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Cartographic aspects of the theater performances *Odisseia 116* and *BR3*

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Cartographic aspects of the theater performances

*Odisseia 116* and *BR3*[[1]](#footnote-1)

Cleilson Queiroz Lopes[[2]](#footnote-2)

**Abstract**

This article is an analysis of the writing process of the dramaturgy *Odisseia 116* based on a six-day trip by bus between Rio de Janeiro and Ceará. Dramaturgy is structured on a triad: autobiographical characteristics; the possibility of interviewing people and photographing traveling landscapes and the Homeric Odyssey, the inspiring work of this writing. A cartography emerges as a methodology from the trip and consolidates itself in dramaturgy. Dialogue with interviews given by Antônio Araújo and Bernardo Carvalho about the *BR3* show. In the final considerations, I point to three possible cartographies: the travel cartography, the dramaturgy cartography and the rehearsal room cartography.

**Keywords**: Travel. Dramaturgy. Cartography.

Aspectos cartográficos das peças *Odisseia 116* e *BR3*

**Resumo**

Este artigo é uma análise do processo de escrita da dramaturgia *Odisseia 116* a partir de uma viagem que durou seis dias de ida e volta de ônibus entre o Rio de Janeiro e o Ceará. A dramaturgia se estrutura sobre uma tríade: as características autobiográficas; a possibilidade de entrevistar pessoas e fotografar as paisagens em viagem e a Odisseia homérica, obra inspiradora dessa escrita. Uma cartografia surge como metodologia a partir da viagem e se consolida na dramaturgia. Dialogo com entrevistas cedidas por Antônio Araújo e Bernardo Carvalho sobre o espetáculo *BR3*. Nas considerações finais, aponto para três cartografias possíveis: a cartografia da viagem, a cartografia da dramaturgia e a cartografia da sala de ensaio.

**Palavras-chave:** Viagem. Dramaturgia. Cartografia.

Aspectos cartográficos de las piezas *Odisseia 116* y *BR3*

**Resumen**

Este artículo es un análisis del proceso de escritura de la dramaturgia *Odisseia 116* a partir de un viaje de seis días en autobús entre Rio de Janeiro y Ceará. La dramaturgia se estructura en una tríada: características autobiográficas; la posibilidad de entrevistar a personas y fotografiar paisajes itinerantes y la Odisea Homérica, obra inspiradora de este escrito. Una cartografía surge como metodología del viaje y se consolida en la dramaturgia. Diálogo con entrevistas de Antônio Araújo y Bernardo Carvalho sobre el show *BR3*. En las consideraciones finales, apunto tres cartografías posibles: la cartografía de viajes, la cartografía de dramaturgia y la cartografía de sala de ensayo.

**Palabras clave**: Viajes. Dramaturgia. Cartografía.

There has been a desire, a strong will inside me since 2014, when I left Ceará to study theater in Rio de Janeiro, carrying only a few clothes and books in a small bag. This travel, taken by bus across BR-116 highway, involved not just a mere displacement, but a north to someone who was adrift. The change, pointing to Rio de Janeiro city, was not limited to the metropolis anymore, because now it did not mean that postcard city for me, the “wonderful city[[3]](#footnote-3)”. It was going to be the city where I would live daily. Inside the wonderful city, I had to create strategies and spaces where Ceará could fit, and inside Ceará, my hometown Iguatu, and inside Iguatu, *me*, an errant and adrift subject, who starts to realize in this transit and in this travel, the transformation of his own identity traits, his instability and soon, the dynamic movement where it occurs.

I could not imagine that the distance from my land, friends, family and landscapes that I have been familiar with would be a burden to me as it was in some moments. In 2001, I had in mind that “going back could be a possible way”. It was in this process of thinking about a return narrative and the reestablishment of my inner and exterior peace, that the Homeric Odyssey seemed to be a work pretty related to my desire of going back.

I confess in the first moment the desire of going back was not problematized as deep as it deserved. Go back to where? To whom? Would it be a possibility to return to the same image I had left three years ago? As a theoretical foundation, it is relevant to understand that the idea of going back as this possible rescue does not come true. That’s because the trip once made by me as a person who was moving out to study in Rio de Janeiro in 2014 was replaced by the return of a researcher-artist who, with a camera on his hands, intended to photograph and interview people along the process.

