ARTICLE

"PASSION OF THE SAME"

CACIQUE DE RAMOS AND THE *MULTIDÃO*

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DE 7000 COMPONENTES SOU UM

OF 7,000 COMPONENTS I AM ONE

—CACIQUE DE RAMOS SLOGAN, EARLY 1970S

How might one picture the immanence of politics in art? This question haunts the catalog of the seminal exhibition Information, curated by Kynaston McShine at the Museum of Modern Art, New York, in 1970, which affirmed the centrality of conceptual practices in the midst of the "social, political, and economic crises" of the time. As McShine famously wrote:

> If you are an artist in Brazil, you know of at least one friend who is being tortured; if you are one in Argentina, you probably have had a neighbor who has been in jail for having long hair, or for not being "dressed" properly; and if you are living in the United States, you may fear that you will be shot at, either in the universities, in your bed, or more formally in Indochina. It may seem too inappropriate, if not absurd, to get up in the morning, walk into a room, and apply daubs of paint from a little tube to a square of canvas. What can you as a young artist do that seems relevant and meaningful?[1]

1 *Information*, ed. Kynaston McShine (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1970), exhibition catalog, 138.

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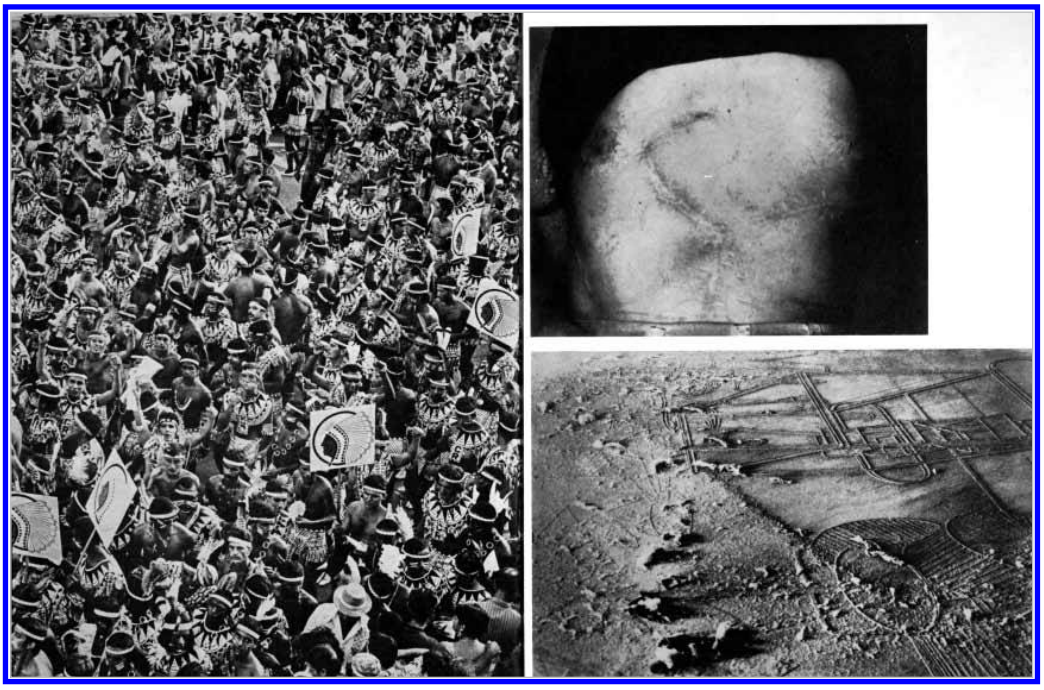
For the artists included in Information, "picturing" was already a problematic operation. This was a generation as influenced by the conceptual provocations of Marcel Duchamp as by contemporaneous social upheavals, and the modes they utilized—language, systems, performative action, documentation, spatial intervention—evidence a turn from representation to enactment, structure, proposition.[2] For the catalog, McShine compiled a "collection of timely photographs related to and expressing the attitudes of art and artists today."[3] These ranged from the 1963 March on Washington, nudist colonies, and Gutai performances to the Moon landing, Black Panthers, data charts, and Yves Klein leaping into the void. The precise relation between radical art and social, technological, and political revolution was never made explicit. But how could it have been? Conscripting art in service of politics would betray its autonomy; positing current events as simple causal agents would betray their complexity. McShine's solution was the critical ambivalence of juxtaposition, signaling the historical sea change registered by the exhibition by setting his visual citations side by side.

Among the numerous images of crowds and mass phenomena within McShine's compilation is a photograph of Cacique de Ramos, one of many loose-knit groups called *blocos* (blocks) that parade together in the streets during Brazilian *carnaval* (Carnival), sourced from the Brazilian weekly *Fatos e Fotos*.[4] Cacique de Ramos, or Chief of Ramos, is based in the working-class Zona Norte district of Rio de Janeiro and is known for the striking visual effect of its characteristic black-and-white costumes. In a fantastical approximation of Amerindian attire, these costumes minimize individual differences between members in favor of the encompassing graphic effect of the whole. In the catalog, the photograph appears alongside a polaroid of Andy Warhol's scar after his 1968 shooting and Man Ray's 1920 photograph of dust accumulating on the cracked surface of Duchamp's

2 See Eve Meltzer, "The Dream of the Information World" in *Systems We Have Loved: Conceptual Art, Affect, and the Antihumanist Turn* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013).

3 Kynaston McShine, Internal Memo "Description of the Catalogue 'Information'," Museum of Modern Art Exhibition Records, exh.934.31.folder, Museum of Modern Art Archives, New York.

4 Unlike the codified and hierarchical *escolas de samba*, *blocos* are informal and process more freely through the streets. McShine sourced the image from the popular illustrated weekly *Fatos e Fotos* (February 19, 1970), which he may have been sent by Hélio Oiticica or another artist following his late 1969 trip to Brazil. See Museum of Modern Art Exhibition Records, exh.934.8.folder, Museum of Modern Art Archives, New York.



Kyntaston McShine, ed., *Information*, exhibition catalog (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1970). Digital image. © The Museum of Modern Art/ Licensed by SCALA/Art Resource, NY.

"definitively unfinished" masterpiece, *The Large Glass* (1915–23). The photographs show a series of marked bodies or fields, then, but connected in only the most elliptical way.

Between 1972 and 1975, the Brazilian artist Carlos Vergara (b. Santa Maria, Rio Grande do Sul, 1941) took hundreds of photographs of Cacique de Ramos as part of a sustained engagement with the phenomenon of *carnaval*. While Vergara was close to Cildo Meireles and Hélio Oiticica, two of the four Brazilian artists included in Information, he does not appear to have encountered the exhibition catalog itself.[5] Nevertheless, the comparisons McShine sought to mobilize—between vanguard art and popular culture, corporeal ecstasy and intellectual withdrawal, mass movements and individual subjectivity, radical politics and aesthetic experimentation—were coincident with the contradictions and tensions that Vergara negotiated in these same years. As I shall suggest, however, Vergara's photographs of Cacique

5 Carlos Vergara, interview with author, Rio de Janeiro, August 19, 2014. It is possible that Vergara forgot (or selectively forgot) viewing this catalog, in light of his subsequent engagement with the theme. But it is indeed likely that he never saw it, since both Oiticica and Meireles left Brazil for extended periods following the show.

de Ramos offer a distinct model for navigating these relations, one that departs from a juxtapositional logic of comparison and seeks to render difference mobile, reciprocal, and temporally activated by the spectator's gaze.

