



Buffoon: masks and ritual connections

Bufão: máscara e conexões rituais

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ABSTRACT

This article presents considerations about the mask of buffoon. It is placed in relation to a sensitive, numinous, shamanic and mythical universe, establishing connections with Dionysus, Exu and Satyr, seeking to underline the powers of incorporation of the grotesque, carnival and ritualistic principles of this mask.

Keywords: Mask. Ritual. Buffoon.

RESUMO

O presente artigo traz considerações sobre a máscara do bufão. Coloca esta em relação com um universo sensível, numinoso, xamânico e mítico e estabelece conexões com Dionísio, Exu e Sátiro, buscando sublinhar as potências de incorporação dos princípios grotescos, carnavalescos e ritualísticos desta máscara.

Palavras-chave: Máscara. Ritual. Bufão.

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Submitted on: 12/01/2016

Accepted on: 01/13/2017

In this article I write about the Buffon. This understanding was built over a path of training and research in the Mask universe. The research is legitimated in reveries², in the concept of image/imaginary/Common Dreams Fund in Bachelard³, crossed, affected and touched by a mythical understanding of the mask. The grounding principle is the connectivity in different instances such as the triad Play-Party-Ritual of Huizinga⁴.

The search for understanding the mask universe started with the clown. The mask itself demanded the search to understand its complementary opposite: the Buffon, whose concept in this understanding is a mask – however, a whole body mask, a physical mask or body-mask.

I use to say that while the clown goes towards an Apollonian poetry, the buffoon goes towards a Dionysian poetry and both relate to one another, are part of the same flow, are complementary and opposite, belong, complete, maximize and mix one with the other. In this path between the buffoon and the clown we find the *dell'arte*⁵ masks that will be referred to throughout this article but will not approach the *Commedia Dell'Arte* itself⁶.

It is worth mentioning that the buffoon mask is understood and organized in two different ways: ritualistic and market – such as the *dell'arte* masks and the clown. The market organization or spectacle organization does not give up the mythical and mystical aspects of the mask and vice-versa. One should have in mind that after taking on the stages and gaining the sympathy of the royals, the masks unfolded or changed. In the line which I follow to develop my scenic and reflexive experiences, we try to understand how the mask taken on by a professional can bring strong festive ritualistic energetic emanation. This understanding arises from connections with the imaginal, numinous, sensorial, energetic and spiritual universe, i.e., through subjectivities.

In the view of this *researchactress*⁷, masks are like icons, a sort of portal of access to an imaginary universe, to all ways of understanding the world. This universe is concretized in the object/link mask, and is reaffirmed in a physical mask or body-mask⁸ that is very specific in *Commedia Dell'Arte*⁹ and built/discovered in the cases of the buffoon and the clown¹⁰.

The technical preparation of the actor that will carry the mask, both the object and the physical one, is specific because it demands a differentiated body that is energetically and technically prepared (I will not approach the constructed buffoon technique, otherwise this article would be too long¹¹). The notion of a body linked to the mask universe was already present in the clown mask's practice; however, it was in the intensive work with the buffoon (2006) that I deepened the

2. Reverie is the capacity of conceiving in the mind, work in other sphere than the reality, of daydreaming. To learn more, "Earth and reveries of repose" by Gaston Bachelard (1990).

3. To learn more about image, imagery and Dreams Common Fund, please read "The right to dream" by Gaston Bachelard (1986).

4. To learn more about this triad, please read "Homo Ludens. A study of the play-element in culture" by Johan Huizinga (1993).

5. To learn more about a likely link between Satyrs, buffoons, masks of the *Commedia Dell'Arte* and clown, please refer to Brondani (2012).

6. To learn more about the *Commedia Dell'Arte* in the light of this researcher, please refer to Brondani (2008; 2012; 2013; 2014).

7. The term *researchactress* (in Portuguese, *pesquisatriz*, result of the words "pesquisadora" and "atriz" put together, being researcher and actress, in English) started being used in my doctoral thesis (2010). In 994 the researcher Beti Rabetti had already used the term *researchactor*.

8. Hereinafter body-mask and physical mask should be understood as synonyms.

9. The practice of the *Commedia Dell'Arte* that minds to me is that of Contin's: it keeps grotesque, carnival and ritualistic aspects. I was part of the *Scuola Sperimentale dell'Attore* (Pordenone-IT) from 2008 to 2009, took courses with Claudia Contin and Ferruccio Merisi, being an actress of the company and delivering courses. From 2010 to 2014 I founded and was part of the *Bottega Buffa CircoVacanti* (Trento-IT), group of *Commedia Dell'Arte* working in Italy.

