

## SUBJECTIVE MOBILIZATION IN THE WORK OF ARTISTS OF POPULAR CULTURE



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### ABSTRACT

Peculiarities of subjective mobilization in the work of popular artists are examined. It is based on the psychodynamics of work and the power of acting from Spinoza's perspective. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with plastic artists of clay, wood and oil painting on canvas. The interviews were recorded, transcribed and analyzed. It was found that the peculiarities of subjective mobilization are shown from the specificity of the very act of making art. As a work, art-making reveals a subjective mobilization through complex and permanent psychic elaboration, not to account for the organization of work, but to create. It is concluded that subjective mobilization is not to face suffering and transform it into pleasure; But, a joie de vivre for art.

**Keywords:** Work. Popular Artists. Subjective mobilization.

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## INTRODUCTION

Studies on the world of work in the Psychodynamics of Work (PdT) approach in Brazil are mostly focused on the analysis of work in formal organizations, whether public or private. This perspective could not be different, since the birth of the approach and its main focus have been the process of wage labor in contemporary capitalism.

The Psychodynamics of Work as a discipline that produces knowledge, both practical and theoretical, according to Dejours (2004), makes explicit central concepts in its scope: the organization of work; pleasure-suffering; defensive strategies; subjective mobilization; and centrality of work. It is considered a theoretical-methodological approach to research and action in the field of mental health at work (Merlo & Mendes, 2009).

The psychodynamics of work articulates concepts from psychology, psychoanalysis and also from the sociology of work, as a way of thinking about the meaning of work for the psychic balance of subjects who work in adverse contexts of work organization, often or most of the time, rigid, repetitive and without room for autonomy and expression of subjectivity (Dejours, 2004, 2011). So, the relationship of the subject who works with the organization is fundamental to this approach. It concerns the analysis of the organization of work and the strategies used by workers to be able to perform their work, escape suffering and seek pleasure (Merlo & Mendes, 2009).

Suffering itself, for the PdT, is part of the work, and ends up working as a warning sign that can prevent illness. The organization of work plays a fundamental role in influencing positively, when it allows freedom for the transformation of work, or negatively, when it manages to restrict in the worker all possibilities of manifesting his personal characteristics and needs. The more rigid and more divided the organization of work, the greater the possibility of increased suffering, considering that the chances of the worker being able to adapt it to his needs and personal characteristics will be smaller.

This suffering in the PoT can go to different destinations: pathogenic suffering, ethical suffering and creative suffering. Suffering can become pathogenic when the worker does not find the possibility of negotiation between the organization of the work he is inserted in and its subjective contents, being prevented from exercising his creative capacity. In this way, the subject ends up experiencing fear, dissatisfaction, insecurity, restlessness, anguish, depression, sadness, guilt, tension, anger, etc. There is a persistence in the experience of failure, which, if prolonged, can compromise the health of the worker (Moraes, 2013).

Ethical suffering, on the other hand, can be observed when the subject submits to or participates in situations at work with which he morally disagrees, acting contrary to his values and principles. This suffering is experienced through manifestations of insecurity, fear and anguish (Vasconcelos, 2013). For this author, ethical suffering has two paths: it can be minimized and denied through the trivialization of evil, but it can contribute to the mobilization of workers for action.

Finally, the creative suffering that leads the subject to walk towards the destiny of creation and ingenuity, leading the worker to invent solutions to the impasses that occur in his work. It acts as a mobilizer for change, thus benefiting the organization of work, but also contributes to personal fulfillment, as it was possible to observe in this study with popular artists (Moraes, 2013).

Thus, work is analyzed from a dialectical perspective, as it is a source of pleasure and suffering. When there is suffering, it is possible to transform it into pleasure through subjective mobilization or defense strategies. For authors such as Dejours, Abdoucheli and Jayet (1995), subjective mobilization is characterized by the use of the worker's psychological resources and also by the public space for discussions about work. In this space, the worker re-signifies his representations about his activity by talking about the aspects that cause suffering in the daily work. Subjective mobilization is, therefore, a process of seeking pleasure, as the worker seeks the transformation of situations that generate suffering into situations that generate pleasure.