Through cartographic methods and the perception that images, landscapes, people and borders are in constant transformation, this article is based on theorists such as Suely Rolnik (1989), Gilles Deleuze and Féliz Guattari (1995), in addition to interviews with Antônio Araújo (2016) and Bernardo Carvalho (2017) about brazilian theater group Teatro da Vertigem and their work *BR3*. In this work, from the perspective of a returning home trip, cartography seems to show sensitive possibilities for my erratic writing. In these terms, creative process and theoretical conceptualization feed each other back.

In the article written by Otavio Miguel Chaves de Sousa and Renato Ferracini, entitled For an investigation in performing arts: a possible path through cartography (2019), the authors say that cartography, besides being a method, is a concept which has been often used in Brazil in investigations on the academic field. Research like these are more frequent in psychology and artistic areas. The philosophers Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, seeking not to follow the research’s routes and not to present a finalized object, have elaborated this concept (Chaves de Sousa, Ferracini, 2019).

Development

In *Cartografia ou de como pensar o corpo vibrátil*[[4]](#footnote-4), Suely Rolnik (1989) separates the concept of cartography from map. For her, cartography differs from a map once it accompanies the dynamic transformations of the landscape. The map, on the contrary, would be the static landscape (Rolnik, 1989). In this sense, the concept of cartography is more pertinent to the project *Odisseia 116* than the concept of map. Project *Odisseia 116* is an artistic project that had the purpose of elaborating a dramaturgy. This dramaturgy was built after a six-days bus trip between Rio de Janeiro and Ceará, my homeland. Its foundation comes from interviews, photographs and inspirations from the Homeric Odyssey.

The aim of this project is to follow the transformations in landscapes, whether special, social, affective or artistic. The photographs do not intend to map but to capture images by chance inside the trip’s dynamic. Similarly, the interviews do not intend to map identities, stagnating or limiting them, but instead, to cartograph the path. Finally, the dramaturgy does not intend to map the trip, it does not seek one vision of a possible reality about the traveler, but is inspired by and identified in the movement, in the trajectory between the trip and the artistic elaboration.

According to Rolnik, for the cartographer, theory is always a means to draw a cartography on. Thus, theory is built inside the dynamic of landscape’s elaboration. Therefore, this dynamic is mutual and complementary (Rolnik, 1989). This is another layer of cartography which is also present in the project *Odisseia 16*, keeping in mind that travel, crisis and trauma[[5]](#footnote-5) are analysed simultaneously to the dramaturgic elaboration, sometimes editing and changing the object’s transformation dynamic, in this case, the dramaturgy. Here, the theoretical study interferes directly with dramaturgy. Some examples of that are my questionings as a researcher among the images seen through the window:

There is a window. A glass between me and the horizon. All images, all landscapes are dynamic and moving. They are becoming images. They transform fast… And then, without noticing, my hand touches the bus’ window. As if through touching the transparent glass, I could feel the image. You know, feel it getting a form, blurring, deforming, leaving it behind or many times following it until the last sigh. It was with the hand on the transparent window that my touch would be complete. That was how I could be part of that image. That was how I have made that window not my wall, but my instrument. *Rio de Janeiro, Belford Roxo, Além Paraíba, Muriaé, Leopoldina*. It was like fate happening in transit. At each stop, a luggage would go away and another would get in. More eyes approaching, then others going away and in this moment the two movements would encounter. Yes, because the one who once before was inside the bus being interviewed, was now part of the image outside, in the same dynamics, it is hard to deal with loss. In the image’s last breath, in its imminence of getting lost, I would see tears, hugs, kind gestures… *Feira de Santana, Governador Valadares, Teófilo Otoni, Jequié, Taubaté, Tucano, Euclides da Cunha*. A memory would then get into myself: Eolo’s island, land of wind’s God in the Odyssey. This island cannot be found in any map, because it is in permanent movement and transformation. I had realized then that not only was I moving, but the space itself was also moving. Inside the bus and outside it, there were only a few moments of suspension… Sometimes, between one city and another, my throat would get dry, and I would suddenly have a frog in it. A couple minutes later I would cough, but I was not sick. I was choking with stars’ dust, that’s what was happening. *Feira de Santana, Santa Bárbara, Areias, Petrolina, Canudos, Salgueiro, Exu, Cab*robó. The landscapes would give me a lump in the throat, tangled images in a forty-eight hours trip. I was in transit, inside, outside and between that each person’s Odyssey happened in there. In a game of tension in which existence was placed, I realize my words move around but are not enough (score - eolo’s island). *Chorozinho, Crato, Limoeiro do Norte, Brejo Santo, Jaguaribe, Icó, Iguatu.* Me, who comes from, me who goes to, me who listens to, who dances, who cheers up, who gets frustrated, now I get off in my hometown. me, me, me. I am the last distance of this narrative, getting off my captive seat, with a sore lower back, my feet swollen, pains, memories, with a bunch of luggage giving farewell outside the window. And then, the bus, which is also a boat, keeps moving… Now, if you excuse me, I quote Homer and the Odyssey for the first time in this play: “I could never see something sweeter than our own land”. Unquote (Lopes, 2017, p.14).