10. Clown is used as synonym of *palhaço* (the term in Portuguese).

11. To learn more about the buffoon technique, please refer to Brondani (2014).

concept and practice of physical mask. The physical mask is a process that places all the mask potential on the musculature, in muscular and energetic circuit. A process where the poetic image resulting from the Common Dreams Fund floods and inhabits the body of the *researchactor/researchactress* in imagination, working on subjectivities and changing this body through a Common Poetry Fund (LECOQ, 1997)¹².

The physical mask resembles a set of corporeality, an agency of potential energies. According to Burnier, physicality is the shape given to a body, while corporeality is the shape inhabited by the person (BURNIER, 2001). The physical mask is made up by the energetic and muscular circuits maximized and inhabited not only the person, as consciousness, but with subjectivities born in the Common Dreams Fund managed by the Common Poetry Fund. Together, these powers are a link to enter the universe of imaginary.

With the object mask we have the fetish, i.e., the mask object is empowered. The physical mask is the Common Dreams Fund and the Common Poetry Fund complex that will trigger another corporeality that will give “power” to the subject. The subject has its own physicality and corporeality that, through the Common Poetry Fund (two momentums of creation), will receive the physicality and corporeality of the mask with links to the Common Dreams Fund. It is a union of corporeality working with infusion. The physical mask is made up by the muscular circuit that, in turn, is composed by tension and energy points – energetic circuit. Once tensions are activated, building up the muscular circuit, it will trigger the energetic circuit and both, in the subject’s own corporeality, will make up the corporeality of the physical mask. When this set is established, the mask body will work as a link to the universe of imaginary – just like the object mask.

The Buffoon Mask locks impulse in the universe of imaginary because, abounding in metamorphose for its own nature of excess, we cannot avoid relating the buffoon to the boiling cauldron that is the imaginary, which is the Common Dreams Fund.

In this dynamic between Common Dreams Fund and Common Poetry Fund, the mask goes beyond a mere ornament, being the full *disguise* of the actor in the sense of altering and changing nature because the mask body acts on the whole body. This feature of the physical mask is what makes the difference to the actor who works with the *dell’arte*, buffoon and clown’s (always in the author’s light in line with Taviani, Martin, Molinari, Tessari, Fo, Lecoq, Meyerhold, Duchartre and Contin) masks.

12.

To learn more about the dynamic between Common Dreams Fund and Common Poetry Fund, please see the reference mentioned in footnote 10.

I will try to briefly illustrate the link between object mask and physical mask. In the *Commedia Dell'Arte* we have the mask acting on the body, changing it into the physical mask. However, the mask body does not crystallize the body in a given posture, neither should the actor act as if it were a deficiency or limitation. The physical mask does not hinder the actor from any movement or action; in fact, it is an incentive to develop powers. The actor must rediscover the possibilities of his body in that physicality and corporeality having the image of an elastic body, making everything just like any other body, but under the physical-corporeal logic of the mask. With the physical mask, the actor must develop even more his capacities. Rather than considering the physical mask as a limitation, he must see it as a chance of new explorations.

Molinari, Tavani and Fo also understand the buffoon as a mask, as a body mask, for everything that is pertinent to the mask, for the link with the ritual, with Dionysus, with the disguise and the metamorphose. Martin and Lecoq share the same opinion and add that it is a mask that moves all the organic systems of the body.

Heir of the Satyrs and Dionysus – god of the transformations of earth and time, of metamorphose, fertility, life and death – the buffoon bears genes of an imaginal DNA that works on his body (imagination/dynamic between the Common Dreams Fund and Common Poetry Fund). From this imaginal DNA that runs through the history of humanity and goes beyond it, we step into the considerations about the ritualistic links of the buffoon, trying to do it through a knot of connective network that extends its threads since the Ancient Greece. To envisage this network we need to consider the theater, tragic and comic representations of the 5th century B.C. in Athens and Greece as elaborated and mature forms of theater to, then, consider the oldest connective relations.

Through an iconographic study, Molinari brings the information that primitive people, before the 5th century B.C., already used the “primordial theater element,” i.e., of disguise/masking. This element was used in the ritualistic processions in honor to the god Dionysus (MOLINARI, 2007). Satyr was part of those rituals of the Ancient Greece, holding the “primordial theater element.” By then he was already perceived as body mask, as a fantastic being that was half man/half animal, representative of old spirits of nature and of Dionysus himself.