Subjective mobilization, for Christophe Dejours (2011, 2012), comprises the effort of all subjectivity, an authentic movement of all intelligence in a particular action. Mobilizing in and for work, according to the author, involves a relationship of contribution and retribution. The subject who works contributes to the organization and expects remuneration from it. Therefore, it is recognition that fosters the search for modifying suffering into pleasure. This subjective mobilization is living itself, it is the search for meaning in work, because the subject does not only want to perform the prescribed work, but to give meaning to what he does, to mark his identity. Thus, subjective mobilization, for the PdT, is work, it is involvement in work that contributes to the worker being able to expand his subjectivity. It is carried out by practical intelligence, by the work collective and by the space for discussion, with recognition behind it.

Recognition at work has an important dimension for the PdT, as it is the form of symbolic retribution given to the worker who engages his subjectivity and intelligence in his

work (Cruz Lima, 2013). For the author, this remuneration can be in the sense of verifying the individual contribution of the worker to the organization and can also be in the sense of gratitude for the contribution of the workers given to the organization of work.

Recognition implies a peer judgment about the doing, about the activity and not about the subject. It is an essential link with the existence of the collective of work and cooperation, representing the primordial point in the intersubjective dynamics of identity at work (Cruz Lima, 2013).

For the PdT there are two types of judgment in this recognition process: utility judgment and beauty judgment. The first is the one that gives the worker's affirmation in the sphere of work, it occurs in the vertical line: bosses, subordinates, customers. On the other hand, the judgment of beauty takes place in the horizontal line, between peers, a judgment of conformity of the work, enabling the feeling of belonging to a professional group by making it a worker like the others, however there is also the judgment of originality, where the distinction is appreciated, in this way there is a recognition of their singular identity, as can be perceived among the popular artists in this study (Cruz Lima, 2013; Dejours, 1997/2005).

In this way, the concept of subjective mobilization, for the PdT, implies an organization of work in the context of salaried work with its contradictions between what is prescribed and what is real, and the subjective movement of working subjects to elaborate new prescriptions for work to happen. Through the regulations of the prescribed organization, there is an exercise of intelligence, sustained by recurrent initiatives and creativity (Dejours, 2011).

Thus, the organization of work is one of the main concepts of the PdT, however it derives from French ergonomics, which stated that work should adapt to man and not man to work (Anjos, 2013). It is the organization of work that institutes the division of tasks and men in the world of work (Dejours, 2011). The organization of work demonstrates the prescription of work and the gap that exists between it and the actual work of the subjects, a gap loaded with contradictions, conflicts, inconsistencies, constraints, difficulties of the worker in performing his work (Costa, 2013).

While the prescribed work is the set of deliberations imposed by managers for the execution of the work of the subjects, due to the use of controls such as: inspection, hierarchy, procedures, among others; real work is the way that the worker will develop to deal with unforeseen events, limitations and failures during the execution of what was

prescribed (Costa, 2013). To work, in the salaried context, is to suffer for the PdT, due to this discrepancy between the prescribed work and the real work, which will always happen, by putting the subject face to face with his limitations and failures. Thus, for Moraes (2013) the path of subversion of suffering into pleasure is enhanced by cooperation, by the space of speech and by recognition.

Subjective mobilization, according to Dejours (2011), also demands coordination among agents through cooperation and collective will. Thus, it is the efforts of intelligence, the efforts of joint elaboration with a view to building a dynamic of the collective of deliberation to face the difficulties at work. For the author, without recognition, the subject engages in defensive strategies to avoid becoming ill. Thus, it conceives that in the context of the contradictions of the organization of work, it is necessary to have an environment for discussion of the collective with a view to managing the contradictions of the organization of work.

Subjective mobilization surrounds a psychic work of the subject in the face of an organization of work, the engagement of subjectivity, the mobilization of intelligence with the involvement of others, because working, for the author, is living together and, therefore, the inevitability of building work rules through cooperation (Dejours, 2012).