This excerpt of the dramaturgy brings images of the trip. All cited cities exist. It brings references to Homer’s Odyssey as well, besides themes such as saudade[[6]](#footnote-6) and distance. Finally, it evokes autobiographical issues once it describes my body, questioning the researcher-artist place that I try to occupy. These references are porous and poetic, bifurcating into the dramaturgy’s elaboration.

Discussing the cartographer’s work, Rolnik considers that all entrances are good whenever there are multiple exits (Rolnik, 1989). I think then about the trip through the river, where its afluents sometimes put us apart from an axis, and sometimes bring it back, because the interest of cartography is not to create an intellectual hierarchy, but to be open to this dynamic which can seem to distance, but actually transforms the landscape and therefore, the object. Cartography does not dismiss these distancing, on the contrary: understanding the fluxus’ changes in the landscape is a cartographer’s function.

Rolnik defines the cartographer as a real anthropologist: living of expropriating, appropriating, devouring and spawning, *transvalued* (Rolnik, 1989, p.2). The mixture of references and materials are part of the cartographer’s work, with no hierarchy concerns over them. For Rolnik, to understand, for the cartographer, has nothing to do with explaining or revealing. For him/her, there is nothing above - skies of transcendence -, nor below - mists of essence. What lies above, below and in all sides are intensities searching for expression (Rolnik, 1989, p.3). This relation approximates cartography to the artistic elaboration processes, where, very often, explanations and revelations are not the artist's’ interest. In the project *Odisseia 116*, my wish was never to map a trip - in the author’s conception of map - or even to circunscribe the crisis inside the project taking the risk of limiting it, but to be aware of these two processes in order to deal with them inside the project and use them as creation devices.

For the author, cartography is, in itself, a space of active exercise of these strategies. An emerging space of unnamed intensities; space of incubation for new sensitivities and new languages throughout time. The desire’s analysis, from this perspective, concerns ultimately to the choice of how to live, the criteria choices in which social invents itself, the real social. In other words, it refers to the choice of new worlds, new societies. The cartographer’s practice is, here, immediately political (Rolnik, 1989, p.4).

In addition, Rolnik discusses the cartographer’s practice as a political position towards the world. A work that, similarly to the artistic work, is moved by an unrest feeling, by an insatisfaction, a discomfort that makes it fabulate, think and try to discover new forms, new worlds. In this active research exercise, new practices, problems and matters appear (Rolnik, 1989). In the case of *Odisseia 116*, São Francisco river transposition to some cities in Ceará, something that was completely abandoned, was an aspect that I did not expect to see and that influences directly the dramaturgic elaboration. The river that does not reach the dry land ends up drowning the dramaturgy’s body of words. Some examples of this device can be noticed on the fifth scene:

You got some cachaça? Gimme two shots. I come from Iguatu. Iguatu has no rain, it’s dry, fucking hot city. Been travelling’ for one day now, heading to Rio de Janeiro, trying to work as a mason. In Iguatu I worked as a rancher. But it don’t rain. They said a river was gonna run there. Did it happen? Hum, the largest river in the world. You knew that? The jaguaribe river that runs through Iguatu is the largest river in the world? The largest DRY river in the world… Fucking hot city. I just wanted to find a better life than this one I’m living (Lopes, 2017, p.15).

This excerpt is from a scene based in one of the interviews made during the trip. The interviewed person was a rancher who repeated many times that Iguatu “didn’t work” because it was hot. He also said it never rained, all sorts of things that crossed his daily life. The intention was to make the river flood this text line, even in its absence. This device is used in different ways in the entire dramaturgy. Sometimes the river is the absence of structure that causes migration, other times it is the metaphor which drowns the words and also the dry river, highlighting the void and constant longing for water.