Dionysus was the deity that catalyzed “several functions of the primitive mind” and had the “intoxicating power of procreation in all things.” Despite being generated the

image and likeness of man, it was called by many names – bull god, goat god, winemaking god – when he appeared as the winemaking god, he “expressed a symbolic aspect of his energetic deity” (GASSNER, 1974, p. 13). The primitive people were dip into magic and ritual practices.

Rituals to Dionysus, known as Dithyramb, in principle were only sung, but they were gradually added with dance and music (COSTA; REMÉDIOS, 1988). Through dance, participants fell into ecstasy and trance (BRANDÃO, 1980). Disguise existed since those processed: masked in goat fur, the men offered an animal sacrifice to the god – typically a goat. Again, the primitive people were dip into magic and ritual practices.

Tragedy elements started being developed from the Dithyramb ritual. In the 6th century B.C., Simonides of Ceos (556-468 B.C.) presented the choir and one soloist (coryphaeus) that interacted with the choir. Later, in 535 B.C., with Thespis and Pisistratus the Dithyramb started telling histories not only about Dionysus, but also the mythology of other “profane” gods. When the topics started to vary, tragedy and comedy were then structured (PAVIS, 2005).

One of the tales about the myth of Dionysus tells that the Satyrs and the Nymphs took care of the god as ordered by Zeus (GASSNER, 1974). The Dithyramb disguise was made with animal furs representing the Satyrs – beings that incorporated and represented the winemaking god. In the popular imaginary, Satyrs were “goat men” (BRANDÃO, 2007). Those disguising as Satyr became Satyr and these representations over representation became as mythological as Dionysus himself. Iconographies show that Satyrs were many times depicted in a mythological way. Always present in religious and theater rituals, the Satyrs followed the choir evolution in tragedy to the satiric dramas and comedy – they were like actors and/or worshipers of the god of winemakers disguised (MOLINARI, 2007) in the myth. This mix of disguise and mythology is interesting because in many rituals the disguise happens aimed at the possession and incorporation of the myth, but can also happen exclusively for the purpose of representing the myth.

Somehow the ritualistic ceremonies in honor of Dionysus were the fertile cauldron of the western civilization. European mimes, clowns, street entertainers (*saltimbancos*), buffoons and *commedianti* derive from the Satyrs (WILLEFORD, 1998; FO, 1997). Sharing this fertile thought, the Satyr then fecundated many other playful manifestations. Dionysus, the god of metamorphoses, transmutation and transformation of earth and

time, of seed into plant and food, of death and resurrection, is deeply connected to Satyr who, in turn, is connected to the buffoon, and both incorporate everything that belongs to god.

The Buffoon Mask provides continuity to the begetting power and bring in it embryos of different manifestations and scenic languages fostered in the Satyrs' choir – the ritualistic and theater processions of goat-men strengthen the imagination of the choir of buffoons. If on one hand we have the potential connection between the Satyrs and buffoons as a development of the choir, on the other there is an imaginal possibility, assuming as premise the dynamic between Common Dreams Fund and Common Poetry Fund and connections with the triad Play-Party-Ritual.

Somehow, the choir of buffoons provides continuity to the Dithyramb. In a process of development of the structure and with creative power, transformations in the playful and disguise parts of the choir brought not only “goat-men,” but also other animals such as the bull and the donkey. Later, jointly with the carnival power, other kinds of disguise and disguised beings were incorporated to the procession. The relation among Dionysus, the Satyrs, Dithyramb, the choir of tragedies and then, jointly with theater developing to comedy occurred with the advance of history, transportation and transformation of ritual to theater.

In theater festivals the satiric drama, developed from the Dithyramb, was the fourth part of the set of plays an author presented – three tragedies and one comedy. Of farcical nature, it mixed the religious and the profane, parodying the tragic heroes. As much as tragedy, comedy has also undergone changes (BRANDÃO, 2007). First, the “Ancient Comedy” was composed by the “Komos” and farce. The Komos was developed in profane or Dionysian (religious side). The religious Dionysian Komos was a ritual in which a phallus was carried in procession on the streets of the city, as part of the rituals of spring, seeding, fertility and fertilization of the land. The profane Komos was a group of persons that went to the streets and homes asking for donations and mocking the residents. It was the imitation, parody and satire of the religious Komos and, to not be recognized, participants wore animal furs.

The choir of buffoons is very likely to come from this two-way Komos, placing the profane and the religious in partnership and communion. This reinforces the observation that to the buffoon the play/scene/comedy and the sacred/drama/tragedy carry the same weight (PEZIN, 2003).