Cooperation becomes effective when workers demonstrate the desire, the desire, the will to cooperate collectively, it is linked to practical intelligence and subjective mobilization, as it aims to build a common product based on trust and solidarity (Dejours, 2011; Ghizoni, 2013).

The power of the worker to feel, think, create and recreate in his daily work, in the face of reality, is living work, which has in its core the labor force in action (Freitas, 2013a). According to Marx (1985), capitalism needs living labor all the time, despite despising it, and capital as dead labor renews itself as a "vampire" by sucking living labor. This research focuses on the living work, but the living work of artists of popular culture. As Lhuillier (2013) states, the salaried process does not cover the full breadth of the world of work. The author evokes domestic work, charitable work, political and union work. Work is here thought of not only as alienated, abstract, dead labor. Despite the contradictions of the contemporary world of work and the advance of exclusionary and flexible capitalism, there are possibilities of studying work as not being, as Lhuillier (2014, p.6) instigates us, the "... the accursed part of human activity." We are interested in the view of work as "human action on its

environment", but as a creative practice, a vehicle of civilization and socialization (Marx, 1985; Lhuillier, 2013, 2014).

Lhuillier (2014) exposes a conception of work focused on man's action on his context, in which work is not separated from the other activities of living. Thus, the Psychosociology of Work understands that the psychic and social dimensions are intertwined, a fact that gives importance to the subject and his relationships with the other, as well as to people's autonomy and their power of action. Furthermore, the author points out, based on the works of Gérard Mendel (1998, 1999), that the subjective experience of work derives from the power that the subject has and from the process of appropriation of the act. Thus, work is a human activity, it is a production of oneself and of the world, and being an action, it is, therefore, a social practice.

For Dejours (2012, p. 34) "to work is not only to produce, but also to transform oneself and, in the best of cases, it is an opportunity offered the subjectivity of proving oneself, of realizing oneself", something perceptible in this study with the participating artists.

In view of this, this research brings the work of artists of popular culture, who are not subjected to a labor relationship characterized as employment. According to Mascelani (2009), the popular artist is the person who produces sculptures, paintings and models without having had access to specific training in the field of arts. The artists of popular culture, for the most part, in Brazil, are self-taught, with histories of social exclusion, but who have created and create works, in a way that is fulfilled through their creations and survives from their art, without employment, without formal work. Therefore, from Bourdieu's (1996) perspective, it is considered that popular artists do not work to earn a living, but earn their living in the exercise of their art, they live for art.

In this way, this article analyzes the peculiarities of subjective mobilization in the work of artists of popular culture, while highlighting the work for these professionals. To this end, it will use Spinoza's (1677/2013) understanding of freedom and power of action and the power of action of the popular artists studied.

## FREEDOM AND POWER TO ACT

According to Chauí (1995), Spinozian philosophy announces itself as a philosophy of freedom of thought, expression and action. Thus, man is free not because he has free will

to choose between possible paths, but because he is constituted by the internal capacity to think and act for himself.

In his book *Ethics*, Part 4, Spinoza (1677/2013) exposes his meditation on freedom. It affirms that man is guided by reason and, therefore, acts, lives and preserves his being in the search for his value in the community. Man is free because he is exclusively commanded by his reason, and remains free because he has adequate ideas. For Chauí (1995), Spinoza's philosophy presents itself as an absolute rationalism when it considers that the real is totally accessible by the intellect, with no room for mysteries and miracles. From this point, the basis of Spinoza's philosophy arises, when he criticizes the ignorance produced by religion at the time, which consists of irrational fear and hope, disempowering the liberating capacity of reason.

According to Chauí (1995), Spinoza's work expresses an ethic of joy, intellectual satisfaction and human freedom, both individual and political. He considers that Spinoza understands man not as a rival empire of nature, but as being part of nature. Thus, the human body is not a set of parts, but a "unit of whole" constituted by internal relations between its own organs and by external relations with other beings. There is, in this way, the human capacity to affect other bodies and be affected by them, in a continuous movement that marks the intercorporeality of being, being human.

