

### Fragment of “Can a mestizo asshole speak?” (3):

It turns out that knowledge, in order to obtain legitimacy as such, needs to give in to a series of normative investments that aim to rule every step of it, from the primal inquiry moving the researcher to the ways a text is organized and the tone of voice that must be used when reading it. In this knowledge-making regime, a nasal voice using the slang of *pajubá*<sup>1</sup> when speaking will certainly sound dissonant; just as an incarnate writing, moved by its own rhythm, and admittedly authorial, might seem unreadable. Despite these definitions, the very strength of such failed gestures towards the hegemonic knowledge-making and the breaches to which they address themselves tend to stress – at times molecularly, others more like a boom – the political regime that establishes what can be heard and read. The nasal voices, the *pajubá* expressions, the incarnate and admittedly authorial writing claim for their position in the construction of possibles, and they do so by not following the traditional methods, because they need to produce a major gash, allowing for degenerate thoughts (not necessarily written as an article, essay, or treatise, nor pronounced as a defense, communication, or lecture) to overcome the tradition of silence, just like the poetic endeavor of Gloria Anzaldúa’s *How to Tame a Wild Tongue*.

*Verarschung*<sup>2</sup> is a video piece that Pêdra Costa sent from Berlin to be a part of the event “Que pode o korpo?,” organized by myself at UFRN, in April 2013. In this work, the artist articulates a web of apparently disconnected quotations that superimposes, for instance, lyrics of American rapper Azaelia Banks and the song “O Bandido” by Tetine, passing through Ludditas Sexxxuales, Audre Lorde, and João W. Nery, mingled with personal quotes and reflections to build a plural speech pronounced in several languages, and having as backdrop the image of hers own asshole in rhythmic movements of contraction and expansion.

In the program of “Que pode o korpo?,” an event created to explore the possibilities of intervention of a bodily speech in the fields of knowledge-making and contemporary politics, this work was announced as “*Verarschung*: a video-lecture by Pêdra Costa,” which got people waiting for a regular videoconference, with hers face in the forefront and the speech coming out of hers mouth. Even if it was an independent activity, parallel to the academic canon, and counting with

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<sup>1</sup> *Pajubá* is a slang composed of words ensued from several African dialects mixed with Portuguese words, mostly used by trans\* people and followers of Creole Afro-Brazilian religions, the *povo de santo*.

<sup>2</sup> *Verarschung* is a colloquial German expression equivalent to “piss-take, put-on, or spoof.”

an audience fairly accustomed to such spaces, *Verarschung* caused astonishment and aroused all sorts of reactions – from “laid-back jokes” to blunt gestures of disapproval.

When resorting back to Grada Kilomba’s “The Mask,” in which the author builds an analysis of the interdict of the mouth as the interdict of speech, we start to envisage a possible connection. If, from her standpoint, the slavery regime produces the territorialization of mouth as a place of torture and non-speechlessness, the compulsory heterosexual norm produced the asshole as the place of excretion and non-pleasure. In both cases, we observe an arbitrary territorialization of the body, seeking to drastically reduce the possibilities of experimenting with such organs.

Mouth and asshole, two ends of the same tube, when faced as interdict organs, reveal the bodily-political dimension of the construction of reality. Still in the wake of Kilomba, we can infer that, since the interdiction of the mouth of biologically designated Black bodies was linked to the constitution of a non-Black hegemonic speech in the context of slavery, the interdiction of the asshole in bodies suited to the hetero-cis-sexist norm makes possible to maintain gender as the regulatory ideal attached to heterosexuality as a political regime.

In this politically regulated realm, the asshole is left aside of the calculation: the counter-genital that misinforms gender, for it passes through the binary sexual distinction. Using the words of Solange, *tô aberta!*, it is “the hole everyone has.” In the *Countersexual Manifesto*, Paul B. Preciado, elaborates a political fiction centered in the dissolution of genders as correspondences to the biological categories of male/female, forging a notion of masculine/feminine as “open records at the disposal of *cuerpos parlantes* [talking bodies],”<sup>3</sup> which are bodies free of the hetero-cis-sexist normalization. Faced with Pêdra Costa’s anal video-lecture, it is not safe to state that the subject of that speech is a man or a woman: the hetero-cis-sexual intelligibility matrix simply cannot classify such body. And when the matrix gets confused, the artist’s *cuerpo parlante* manifests hers subaltern speech. Through the asshole.

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3 Beatriz Preciado, *Manifiesto contrasexual*, Madrid: Opera Prima, 2002.