

ABSTRACT

THE ARCHAIC MAKES THE AVANT-GARDE.

EXPERIMENTAL PRACTICE AND PRIMORDIAL IMAGE.

READING THE BRAZILIAN POST-NEOCONCRETE AND THE JAPANESE GUTAI
ARTISTS THROUGH MIRCEA ELIADE AND CARL GUSTAV JUNG.

The Archaic Makes the Avant-Garde, Experimental Practice and Primordial Image is a research on the work, practice and creative process of the Brazilian Post-Neoconcrete artists Lygia Clark and Hélio Oiticica, and of the Japanese Gutai group. These artists adopted a concrete ludic relationship between the body and the material; their empirical processes preceded and dispensed theoretical consideration. As a result, their practice and work substantiated a very primal bond between artist, matter and creative drive, through which they cumulatively experienced the creative potency, exerted the creative command, and re-enacted the original creation. Having dismissed content in the work of art – the conventions of language, meaning, and representation – their imagery consistently placed them in the existential condition of the ‘absolute beginning’.

However, at the cutting edge of artistic production, in the pursuit of a new order of creation, underlying the experimental practices and works of these avant-garde artists, and evinced in recurrent primordial images of the pattern of ‘restoration of the creative time’, rests a universal knowledge, embodied and archaic. It remains largely unconscious, consisting of a psycho-physiological device to surpass consciousness and attain a cosmicized atemporal mode of being – the condition of ‘absolute beginning’ that the avant-garde

extols for creation – and known in ancient practical philosophies as the ascension of the kundalini energy (libido, orgone, or sexuality are aspects of this energy – thus, a creative, generative principle). This knowledge is constantly brought forward, in inexorable reminders of the ‘teleology of creation’ of that inner program of emancipation.

The analysis of the work and practice of these artists took on from the theory and method of authors Mircea Eliade, Gustav Jung, as well as Nise da Silveira. They acknowledged this psycho-physiological process, verified its correspondence with specific human aspirations or existential situations, figured within dreams, symbols, myths, reveries, insights and plastic artistic creation. And, from this generative and emancipatory attribute of the psyche, they also looked into the purposefulness of the creative accomplishment, which is arguably the ultimate question of this research.