In Spinozian philosophy, we are interested in the conception of freedom and the power to act, with a view to presenting the specificities of the subjective mobilization of plastic artists of Brazilian popular culture, in the face of their historical-cultural context, of social exclusion and the search for art as a way to preserve their being.

For Spinoza (1677/2013) humans are free when appetite and desire are driven to choose virtuous ends. Thus, the force of desire can increase or decrease, depending on the essence of the desired, and the power of desire can increase or decrease, according to the fulfillment or not of the desire achieved. Spinoza's philosophy understands that a fulfilled desire increases the human strength to think and exist (Chauí, 1995, p. 65).

Spinoza (1677/2013, p. 239) proclaims that all affections are linked to desire, joy and sadness. Desire is the essence of man, it is understood as: "... all the efforts, all the impulses, appetites, volitions of man, which vary according to his variable state...". Joy refers to a passion that carries the mind to a higher perfection, such affection produces excitement and contentment to the mind and soul. Sorrow is conceived by a passion which



carries the mind to a lesser perfection, and affects the soul and body with pain and melancholy.

Chauí (1995) clarifies that joy, for Spinoza, is the feeling that one has due to the increased capacity to exist; therefore, the satisfied desire produces joy and the power to think and act increases. While frustrated desire diminishes the strength to think and exist, the feeling of sadness arises. Thus, Spinoza (1677/2013) is interested in clarity about how affects can increase and decrease the power to act. The affect of joy leads the mind to act and produce suitable ideas. Thus, for this research, art increases the power to act, art is an appropriate idea. In art, artists strive to persevere in their being, in their essence. Art is a good encounter, it is freedom, with a view to the spontaneous manifestation of an essence, a power, a way of being and acting. Spinoza (1677/2013) considers that power to exist is power and that power is singular and finite. The power to act, for the author, is called *conatus*, which is the effort of self-perseveration proper to existence. Being *conatus*, the human being is part of the nature and infinite power of substance. Spinoza considers that the power to act can be increased or decreased depending on the affections of the body. This decrease or increase in the power to act concerns the adequate or inadequate fulfillment of desire. According to the author, the mind can act or suffer. When one has adequate ideas, the mind acts; When inadequate ideas predominate, the mind necessarily suffers. Inadequacy is called passion by the author, which is understood as passivity in the face of external forces. Adequacy is action, which is the autonomous activity that coexists with the external world without submitting to it.

The *conatus*, the effort by which each thing perseveres in its being, is determined by the emotions that come to us from the external world, which causes the consciousness of the *conatus*. Consciousness, according to Spinoza, is the feeling of passing from a greater perfection (joy) to a lesser one (sadness) or the opposite, depending on the way in which the subjects are affected by the objects found. Those that are convenient lead to a higher power and those that are not convenient compromise cohesion and subdivide the subjects, leading them to impotence (Spinoza, 1677/2013).

The force of existence, the body, is a power in act that is affected by the world, and also affects it, so that in this complexity of affections changes occur that increase or decrease the power to act. In this movement, affections arise, the lived, felt experience, according to Spinozian philosophy. So, it is the encounters and relationships that produce affections and, depending on the quality of these encounters and relationships, the ability to



act may or may not be increased. For Spinoza, knowledge is action and acting is knowing. Action produces freedom and the free exercise of the intellect.

## METHODOLOGY

This qualitative research used the descriptive exploratory method, based on the epistemology of Rey (2005), which understands the construction of knowledge as a process of constructive-interpretative character, therefore, a permanent and non-linear appropriated production. In this way, the uniqueness of each participating subject and their social context are references for the construction of knowledge.

## PARTICIPANTS

The study had the participation of three plastic artists: Maria Amélia da Silva, clay artist; Maurino de Araújo, working with wood; and Josafá Neves, who dedicates himself especially to painting in oil on canvas. The choice of the aforementioned artists occurred because they met the inclusion criteria: a) they are artists of popular culture; b) to make a living from their art. To reach the participating artists, the mastery of the professionals in clay and wood supports and oil painting on canvas was considered. Therefore, a first survey was carried out at the Casa do Pontal Museum<sup>3</sup> to identify and define the participants. The artists were identified in the research with their consent.