In Cacique de Ramos, Vergara found a form of ecstatic collectivity that radically diverged from Brazil's authoritarian, dictatorial state. But his photographs do not simply document the existence of this *multidão* (in Portuguese, both "multitude" and "crowd").[6] They attempt to crystallize the very means by which singularity and group affiliation are negotiated and maintained. To this end, they are visual theorizations of a paradigm of social organization. They identify the unique configuration of an existing social phenomenon and extract its structure as a picture. Thus, while Vergara is the one who participates within the actual space of encounter, the photographs ultimately cede his point of view to that of the spectator. The result is a visual diagram of how singular subjects choose to enter, or not, within horizontal, nonhierarchical identification with the group. In this, Vergara's photographs offer an implicit response to McShine's question about how to deploy aesthetics to construct a subjectivity consonant with the political and social exigencies of the time. But they exceed this historical circumscription as well. In a present moment in which both the promise and threat of globality are riddled with nationalist and tribalist claims, these photographs offer a speculative paradigm for intersubjective identification: a mapping of difference from deep within what the anthropologist Eduardo Viveiros de Castro called "a passion of the same."[7]

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6 While the topic is not a direct concern of this article, it is important to note the long history of distinctions between such terms as "the crowd," "the masses," and "the people." See, in particular, Benedictus de Spinoza, *Theological-Political Treatise* [1670] ed. Jonathan Israel, trans. Michael Silverthorne and Jonathan Israel (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007); Gustave Le Bon, *The Crowd: A Study of the Popular Mind* [1896] (Dunwoody: N.S. Berg, 1968); Georg Simmel, "The Metropolis and Mental Life" [1903] in *The Sociology of Georg Simmel*, trans. Kurt Wolf (New York: Free Press, 1950), 409-424; and Elias Canetti, *Crowds and Power* [1960], trans. Carol Stewart (Hammondsworth: Penguin Books, 1973). My use of the Portuguese *multidão* signals a distinction from the English term *multitude*, used in Brazil to signify the political concept popularized by Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri. See note 52.

7 Eduardo Viveiros de Castro, "O igual e o diferente" (unpublished manuscript, date unknown [ca. 1975], authorship confirmed in email correspondence with the author, January 7, 2008). Transcript of essay located in document no. 0337.sd, Arquivo Hélio Oiticica/Projeto Hélio Oiticica, Rio de Janeiro. Translated and published in this issue of *ARTMargins*, pp. 109–12.

Vergara embarked on his Cacique de Ramos series on the heels of the censorship of his exhibition EX-POSIÇÃO, held at the Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro in 1972.[8] While he participated in Opinião 65 (1965) and Nova Objetividade Brasileira (1967), epochal exhibitions that probed the relationship between avant-garde art and popular culture, Vergara belongs more properly to a younger group of artists (including Meireles, Artur Barrio, Antonio Dias, and Rubens Gerchman) who sought to build on such experiments in the rapidly shifting political landscape of the late 1960s and early 70s.[9] In 1964, Brazil's democratically elected government had been overthrown in a military coup. But it was at the end of 1968, with the passage of the notorious Ato Institucional #5 (AI-5), that the dictatorship entered its most violent phase. Several artists of the so-called Geração AI-5 (AI-5 Generation) developed strategies to intervene within this repressive regime, rethinking the politics of aesthetic form and its social insertion in order to critique or sabotage institutional structures.[10] Yet many, too, remained invested in the broader question of collective art and how popular sociocultural phenomena might reveal new ways of articulating subjectivity and political experience.

For Vergara, EX-POSIÇÃO was key. Although he had been invited to realize a solo show, he opted to stage a group exhibition, the collaborative, multidisciplinary, and nonhierarchical character of which explic-

8 Censors objected to a film by the *cinema marginal* director Ivan Cardoso. See a letter by Walter Moreira Salles and Fernando Quintella to Carlos Vergara, August 18, 1972, Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro (MAM-RJ) Arquivos. On the importance of MAM-RJ in this era, see Giselle Ruiz, *O MAM/RJ: Arte/cultura em trânsito na década de 1970* (Rio de Janeiro: MAUAD Editora, 2013).

9 In the early 1960s, the Centros de Cultura Popular (CPCs) sought to deploy "revolutionary popular art" as a catalyst for politicizing the Brazilian working class, yet saw preexisting popular forms such as *carnaval* as apolitical, even regressive. See Carlos Estevam Martins, "Anteprojeto do manifesto do Centro Popular de Cultura" [March 1962], reprinted in Heloisa Buarque de Hollanda, *Impressões de viagem: CPC, vanguarda e desbunde 1960/70* (Rio de Janeiro: Aeroplano, 2004), 135–68. In the wake of the coup and closure of the CPCs, many artists sought to develop more complex strategies; see, in particular, Hélio Oiticica, "Esquema geral da nova objetividade brasileira," in *Nova objetividade brasileira* (Rio de Janeiro: Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, 1967), exhibition catalog.

10 See Claudia Calirman, *Brazilian Art Under Dictatorship: Antonio Manuel, Artur Barrio, and Cildo Meireles* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2012); Elena Shtromberg, *Art Systems: Brazil and the 1970s* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2016); Heloísa Buarque de Hollanda and Carlos Alberto M. Pereira, eds., *Patrulhas ideológicas, marca registrada: Arte e engagemento em debate* (São Paulo: Brasiliense, 1980); and Décio Pignatari, "Teoria da guerrilha artística" [1967], in *Contracomunicação* (São Paulo: Atelie Editorial, 2004), 167–76.

itly rejected the segmentation and atomization promoted by the dictatorship.[11] As he wrote, the heterogeneous practices on display did not share "art" so much as "critical thinking" about the world.[12] In this sense, EX-POSIÇÃO's collective character was itself the show's *posição*, or position, a point Vergara underscored in the exhibition's title, in which the first two letters were crossed out with a larger X so as to read X-POSIÇÃO. In a condensed diagram of his intervention within the institutional logic of the museum, Vergara negated the solo exhibition, a platform for individuality, as an outdated model of position-taking in general.

Vergara included several of his own documentary photographs of *carnaval* in EX-POSIÇÃO. But he resolved to make a more "systematic study" after the exhibition's abrupt closure, seeking out ways that it entailed modes of "inventing behavior" and "occupying public space."[13] Vergara's interest in *carnaval* ritual was anticipated by Oiticica's celebrated involvement with the *favela* of Mangueira and its famed samba school in the mid-1960s.[14] Yet his approach to Cacique de Ramos was distinct in the ethnographic character of its orientation. Vergara spent several years photographing the *bloco*, immersed himself within the group as a participant-observer, documented its rituals, and visually isolated its distinctive structures. He was influenced, too, by several young Brazilian anthropologists who introduced him to concepts, such as liminality and *communitas*, current in the field at the time.[15] To this end, photography was a pragmatic tool of investigation but also an analytic device: a means of extracting the underlying social dynamics from within the *bloco*'s structure and rendering them newly legible as modes of identification and relational address.

Cacique de Ramos was founded in 1961 by a number of families with close links to traditional samba and Afro-Brazilian religion who

11 Vergara, interview with the author, 2014.

12 Carlos Vergara, "Statement, 22 de maio 1972," in *EX-POSIÇÃO* (Rio de Janeiro: Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, 1972), exhibition pamphlet, n.p.

13 Vergara, interview with the author, 2014. See also Paulo Sergio Duarte, "Entrevista com Carlos Vergara," in *Carlos Vergara: Rio de Janeiro 1972/1976* (Rio de Janeiro: Silvia Roesler Edições de Arte, 2007).

14 See Hélio Oiticica, "Bases fundamentais para uma definição do parangolé" [1964], in *Aspiro ao grande labirinto* (Rio de Janeiro: Rocco, 1986), 65–69.

15 Vergara cited extracts of Victor Turner's work on ritual and performative action in, for example, his photoessay "Lê lê ô: Cacique é o bom . . . ," *Malasartes*, no. 2 (Dec./Jan./Feb. 1976): 27–31. See also Turner, *Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure* (Chicago: Aldine, 1969).

