

The Idea Is for Us to Work Here In The Workshop!: The Re-functionalization Of Artisans' Economic and Cultural Circuits In Florianopolis, South Brazil

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Abstract: The purpose of the paper is to present and interpret strategies used by urban artisans to (re)functionalize their workshops into showcases where their performances are (re)organized and exhibited. The workshop is presented here as a privileged space where different aesthetic and political, economic and historic experiences (re)construct performances, as well as other systems of artifacts and spatialities. The atelier is understood as architectural space that performatizes globalized scenographies of desire and their fragmentations and overlappings. We conducted an ethnography impregnated by the random relation of events, encounters and exchanges (whether symbolic or economic) in urban contexts. As a result, we present various devices that trigger expression and updating found in both the artisans' biographical trajectories and in the systems of artifacts and spaces in a recent urban society.

Keywords: *social unity of artisanal production, cultural consumption, urban artisans, handicraft.*

Introduction

The purpose of this study is to reconstruct the experiences of subaltern groups, particularly producers of

artisan material culture, in the light of the processes of modernization experienced in medium-sized Brazilian cities.¹

We studied the strategies and narrative devices used in the biographic

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updating of artisans who model folkloric ceramic products in the city of Florianópolis, Santa Catarina State, Brazil.² These strategies and devices are used to insert the artisans and their production in a circuit of political, economic and symbolic circulation in the space and time of urban consumer societies.

To conduct the study: a) we collected and recreated the narratives of the artisans about their work, the conditions in which they execute it, concepts about time and space, techniques and aesthetics; b) we traced and interpreted the possible biographies, available or acceptable to the systems of artisanal objects; c) we presented and interpreted the processes for updating the artisanal practices in recent intercultural urban spaces.

The study of popular crafts-culture was not conceived as some type of protest against the world of industrial objects or as a romantic undertaking about the losses of popular cultures in light of the processes of Western modernization. The study is based upon the formulation of questions and reflections about biographic and therefore political choices made by men and women in history, in a specific space.

Research trajectory: methodological procedures

This section presents the methodological procedures used during the research. Autobiographical narrative interviews were used to obtain the narratives. The procedure is based on linguistic anthropology and the theoretical work of Albert Schütze who

studied the construction of biographic narratives and their uses in sociological analysis. The procedure is completed by the perspectives of authors such as Briggs (1986), Pries (1994) and Appel (2005).

The purpose of the biographic narrative interview is to understand individual perceptions and constructions about socio-historic reality. In this way, the narrative interview allows (re)locating the cultural changes in a local society, or given social group, within a historic process. To begin with individual narratives does not imply understanding that the individuals interviewed share common experiences, or that information about the causes and effects of historic events can be gathered from the interviews. We did strive to understand the experiences, or that is, the perceptions about the opportunities for agency, of simultaneity between cultural repetition and innovation, which allows the writing of other histories, anthropologies, sociologies, philosophies and arts.

We approached the narratives collected as raw material, which according to the orientations of some authors of literary criticism and oral history allows going more deeply into the content and explanations of it than can be achieved in a structural analysis of produced speech. We thus began with the indications of Bakhtin (1977) about dialog and constructed an arena of discussions and dissonances, in which distinct themes are disputed, negotiated and resolved by actors and actresses.

In this 'diagram' of the interview, we opted for transcription in shifts. This is characterized as a methodological

strategy that ‘organizes and prepares’ the interview for analysis. This resource was used to materialize the conversation, given that it maintains its objectivity in the ephemeral of utterance, or that is, in the spoken word. To produce this ‘diagram’ we followed the orientations of Marchuschi (2000). Other orientations from Gancho (2006) were used in the reconstruction and analysis of the biographic narratives. These orientations support the analysis when terms, allegories and metaphors are needed to give meaning to what was observed which, however, continued without a form of being inscribed.

Moreover, from the perspective of a type of literary criticism, it was necessary to conduct an approximation of the methodological perspective of the oral history (Meihy, 2005; Montenegro, 2007; Neocochea Garcia, 2005). This helped in the understanding and interpretation of the filigrees that connect the narrative enunciation with memory, or the memory of a memory.

This is how we explain this. By considering that the narratives collected at first appear to be the direct experience of the subjects, it was necessary to understand this experience as a reconstruction, mediated by devices that activate, or not, individual memory, thus constituting a version of the facts. This takes place because this apparent ‘historic reality’ is reconstructed and edited according to the desires of the narrator, or that is, the narrator chooses what to say and how to say it, defines the sequence of events and their importance, thus constructing the best way to tell the story. This internal procedure of the narrator reveals an experience deeply mediated by time and culture.