The choir of buffoons gathers the two Komos, the phallus, the ritual, the mockery, the parody, the satire and the extrap-

olation of reality through excess and gratuity. It is interesting to observe the phallus that accompanied the choirs of comedy and carnival processions. One of the obscene elements of choir, according to the social morality, comes from the religious rather than from the profane part of the Komos. This duality between Dionysian religious and profane mockery that the buffoon brings with him is what makes him so ambivalent, disturbing, metamorphosing, transforming, divine and hellish – in the disturbing sense of the term and not as good and evil.

The representations of the tragic and comic genres moved from Ancient Greece to the Ancient Rome (CHACRA, 1983) and developed as movements, characterization and evolution of the Dithyramb chorus in tragedy and in the three stages of comedy (Ancient, medium and new Greek) until it was divided up in the popular styles: Atellian, Fescennine and mime. The Atellian comedy had as nucleus the mask of an old man (Papus) and of a servant (Maccus). It is easily identified as the likely origin of the masks of the servant and of the old man in the *Commedia Dell'Arte* (Zanni and Pantallone), while mime is associated with the satiric style and the *giullari/buffone/buffoon* (MOLINARI, 2007). This link between mime and satiric drama reinforces the connection between the choir of the Satyrs and the choir of the buffoons/*giullari*.

Knowing a little about the changes of the Dithyramb chorus and the Satyrs, we can understand that the tragic and comic choirs strengthen the carnival festival, and were perpetuated and developed in it. The choir that in tragedy joins, narrates and even shares the tragic experience, also offers itself in the carnival banquet. The Satyrs choir, both in tragedy and in comedy, already carried in its heart the principles of the carnival and the womb – the strongest popular power (BAKHTIN, 1999). Understanding the change of the satiric choir – that belonged to the satiric drama, which came from the Dithyramb, where the religious and the profane partook in the Komos – into the buffoon's choir is of utmost relevance. This find shows that the satiric drama choir shares many features with the buffoons' choir. Buffoons are a representation of an imaginary that overflows, exceeds and renews. They summarize an understanding of the world, and whoever carries this mask should also embrace this understanding.

Carnival, in its primitive European tradition related to seeding and the spring equinox (for those leaving the winter and entering the spring), represents the rebirth of life after

the winter hibernation. Such a representation of renewal also happens through disguise/masking. However, the act of disguising/masking is naturally ambiguous, since it brings with it different truths gathering reality and imagination.

[...] bodies are true masks, the materialization of the powers we carry in each of us, force of passions, violence, excesses that we are capable. Comic, primitive, divine and animal beings, funny and fascinating, magic¹³ (MARTIN, 2003, p. 27).

Another manifestation that influenced and merged with the buffoon, also coming from the Satyrs, was the mime. The Satyr, however, disguised as an animal and influenced the buffoon with the disguise, while the mime presented wearing no mask and not disguising himself as an animal. Both the Satyr and the mime, however, used all the capacities of their bodies. According to Molinari (2007), in the Middle Ages, actors typically used no masks, as they inherited the mime legacy. They were known as *histrioni*/histrions, while any actor performing on the streets, bars and fairs was known as *giullare*/buffoon, minstrel or troubadour, depending on their specialty. The *giullare* was the most diffuse and complex form, a kind of mix of mime and Satyr:

And the actor, the *giullare* is the one whose professional activity is to distort the human shape, not only because he disguises as an animal or woman, which per se bears the moral corruption, which is hypocrisy and flattery, but also because he uses his body, showing it, hurting the natural and social rules¹⁴ (MOLINARI, 2007, p. 58).

In some texts *giullare* is translated as jester, but the form/version of jester most known is that after the 10th century that resembles much more the troubadours that recited poetry, sang and played ballad. What matters to know is that the jester with these features, and after the 10th century, is one of the developments of the *giullare*/buffoon (MOLINARI, 2007).

A trait that is not a general rule, but is not exception as well, is that sometimes the *quillare* moves alone; however, we should understand that, since he is from the popular class and carries the “popular class culture” (CAMPORESI, 1991), the buffoon made a life with his art and, therefore, many times depended on someone to sustain him. The likelihood or possibility of getting a patron or benefactor was much higher if he were alone. However, even wandering along the buffoon preserved his languages – mockery, party, carnival, scorn, eschatology, grotesque, sexuality, divine and profane – and the laugh in all of its possibilities. If power was needed, than the

13.

Free translation : “[...] les corps sont de véritable masques de jeu devirent la matérialisation des forces que nous portons tous en chacun de nous, des passions, de la violence, de la démesure dont nous sommes capables. Êtres cosmiques, primitifs, de nature divine et animale, amusants fascinants, magiques.”