Carlos Vergara. *Untitled (Cacique de Ramos)*, 1972-1975. Photograph. Image courtesy of Carlos Vergara.

lived in the neighborhoods of Ramos and Olaria in Rio. As Carlos Alberto Messeder Pereira recounts, several of the founders had Amerindian names, including the brothers Ubirajara, Ubirani, and Ubiraci Felix do Nascimento, and the *bloco*'s *índio*, or "Indian," motif remains its most distinctive characteristic.[16] Yet this appeal to indigeneity was always refracted through transnational, mass-mediated phenomena. The Cacique profile on its seal was derived from stereotyped formulas of North American "Apache" chiefs that circulated during a 1960s vogue for "cowboys-and-Indians" films. Moreover, Brazil's first television station, TV Tupí, was named after the most populous indigenous group in the Atlantic coast region. Thus, the very means by which Hollywood images of Native Americans were disseminated in Brazil

16 Carlos Alberto Messeder Pereira, *Cacique de Ramos: Uma história que deu samba* (Rio de Janeiro: Editora E-Papers, 2003), and interviews by the author with President "Bira" Ubirajara Felix do Nascimento (Rio de Janeiro, November 29, 2015) and Cacique de Ramos member Fábio Martins (Rio de Janeiro, August 9, 2015).

was channeled through an equally stereotyped version of Brazilian indigenous subjects. Even elements of the characteristic Cacique de Ramos uniform appear to have Hollywood roots, as they were inspired by Kirk Douglas's *Spartacus* costume, which he reprised during a widely publicized visit to Rio's *carnaval* in 1963.[17] These uniforms, minimally modified over the years, consisted of a simple chest-piece, fringed kilt, and headband made by silk-screening black geometric patterns, sometimes accented with red, onto white plastic, which were then cut and assembled on the body. Participants added nominal markings—typically streaks of white paint or tape—in a manner vaguely reminiscent of indigenous body painting.

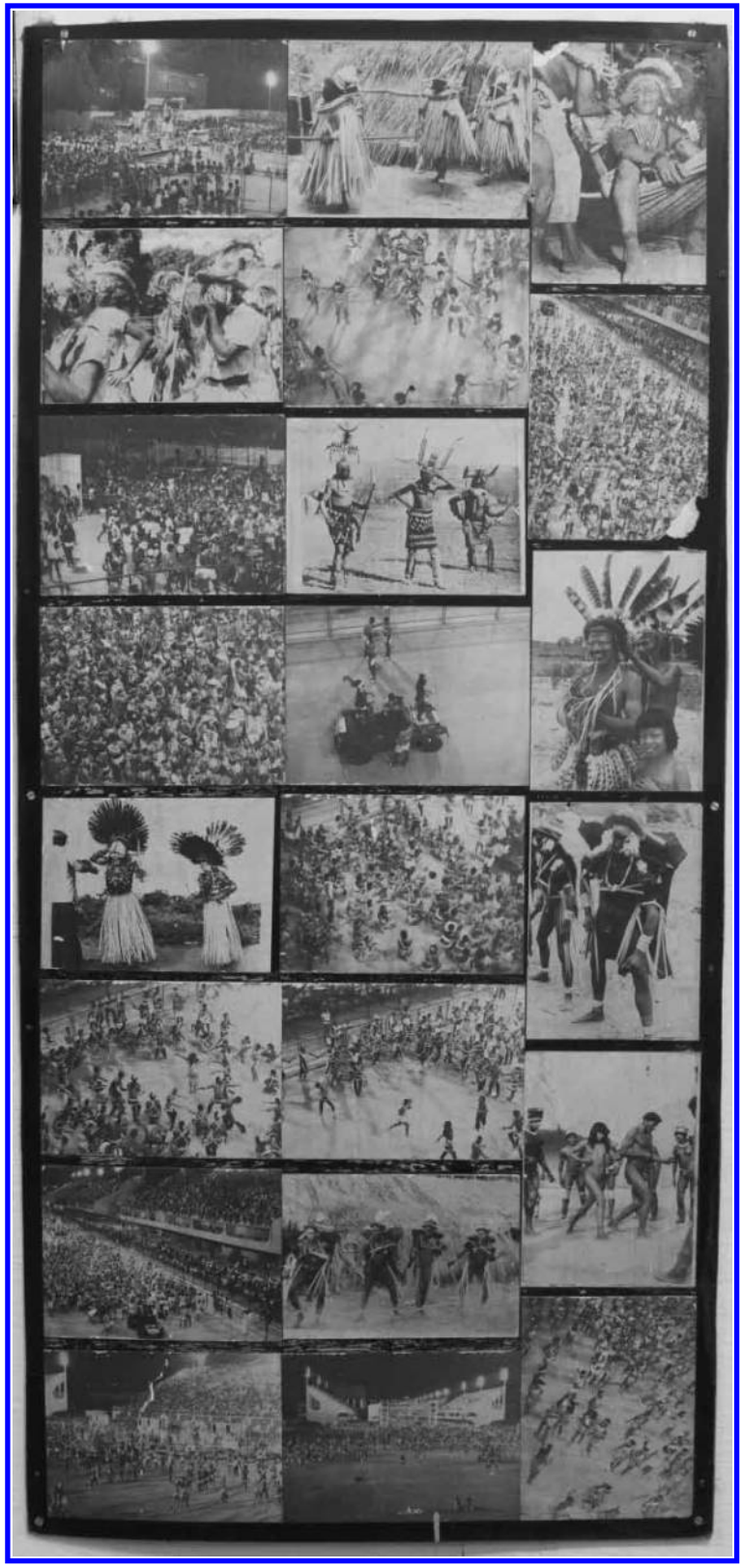
Cacique de Ramos likewise evoked indigeneity by mapping the *bloco*'s horizontal structure of group affiliation upon an anthropological concept of tribal society, wherein individuals are embedded in a network of kinship relations, customs, and habits. A collage made by costume designer Romeu de Vasconcelos, for example, juxtaposes photographs of the *bloco* alongside images of ritualistic manifestations by indigenous groups such as the Xingu and Timbira.[18] The collage's visual rhymes of sparsely clothed bodies in motion intentionally confound the opposition between indigeneity and *brasilidade*, secularism and spirituality, authenticity and appropriation. Much like Aby Warburg's *Mnemosyne Atlas* of 1927–29, which juxtaposed images from antiquity, Renaissance, and contemporary times, the collage aims to chart a continuity of gesture and bodily disposition across strikingly different social formations.[19] If Warburg used visual comparison to excavate elemental psychic energies repressed in the early modern world's turn to rationalism, however, Vasconcelos's collage reveals the libidinal manifestation of such energies as a self-conscious and imaginative act of cross-cultural affiliation in the wake of the industrialized modernity that followed. Cacique de Ramos's *índianidade*, in short, was a self-conscious project of auto-affiliation and affirmation: the *índio* as a medium for identification rather than a defined identity in and of itself.

The allegorical appeal to a generic indigenous subject is a tradition

17 Messeder Pereira, *Cacique de Ramos*, 60–61.

18 The authorship and dating of the collage to circa 1984 was confirmed by Tuninho Cabral, Cacique de Ramos Diretor Financeiro, in interview with author, Rio de Janeiro, November 29, 2015.

19 Aby Warburg and Matthew Rampley, "The Absorption of the Expressive Values of the Past," *Art in Translation* 1, no. 2 (2009): 273–83.



Romeu de Vasconcelos, *Untitled*, n.d. Collage. Headquarters, Cacique de Ramos, Rio de Janeiro. Image courtesy of Cacique de Ramos. Photograph by Matheus Rocha Pitta.

with significant precedent, and one frequently used to mark Brazilian identity as distinct from dominant European or North American models, converting a presumed ethnic difference into a cultural difference writ large.[20] In contrast, the Brazilian government's approach to Amerindians as political subjects trafficked the other way, positing the *índio* as a temporary cultural status to be absorbed by the nation's dominant ethnic groups. The military government's 1973 "Estatuto do Índio," for example, stated that while "indigenous communities" were distinct from "the rest of Brazilians," they were to be integrated "progressively and harmoniously, into the national community."[21] This contradictory logic of *desindianização* (de-indianization) hinged on an outdated classificatory system in which *índios* were either "isolated," "in the process of integration," or "integrated."[22] More disturbingly, it was part and parcel of an exploitative policy of political and economic disenfranchisement: if *índios* became Brazilians, the military dictatorship hazarded, they no longer required the protection of their own laws or land.[23] (The government took this logic to an extreme when it attempted to declare Amerindians "emancipated" from their *índio* status in 1977.)