Memory is thus converted into a kind trap. To remember signifies choices and organizes lived experience. In weaving memories, silence, that which is voluntarily forgotten and a command of the ways in which one wants to be represented, construct a version of the facts. This field of action of memory finds its materiality in biographic narrative, allowing the continuous negotiation of perceptions about individual and collective representation, about the forms of being in and living in the social world. This theoretical strategy for understanding memory transforms the fact of remembering into historically significant evidence. It constitutes the moment of remembering, and its edition, into profound communicative acts in which the lie, the alteration, the forgetting and imprecision are the material upon which the interpretation finds its form (Cruces, 2003).

The narratives were produced in 2005 and 2006. We chose to conduct extensive interviews with a reduced group of interviewees. Our proposal was to go deeper into the issues presented, by contrasting the produced and recreated narrative schemes. In this way, We wanted the group of narratives to be an image of the questions about the processes lived in the light of the need for insertion in a circuit of production-circulation-consumption. In the realm of investigation, We understood this process as the pressure exercised on the social forms of artisanal production, which demands that the artisans reproduce upon other ‘rational’, ‘productive’, ‘biographical’, and ‘symbolic’ bases.

The analysis is completed with the presentation of the technical/

technological strategies used in the production of the system of craft objects. We included in the recording and documentation domains a description of the knowledge about the ceramic modeling industry. We thus conducted a mapping of the gestures involved in the modeling, explaining a process that we called densification of gestures, both technical as well as artistic, or that is, we mapped the artisanal poetic. As such, we believe it is possible to express that the social forms of artisan production are distinct, as are the objects that result from these different ways of doing.

We chose the *Boi-de-Mamão* as the highlighted theme because it is a manifestation of the popular culture of Santa Catarina Island that is used as a marker of the local ‘identity’³. The criteria for the choice of the sculptural groups were the following: a) the production of the sculptural pieces by all of the artisans interviewed; b) the participation of the groups in the ordinary and symbolic-cultural circuits of circulation; c) the centrality of the group in popular and or institutional, economic or political manifestations in the urban space studied; d) the circulation of these pieces in state cultural activities, specialized publications, the mass media, in imaginations that populate the city and its identity discourses.

The artifacts chosen among those that constitute the group of the *Boi-de-Mamão* were: the *maricota*⁴, the *boi* [ox] and the *bernunças*⁵. These three pieces represent a synthesis of the groups of the Boi, which are generally constituted by 13 or 15 pieces distributed in categories such as: animals (both

natural and supernatural); characters and musicians.

Therefore, we accompanied the gestures, craft techniques and aesthetics and with these texts, we discuss the ways that men and women who work with clay found to update their personal biographies, in terms of labor and objects.

Conceptual approaches

The term workshop or workshop defines the social organization of the forms of artisanal production encountered in the research. This category provides a key to understanding this industry and, consequently, the materiality of the circuits involved in the symbolic economy of crafts.

We understand the workshop from the perspective of Bakhtin’s concept of the chronotope which ‘fuses the spatial and temporal indicators into one intelligible and concrete whole’ (Amorim, 2006:102). Nevertheless, the chronotope favors a time that carries with it a concept of a person that is reformulated at every new temporality. The chronotope becomes a useful category, because in the processes of updating the poetic and productive, discursive and symbolic artisanal practices, there is a ‘transformation’ of the collective-public subject into an individual-private subject.

The transformations that the individual-private subject undergoes and which configure the alteration-identity conflict are materialized in the construction of the space-time workshop. The conflict is impelled by the temporalities of the circuits of symbolic goods and by the dispute

waged by the different actors involved in the legitimization of the artisanal industry in a circuit of cultural consumption.

We use the category social forms of production conceptualized by Novelo (1974), as the way the artisan presents and situates him or herself in relation to his or her work, instruments and tools. The purpose of this perspective is to understand the artisanal production, not only through its products, but also from its social processes (economic, legal, moral, and symbolic).

Approaching the forms and processes of work and not only the objects allows us to define craft by the gestures and actions it makes explicit, and through the social relations that are implicit or explicit in the artifacts, and through their economic and symbolic circulation. We thus agree with Novelo (1982:257) that ‘we simply won’t be able to talk of crafts as finished objects without first having seen who produces them, for whom, for what reason, when and in what situation those who produce them live’.

More broadly, to problematize the social forms of artisanal production and then design its strategies, or even map the cultural resistance, gains meaning as a possibility for understanding the inclusion of the agents and producers in consumption circuits. This participation shifts markers such as ethnicity or socio-cultural-political-symbolic group. It is important to consider that the changes of the activities of material or social (re)production are followed, or even preceded, by transformations in daily and ritual social practices, political organization and forms of citizen participation.

This characterization is in contrast with Novelo’s (1974) operative proposal, in the Mexican context, which was: the familiar form of production, the small workshop or capitalist workshop, the workshop of the independent master and manufacturing. By contrasting these classifications and the definition of the social forms of production, we classify the workshops or workshops that were studied into an intermediate or borderline category between the small capitalist workshop and the workshop of the independent master, however, with significant specificities and singularities.