*BR3*, from Teatro da Vertigem, a theatrical group from São Paulo, is a cartographic piece that finds in travel one of its creation impulses. At first, worried about a dramaturgy that would start from transit, they chose Brasileia, Brasília and Brasilândia, cities that shared the prefix BR in its names, for a theatrical creation influenced by cartography, starting from the identity construction of these places. In an interview given to Silvia Fernandes, in *Sala Preta* magazine (2005), about the creative process of the play in its relation with the three cities and Tietê river, the location chosen to its mise-en-scene, the director Antônio Araújo observes:

If you think of identity in this dialogue with the river, you are creating a relation. But I remember that in Suely Rolnik’s talk, it was less in relation to something and more in relation to the other who is not you, but another person. In this sense, concerning these multiple identities, I feel it is stronger in BR3’s text directions than in the staging issues. If we think about Jonas, for example, he is a character who starts changing once he is in contact with the other, and absorbs things… (Araújo, 2005, p.170).

As the characters move when they are in contact with the other in Antônio Araújo’s mise-en-scene and, mainly, in the dramaturgy proposed by Bernardo Carvalho, so does the elaboration of a piece motivated not by a desire of mapping the three cities, but by the intention of acting in travel as an artist who “cartographs” landscapes, considering them dynamic. This is a feature that approximates project *Odisseia 116* and *BR3*, because it is not only about having the travel as a characteristic, but the fact that this characteristic, of transit, influences directly the dramaturgical elaboration.

*BR3* proposes a literal trip, where the encounter between the characters transforms their characteristics and their identity traits, because, for the director, identity is dynamic. In *Odisseia 116*, the trip works much more as an invocation, as a citation that accumulates diverse references in the dramaturgy, triggering it.

For Araújo, the river’s mapping is understood as places that are inside places - the river is inside the road that is inside São Paulo city (Araújo, 2005). If the play’s mapping already stresses the traditional idea of map, I can say that cartography in *BR3* is established through landscapes within landscapes. In *Odisseia 116*, the river’s cartography is constituted as a juxtaposition of images which cross the text’s body: through the feet, inside the house, running across the space, inside the bodies. The river current floods the dramaturgy and when the river does not reach land, it is its absence that elaborates new spaces.

In order to think about places of transit, cartography, identities and travel in the piece *BR3*, I have done interviews with director Antônio Araújo and dramaturgist Bernardo Carvalho, making almost the same questions to realize what has been the process for each one, after more than ten years after the piece’s debut[[7]](#footnote-7).

Both interviews bring very interesting perspectives for the discussion of cartography in theater. Both talks are quite frank and recognize the hardships of working with travel and the cartographic process as a theatrical methodology. They reveal, thus, a layer that is neither sweet nor docile, which ends up being rare when it comes to writing about collaborative processes in Brazil. In this sense, the interviews have been a thankful surprise.

As a starting point for artistic elaboration, *BR3* uses the three locations with prefix BR, as mentioned before. The same way*, Odisseia 116* is also triggered by the trip between two cities, Rio de Janeiro and Iguatu, my homeland. Both cartographies are dynamic. They move and perceive landscapes and identities which are also on the move. According to Antônio Araújo,

When we started observing these three places, we realized some contrasts that seemed interesting: Brasilândia, for example, is in the north; you are already at Serra da Cantareira there, so it’s very funny because there are places in Brasilândia where it almost feels like you are not in São Paulo, but in the woods, which is the opposite of São Paulo’s perception; with Brasília, the fact it was a city created by a demand, imposed by a project, it gives the city an artificial character. Therefore, the elements of contradiction and artificiality were interesting to us in the identity discussion. Finally, Brasileia, a city on the borders between Brazil and Bolivia. It is in Brazil, but is separated from Bolivia by a river that you can cross on foot, walking across a bridge. Many people from Brasileia work in Bolivia and people from Bolivia go to Brasileia as well, so it’s a border’s zone (Araújo, 2016, p.245).