14.

Free translation : “E l’attore, il giullare é proprio colui la cui attività professionale consiste nello stravolgimento della forma umana, e non solo perché esso si traveste da animale o da donna, ciò che di per sé comporta corruzione morale, cioè ipocrisia e adulazione, ma anche perché egli usa del suo corpo, esibendolo, contro la norma naturale e sociale.”

gang/choir was built bringing the parties of crazies, carnivals, processions etc. If the strategy was to survive, it was better to wander alone. In fact, his solitude protected the royals and clergymen against his carnival and anthropophagic power that was present, although to a lesser extent. The royals could not afford with the choir of buffoons without being corrupted or becoming their target, since when a gang wins room the carnival *folie*, the freeing madness is installed.

The *giullari*/buffoons had three forms of play/scene. The first was with obscene gestures, deformed, transformed and transfigured bodies. The second was staged in the courts, and the buffoons reported or made intrigues (what we know as court jester or king's fool). The third play was in churches where buffoons sang/told the story of the lives of saints, kings, and princes.

We naturally guess that the buffoon will seek for the church: since his ancestry lays on the rituals to a god he split into the religious institutions keeping his ties with the divine. In that historical moment of passage from primitivism to the Middle Ages in which the society was seizing the rituals it used to call profane and carrying it to the Christian festivities, the only refuge of the divine was the religion and its spaces. However, the buffoon is corrosive to the power institutions through his satire, inversion, corruption, and takes with him the profane in relation to the institutional religion. These traits and powers made the ecclesiastic institutions endeavor to fight the buffoons, firstly expelling them from churches.

There are documented records of catholic actions against these artists. The documents trigger the hunt to the artists and, at the same time, unveil the power of the buffoon/grotesque play on the audience, and how the religious power institutions feared losing the social control. The buffoon's life philosophy was not work to the controller institutions, "Sleep, eat and let the world go on. And this represents the buffoon's honor" (MOLINARI, 1985. p.111)¹⁵. This motto shows the lack of fear for God, guilt, obedience, penitence – the manipulation tools used by the religious institution – absence at work, lack of social duties and morality – tools of social obedience.

We should also consider that, even in the religious institutions, the buffoon has not changed its appearance: his deformed, pulsating body-mask with lecherous habits was an insult to the religious moral. The church or the buffoon had to succumb. However, it is known that "[...] the buffoon never falls: no one will ever blame him or make him a scapegoat, because he is the vital and corporal principle par excellence, an animal that refuses paying for the collectivity

15.
Free translation: "Dormire, magnare e lasciar correre il mondo. E questo rappresenta l'onore del buffone".

[..]” (PAVIS, 2005, p. 35). Therefore, without succumbing the buffoon leaves or is removed from the religious institution. The institution sustained power based on fear, on the castration of pleasure and on penitence, but was headed by human beings subject to corruption. And here is the conflict: with his freedom, the buffoon invited to corruption and then there he was to report it. He would denounce the corruptible, the hypocrites that enjoyed richness, gluttony, luxury and then represented penitence and poverty. He, the buffoon would not be denouncing himself, as he was not part of the social moral, but would denounce those that dressed up a pseudo-morality. For all these reasons, the third room occupied by the buffoon, i.e., the churches, was gradually vacated.

Despite his conviction for this seeming craziness, or for the religious averting or for the social/moral repugnance, the buffoon fascinates whoever looks at him. Seen as the carrier or truth, with his apparent insanity, he can say everything to everybody, without being target of the moral laws. Through the possibilities of laugh, including craziness, the buffoon unveils the intentions behind the social conventions and exposes their corruption. The mockery with teasing smile bears the cruelty of the denouncement of the hidden truth always under the shade of craziness or playfulness causing the ambiguity of his words’ power.

With his metamorphosed and metamorphosing figure (for all the powers working on his body-mask), apparently dying and agonizing, gangrene and pulsation between life and death, between excrement and fertility, putrefaction and/or gestation, the buffoon is the passage of worlds, metamorphose of the material. With penis, breasts, swollen belly and visible organs, the buffoon can bring out ambiguous feelings of repulsion and compassion. Some perceive him as a poor cripple, a deformed being that deserves mercy but who, nonetheless, with his compelled rhetoric and even for his deformity, causes repugnance – make a self-defense for rejecting the pain caused by the true insults. But the word said could also result from craziness and, thus, the feeling of mercy comes back and, soon after, the feeling of repugnance emerges, and so on, alternating in the subject that observes him and holds contradicting feelings about him.