Characterization of a social unity of artisanal production: the workshop

The artisans and their families live in popular urban neighborhoods of Florianópolis (South Brazil). They have their own house independent of the workshop and they are mostly involved in activities of production-circulation-consumption. These activities, at times performed with the help of other workers, who are usually unpaid (because they are close relatives or apprentices who perform unpaid work in exchange for space or the opportunity to improve their skills and practice modeling).

Gaining command of the techniques and models requires a specialized learning process, but not exclusively, and it takes place in workshops and or in arts or crafts schools. Autonomous training also takes place, as well as the exchange of techniques among craftsmen, which happens less frequently as does the transmission

from one generation to another that is found among a few individuals. It is common for the artisans to work on technical and expressive improvement, but often do not assume this publicly. The tools and equipment belong to the artisans, and are developed in their own workshops or bought in specialized stores.

The craft work is conducted in conjunction with 'formal' work, which guarantees a monthly income for at least one family member. These artisans have a previous work history, and sometimes they even have a job, parallel to the artisanal production. The production conditions (routines, schedules, volumes and models) are defined by the craftsmen. The production cycles are flexible and vary according to the formal working hours or to the volume to be reached. The division of work is often made by gender, without a rigid rule.

The work is rationalized as a function of a specialized productive sequence, the goal of which is efficient production and improved yield of the volume produced, without losses of material and effort, particularly in the phases of modeling and firing. The innovation or the creation of new models is faced as a condition of this craft production and as a mark of creativity and personal distinction. Only the already consecrated models, because of their efficiency in the circuit of circulation, are maintained unchanged or with small artistic or productive modifications.

The products are destined for sale in the economic and symbolic circuit (to a popular, tourist or cultural market). The distinction is not defined by the type of object produced (whether for daily or

ritual use) but for its artistic quality or its ability to stimulate alternative experiences to the industrial objects. The sale can also be direct to the consumer. To do so, the artisans use the time in which they are not working intensely on an order or at a formal job. The resources obtained from these different strategies are used to begin a new production cycle, and contribute a significant portion of the family budget.

Organization of the social unit of artisanal production: ethnography of the scenographies of wanting

The workshops studied are a conquest of the artisans, and their construction is a consequence of various years of work and updating of the forms of participation in the circuit of production, circulation and cultural consumption. Upon interpreting these spaces, we believe it is possible to map the trajectories, motivations, standards, innovations and repetitions that occur in the biographies of the artisans. That is, we believe that the materiality of these spaces and the ways of experiencing them is fed by information from interpretations about the artisanal economic phenomenon.

The workshop is a space that synthesizes work, storage and in some cases the exhibition and sale of production. It is located close to or is actually part of the house, as one of its specialized spaces. The house is not, therefore, only a space for the reproduction of intimacy, or for primary sociability, it is refunctionalized⁶ to embrace the ambiguous meaning of workshop and showcase, in the form

of a domestic/commercial scenography for these characters and performances: the subject of the wanting (the consumer) and the commercial artisans.

To make this affirmation, we take the definition and typification of the showcase made by Oliveira (1997), according to whom, a showcase 'is an intricate stage of significant relations' (Oliveira, 1997:15). In other words, showcases are spaces for the manipulation of the modality of wanting using the tricks involved for showing or making seen or wanting to be seen. The showcase and the workshop/showcase are configured as a mediation of social relations involved in the circuits of commercial and symbolic exchanges that constitute the political and symbolic economy of popular culture and craft.

Oliveira based his typologies on the identification of the matrixes of arrangements, or that is, the persuasive resources explored and the identification of the specific modes of organization. She affirms:

In a position of mediator between two spaces, that of store – the interior – and of the street – the exterior – the showcase can be structured according to four types of distinct devices as a function of the use of space. They include: separation, intercrossing, annulation and invasion of specific spaces (Oliveira, 1997:85).

With this typology as a backdrop, but also recreating it in the context of the study, we present how the workshops are constructed as an overlapping of visual regimes available in the circuit of both commercial and cultural circulation. In these scenographies,

strategies to make see and make oneself see, construct new meaning to the workshop-showcase and to the devices that constitute it. In the form of an effective strategy of seduction, the showcase, and therefore, the workshop-showcase, offers the market (consumer-subject of the wanting) an opportunity to recognize - identify – oneself, on one hand through purchasing and on the other, by obtaining from this experience of looking, images of oneself reflected (or refracted) in the artifacts.