Cacique de Ramos's mass-mediated, ethnically inclusive, and overtly fictional *índio* must be comprehended against this complex political and cultural backdrop. As in prior allegorical invocations of the *índio*, the *bloco*'s appeal to indigeneity hinges on the generic capaciousness of the category. And, like the 1973 statute, it casts the *índio* as a temporal, and even shifting, designation. Yet rather than mobilize indigeneity in service of a racist evolutionary scheme or mythical state

20 See, for example, Lilia Moritz Schwarcz's discussion of the "tropical monarch" Dom Pedro II in *As barbas do imperador* (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 1998); Oswald de Andrade, "Manifesto antropófago," *Revista de Antropofagia* 1, no, 1 (Maio 1928); and even Vergara's own painting *Auto-retrato com índios Carajás* of 1968.

21 Lei no. 6,001 de 19 de dezembro de 1973, Dispões sobre o Estatuto do Índio, www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil_03/leis/L6001.htm.

22 On the roots and critique of this classification system, see, for example, Darcy Ribeiro, "Línguas e culturas indígenas do Brasil," *Educação e ciências sociais*, no. 6 (Rio de Janeiro: Centro Brasileiro de Pesquisas Educacionais, 1957); Eduardo Viveiros de Castro, "No Brasil todo mundo é índio, exceto quem não é" [2006], in *Encontros: Eduardo Viveiros de Castro*, ed. Renato Sztutman (Rio de Janeiro: Azougue, 2007), 132–61; and Bruce Granville Miller and Gustavo Menezes, "Anthropological Experts and the Legal System: Brazil and Canada," *American Indian Quarterly* 39, no. 4 (Fall 2015): 391–430.

23 In the early 1970s, the military government aggressively claimed land in the Amazon through such projects as the Transamazônica highway. See "Violações de direitos humanos dos povos indígenas," in *Commissão Nacional da Verdade Relatório: Vol. II. Textos temáticos* (December 2014), 197–256, www.cnv.gov.br/images/pdf/relatorio/volume_2_digital.pdf.

of authentic alterity, Cacique de Ramos deliriously short-circuits these terms of reference in order to posit the *índio* as precisely the encompassing, "universal" category that integrates and combines. Anyone, in short, can become a member of its tribe.

To this end, the simplified graphic schemes and black-and-white markings of the Cacique de Ramos uniforms do not approximate the look of a specific Amerindian group so much as promote visual identification with and of the collective at large. Moreover, the *bloco* does not presume a closed structure, and its distinctive mode of visual identification facilitates rather than impedes the incorporation of others into the tribe. This capacity for extension adheres even in the silk-screen process by which the costumes are constructed and reproduced. As a practicing printmaker, Vergara was particularly intrigued by how the costumes' graphic formula and associated bodily markings rendered them uniquely conducive to multiplication.[24] One photograph pictures a costume design silk-screened on a wall, as if taken from a pattern book or printing matrix from which an infinite number of copies might be pulled. Since one need only wear the uniform to take part in a Cacique procession, its very simplicity and minimal differentiation aided the *bloco*'s proliferation. Its members can be instantly recognized, but it is just as easy to affiliate and join in.

This structural openness extends to Cacique's processional practices. As Vergara exuberantly recounted to Oiticica in 1973, members of the *bloco* surged through the streets, periodically throwing the tops of their costumes into the air, allowing for an exchange of garments when they fell.[25] This process results in the incorporation of new members as bystanders catch and put on elements of the costume—"a part of its skin," as Vergara put it—and merge into the crowd.[26] These bystanders relinquish their visual distinctiveness as they are integrated into the *bloco*'s overall pattern: literal figures absorbed by a collective ground. The *bloco* is therefore continually forming and reforming. It is both a mutable topology (a graphic surface or "skin") and a discernable "block" or body. Its boundaries are porous and flexible, while its individual units are paradoxically exchangeable and unique.

24 Paulo Sérgio Duarte, "Entrevista com Carlos Vergara," n.p.

25 Carlos Vergara and Hélio Oiticica, "Rap-N-Progress," unpublished transcription of interview (New York, October 28, 1973), document no. 0504.73, Arquivo Hélio Oiticica/ Projeto Hélio Oiticica, Rio de Janeiro.

26 Ibid.

Cacique de Ramos was, and remains, an apolitical institution. Yet its open structure and distinct mode of visual integration and identification have complex implications for the politics of collectivity and subjective desire. For Vergara, this political valence was a motivating factor for his photographic investigation. As he put it, "I wanted to understand how at the height of the military dictatorship, 7000 people chose to process [*sair*] as one."[27] Indeed, the *bloco*'s surging popularity in the early 1970s—precisely those "years of lead" in which the dictatorship inflicted its most severe repression—presents an extraordinary set of circumstances localized around questions of individual and group identity. The state of exception established at the end of 1968 with the Ato Institucional #5 was followed by a phase of accelerated economic expansion, often termed "the Brazilian miracle." In the resulting configuration of economic and political power, the government sought to rhetorically maximize its citizens' individuality as consumers, while simultaneously asserting their collectivity as a people—a nation—through ritual patriotic displays. Of course, "consumer choice" is really a function of demographic blocking, while the enforced consolidation of distinct groups demanded by nationalism treats *o povo* (the people) as a unity with no choice *but* to be one. But for the dictatorship, the configuration was highly effective, as the resulting self-other distinction could be mobilized symbolically or violently against other nations (as in sports, or war), or turned inward against individuals who deviated from the state's ideological norms (as in the copious incidences of censorship, imprisonment, and torture that occurred in these years).

Nowhere is the exceedingly perverse and paradoxical character of this self-other distinction more evident than in the state's policies toward Amerindians. For even as the military government launched a strategy of *desindianização* to integrate indigenous groups into the "national community," it conceived of them as the "internal enemies" of the state.[28] In so doing, it collapsed political interiority and exteriority into a single topology of immanent enmity, one in which the *índio* could be everywhere and nowhere at once. As one military general put it in an astonishing formulation in 1973: "The enemy is undefined; he makes use of mimicry and adapts himself to any environment."[29]

27 Carlos Vergara, interview with the author, Rio de Janeiro, April 19, 2006.

28 "Violações de direitos humanos," 205.

29 General Breno Borges Fortes, speech at 10 Conferência dos Exércitos Americanos, 1973, cited in "Violações de direitos humanos," 205.

Within this context, what indeed did it mean for seven thousand people to process as one?

Several of Vergara's images are akin to popular journalistic photographs and represent the Cacique *bloco* in the midst of rapturous manifestation, the angle pegged at a worm's- or bird's-eye view for maximum drama and graphic effect. In such images, the participants lose their physical, racial, and gender specificity within the greater aggregate of black-and-white uniforms. Yet an even larger number of Vergara's photographs picture Cacique members in moments of waiting or disaggregation. Supine and sitting, they lie and lean against one another during the liminal intervals before or after an event. Often, Vergara catches the eye of one of the *bloco*'s subjects, who turns outward toward the viewer, fixing us in his or her gaze. In such moments, a coupling mapped horizontally across the surface of the photograph—above, two men sitting back to back, or here a man and a woman—pivots on the perpendicular and establishes a new pairing with the viewer behind the camera's lens (and, subsequently, the photographic frame). The result is a triangulation: a pair whose units are the same but different incorporates a third entity whose relation is indeterminate and unknown. But here, yet another pairing emerges from the very distinction between the social unit that can be seen within the photograph and the social unit formed by the exchange of glances produced by the

Carlos Vergara. *Untitled (Cacique de Ramos)*, 1972-1975. Photograph. Image courtesy of Carlos Vergara.

photograph itself. This second pairing is also the same but different, joined by the gaze but set apart by the pure fact that the identity of the spectator is withheld from view. The equation thus rests not so much on identity as *identification*: what is the affinity that may be charted—or not charted—across this gaze? The invisible third position of the viewer—both elided from the photograph's representational surface and inscribed within it by means of the pictured subjects' gaze—is therefore not an unmarked position, but one *always-already* marked as different and with simply the potential to also be same.