Although some questions inside the travel have also crossed over writing and mise-en-scene, as the use of Ayahuasca and deforestation of a large extension of the amazon forest, the cartographic interest in BR3 piece is established much strongly in relation to the three locations and the identity traits they form, predominating in the work characteristics and cartography influences from the three places. In Odisseia 116’s dramaturgy, on the other hand, transit influences me as much as starting and arriving points do. I’m interested in moving identities and cartographies which can be elaborated for the scene.

Travellers have inspired me in the development of themes and possible scenes. An interesting case is the one related to the elder woman in this picture:

Homem sentado em frente a avião

Descrição gerada automaticamente com confiança média

Source: Photograph taken by the author (2017)

From the observation of this woman and the photograph above, I have written the following scene:

(Blackout - voice-over): Watch out, watch out the luggage. Yeah, yeah, you can load it, but very carefully. Slowly, you idiot. This one you take it very carefully. Careful. Careful with the bread, you idiot. You’re gonna smash it. Oh goodness, it’ll turn into flour (lights on). This line is from an old lady who got on the bus at Bahia. She was around 92 years old. She struggled a little to enter the bus. I was more surprised when just behind her stood this lady’s mother, who in my counting should be around 129 years old, she could barely speak. She was being helped by the driver, the one who had been called an idiot just now. Unlike the other people who were interviewed, I preferred to just observe them, I don’t know their names, their real ages… At one of the bus stops, the old lady, who was the daughter, was having a cigarette and I heard when one of the drivers asked her: you’re smoking over there so you don’t smoke near your mother, aren’t you? She answered right away, not looking very patient: Hmm, she also smokes! The last memory I have from them was at night. The bus was dark and I was almost falling asleep when I saw a light coming from their seat. They had a plastic box like those used for storage buttons, but this one was packed with medicines. That image was beautiful because in dim light we could only see the silhouette, the medicine box and mother and daughter’s white hair. Then, they drugged themselves for the last time that night and fell asleep (Lops, 2017, p.18).

I like this scene, specifically, because it was not triggered by an interview, but from an observation that lasted more than one day in the trip. From it, I realize clearly a cartography of sensations, a cartography of emotions. I realize that actions, gestures and mainly images can communicate more than words.

Filmmaker Karin Ainouz (2009), after the shooting of *Viajo porque preciso, volto porque te amo*[[8]](#footnote-8), defines Iguatu, my hometown, as a “passage city”. I add some possible readings: an structural passage city, once it is between the state’s capital, Fortaleza, and the state’s cradle of culture, Cariri region; a personal passage city, because there is a huge exodus due to unemployment and climate issues; and finally, a passage city because of its spatiality. The extremely plain formation makes us catch a wider glimpse of the sky, threading a relation almost close to the one we have with the sea, because although it is not a coastal city, the sky ends up becoming an invitation, a becoming glimpse. In this sense, the way I use cartography in *Odisseia 116* has a close relation with these identity traits which cross my body. A cartography of the landscape, of dynamics, of displacement.

Antônio Araújo uses the word “construction” to speak about *BR3* play. The movement is of constant construction. I would rather call this movement “travel” in the project *Odisseia 116*, not losing sight of the crisis that happens after it. About the fieldwork, Araújo comments:

When I’m in the field, I seek to be crossed over, before anything. I don’t think who is the character in the play, what is the situation I’m going to use, or even if a certain place seems like a possible place where the piece could take place. Maybe I will later, but while I live the field experience I don’t, because the impression I have is that I can miss living the experience and being crossed by it due to planning the future, a piece that will still come. Actually, the idea is to be there, be in that place, get in the rhythm, even if temporarily (Araújo, 2016, p.245).

For Araújo, the piece’s cartography happens through the impressions, sensations, and not from a possible scene reproduced by an experience in the field, precisely to inhabit that space in a first moment freed from any artistic fabulation, because the opposite, according to the director, could boycott the process and this is not the group’s interest. In this aspect, my process relates to Teatro da Vertigem’s work considering I would avoid watching repeated times the interviews’ videos after the trip, so I would not take any chances of doing a *mimesis*, on the other hand, I would create the dramaturgy from the trip’s inspirations, indications and suggestions. These traits interest me more in this process, although they do not silence the interviews’ presence. When asked about the other cities crossed in travel and their influence in *BR3*, Araújo highlights its influence:

They have influenced because they were not just the main spots, but the linking between them. I remember a moment that really impressed me was when we were crossing Rondônia and Mato Grosso. We saw the agribusiness issues, the soy, the cattle raising, and as we got closer to Amazônia and the North state, we could clearly see the devastated forest. Huge chestnut trees in deforested areas. That impression of the destruction and the devastation was very strong, it really struck me… When we decided for Tietê river as the place to stage *BR3*, it relates to that. It is a nature element that due to a modernization project, rich and progessist, is being destroyed (Araújo, 2016, p.246).