Each artisan creates or maintains the workshop as a place that refers to the atmosphere associated to that which is 'manually produced', or that is, which is outside of a mechanical industrial and anonymous logic. This strategy is part of the forms of participation in a cultural consumer market that demands not only original products but also experiences different from those lived daily. To go to the workshop, to see the artisan working and to purchase an object, has become a way that men and women in urban contexts find to 'turn their back' on the massification of experiences in the contemporary world (Dormer, 1995).

This perception is common to artisans who use this fact as one, among others, available to make viable their participation in a circuit of cultural consumption occupied, above all, by public arts and crafts centers and boutiques. Petrolino, a government employee, comments on this, self-identifying as an artist and painter of canvases, who paints pieces shaped by Olinda: 'the idea is for us to work here in the workshop [at home]!'. The objective is to provide consumers contact with the work processes, their

spaces (scenarios) the production, and thus give symbolic and economic value to the shared experience and the artifacts.

For Petrolino and Olinda, the workshop is part of a strategy to participate in a circuit of cultural consumption, whose attraction is found in the shift of meanings of alienation or superfluosness, associated to consumer practices. As an alternative to ‘consumer alienation’, this shift offers the opportunity to have ‘unique experiences’ mediated by interpersonal contact between the consumer and the artisan. This relation has its high point in the opportunity for the consumer to interfere in the artisan’s artistic production, and feel like a co-author.

The experience of the consumer has its reflex in the artisan, who, upon experiencing his or her recognition as author, subverts the presumption of anonymity associated to the system of artisanal crafts. The workshop thus becomes a scenographic place where the artisan gains materiality and performance. He or she is no longer a social group or an ethnicity, and becomes an individual author. In other words, the artisan becomes an owner of the forms, of the ways of expressing oneself through clay, an owner of the ways of narrating experiences and interpreting things that surround him or her into sets of objectivized utterances, modeled on and from visual and verbal formulas.

The artisan expresses, through the strategy of bringing the consumer to the workshop, his or her version of the world, which necessarily must be distinct from that of the consumer – even if both share codes, texts, images and imaginations. About this, Olinda,

an artisan by choice, comments: ‘then they began to come [to the workshop] and to distinguish my work, because each one has a certain way’, adding, ‘(...) because my own, I began to work in my own way, then, they came to look (...) and I began to exhibit with *Fulano*, right! Who is an artist.’⁷

The authorship recognized, and to a point legitimated, in a symbolic circuit, modifies the perception of the artisanal work, and as a consequence, its form of production and its objects. For Petrolino and Olinda, the molding, the workshop and the system of artisanal objects acquire meanings of personal realization, that is, they refunctionalize their artisanal form of production and their system of objects into an artistic gesture similar to the hegemonic arts. This intentionality is mediated by Kantian disinterest, a mobilizer of a type of pleasure denominated aesthetic fruition (or experience).⁸ The work cannot be reduced to the economic maintenance of life or to the (re)production of tradition, but, gains potential as a way of dealing with the world aesthetically.

The material consequence of this movement of subordination and resistance is the symbolic and or moral constitution of a scenario – the workshop – in which personal performances are reassembled or (re)performed. The formulas of social interaction are equally resignified and updated, new scripts must be and are written and these narratives must be (re)invented.

In this way, the discursive genres are the parody of a history of Western art, in which the search for legitimation establishes a self-hero who is naive. One example of this discursive genre,

reassembled in the narrative of Olinda and Petrolino, can be seen in the following fragment of an interview:

Petrolino: As there are great artists, great sculptors...they were even saying, that today it is difficult to find a sculptor-sculptor, who works with another art. He makes the piece...his own work, for the first time...then he orders a mold...

Olinda: Then he makes it, they make ... yeah, I have seen a few like this ... that is I already saw in a television documentary, right... those who do it like that ...it's interesting because he makes it to sell, because to sell it has to be like that...it has to be ... [reproduced many times] although I make [single pieces] I also sell them, of course money has to come in.

Access by means of the media to the versions of history of Western art and its forms of (re)production, provides the justifications for the demand to participate in a symbolic circuit. To have this perception as a base, Petrolino comments that 'today it is difficult to find a sculptor-sculptor,' in this way the artist is removed from the world of the sacred by the narrator. The artist or the sculptor-sculptor, marked textually with a nearly hyperbolic repetition, is no longer found, was lost at some time, forgotten or simply disappeared. By breaking with what is extraordinary about the agent (the artist), the artisan subordinates the most imponderable factor of the artistic field, that is: the authorship of the *artistic gesture*.

The point of inflection is the consumption, or the production for consumption, which links artisans and artists. The approximations of the

practice of the artistic circuit with that of the artisan circuit is marked by the personnel conceptualization about the mechanisms of producing for sale and making a single piece. With this organizing theory about the circuits, the narrator shifts his specificities, hides his distinctions and establishes other limits.