This potentiality would appear to hinge entirely on an act of individual will, for as Vergara noted in his 1973 discussion with Oiticica, the *bloco* as institution is structurally open: "all it demands of you is a desire to join the collective phenomenon."[30] Yet the photographs also suggest that potentiality is not equivalent to pure affirmation. After all, they suspend the social relation between the *bloco* member and the viewer, such that the latter's identification with the *bloco* remains unknown. Indeed, as a significant strand of philosophy reaching back to Aristotle has elaborated, to be free is not simply to exercise a given possibility or choice, but to be able to withhold this actualization, as well. It is, as Giorgio Agamben puts it, *"to be capable of one's own impotentiality."*[31] In its most robust sense, potentiality therefore entails not simply realization, but latency and refusal. Bearing this in mind, we can see how the perpendicular mapping of the exterior, third position in Vergara's Cacique photographs constructs a paradoxical space of generative impotentiality. For in refusing to imagine their viewer as anything but an individual who may choose *or choose not* to join in, the photographs insist, along with the loosely aggregated subjects pictured within them, that the Cacique *multidão* is open, anarchic, and free. Difference is a constant and a given, the photographs argue. It is sameness—equivalence, in its most logical, mathematical formulation—that requires an act of will.

Discussing his project with Oiticica in 1973, Vergara noted that when he paraded with Cacique de Ramos, his camera became

30 Oiticica and Vergara, "Rap-in-Progress."

31 Giorgio Agamben, "On Potentiality" in *Potentialities: Collected Essays in Philosophy* (Stanford University Press, 1999), 183. As he writes, "To be free is not simply to have the power to do this or that thing, nor is it simply to have the power to refuse to do this or that thing. To be free is . . . *to be capable of one's own impotentiality*, to be in relation to one's own privation."

Carlos Vergara. *Untitled (Cacique de Ramos)*, 1972-1975. Photograph. Image courtesy of Carlos Vergara.

an extension of his body, technologizing that body while eroticizing the machine. A technological means of mimicry (the photographic apparatus) thus coincided with an embodied form of mimicry (the euphoric sensation of incorporation within the crowd). In one picture, Vergara himself appears in the far right corner at the edge of the mirror, imaging the scene in front of him as the Cacique members, in turn, image themselves within the environment. Here, the dyad mapped horizontally across the photograph is one of mimetic reproduction, while the third position of potent impotentiality occurs on the axis—the three figures within the picture who see, *but do not yet see themselves*. The viewer's position is ambiguous. For while the perpendicular axis aligns us with the three individuals who remain as yet outside the *multidão*, the photograph also locates us within the Cacique formation, looking into the mirror's reflected space. In this constellation, Cacique members are both image generators, reproducing themselves within the environment and the bodies around them, and image receivers, sensitive plates upon which our own image might be registered or impressed.

Vergara's photographs deliberately hold in abeyance the viewer's relation to the depicted *multidão*. Yet their remarkable conjunction of individual action and a potential election to *sameness* offers a decisive departure from previous models of avant-garde negation. In Oiticica's notorious 1968 banner, *Seja marginal seja herói* (Be an Outlaw Be a Hero), for example, the avant-garde artist finds his parallel in the figure of the crucified outlaw who, refusing to subscribe to the social contract, is violently excised from its fold.[32] In the associated set of homologies, the artist/bandit emerges as a solitary individual whose act of renunciation is doubly a gesture of liberty and radical critique. In reifying elective affinity to this position of marginality, however, the formulation obscures the workings of economic, sexual, and racial oppression. Moreover, it offers no model of collectivity other than that proscribed—or denied—by a social contract legitimated by the state. Even Man Ray's aforementioned photograph of Duchamp's *The Large Glass* depends on the critical positionality of an outside. As an allegory of hermetic withdrawal, it appears to foreclose the possibility of large-scale social change. This, indeed, was precisely why it was necessary for McShine to work in a juxtapositional mode when he plotted the relations between avant-garde art and social and political movements side by side.

By contrast, the individual act of elective affinity that structures the Cacique de Ramos *bloco* facilitates a literal incorporation within an institutional body or flesh. Its model is not figure *against* ground, but the absorption of figure *into* ground. For Vergara, the ecstatic nature of the *bloco* experience is rooted precisely in this moment of transformation. As he described it 1973, "I leave the space of the individual and fall into the equality of the crowd."[33] The Cacique de Ramos paradigm therefore commences with the formation of a *multidão*. The question it poses is not how to exit the space of collectivity, but rather, *how to enter in*.

Within Vergara's renderings of Cacique de Ramos manifestations, the seemingly dichotomous modes of "same" and "different" are rendered exchangeable by means of the anarchic equality of the group. Crucially, the resulting triangulation of different-equal-same

32 See Waly Salomão, *Qual é o parangolé? e outros escritos* (Rio de Janeiro: Rocco, 2003), 67, as well as "Declaração dos princípios básicos da vanguarda" (1967), signed by Oiticica and Vergara, among others.

33 Oiticica and Vergara, "Rap-in-Progress."

repudiates the self-other opposition the Brazilian state had mobilized in service of repressive nationalism *as well as* the reification of the individual it had mobilized in service of consumer capitalism. In contrast to these self-other models, the institutional protocol made visible in Vergara's photographs corresponds to the logical coexistence of the singular and the plural. The grammatical idiosyncrasy of the *bloco*'s name underscores the point. For in a Cacique de Ramos manifestation, all participants are simultaneously individual "chiefs" (*caciques*) and building blocks of the collective "Chief" (*Cacique*) that is the *bloco* itself. If the modern political paradigm identifies sovereignty with the state, Cacique de Ramos offers a mutating tribe of chiefs who mimetically reproduce their individual and collective sovereignty through their free association as singularities.

This anarchic paradigm deliriously upends the topological configuration of immanent enmity the Brazilian state constructed in relation to the politics of indigeneity, in which a national policy of erasing difference through *desindianização* coexisted with the assertion that indigenous "internal enemies" of the state adapted themselves to the environment at every turn. For if the state understood the *índio* as mimetically camouflaged within the dominant culture, yet always capable of wielding the incommensurate difference of radical alterity against the state, Cacique de Ramos mimetically incorporates unmarked differences *within* this supposed alterity. To repeat my earlier formulation, *the índio is precisely the encompassing, "universal" category that integrates and combines*. The topology is thus not one of immanent enmity but of immanent potentiality, as subjects enact the freedom of their own identification, or nonidentification, with the *multidão*.