Thus, there is certain interference of the cities in transit that also runs through BR3’s mise-en-scene and dramaturgy. After a long trip and a tiring return, the group faces not a crisis as it happened in the dramaturgic elaboration of *Odisseia 116* project, but takes a break. They spend almost a whole month without meeting each other. According to Araújo, this pause was extremely necessary to friction with what had been lived during the travel with São Paulo city. The image of dust that lingers is also a trace, a mark in the group’s body (Araújo, 2016). I think this dust mark is a good metaphor for cartographies of bodies in transit, for both works, *BR3* and *Odisseia 116*. A metaphor that coincidentally is repeated in both projects.

In an interview with Bernardo Carvalho (2017), the conflicts inside the collective are highlighted. It is possible to glimpse the difficulties of working with a cartography in the arts field, a cartography that projects a dramaturgy and the way this dramaturgy should dialogue with a process that is collaborative:

I just started writing on the returning trip. Until this trip, there was no writing, text, it was a long research process that lasted almost one year. When I returned, Antônio Araújo asked me to stay alone and write a text proposal, a kind of synopsis with characters, a dramaturgy suggestion. When I showed this proposal to the group, there was a kind of revolution there. The group got divided, half of the people totally refused my proposal and the other half embraced me. From that on, a very violent process of creation took place, war-like, with betrayals and attempts of creating parallel and alternative texts by other members of the group, to bring down my dramaturgy proposal. It was part of Teatro da Vertigem’s creative process, and maybe still is. There is certain violence, the installation of chaos which maybe works for some people in there in a productive way, but for me it was very bad (Carvalho, 2017, p.255).

The friction between the dramaturgy figure and its presence in the process interest me in particular, considering that in the rehearsal room I will be not only a dramaturgist but also an actor who dialogues and seeks to stay connected with the other people who might collaborate in the processo of scenic elaboration. In this sense, I think in both processes, *BR3* and *Odisseia 116*, there are three potent cartographies which approximate, distance and reapproximate. The first one is the trip’s cartography, the second is the dramaturgy’s cartography and the third is the rehearsal room’s cartography.

Teatro da Vertigem works in a collaborative form and in this type of process there is an assignment for each function, despite the constant dialogue. The dramaturgist gives its signature to dramaturgy as the light designer does with lighting. There is, then, a necessity of dialogue or listening for an artistic and collaborative comprehension of this scene’s cartography, and also in order to avoid any function to get alienated. According to Carvalho: “for some reason, the actors thought they could interfere in the text in a way they didn’t with light or stage design, or with music and much less with the direction. Dramaturgy then started to be a kind of whore, whom everybody wanted to feel up to” (Carvalho, 2017, p.256).

Bernardo Carvalho disagrees in a certain measure of Antônio Araújo in relation to the way the group understands the impossibility of a national identity in face of multiple and dynamic identities. For the dramaturgist, Araújo understands this moving identity, nevertheless the group, mainly the actors, have a hard time to understand these specificities because of theater’s own ritualistic and collective characteristics. For Carvalho:

The impossibility of essence was a data for me a priori, an element I was going to work with. What impressed me is that, as I was talking to the group, I noticed they had a completely opposite idea and they believed indeed in the possibility of a national identity essence. It started to bother me, and make me suspicious (Carvalho, 2017, p.261).

This impossibility of an essence that is revealed even in the characters' change of names is one the biggest divergences between the dramaturgist and the actors, even causing some actors to quit the group. I believe that the recognition of the impossibility of an essence facilitates a cartographic methodology, and there is no space for a methodology that wishes only a single mapping. In this sense, the cartographic process of *BR3* happens in collaboration, respecting each artist-creator individuality though. The ideological divergence did not cause only some actors to quit, but also the distancing of dramaturgist Bernardo Carvalho from the process in the early rehearsals in Tietê river, although he recognizes the importance of the project for his career and personal life. Bernardo Carvalho’s crisis did not come up from the travel to the writing process, but in the elaboration and contact of these first dramaturgy sketches with the actors, in which ideological, artistic and conceptual disagreements start to rise.