Amid the changes of motivations, reflected in the forms of perception of craft production and its agency in this field, the configuration of Petrolino's and Olinda's workshop materializes in a distinct manner the idealized image of the workshop of the master artisan, and it is necessary to understand and interpret this space. The workshop is a juxtaposition-intercrossing of various things: the workshop of the master artisan, the place of experimentation of the artist and references to decoration magazines and showcases in popular stores.

Like the doors analyzed by Oliveira (1997), which, closed, materialize the separation between zones – the public and the private – the preservation of family space, and open, connect with the world, the doors of Olinda and Petrolino's workshop connect by a symbolic knot the oficina to the relations of consumption that take place in this space. This ambiguous protection – the doors – appear to reserve to the interior of the workshop the experience with the objects and the artisans. Doors that when closed preserve the intimacy, the specialty of the ways of doing, the techniques and artisan aesthetics and their new ancestral qualities are also a concrete resource that transforms stimuli into action, or that is, transforms *desire* into *wanting*. It thus configures a space

of dialog, of material and symbolic exchange. This (re)constructed experience is triggered by opening the doors – to the outside, to encounter the street, or to the inside, towards the house – to the other, who comes to visit and who will receive personalized treatment. But, in a fractured way, this is also the space of the store, of commerce, of merchandise.

This is a locale simultaneously inhabited by the expectation of being an artist and participating in a circuit of symbolic consumption and the desire of earning a living and inserting oneself into a circuit of economic consumption. As a manifestation of this, hanging like a banner, is a poster produced by a telecommunications company, which released a series of telephone cards with photos of pieces sculpted by Olinda. There are the old pieces, sculpted in other times, like a decomposed diorama, material memories of forms, colors and themes. Finally, there are the recently sculpted and fired pieces, and the experiments, the attempts, the failures.

The workshop, linked to the home by a door, is invaded by intimate smells, sounds that are distant to places exclusively for work – like a television and a child's question about an electronic game. This daily life that invades the environment makes the steps lost between the kitchen and the workshop define other limits for the useful and the quotidian. The fact of going up and down steps does not physically set the limits. Some small openings – which were once living room windows – open to the nostalgia of a space that no longer exists, landscapes are no longer seen through those windows, the warm summer mist

from the bay no longer comes through. The demarcation of the performances – artisan – consumer, is obscured in this imprecise scenario.

The question is approached in a similar manner by Edwilson, who is an artisan by choice and not by tradition, a man who speaks quickly, is involved with his community and is concerned with making craft production a profitable *industry*. He explains his project to take advantage of the experience that the consumer market requires:

What is missing, in reality, here in the city, is a place that would have better publicity than... these pieces, right! That's what we want here [in the workshop] ... The idea is to create a space and... Try to create support within the municipal government! The people who come to Florianópolis have to visit a place that produces pieces with a cultural reference, they have to visit the beach where they have contact with the bay, right...The Azoreans came here, to this city, because of this bay, right! To guarantee possession of the island! And it's here because the Azoreans came here, the answers are here in front of the house! I have, one of the ideas that I have is to create a point of production here, a point to make the ...to teach, to anyone, and also... to try to offer schools a guide for excursions here...To show the bay. Show the region here, right! Where they live and all... [referring to the migrants and natives of the island]. And to create a space, right! a space for the people who come to visit...charge

a few, I don't know, five reals per student, take them around and at the end have a workshop here... And if they want to buy some clay, I have to think of selling clay as well, we would buy it and resell it to them, to these people.

This fragment is characterized as a pattern of biographic action.⁹ In it, the narrator exposes his potential to conduct certain plans for his life. In the case of Edwilson, the construction of the workshop, not a place of production or exhibition, but a cultural center that meets the expectations of urban consumers.

The fragment begins expressing the density of the reflection conducted by Edwilson to organize his project. The artisan calls attention to the gaps existing in the cultural life of the city and then presents himself as an agent of change. Edwilson positions himself, not only as an artisan who seeks to insert himself in the market for cultural consumption, as do Petrolino and Olinda, but as someone who intervenes in cultural policies for crafts and the city.

Edwilson reproduces an interplay of marketing strategies that can have his workshop-cultural center be better located in the symbolic economy of crafts. In addition to symbolic consumption, in guided visits or experiences of contact with 'nature' and 'local culture,' he seeks to make viable the material consumption, exploring the diversification of offers and or products.

Edwilson's workshop is a small yellow house by the bay, which he inherited from his grandmother. Set on a plateau and protected by a wall of red stones, where the artisans place

characters of the Boi-de-Mamão to discretely mark a ludic territoriality or visually announce that extraordinary people live here.

The house has a small room with a window that overlooks the bay, where the clay pieces are stored. Alongside is a closed, forgotten room, waiting to be put to use. In this space, the wooden furniture is arranged to look like a couple's bedroom. Edwilson told us that this scenario was constructed as a strategy to get around regulations prohibiting the operation of a store in a residential zone. Thus, the room is a lie, a falsification used to hide the commercial quality of the space.