The buffoon is a disturbing being with corrosive rhetoric, of commotion and intensive mime intonations; he masters the word and the powerful use of the body in the discourse – legacies of the mime and the Satyr (MOLINARI, 2007). In his words there are affections moved by his body-mask that are emanated in the atmosphere. The perspicacity of the rhetoric,

the use of mime, irony, metaphor, laugh, dual sense, sarcasm, mockery, humor and tease are also useful to the buffoon. With those, he brings everything that is mental to the physical plan, i.e., he causes a physical reaction: laugh. Bringing this to the physical plan, he takes subjects away from the rational field and starts affecting them and, in the realm of affections, the buffoon has empirical wisdom, intrinsic knowledge, it is in his imaginal DNA –in his domain.

With the power of rhetoric, body-mask, theater and meta-theater (mime), the buffoon inverts the established order. He attacks the society, not physically, but morally, because he attacks the pseudo-moralism, unleashing the awareness raising that is where aggressiveness and cruelty reside. With visible genital organs, bowels, wounds and deformities, bad words and obscenities mixed to philosophic, existential and prophetic discourses, the buffoon infers a reflection about the human relations and their structures. Although the buffoon uses obscenities, it should be clear that he is not an immoral, but an amoral being. This difference is very important because to be immoral the buffoon should share the social morality, which he does not: he denounces it. We should bear in mind that the obscene symbolisms come from the holy side of the Komos and that he uses it as a way for confronting the taboos of the pseudo-social morality, not to be obscene or shock through obscenity, since in the buffoon's life/play there is no obscene: everything can be sacred and/or play.

With his laughter the buffoon mocks and laughs at everything: power, war, hunger, wealth, poverty, death, Evil, God and the human being itself that creates the social structures to be imprisoned in it (BALANDIER, 2006). With his laughter he exercises everything that could cause him dread or fear, and this way he survives because “Whoever laughs at hell can laugh at anything” (MINOIS, 2000, p. 249)¹⁶. With his hunger for life the buffoon does not need authorization, approval, neither allows psychologies because “he has the superiority of the supreme craziness, universal craziness, queen of the world” (MARTIN, 2003)¹⁷ – and such universal craziness, of the cosmic power of creation, is also part of the Common Dreams Fund.

The buffoon is body-mask; he is a complex of dynamics between the Common Dreams Fund and the Common Poetry Fund connected in the play-party-ritual sphere, whose discourse is embedded with the universal craziness and the grotesque mediated by the mastering of the rhetoric and the full use of the body possibilities in the discourse, which carries in it the imagination, the primitive and the divine.

He celebrates life in the most ritualistic sense of party.

16.

Free translation: “Qui rit de l'enfer peut rire de tout.”

17.

Free translation: “[...] a la supériorité de la folie, la folie universelle, reine du monde.”

His body in evidence and dilaceration is presented to the human being serving as a mirror for a catharsis. Regardless if in putrefaction or gestation, his joyful body emanates and exhales (itself in) party invoking a perception of the world's and human life's duality (life and death). In his entrails and entries, the buffoon brings the "principle of material and corporeal lives" (BAKHTIN, 1999). Within him and through him, the party begins causing the same commotion in the audience that affords to follow its carnival group and choir.

For being so integrated to ancestry with his body-mask, grotesque, carnival and joyful, the buffoon starts the party, invokes the ritual and plays with reality. With his presence he seduces, works in the inner and in the heart, moves affections, instigates and acts with dexterity, perspicacity, wisdom, amorality, freedom, fascination, moving malice, accessing the consciousness of the popular Rabelais' power. Assisted by carnival, laugh and craziness, he presents to the audience the decoding of social reality.

The buffoon uses laugh in all of its aspects. Since laugh is a physical action, it can be a reaction to an intellectual or external stimulus, or a spontaneous action caused by the body. However, in both cases laugh will cause a sensitive and subjective action that exceeds the moment when it happens, because it is related to dimensions abstract to the reality, he is connected to the universal craziness, to rituals of transition of many cultures – festive, funeral or of age passages – to pleasure and party. This physical action/reaction comprises and moves archaic elements of the soul.

Sensitive relations of connection with the buffoon happen in different levels, considering his body-mask relations with the ritual, with Dionysus, with the Satyrs and with the choir. Some academics associate the Trickster to the buffoon. If we consider the mythology, the Trickster is very close to the buffoon in the concept relevant to that line, because it is an anthropomorphic being that is marginalized, playful, festive, with Shamanic traits and that can also be rascal, tricky and "vindictive." Martin (2003) places Buffoons, Tricksters and Shamanic (office existing in some tribes) in the same category, as synonyms. It is important highlighting that Shamanism is understood as the manifestations, rites and practices related to nature, to the spiritual, supernatural, energetic and mystic plan and the shamanic is the intermediary between the objective reality and the phenomenon (BARRIO, 2005). Augras (2009) brings information that supports the thinking that rules this research: according to her, Exus and Pombogiras would also be in the same category as the Tricksters.