*Maria Amélia da Silva* – artist who works with ceramics, in the city of Tracunhaém, state of Pernambuco. She was born in 1924. At the age of 95, Dona Maria Amélia reported that she learned to like clay under the influence of her father, who had a pottery. As a child, still 6 (six) years old, I ran a lot and started coughing. To calm her down, her father invited her to touch the clay and make a "pet". From then on, she says she hasn't stopped. Her father was a cupboarder, supported the family by making basins, pipes, etc. The artist, with all the freedom she had in her father's pottery, began making the "animals" until she produced the Catholic saints, who made her known. For the artist, her favorite saint is Saint Joseph. At the age of 95, he no longer works, but talks about his history of modeling for more than 70 years. He had a life totally dedicated to modeling clay. He did not attend schools to learn the art, however, his livelihood has always been from the works he created,

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<sup>3</sup> The Casa do Pontal Museum is located in the city of Rio de Janeiro. It is the largest museum of popular art in Brazil. More information at: <http://www.museucasadoportal.com.br/>, and on the specific portals of popular culture: <http://artepopularbrasil.blogspot.com.br/>; <http://www.artedobrasil.com.br>.

such as: São João do Carneirinho, Nossa Senhora do Rosário, Rainha do Céu, São Francisco, among others. His works measure between 50 and 70 centimeters. She narrates that she does not sign her works because the work itself already says who created it. He participated in several exhibitions in Brazil and other countries. The artist says that many of her creations are scattered around the world with collectors who appreciate her art.

*Maurino Araújo* – sculptor born in the state of Minas Gerais, Rio Casca, on May 28, 1943. Before living totally dedicated to the arts, Maurino was a bricklayer's servant, construction accountant and also a counter assistant. Self-taught, his influences come from his grandfathers who were potters. In the 60s, still a young man, he went to a seminary in São João del Rei. He discovered Aleijadinho, the wood and began to sculpt in the seminary itself. He studied Aleijadinho's work diligently in the seminary. He left the seminary in 1969 and moved to Belo Horizonte, living exclusively for his art. At this time, until the discovery of Africa, Maurino built sacred sculptures from large tree trunks, preferably cedar. It uses wax to protect the work, glue, checkered paint and kerosene to dilute the pigments and produce the aging of the works. At the end of the 70s, when he got to know Africa, Maurino de Araújo began to bring the marks of the continent in his works. At 75, Maurino says he still has numerous sculptures he needs to make. In his studio, he narrates that he looks at the countless trunks every day and knows that he will still sculpt many works of art.

*Josafá Neves* – was born in the city of Gama, Brasília, Federal District, on September 20, 1971. Self-taught, the artist, when he was 5 (five) years old, began to draw on the sidewalks and streets of Gama. He explains that since he was a child he already knew exactly what he was going to do with his life, because this strength for drawing was always present. Despite the setbacks to gain survival, the artist narrates that his focus has always been art. At the same time that he ran after trying to support himself, he never stopped practicing drawing. In addition, he studied, visited galleries and carried out research. He says that the painting he makes is the expression of his own pain, since, "when you are born black, the suffering of racism is in the skin". From that point is his technique, since it "darkens to lighten". He states that he creates an intuitive, visceral art, and that each work is a work, he resolves the final composition in the relationship he establishes with the production of art. The artist reports that he paints every day, creates all the time, when he sleeps, when walking on the streets, when talking to people, in short, he lives art full time.

## 2.2 INSTRUMENTS

Data collection was based on the following instruments: a) analysis of documentary sources (life history, artists' curriculum) provided by popular art portals; b) narrative interview.

The narrative interview, according to Flick (2009), is used in biographical research contexts. Thus, in this study, the search for the artists' narrative about working with art was possible from the generative question of narrative, which is: "Tell me about your life story with art. Tell us when you started learning the art." In addition, the support script for conducting the interview was: a) working as a popular artist; b) the living of art; c) feelings about making and living from art; d) difficulties with working as an artist of popular culture.