The very concepts of power and the political shift in turn. In 1974, Pierre Clastres published *La Société contre l'État: Recherches d'anthropologie politique*, in which the French anthropologist argued against the widespread belief that the state was necessary for the political development of a society.[34] This assumption had long undergirded the distinction between "modern" and "traditional" societies: if the

34 See Pierre Clastres, *Society against the State: Essays in Political Anthropology* [1974], trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Zone Books, 1989); Paula Montero, Jose Maurício Arruti, and Cristina Pompa, "Para uma antropologia do político," in *Horizonte da política: Questões emergentes e agendas de pesquisa*, ed. Adrian G. Lavalle (São Paulo: Ed UNESP/CEBRAP, 2012); and Eduardo Viveiros de Castro, "The Untimely, Again," in *Archeology of Violence* [1980], ed. Pierre Clastres (New York: Semiotext(e), 2010).

latter had no state (with its associated characteristics of hierarchy and coercive power), they could not have the political, properly speaking. Clastres argued that on the contrary, so-called "primitive" societies developed precise mechanisms for neutralizing the accumulation of power in either individuals or institutions approximating the abstract entity of the state. The politics of traditional societies, in short, was a "struggle against the State."[35]

For Clastres, a key mechanism of this resistance was the "powerless chief," who lacks any true authority aside from his functional "dependence on the group."[36] Cacique de Ramos fantastically proliferates this "powerless chief": it is a *bloco*, after all, entirely composed of *caciques* whose only power inheres in the decision to join, or not join, the tribe. To return to Vergara's motivating query, herein lies the radicality of seven thousand people choosing to process as one at the height of the military dictatorship. In the face of a modern, dictatorial state whose sovereign power was staked on violence and intimidation, Vergara's Cacique de Ramos paradigm counterposed the symbolic figure of "primitive" society's "powerless chief," now conceived as the collective, proliferating, and topological entity whose very existence militates against the consolidation of institutional power.

* * *

Around 1975, Vergara solicited the young anthropologist Eduardo Viveiros de Castro to write a short essay for an unrealized exhibition of his Cacique de Ramos series.[37] In the resulting essay, "O igual e o diferente" (The Equal and the Different), Viveiros de Castro distinguishes between two types of society. In the first, the group is anterior to the individual, who is merely "a residue" that comes into full existence through "mediumistic" incorporation within the collective. In the second, the group is the "inevitable product of the gathering of individuals," each of whom is "self-sufficient," a "universe in itself."[38] Here, the individual "creates the social by means of an act of will—a contract—or, inversely, renounces the social by means of an act of liberty."[39] What

35 Clastres, *Society against the State*, 218.

36 Clastres, *Society against the State*, 45, 206.

37 Vergara, interviews with the author, 2006, 2014; Eduardo Viveiros de Castro, interview with the author, Rio de Janeiro, January 27, 2016. See my introduction to and translation of the essay in this volume of *ARTMargins*.

38 Viveiros de Castro, "O igual e o diferente", 1.

39 Ibid.

Carlos Vergara. *Untitled (Cacique de Ramos)*, 1972–1975. Photographs. Images courtesy of Carlos Vergara.

is distinct in Cacique manifestations, Viveiros de Castro posits, is that they mobilize this second form of sociality for the purposes of the first. "The basis of association is the free contract, but a paradoxical contract. It deindividualizes, reduces all to a common denominator: members of a species dissolved in a '*bloco*'."[40]

For Viveiros de Castro, this phenomenon represents an accidental, even fortuitous, eruption of "a passion of the same" that runs deep within Western industrial society.[41] Like the fundamental social memory Warburg sought in gesture and bodily comportment, this passion runs counter to the ideology of modernization and rationalization. Yet it also reveals the persistence of singularity within the group. In the "passion of the same," the logic of individualization is a combination of minimally divergent elements that generate singularity, much like the genetic code. Vergara offered up a visual metaphor for this process in two photographs that picture the aggregate black-and-white markings of common snails. In one, the snails are clustered in an expanding spiral; in the other, they form the mathematical signs for "equal" and "unequal." Much like the black-and-white determinants of Cacique de Ramos's visual system, each snail's biological singularity is produced through a composite of

40 Ibid., 2.
41 Ibid., 3.

Carlos Vergara. *Untitled (Cacique de Ramos)*, 1972-1975. Photograph. Image courtesy of Carlos Vergara.

binary differentiations: not only are their protective shells characterized by either/or patterning, their sexual reproduction depends on an alternation of binary possibilities, since snails are hermaphrodites and can take both parts in the reproductive act. Both internal anatomy and exterior habitat thus establish sameness and difference from the micro-level of the individual organism to the species en masse. Viveiros de Castro is quick to assert, "men are not snails."[42] Yet from the biological example, one can extrapolate a radical cultural implication, he asserts, for the minimal markings by which Cacique de Ramos generates individuation and deindividuation are *socially* produced.

It is in this sense—that of singularity produced as the combination of minimal variations—that Vergara's Cacique de Ramos paradigm is also able to coexist with a politics of race, class, and gender identification, collapsing normative self-other distinctions in favor of a continually mobile triad of different-equal-same. Consider, for example, an image of three black men with Afros and the word *poder* (power) written on their chests. Rather than picturing integrants of the *bloco*, this photograph documents individuals who were attending the Cacique de Ramos manifestation in order to publicize a political stance.[43]

42 Ibid.

43 Vergara, interview with the author, 2014.

Anticipating Brazil's Movimento Negro of the later 1970s, they foreground the political claims of racialized subjects by physically occupying public space.[44] Their hairstyles (called "Black Power" in Brazil) likewise register the micropolitics of the burgeoning Black Rio and Black Soul movements.[45]

At first blush, it might seem that this explicit politics of the racialized body would have little in common with Cacique de Ramos's symbolic appeal to the *índio* as a medium for affiliation and "passion of the same." Yet the very method by which the men signal "black power" with and upon their bodies indicates how these distinct strategies of identification might align. For their political claim is made by means of the binary graphic system of Cacique de Ramos itself: white letters that form the word *poder* upon three bodies that themselves perform the signifier "black." Applied in another manner, or to another body, the word *poder* would shift in valence. But because it is generated from within Cacique's binary variants, it reveals how a difference always already marked within one set of coordinates ("race" on the one hand, "color" on the other) can simultaneously function as the means by which a subject is recognized within a coexisting and transversal logic of *same*. The demand for power visualized in Vergara's photograph is therefore specific, embodied, and locatable, but also communicative, transferable, and contingent. After all, these men may choose to perform blackness as a racial category within a given signifying context, but they may not always choose when the significance *of* this blackness is determined and deployed from without. The sovereignty of the subject is therefore not a given condition, but must be continuously and reciprocally reproduced. The photograph does not indicate whether or not these men choose to join the Cacique de Ramos *bloco*; it simply

44 On the Movimento Negro, see Verena Alberti and Amilcar Araujo Pereira, eds., *Histórias do Movimento Negro no Brasil: Depoimentos ao CPDOC* (Rio de Janeiro: Pallas, 2007); Michael George Hanchard, *Orpheus and Power: The Movimento Negro of Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo, 1945–1988* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998); and Ivair Augusto Alves dos Santos, *O Movimento Negro e o estado (1983–1987)* (São Paulo: UNICAMP, 2001).

45 On the cultural manifestations of Brazil's Black movement, see Antonio Risério, *Carnaval Ijexá: Notas sobre afoxés e blocos do novo carnaval afrobaino* (Salvador: Corrupio, 1981), and Amy Abugo Ongiri, *Spectacular Blackness: The Cultural Politics of the Black Power Movement and the Search for a Black Aesthetic* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2010). See also Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, "Micropolitics and Segmentarity," in *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* [1980], trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987).

visualizes how their political claims may persist if they do. The call for power imaged, then, remains singular even as it multiplies with the mimetic variation of the *multidão* as a whole.

It follows that the mimicry of a Cacique de Ramos *bloco* is not a self-other operation, but a *self-same* operation. It does not imitate or masquerade a dominant subjectivity, but rather, amplifies its own capacity for replication and extension within social space.[46] Hence Vergara's interest in picturing Cacique integrants in front of reflective surfaces such as mirrors or pools of water that provide opportunities for instantaneous mimetic reproduction, extending into the environment the embodied mimesis enacted by the integrants themselves. As Oiticica remarked, "the skin of the body and the entire environment come to be a single thing."[47] In a context of crushing oppression and censorship, in which the putative social contract with the state is suspended and surveillance is rife, Vergara's photographs make the case that a traditional politics of opposition must be converted into a collective politics of camouflage and ecstatic mimicry, one in which individuals, recognizing themselves as a generative *impotentiality* in relation to the *multidão*, choose freely the radical equality of the different and the same.