To this study, Dionysus is deeply connected with Exu in an underground and shrubby way, just like the Satyrs are connected with Dionysus, with Exu through the imaginary caldron, related by an imaginal DNA that crosses cultural, time-space and geographic borders.

Dionysus, god of transformation, of the nature cycles, of transmutation of excrement into fertilizer and fertility of earth, and of death into life, of party, of banquet and wine, has its special agencies; his knowledge is rooted, as shrubby as his nature, as lively and organic as his fertility, as intrinsic as pulsation (MAFFESOLI, 1985). These traits also fit into Exu.

The Dionysian rituals were Shamanic rituals, since they sought to connect with another sphere, with the divine. Likewise, the rituals of worship to Exu, the *orixá* of fertility, of transmutation paths, of the mouth that eats everything and swallows everything returning it as fertility, are also Shamanic. While the Satyr represented and incorporated Dionysus, the buffoon represents and incorporates sensitive elements of such a dual and complex *orixá* as Exu. Through connections, the buffoon becomes Shamanic and touches in him an Afro-Brazilian ancestry that is Exu, as mythical and controversial as Dionysus – but such a polemic complexity is inherent to the nature of both gods.

Some studies refer to the buffoon as the demon, Shamanic/sorcerer and/or trickster, in a derogatory sense. And this is a quite Christian view since the buffoon represents all the excess repressed by the social structure. The same happened with Exu that is mistakenly viewed as the personification of evil. Here, the evil has been labeled. In Europe, the attempt of placing Dionysus as the evil fails, because he was already impregnated in culture even before Christianity started. So, he was popular and everybody knew his true nature. Exu is an *orixá* as multiple and polysemic as Dionysus and his connectivity takes place in a mutual and powerful dynamic. In Brazil and Latin America Christianity has deflowered the beliefs using the concepts of sin, fear, obedience and each and every deity contrary to this structure was related to “evil.”

In the rituals of Candomblé and Umbanda we have the incorporation, where the Orixá or Entity is present through the presence in the “*filho de santo*¹⁸” who becomes the representation and incorporation of the Orixá or Entity – just like the Satyrs did by incorporating and representing Dionysus. We should bear in mind that in both rituals dance plays a core role: it moves the affective musculature that calls the ancestry jointly with other elements (singing, drum) that assist this call/invocation.

18.

The person who incorporates the entity or *orixá*.

In Candomblé and Umbanda, Exu is the first one to be welcomed. Every yard (*terreiro*) has an altar or room for him and the house's sons must worship him. That is so because Exu is responsible for the communication between gods and men – just like Dionysus in the Greek mythology. Exu is the one who opens and closes the paths. In the Greek-Roman mythology, Dionysus or Bacchus (correspondent in the ancient mythological pantheon) was not only the messenger, the one who took and brought messages between gods and human beings. In the rituals to this god, the Satyr incorporated him and communication became more interactive: god and human being shared the same body. Then, communication happened in other levels, not only through message but through the incorporation presence. This way, Dionysus and Exu become the embodied link between human beings and gods, and the subject, *filho de santo* or Satyr, is the Shamanic, the welcoming support and receptacle that enables the presentification.

While to Candomblé or Umbanda incorporation happens with all *orixás* and entities, in the Greek-Roman mythology the phenomenon happened only with Dionysus. However, Exu and Dionysus share other traits: in the Afro-Brazilian pantheon Exu is the *orixá* that prefers the human pleasures of the party, drunkenness, vice and excess – pleasures so joyful for Dionysus as well.

The fact that Dionysus allows the gathering of gods and humans at this level of sharing a body, i.e., allowing the human being to experiment the sensation of divinity, immortality (BRANDÃO, 2007), subjectivities and wisdoms reserved to gods, was an insult to the Olympus congregation. The union between immortality/mortality, god/human that happened in incorporation defined the main communication means that Dionysus managed between the spheres of reality and the divine. Considered to be a popular and diverse god in the world of the Olympus' traditional deities, his cultures in the field have been integrated to the rites later practiced in Athens since, in face of such an imprudent agency, his rite should be integrated to the Olympus' festivities with some caution (ROCHA, apud FÉLIX; GOETTEMES, 1989).