In *Social Performance Studies (in China): Between the Real and the Virtual*, William Huizhu and Faye Chunfang Fei (2009) allude to the rupture that occured with the emergence of the term Performance Studies in the seventies in the United States, coined mainly by Richard Schechner. As Sun and Faye note, “from its inception, performance studies began to dissolve the more traditional separation of practice and research” (Sun, Faye, 2009, p.70). The theater studies’ structure broadens in the contact with rituals, tribes, street and gender performances. As space opens itself for the dialogue with other dramaturgies as well, such as action research and cartography, so does the comprehension and assimilation of fragment and trauma resulting from new historical perspectives as, for example, the oral history.

The relation between cartography and oral history is specially important for the project Odisseia 116. Oral history can be more easily noticed in the interviews, but the voice-overs that happen in the trip between Rio de Janeiro and Ceará, its indications, suggestions and quotations are essential in the landscapes’ compositions and also reverberate as layers in the dramaturgical composition.

In Odisseia 116 project, this interest emerges with the strong exodus's subject and its significant increase, especially in a moment of economical crisis and drought in the northeast region of Brazil. During the process, the non-transfer of the São Francisco river was an unexpected variant which gained a big proportion inside the dramaturgy writing. The photos show the interrupted transfer work and this is one of the possible reasons for the increase of exodus.

Yasuda discusses in this article the term “Media-Space”, coined by north-american artist Tony Oursler, meaning a conglomerate of virtual spaces, of which limits and identities are multiple, permeable and contradictory. For the author, the use of multimedia on the scene amplifies its multiplication and instability, as the Wooster Group’s work demonstrates, with art and multimedia crossing and mirroring each other in juxtapositions between the recorded and live performance (Yasuda, 2009). Odisseia 116’s dramaturgy also suggests to the scene’s cartography this mirroring/juxtaposition. Photographs and videos recorded previously dialogue with the live scenes, which are often also projected, destabilizing the actor, increasing the possibilities of signifiers. The idea of interviews gets diluted in the dramaturgy, as well as in the scene and projected videos, helping me to tense two temporalities.

Tony Oursler works with projections on tridimensional surfaces to build “strange” images; his interest is to produce a “delocation” of the image. For the artist, the video must not act as a window in which one can look through, but as a physical effect (Yasuda, 2009). Image/video, even “real”, projected on a tridimensional space such as the actor’s body creates a distortion and a certain strangeness, invigorating the scene’s cartography, avoiding a *mimesis* of daily landscape or even a background. For Yasuda, disjunction is the key-word between the scene and multimedia space, where the lack of correspondence happens between spaces that are linked to each other (Yasuda, 2009). I start thinking, then, in this disjunction as a proposal inside *Odisseia 116* project, in which image does not figure what is being said on the text, but on the contrary, it builds another cartography, where multimedia in some moments might be related to the text and the scene, but is also independent.

Final Considerations

Deleuze and Guattari (1995) characterize as a map what Suely Rolnik approaches as cartography. The idea of map as a closed and delimited structure, as claimed by Rolnik, is classified to Deleuze and Guattari as tracing. For them:

The map is open and connectable in all of its dimensions; it is detachable, reversible, susceptible to constant modification. It can be torn, reversed, adapted to any kind of mounting, reworked by an individual, group, or social formation. It can be drawn on a wall, conceived of as a work of art, constructed as a political action or as a meditation. Perhaps one of the most important characteristics of the rhizome is that it always has multiple entryways [...]. A map has multiple entryways, as opposed to the tracing, which always comes back "to the same (Deleuze; Guattari, 1995, p.12).

I claim that in the process of *Odisseia 116* as in the process of Teatro da Vertigem’s play *BR3*, both are formed by three possible cartographies: travel cartography, dramaturgy cartography and rehearsal room cartography. I approximate the concept of cartography elaborated by Rolnik to the concept of map by Deleuze and Guattari.

The travel cartography in *Odisseia 116*, despite having a relatively constant trail, suffers interference of routes, due to assaults, delays or even the danger of travelling at night. To name all the cities, write about them or even quantify the travel was an impossible venture for the project. In this sense, my travel map was built through open, fragmented information and images, which were constantly being edited in the writing process. I consider that *BR3*’s travel cartography faced more interference and elaborations, taking in account they had more freedom and autonomy in their trip, being able to choose their stops and visits in specific places.