* * *

Over the course of the 1970s, Vergara traveled extensively outside of Brazil, intensifying his interest in the question of Brazilian identity or, as Oiticica put it in 1978, of constructing a "*face-Brasil*" through his work.[48] Years earlier, in his text for Information, Oiticica exhorted Brazilian artists to stop "importing" culture and instead to formulate critical models of "exportation" that would circulate in international culture at large.[49] Tellingly, when Vergara represented Brazil at the Venice Biennale in 1980, he included a number of Cacique de Ramos photographs in the accompanying pamphlet. In some fundamental way, the *bloco* and its photographic articulation represented the critical

46 This is distinct from the mimicry theorized within postcolonial and feminist studies as a slippage produced by the Other in relation to the colonizing or phallocentric subject. See Homi Bhabha, "Of Mimicry and Man: The Ambivalence of Colonial Discourse," *October* 28 (Spring 1984): 125–33; Joan Riviere, "Womanliness as Masquerade," *International Journal of Psycho-Analysis* 10, no. 1 (January 1929): 303–13.

47 Oiticica and Vergara, "Rap-in-Progress."

48 Hélio Oiticica, Untitled text, in *Carlos Vergara* (Rio de Janeiro: FUNARTE, 1978), exhibition catalog. As Vergara put it, "It was a desire to look at Brazil, to impregnate myself with the question." Duarte, "Entrevista com Carlos Vergara," n.p.

49 Hélio Oiticica, statement in the *Information* catalog.

exportation Oiticica advocated. Rooted in the specificity of Brazil, yet transnational, anarchic, and in excess of the country's reactionary and repressive nationalism, they offered a seed of radical (im)potentiality—"an open plan," as Oiticica put it in the catalog for Information, "that can be expanded, gr o o o ow."[50]

To this end, it behooves us to consider the afterlife of the Cacique de Ramos series. For while Vergara used them as source images for various projects, he only exhibited them as independent works in 2010.[51] At this point, the very notion of mass phenomena had gained new inflection under the widespread influence of the concept of "the multitude," advanced by political theorists Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri and their trilogy *Empire* (2000), *Multitude* (2004), and *Commonwealth* (2009).[52] As a political concept, the multitude has a much longer provenance—appearing in Machiavelli, Hobbes, and Spinoza, for instance, to denote the agency of an inchoate entity that forms in relation to, and against, the sovereign power of the king or state. But Hardt and Negri's impetus was to imagine the insurgent potential of such an aggregate in the face of the 21st-century conjunction of global capitalism and biopower. Rejecting both the politics of identity and older class-based alliances, they argued that only an emergent and mobile collective of singularities could constitute resistance to this new form of sovereignty. "The multitude," they wrote, is "composed of innumerable internal differences that can never be reduced to a unity or a single identity—different cultures, races, ethnicities, genders, and sexual orientations; different forms of labor; different ways of living; different views of the world; and different desires. The multitude is a multiplicity of all these singular differences."[53]

As an articulation of a single entity that is many, multiple, the paradigm of collectivity advanced in Vergara's Cacique de Ramos

50 Ibid.

51 Vergara published selected Cacique de Ramos photographs in 1976 in the journal *Malasartes* and in his 1980 Venice Biennale pamphlet, and he used elements as source material for various paintings and prints. In 2007 he published the majority of the photographs in *Carlos Vergara: Rio de Janeiro 1972/1976*. In 2010 the works were exhibited at the 29th São Paulo Bienal and also were included in a permanent installation at Cacique de Ramos's renovated headquarters.

52 Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Empire* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000); Hardt and Negri, *Multitude: War and Democracy in the Age of Empire* (New York: Penguin Press, 2004); Hardt and Negri, *Commonwealth* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2009).

53 Hardt and Negri, "Preface: Life in Common," in *Multitude*, xiv.

photographs is theoretically contiguous with Hardt and Negri's concept of the multitude. But, crucially, the two paradigms are not coincident. Indeed, if we attend to the photographs, they do not illustrate an "imported" discourse of the multitude, but rather articulate an alternative paradigm of the *multidão* as a *face-Brasil* primed for critical "exportation." The "polyphonic" composition of carnival, for instance, is a privileged metaphor for Hardt and Negri's multitude. As they write in relation to anti-globalization protests, "The protests . . . are also street festivals in which the anger of the protestors coexists with their joy in the carnival. . . . Long live movement! Long live carnival! Long live the common!"[54] Yet Cacique de Ramos reminds us that a collective comprising joyful difference must be complicated by concomitant desires for "a passion of the same." Likewise, while Hardt and Negri comprehend the multitude as "singularities acting in common," the concept is critically elusive as to how the multitude forms and how such singularities are negotiated or preserved when one enters in.[55] By contrast, the impetus of Vergara's photographs is precisely to diagram how a subject enters—or not—the *multidão* based on the reciprocal equality of difference and the radical potentiality of the same. This bears, too, on the question of coalitions. For if Hardt and Negri argue that the multitude's immanent virtuality renders an older politics of coalition-building obsolete, Vergara's photographs indicate how coalitions might coexist through a transversal operation of *different-equal-same*. In the very flexibility of this triad, singularities are rendered mobile and resist the ossification of an invariable identity, position, or place.

Several decolonial theorists have argued that Hardt and Negri's abstract and universalist conception of multitude fails to comprehend the local stakes of "globalization from below" as well as the differential

54 Hardt and Negri, *Multitude*, 211.

55 For critiques of the concept of the multitude, see Gopal Balakrishnan, ed., *Debating Empire* (New York: Verso, 2003); Iain A. Boal and Retort, eds., *Afflicted Powers: Capital and Spectacle in a New Age of War* (New York: Verso, 2005); William Mazzarella, "The Myth of Multitude, or, Who's Afraid of the Crowd?," *Critical Inquiry* 36, no. 4 (Summer 2010): 697–727; Paul Passavant and Jodi Dean, eds., *Empire's New Clothes: Reading Hardt and Negri* (New York: Routledge, 2003), in particular the essays by Ernesto Laclau, "Can Immanence Explain Social Struggles" (pp. 21–30), and Kam Shapiro, "The Myth of Multitude" (pp. 289–314); and Néstor Kohan, "I império de Hardt & Negri: Para além de modas, ondas e furores," in *Filosofia política contemporânea: Controvérsias sobre civilização, império e cidadania* (Buenos Aires: CLACSO, Consejo Latinoamericano de Ciencias Sociales, 2006), http://biblioteca.clacso.edu.ar/clacso/se/20100601035456/20Kohan.pdf.

uses and abuses of the nation-state within the Global South.[56] The speculative paradigm of Vergara's photographs is similarly abstract, yet it remains a register of the situated and historical specificity of the *multidão* pictured within them. This paradigm consists of a "powerless chief" whose political immanence rests in the way it topologically inverts the contemporaneous configuration of power deployed by the Brazilian state in relation to its political, ethnic, and racial "others." This is a *multidão* that converts enmity into generative (im)potentiality and mimicry into a structure of recognition and choice. While the Brazilian dictatorship of the 1970s may seem far removed from the mechanisms of contemporary globalization, our swiftly changing geopolitical landscape indicates how much the old nation-state and emergent, post-Fordist, and neoliberal agendas work hand in hand. The orchestrated 2016 impeachment of Brazil's democratically elected President Dilma Rousseff (for some, under the very sign of previous military rule) is a case in point.