The interview time with each artist was varied. With Maurino Araújo, it was around four hours. The artist lives in Belo Horizonte. A meeting was scheduled by telephone, and in this, with the participant's consent, the themes were worked on in his time. There were several breaks for the artist to show his works, newspaper articles and to take photographs of the works present in his studio.

With the artist Maria Amélia, the interview lasted about an hour. The 92-year-old artist living in Tracunhaém, Pernambuco, received us at her home for the interview, scheduled in advance. As for the third artist, Josafá Neves, the interview lasted around three hours, with breaks, according to his wishes, and took place in his studio, in the Federal District.

## DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES

The documentary analysis was carried out based on the reading of information about the artists available on portals that deal with popular culture. In this way, the documentary analysis subsidized the description of the artists, both the personal aspects and the history of each one with art.

Each interview was conducted based on the following steps: (a) initial information (presentation of the researcher and the research objectives); (b) presentation of the Informed Consent Form and request for its signature; (c) request for authorization to record the interview through a cell phone application; (d) formulation of the central themes of the study. The recordings were transcribed for the researcher's analysis.

Contact with each artist was made by phone. The objectives of the research were presented and, with the artist's agreement, the interview was scheduled to take place in each participant's studio.

This research was approved by the Research Ethics Committee of the Catholic University of Brasília (Opinion No. 2,397,958). The participants are identified as artists and seek to give visibility to their art.

## DATA ANALYSIS

With the transcription of the interviews, the verbalizations were treated based on the thematic content analysis technique, proposed by Bardin (1977). In this sense, we sought to identify the themes present in the semi-structured interviews, which, in view of the recurrence in the various verbalizations, were organized into categories.

As Bardin (1977) asserts, this technique of communication analysis, which uses systematic and objective procedures to describe the content of messages, enables the production of inferences and knowledge related to the messages presented.

The data obtained in the documentary analysis served as a complementary source to compose the presentation of each artist.

The analysis of the interviews allowed the construction of two categories defined *a priori*: "working" and "subjective mobilization".

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### WORK – "IT'S JUST THAT I THINK THAT CREATION IS JOY ITSELF".

In this nucleus, the work and the senses of the artists about making art are found. Work here, understood as living work, the labor force in action, of the real of work, of the encounter of the subject with doing, realizing, inventing, building. Meaning, as the meanings, the thinking, the feeling about its doing (Marx, 1985; Antunes, 1999; Dejours, 2004; Freitas, 2013).

In general, the live work with the art of the artists studied first goes through an experience that occurred in childhood, in the family context and/or in other spaces of access to art.

"... It was my father who made me like it, he had a pottery, I, as a child, ran a lot. I started coughing, one day, my father asked for a bowl of water near a vise, told me to sit down, I said, why my father? ... He said: to make pets. From then on I never stopped." (Maria Amélia da Silva)

"I found myself with art when I was 5 years old. My school was a pottery where my grandfather and mother made household utensils, pots, pots for water... I saw that and that attracted me, but I had an idea of the figurative, I made me and my brother, we made human figures, woman, man." (Maurino Araújo)

"Since I was 5 years old, I already knew exactly what I wanted to be. For me every child is born a genius, .... I always had the gift of drawing, arranging things. Since I was a child, I drew on the walls, on the sidewalks." (Josafá Neves)

Furthermore, the verbalizations show that making art was learned by the action of these subjects, in their historical-cultural context, in their own effort to exist, to self-persevere (Spinoza, 1677/2013). The documents analyzed about the lives of these artists and the contact with each one in the studio reveal a social origin of the popular classes, that is, of the classes that did not have full access to the economic capital and cultural capital built by humanity. Nevertheless, these artists did not succumb to poverty. At home, they already had contact with popular art, and this good encounter made it possible to build subjectivities dedicated to the act of creating and performing.