Wine, drunkenness, excess, party and everything that pleased people and human were part of the rites to Dionysus, just like in the rites to Exu. But there are differences in this similitude, and the difference is in the rite. In the rites to Dionysus, wine and drunkenness brought ecstasy for the concretization of the union with the god. In the rites for Exu, in Umbanda, the act of drinking is posterior to the trance – this when the son is part of the rite, leaving aside discussions about

incorporations out of the rite or by persons in altered consciousness state due to the use of alcohol, or other substances, and that end up by incorporating during the rite. Alcohol is present in both rituals, but managed in different ways. In the ritual of Candomblé, in the ceremony open to the public, alcohol may be offered to the audience and is given to the *orixá* as a gift. The Shamanic does not drink it to incorporate, the trance happens in a process of possession that is not induced by drink, but by dance, singing and drums.

Dionysus' duality between the human and the divine is inherent to the god. This characteristic is in his mythology because he had two gestations: one in the thigh of the immortal Zeus and another in the womb of the mortal Semele, making the founding and funded image of/in the union and oneness between the divine being and the human being (TORRANO apud FÉLIX; GOETTEMS, 1989).

This inversion of mortal into immortal that happens in the ritual and possession and incorporation of Exu and Dionysus resembles the principles of carnival, a realm where inversion of power is part of the game and the party happens. In the festive rituals of Dionysus and Exu is where the strongest inversion of power happens: of an immortal into mortal and vice-versa.

Evoé and Laroyê are powerful greetings and evocations in each mythology and are both related to fertility and procreation, having the phallus as a symbol. In the popular imaginary both can be either animalistic or the image and likeness of human being; both have the goat as one of the totem animals or the animal to be offered in sacrifice. Dionysus and Exu are wine and *cachaça* (brandy) in a festive drinking ritual of trance and party. The duality and ambiguity are present in both. Dionysus and Exu may be vindictive, peacemakers, seduce, sensual, sexual, warrior, dark and/or sunny, serene, joker, ironic, liar or sincere. They both maximize the power that goes towards them and are deeply related with the ritual and party, either for the fertility or for the inversion of the order and power, of the game and play of carnival.

The same powers that place the buffoon in connection with Dionysus place him in relation to Exu. It is worth noticing that such connections follow underground paths. The buffoon is not the incorporation of Exu or Dionysus, but comprises and incorporates the principles that govern these gods; he is the heir of those gods, a legacy that comes from an imaginal DNA. The buffoon actor body-mask must try to touch and affect through subjectivities resulting from such festivity ancestry.

The intention here is not to set a correspondence between Dionysus and Exu, but to appropriate knowledge, understand the empirical and ancestor agency based on the cultural referential, of an experience close to a reality of life. If Maffesoli points out that Europe and the Western should resume to the Dionysian knowledge (MAFFESOLI, 1985), why should we not return to a ritualistic experience that could provide use with this organic, rooted and transformative knowledge? Why should we not appropriate the knowledge of Exu with carnival power of exuberance, if the popular power overflows in several traditional practices that enable us to experience such powers?

The connections between Dionysus and Exu mainly enter detailed relations. Some of these are shown here, evidencing the fertile links that strengthen the intrinsic and empirical wisdom to be explored. Deep and sensitive knowledge about the changes of the body based on the relations with the nature elements, with the spiritual and transcendent sphere of the human being.

The buffoon body-mask connects to Exu through the same complex relations that connect him to Dionysus. These links go beyond space/time, culture or geography. In fact these are links/incorporations, achievements of the Common Poetry Fund that happen at micro and macro levels, singular and plural coming from the Common Dreams Fund through an imaginal DNA. In this dynamic the individual is him, is he in the myth, is he with the myth, is the representative of the myth, is the myth (Dionysian, Exu's ambiguities, and also of the mask). One can easily perceive that most considerations refer to the mythological field and are strengthened in the mystical spheres of the ritual, also linked to the mythic and mystic aspect of the buffoon's mask. However, we know that every sensitive and imaginal universe feeds reality, returns to the imaginary to then come back to reality and so on, building the cyclic net between reality and the imaginary.

Many masks, part of the rituals performed in the Antiquity and Middle Ages, were spread over time, being developed in possibilities and powers, and continued to be manifested in mountains, on regional parties and provincial carnival parties, but also opened a market path. In some moments this turbulent path is subdivided into professional and ritualistic. Sometimes both paths interact, complement one another. In other times, they seem to be very apart, and a dialogue seems to be unlikely. But this context duality is part of the great fascination of the mask.

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