Three days after lawmakers voted to impeach Rousseff on April 17, 2016, Viveiros de Castro, now perhaps the most renowned anthropologist of his generation, gave a public seminar in an open square in downtown Rio in solidarity with the Abril Indígena movement for indigenous rights. He called it "Os Involuntários da Pátria," resignifying the name of the famous street that eulogizes the heroes or "volunteers" of the fatherland.[57] *Índios*, he suggested, were the first "involunteers" of the fatherland. But they were joined by other *involuntários*, other *índios*, other *others*, who likewise were—and continue to be—dispossessed by the state. "We who are here, feel as the *índios* do, as all the indigenous of Brazil, and form an enormous contingent of *Involuntarios da Pátria*," he declared.[58] But for this reason, too, Viveiros de Castro argued, "the *índios* are our example." Their very existence in the face of a nation-state that has continuously sought to eradicate them indicates the enduring power of a "people that is a singular multiplic-

56 Sourayan Mookerjea, "Migrant Multitudes, Western Transcendence and the Politics of Creativity," *Journal for Cultural Research* 7, no. 4 (2003): 405–32. See also Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing, "Empire's Salvage Heart: Why Diversity Matters in the Global Political Economy," *Focaal—Journal of Global and Historical Anthropology*, no. 64 (2012): 36–50.

57 Eduardo Viveiros de Castro, "Os Involuntários da Pátria," Public seminar on the occasion of the April Indigenous Act, Cinelândia, Rio de Janeiro, April 20, 2016, http://provocadisparates.blogspot.com.br/2016/04/os-involuntarios-da-patria-eduardo.html.

58 Ibid.

ity, which presupposes other peoples, that inhabits an earth plurally peopled by peoples."[59] They enact difference, in short, as the (e)quality that proliferates and recombines.

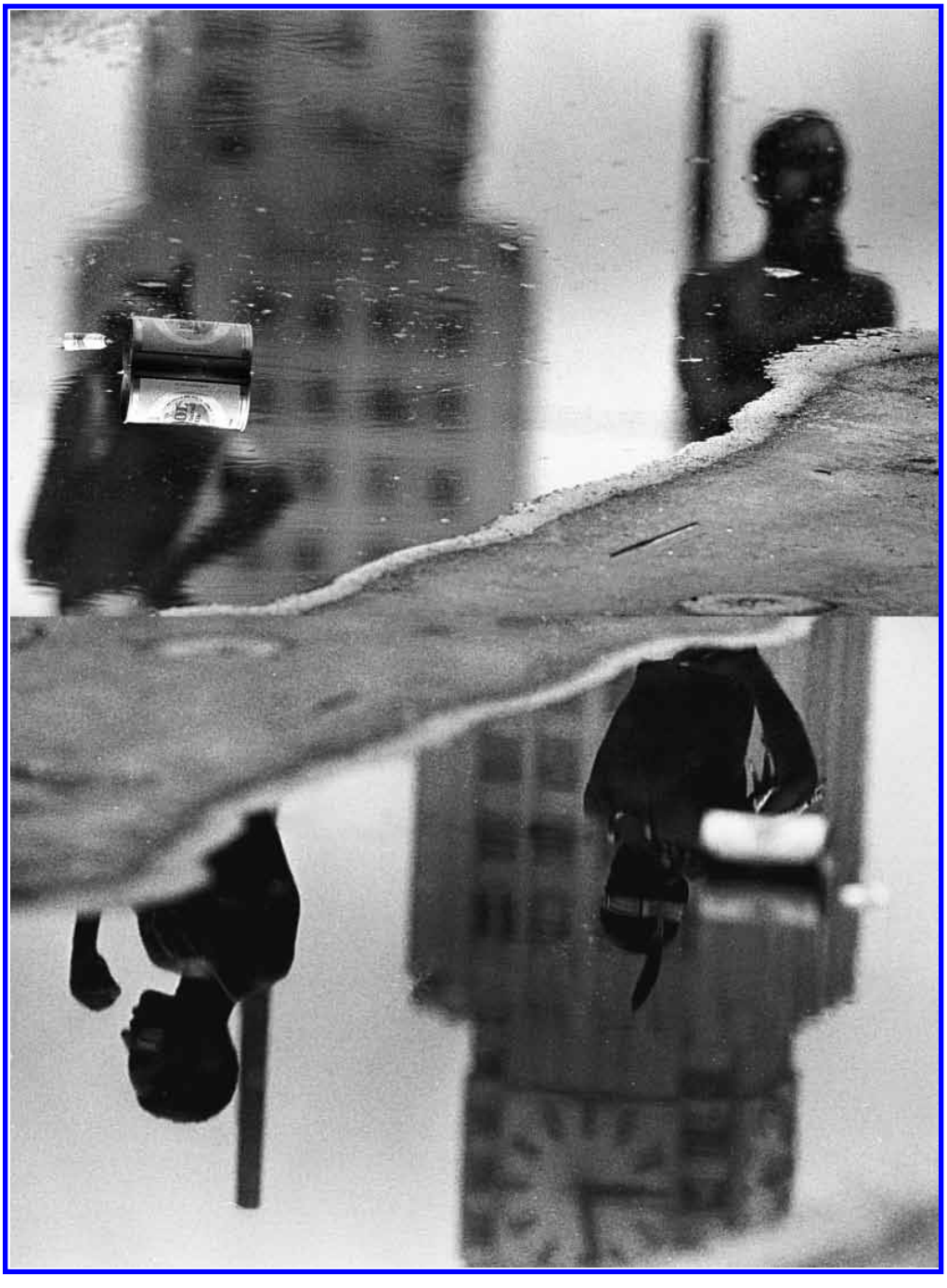
In his 2016 speech, Viveiros de Castro contrasted the philosophical orientation of the indigenous with that of the citizen. "The indigenous looks down, to the Earth that is immanent; he draws his force from the ground. The citizen looks above, to the Spirit embodied in the form of a transcendent State; he receives his rights from on high."[60] In this vein, I want to conclude with a pair of images Vergara joined in inverted form when he published the Cacique de Ramos series as a book in 2007.

The images picture two men reflected in a puddle of rain water, a street post and clock tower rising behind them, a stray beer can on the ground. The orientation swivels from top to bottom, seemingly repeating the image in reverse. But differences soon proliferate. Above, the figure closest to the post faces outward; at bottom, he turns in profile, fist floating away from his chin. The post migrates toward him, forming a vertical appendage that rhymes with the feather plume on the second man's head. This second figure, meanwhile, rises from a low crouch to standing, his reflection no longer obscured by the discarded can. In sharp focus above, less distinct below, the can indexes the micro-movement of a camera lens as it zeros in on the material object at one moment, and concentrates on the image the object disrupts the next.

In this heartbeat of temporal difference, we can also imagine the actions in reverse: the taller man turning from profile to frontal address, the second figure sinking to a squat from standing while rotating to face the camera lens. Extrapolating from his stance, we can reconstruct Vergara's position. But we also begin to wonder if the squatting man is in fact the photographer, the reflection of his camera obscured by the jettisoned can. But here the double image plays tricks, and the two images transform, implausibly, into a single surface of kaleidoscopic representation. If initially we identified two distinct figures, we now see two figures reflected to make four, four distinct figures, even a single figure rising, standing, turning, and squatting in dizzying succession. If we as viewers once occupied a position

59 Ibid. See also Eduardo Viveiros de Castro, "No Brasil todo mundo é índio, exceto quem não é" [2006] in Sztutman, *Encontros: Eduardo Viveiros de Castro*, 132–61.

60 Ibid.



Carlos Vergara. *Untitled (Cacique de Ramos)*, 1972-1975. Photographs. Images courtesy of Carlos Vergara.

outside the image, this outside is now implicated within the image's interior as our own activity of looking and imaging is doubled and reflected in its mimetic play. Warping, folding, billowing out and buckling under, the picture becomes an animate topography in which sameness generates difference from multiple points in space.

These sutured photographs, I offer, show us *how the multidão feels*. Disorienting and chiasmic, its pairings and cleavings unfolding vertically, horizontally, and diagonally across and beyond the page, the images do not offer up a mise-en-scène of self and other. They offer instead a delirious mapping of singularity as multiplicity—what we have come to recognize as a "passion of the same."

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