Next is a room that fills the entire space of the house, where the windows are always closed. Here is the workbench and the painting materials, an old clothes closet is used for storage. Next to it is a small kitchen with faded gray and blue ceramic tiles and a small dining table in the corner. In the house-workshop the recent specialized workshop overlaps in confusion with the memory of the once inhabited home. This overlapping is confusing because one still finds the delicate china cabinet with double doors with glass panes displaying crystals, plates and cups waiting for a visitor to come through the kitchen door. Above the cabinet an old wall clock still marks the passing hours. Some stuffed chairs from the sixties and a bench with green imitation leather in a corridor are indications of another overlapping.

The old architecture serves as a portal that takes us to another time. The sounds of the wooden floor boards stir old memories of the steps taken by the people who no longer inhabit these spaces. The small double windows,

protected by lace curtains, at times provide a view of the sea, and at times spew the dust from the road raised by the buses that noisily pass by heading towards downtown Florianópolis. The white walls are bare, there are no paintings, photos or posters, a strong contrast with the colors of the nearly thousand pieces that colonize the workbench. There are *bernunça*-dishes and ox pencil-holders, in which the artisan marks their ambiguous bodies with the hyphenated juxtaposition of the functionalities.

This contrasts with the narrative of Maria, an artisan who specializes in modeling folkloric ceramics. She is a single woman born in the 1930s, the middle daughter from a total of 11 siblings, all of whom work with clay. In the fragment from her statement presented, she narrates the moment of construction of her workshop, mediated by the work practices and the negotiation of a sale. The fragment from the statement is long, yet necessary for understanding the narrative scheme used by the artisan. It is presented as a *biographic action process*, related to work spaces and to production practices. This action influenced Maria to transform her relations with the house and workshop, with the consumers and with herself.

Maria: at the beginning I sold only fired work, I was alone and had to do everything. I had my mother to take care of. I did not paint, then later, my sister-in-law – lots of orders began to arrive, then my sister-in-law came to help because I had to take care of my mother as well, right! And, then the production began to increase, because my sister-in-law came to

help...then one day some people came from Tupi...Tupi is a factory that makes steel and iron things... because the social assistant from Tupi in Joinville was from here in Palhoça, and their family knew my family, and her brother lived here in back. She showed up here and said: ‘Dona Maria, I want three hundred *pau de fita*’ [maypoles]; I said: my God, God in heaven! For when?

Interviewer: But she already knew your work?

Maria: She knew it because her brother lived here in back ...behind here ... and then, I said: ‘I have to speak with my sister-in-law because she is working with me, if she helps me, I’ll do it! – we’ll do it.’ So ok, we gave her a price ... it was three cruzeiros at the time, I used it to make this [referring to the rancho/workshop], so we got it [the order], it would take about three months to do, we did it in a month and a half. My mother would wake up in the middle of the night, she would call me, because I was still at the table asleep...like this [simulates the position] with the pieces of clay in my hand! It was nearly dawn ... in one and a half months everything was ready ... the woman couldn’t believe it... ‘it’s almost ready’ I said: ‘no, you can come get it because it’s all ready!!! [smiles]. So there were 300 little bases, right, and 1,200 dolls, ...But we did it...so... so I built this here, because I didn’t have it ...the workshop was here... but so the money was enough just to make this [moves her arms, showing the space built] and there was no plaster, or...ceiling,

nothing, right! And later they grew and grew [the orders].

The fragment begins with a comment about the forms of sale of the objects and how they combine with the domestic practices. Through one of the ironies that involve the relations of parentage and genre in a certain time and space in Brazil, and that remain socially relevant in this case, Maria was the daughter who stayed to take care of her parents until their deaths, and as a result never got married.

In this portion, the temporality marked by the formula ‘at the beginning’ defines the ancestral nature of a time-space that appears to be perpetually immobile, immutable. Or even a spatiality, understood in the text ‘I was alone and had to do everything’ which was related to the house. In this way, the times of production are those that remain when the care for the house, or for the mother, is no longer necessary, or that is, when her performance as the woman in charge of the house and as a daughter, were fulfilled. This overlapping of performances marked the relations maintained both with the spaces, the house-workshop, and with the pieces produced. It is important to say that there is no hyphenation between the identities woman of the house and artisan. They overlap silently, but not for this reason with less tension.

