Free Will: An Essay on the Immediate Data of Consciousness* (1889) by the philosopher Henri Bergson.

The spaces explored by cultural critical discourses (their compression extendible to the aesthetic-artistic and from these words post-feminist) imply the consideration and perception of the structures which contain them. An interdisciplinary discursive meshwork in which the text (critical-artistic) is articulated as writing-reading. A construction which implies participatory action, as Julia Kristeva² observed in around 1969, through the notion of paragrammatic writing-reading. For the ancients, the verb to read denoted to gather, to spy, to recognise signs, to pick, to steal. An active and aggressive participation entailing appropriation of the other. Writing would be reading transformed into interpretative theoretical/practical production.

How to understand the hypertext writing contained in *Zeros + Ones* by the cyberfeminist Sadie Plant?

How to give action to the critical contents which *Zeros + Ones* generates through accumulation and citing other texts on cultural, media, technological and social models in which single thought (as opposed to radical discursive constructions) is established?

2. Text/Hypertext and Context Oppositions. Working elements for an imaginary intervention.

From textuality to hypertextuality, according to Roland Barthes:

I think of a text formed by blocks of words (or images), joined electronically by multiple routes, chains or paths within an open textuality, eternally unfinished and described through such concepts as nexus, node, network, plot and route .

Towards the idea of act, culture and the dÈbordement of the text which Jacques Derrida applied to cultural product: characterised by blurring the limits of the text, that which we believe that the world can identify, that is, the supposed beginning and end of a work, the unity of a compilation, the signatures, the domain of the exterior references to the frame. A definition which may necessarily be understood on linking media culture and the communicative processes between subjects.

3. Reading/viewing: books and screens [A possible transformation. Book archive and the influence of Media Art: video, cinema and hypermedia].

The term that best describes the present social condition is liquescence. The once unquestioned markers of stability, such as God or Nature, have dropped into the black hole of scepticism, dissolving positioned identification of subject or object. Meaning simultaneously flows through a process of proliferation and condensation, at once drifting, slipping, speeding into the antinomies of apocalypse and utopia. The location of power - and the site of resistance - rest in an ambiguous zone without borders. How could it be otherwise, when the traces of power flow in transition between nomadic dynamics and sedentary structures - between hyperspeed and hyperinertia? It is perhaps utopian to begin with the claim that resistance begins (and ends?) with a Nietzschean casting-off of the yoke of catatonia inspired by the postmodern condition, and yet the disruptive nature of consciousness leaves little choice. (*The Electronic Disturbance*. Chapter.2. Nomadic Power and Cultural Resistance. Anti-copyright 1994 Autonomedia, POB 568 Williamsburgh Station Brooklyn, NY 11211-0568 USA).

4. Influence those elements which do not exist, the obvious we see but we are barely aware of that which is absent for this space for research into art as cultural discourse.