The dramaturgy cartography in *Odisseia 116* has as a writing architecture the travel’s cartography. I say that because inside it there are a large number of my travel indications in relation to Homeric Odyssey’s themes and in relation to the autobiographical themes that will make me take the returning trip. Still open and porous, it is this first cartography that functions as a sketch for the next two cartographies that will follow. I think that in the *BR3* dramaturgic project, it works in a different way if we consider that this dramaturgy was elaborated in a collaborative process, but started indoors with Bernardo Carvalho’s first drafts, that would be shown to the group after. The multiple entrances, characteristic of a rhizomatic system, caused a certain discomfort in Bernardo Carvalhos’s authorship process, which caused him, sometimes, to not recognize his creation and understand the interference process of the actors as abusive in some circumstances.

The third one, the rehearsal room cartography, takes place one month after the trip in the BR3 staging process, where meetings and rehearsals are done. It is in the moment of drawing this map that a friction inside the group happens, having as a result the quit of half of the actors who disagreed with the dramaturgy. In this period, Bernardo Carvalho stays apart from the group, sporadically participating in the early rehearsals. In the *Odisseia 116* project, this cartography is still being drafted. I say this is one of the most beautiful moments in the process of creating a play, and what scares me the most, because if I am someone who is complex, full of doubts and uncertainties in the creative process, how is this chaos going to encounter and reverberate on the other? This way, the last partnerships must be very tuned, considering this third and last cartography is the most collaborative, where I also have to deal with the distancing of my authorship in order to listen to, contemplate and be crossed over by the work team.

This rehearsal room cartography is also a moment where I can think in a more concrete way and experiment the relation between the photographs and videos with space. Photographs and videos as dramaturgy are manipulated and even produced in the rehearsal room for the scene. To perceive these materials in the scene, on a bigger projection and their relation with the space informs me about questions I had not thought before in the dramaturgy. A low quality photo or even a photo too bright might look very erased when reproduced on a wall. The videos’ audios might get lost in the room’s space as well.

Besides the three traced cartographies for *Odisseia 116*’s dramaturgy construction in dialogue with Teatro da Vertigem’s play, BR3, I emphasize the importance of photographs and videos, which are documents used to revive memories and trigger the writing, as well as to reflect about possible uses of these documents in a future mise-en-scene.

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**Movie:**

Viajo porque preciso volto porque te amo. Direção: Karim Ainouz e Marcelo Gomes. Produção: João Vieira Jr. e Daniela Capelato. Duração: 75 min, 2009.

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1. Translation to English language by Francisco Carlos Costa Filho (Paco Leal). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Doutorando em Teatro pela Universidade do Estado de Santa Catarina (PPGT/CEART/UDESC). Mestrado em artes Cênicas pela Universidade Federal do Estado do Rio de Janeiro (UNIRIO). Licenciado em Artes Cênicas pela UNIRIO. Professor do ensino médio de artes na Escola Dr. José Gondin (Ceará). [cleilson-lopes@hotmail.com](mailto:cleilson-lopes@hotmail.com)

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3. Translator 's Note: In Brazil, Rio de Janeiro is commonly referred as “cidade maravilhosa”, or “the wonderful city”. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. T.N: *For a heartfelt cartography or how to think of a vibrating body.* [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. The debate about trauma in the elaboration of *Odisseia 116’s* dramaturgy can be found on *Revista Cena* - Dossiê Arte e Trauma, in the article of my authorship called *O Trauma e a Cicatriz na escrita da Odisseia 116* (2021) - Trauma and Scar on the writing of *Odisseia 116*. In this article, I debate questions of trauma and scars from a dialogue which updates questions raised by Walter Benjamin when he reflects on the war’s trauma. In the article, I reflect about other fragments of dramaturgy, working from approximations and distancings. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. T.N: *Saudade* is a Portuguese word which means a deep emotional state of melancholic longing for a person or thing that is absent. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Both interviews are published in the online magazine *O Percevejo* - a Performing Arts Post-Graduation Journal from PPGAC/Unirio. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. T.N: *I travel because I have to, I go back because I love you,* [↑](#footnote-ref-8)