The tension is only resolved after the construction of the workshop, a time in which the spaces are marked and with them the performances are (re)established and reaffirmed, and later, with the death of Maria’s mother. This place, the workshop, is where Maria finds herself, reorganizes, and constructs rituals that allow rebuilding these experiences, re-writing her story,

guiding her biographic actions. This cronotopo materialized in the workshop is where the narrator tells, reconstructs and narrates the time of work. Before this, the work was conducted in the service area, where there is a sink for washing clothes, close to the kitchen, a garden with vegetables and medicinal plants. This spatiality marks all the activities conducted as practices of production of the useful – or of utility, such as cooking and caretaking, that is, of care for the other. This non-specialization of spaces causes the production of craft objects to be signified as part of the daily activities, or that is, as domestic work and not as a job or profession.

When production increases there is a need for help to meet the deadlines for the orders, and to do so Maria has the support of her family. The ‘help’ is not constituted only as support for the production of pieces, but mainly, is related to domestic issues that need to be left aside as a function of greater dedication of time and effort to production. The affirmation ‘because I had to take care of mother as well, right!’ is a standard formula, used by the interviewee to justify and exempt herself from guilt for dedicating more time to the work of care for her mother. This formula - constructed in different forms - is repeated various times in distinct moments and ‘illuminates’ the tension that the artisan experienced.

The challenge to be overcome, and which causes the biographical change, is presented by the textual marker ‘then one day some people came from Tupi.’ This announces the guiding thread of the narrative in which the challenges in Maria’s life are revealed. The homogeneous temporality of the

report is broken by one day that was exceptional, which took on meaning and brought change. The carrier of change was someone from the circle that Maria had as an absolute limit: the neighborhood. It was as a function of the relations in the neighborhood that the artisan received an order that allowed her to build her workshop.

The narrative continues with the presentation of the adversities experienced and overcome to achieve the objective. As a hero who suffers with her luck, the artisan tells of the tests her strength conducted in the face of challenge: 'My mother would wake up in the middle of the night, she would call me, because I was still at the table sleeping...like this [simulates the position] with the clay in my hand! It was nearly dawn.' The formula with which the portion closes reveals the suffering expressed in overcoming. As in every heroic saga, the victory comes in a surprising way and exposes the hero to qualities that even she doubts she has. To do it in less time than agreed, to tell about the victory becomes a heroic legacy, marked by the conclusion: 'but we did it.'

The money earned with the order was the boost that allowed building the workshop in back of Maria's house, but was not enough to finish it. It is far from the house. The space does not refer to celebration or exhibition, and is much more an intimate space. It is full of things that indicate the scope of the work, its conditions and imaginations.

The space is nearly impassable, having been planned for a small person like Maria who is barely 5-feet tall. Complex maneuvers are needed to move through the space; everything is at arm's length, in a very personnel

logic. There is paint and clay, water and clay pieces, respecting some logic that can only be decoded by following her short steps and the slip of her rounded hands with short fingers over the tools.

After some time, things become legible: from a confused overlapping of cardboard boxes, jars of paint, pots with water and lots of rags, leap out colorful oxen, wild maricotas, feisty musicians and many other characters who populate the imagination of this artisan. It is necessary to accompany Maria to understand this space, these objects, this woman. Materially, this space is nothing more than a rectangular structure with white walls, a low roof, narrow doors and windows, covered with tiles and a PVC ceiling. On the side, in an extension of the tiles, is the table for molding the clay and the storage space where the artisan keeps a stock of fired pieces. In front, in an area with a cement floor, there is a small wood stove, recently built. The area is circled by beds of flowers, vegetables and herbs that Maria uses for cooking, curing and decorating her house.

The workshop is a material synthesis (if this is possible) of Maria. It reflects her way of organizing her work, her perceptions about the pieces and about the life she lives. It is thus converted into a potential utterance about being a traditionally modern artisan, because Maria is one of those people who were formed by tradition, that is, in the shared action of the transmission of abstract meanings and signs, which are materialized again and again into artifacts. This fact determines how, subjacent to the new objects, the material and spiritual conditions experienced by the previous

generations are found, and not only the impositions of a circuit of circulation and consumption.

Unlike Olinda and Petrolino, Maria's workshop is not that of the pseudo-artist and is also different from Edwilson's workshop-cultural center. It is a place where she finds herself, the artisan and her objects, tools, spaces and times. We believe that Maria's workshop, in addition to being a performatic strategy for her participation in a type of cultural circuit, is the space of remembering previous times. A place of reconstruction of a biography.

This space does not constitute an anti-capitalist contemporary experience, it was first built as a material and discursive strategy for the organization of a self and, as a consequence, for the organization of multiple experiences and identities that this woman collects on the shelves of the crystal cabinet in her dining room. The space establishes a significant and simultaneously symbolic reciprocity with the workshop. Stories about herself and others, memories of times and places are expressed in other objects, molded in clay.

Conclusion: considerations about the social unity of artisan production

As an overview, we sought to reconstruct, present and interpret strategies used by urban artisans in Florianópolis, Santa Catarina, Brazil to (re)functionalize their work spaces where their performances and artistic gestures are (re)organized and exposed. The ambiguity of the space of the house, transformed into a specialized space,

midway between work and intimacy, causes the fragmentation of the social interactions to overlap the itinerary home-workshop-home. By 'passing through' a door, or through part of a garden, to go up or down a staircase, relativizes the spatialities (work space – private space), temporalities (the time of the steps, of walking, the time of being, of coming and going, beginning, ending, continuing), and corporalities (the disciplines, techniques and perceptions) that involve the social forms of artisanal production.

The workshop is, therefore, a special space where different aesthetic and political, economic and historic experiences (re)construct the performances of themselves, as well as the systems of artifacts. In addition, the workshop-showcase is configured as architecture that performs the globalized scenographies of wanting, its fragmentations and overlappings. These shifts mark the spaces, the meanings of the objects, their materialities and circulation, which instead of making the political tensions and disputes invisible, reveals them. Said another way, based on the shifts of the systems of meanings and their materialities, other actions and places are made explicit that narrate the popular culture, the activities of consumption and its interpretation.

Our interpretation (re)locates these artisans in the context of recent capitalism to, from this, express the choices they make to insert themselves in these fragmented, intercultural, multi-media cosmos. We call the scenario that we construct the arena of disputes of a political and symbolic economy of craft. Within this arena, locate the personalities

(artisans), present their complexity and agency. We reconstruct the actions (performances), paying attention to the discursive strategies and narrative genres used. We discuss their gestures, in an attempt to express the body-reality of their existences. This updating marks the artisanal gestures, inscribes in their narratives other texts, expresses the 'functionalities' and interchanges of the artifacts of popular art or crafts in circuits of economic and cultural consumption. It is thus revealed that the capitalist process, contrary to being hegemonic and stable, is fragmented and overlapped.

To build this arena and its complexity, if still not totally configured, involves tracing one of the possible cartographies about the production-circulation-consumption circuit. This circuit, used as a guide for analysis, 'illuminated' the construction of our interpretation. Its presence marks the movements configured throughout the text of this article, as vital to the process of modernizing, that is: the configuration of the workshops as scenarios of desire, the shift of the identity of the artisan to a compound identity of artisan-artist.

Linked to the question of identity is the configuration of the forms of learning and transmission of one, or various, possible artisan aesthetics. These are understood as devices that activate possible and available biographies. The centrality of design in the updating of the pieces defines in some way the forms of learning the techniques (the production) their circulation and consumption, and the strategies of merchandising, demerchandising and (re)merchandising available in the

realm of the economic and symbolic exchanges.

These movements found and expressed, analyzed and interpreted – and briefly presented in this article – allow expressing the presence of artisans and of craft, not as survival, but as a questioning of the apparent homogeneous linearity of the history of Western capitalism. As expressed in different moments, we believe that the popular craft-culture, overlapped with the monetarized forms of capitalist exchange, expand the understanding about the forms of production, circulation and consumption available in the recent world. In addition, they allow seeing that, in different contexts, the relations mediated by economic or symbolic objects establish different interactions that are equally economic and symbolic and that they do not necessarily follow the same rules, or have the same meaning.

Notes

¹ About the concepts of popular and subaltern culture see Garcia Canclini (2002).

² We refer to the doctoral study (Corrêa, 2008) financed by CAPES (Higher Education Co-ordination Agency, a funding agency linked to the Brazilian Ministry of Education). All of the field work was conducted by the first author for his doctoral thesis.

³ The *boi-de-mamão* is a theatrical dance whose plot is usually about the death and resurrection of an ox. It has its origins in the folk tales of the Azores Islands, which was colonized by the Portuguese in the 15th century. The Azoreans constitute the

main wave of immigrants who started the colonization of Santa Catarina in the 18th century.

⁴ The *maricota* is a humorous and allegoric representation of the migrating women, specially of German origin. It is characterized as oversized and exaggerated.

⁵ The *bernunça* is a supernatural figure, a strange beast of the folk tales of Azorean origin which constitutes the group of characters of the performance of *Boi-de-Mamão*.

⁶ About the notion of refunctionalization, we use the characterization of Garcia Canclini (2002).

⁷ The name of the artist cited was

substituted for the term *Fulano* to protect his identity; this was done for all the names mentioned, in which authorization was not obtained to use their names in the text.

⁸ As a first approximation with the notion of aesthetic fruition, I present that of Ortiz Angulo (1990); as a questioning of this concept see Mandoki (2006).

⁹ This pattern of biographic action is in keeping with the Schütze's categories about the global patterns found in biographic narrative interviews. This author calls them schemes of structured biographic processes. They define the attitudes and the concepts of the protagonist of the narrative. (Appel, 2005; Hamel, 2007).

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