"I learned to work with clay by myself, from my head." (Maria Amélia da Silva)

"It was my learning, ..., I think all this is very natural when you feel it, when you want it, right? I, for example, felt, had this joy inside for creation, you know?" (Maurino Araújo)

"I learned the art by researching and dedicating myself fully to art." (Josafá Neves)

The encounter with art in childhood and self-teaching reveal a power to act. In this way, the context of the constitution of the subjectivity of these artists, even outside the formal labor market, favored the creation and making of an art performed with joy. In view of this, these subjects do not suffer, the making of art substantiates the action, because it is an adequate encounter, the mind acts and does not suffer (Spinoza, 1677/2013).

"Clay has never tired me, when clay is bad, it breaks, I put it in the machine and it gets good. Working in clay is like a teacher, what does a teacher want? May all students learn. The teacher gives herself, he forms it. In clay, it is good, I give it shape, I make my life. With clay I feel joy, I am happy. When I'm working I feel happy, I want to finish, but do it well." (Maria Amélia da Silva)

"It's just that I think that creation is joy itself, right? She is born and we don't know how she is there, we don't know where she comes from, I mean, or why. But yes, and every day that passes I spend believing in it more, you know? ..." (Maurino Araújo)

"Work is not just the act of painting the canvas, it is the imagination, the elaboration, it is created all the time." (Josafá Neves)

The power of living work is revealed in the act of creating. There is freedom, artists are not submerged by an organization of prescribed work. There are no goals set by others,

there are no predetermined schedules and rules set by a company. What there is is freedom to be and to make art with joy. In this way, artists are affected all the time by their creation and, at the same time, affect other beings because art fulfills this function in the movement of intercorporeality, a condition of human existence (Chauí, 1995).

"I have always worked with clay, .... My sense is in clay, I like clay, it was my father who made me like it..." (Maria Amélia da Silva)

"I've been living from art for more than 50 years, only from art..." (Maurino Araújo)

"I had my setbacks until I dedicated myself fully to the arts. .... Since 1996 I decided to live only from my art." (Josafá Neves)

The historical-cultural circumstances of these artists regarding their contact with art since childhood, self-teaching and living only from art yield satisfaction and freedom. The artists reveal a lot of accomplishment with their work. Therefore, as your desires are fulfilled, the human strength to think and exist is increased. Thus, the artists studied here, although they are not in the logic of formal work, which brings numerous labor rights, are free people, they live in an ethic, the ethics of joy, according to Spinoza (1677/2013).

The fact that they are free, that they are not subject to a prescribed organization of work, the interviewees show difficulties, which they differentiate from the difficulties of a formalized work.

"I didn't have any difficulties, I like it, not even to sell. I stay here, people come and buy. My life was full of joy." (Maria Amélia da Silva)

"Sometimes, they discriminate against our art, I mean, popular art, sometimes for them it's handicrafts, it's a thing, I understand their discrimination..." (Maurino Araújo)

"Relationships with galleries make you suffer, you take so long to be validated, recognized. You are left in the hands of having a person who will validate you to have access to the art market. So, with galleries there is a lot of this dimension of the market. Many times they want to put the price on their work. I say, the price of my work is up to me alone." (Josafá Neves)

Maria Amélia da Silva highlighted that she never had difficulties with her art, she always went through joys and achievements. For the artists Maurino Araújo and Josafá Neves, the obstacles highlighted, on the one hand, are in the domain of a look that does not understand popular art and discriminates against the culture that comes from the people, not validated in universities. On the other hand, the capitalist logic of the art market imposes itself, by wanting to dictate the price of artists' works. However, the artists themselves state that:



"I never had a job, I got to work for myself. I created myself, I create my work, I never worked for others, the others I like to help, to help with the board." (Maria Amélia da Silva)

"I never had an intermediary, I have the autonomy to negotiate my works." (Maurino Araújo)

"I do everything for my art. I'm the director, the salesman, the secretary and the one who makes the art." (Josafá Neves)

According to Dejours (2004, 2011), the organization of work has a favorable influence on the lives of working subjects when it provides freedom for the transformation of work; negatively, by restricting the worker from manifesting his personal characteristics and needs. In the case under study, this concept does not apply, because there is no organization of work, there is real work, concrete work. There is living work, in a Marxian sense, that is, human action in its environment, a creative practice, a process of civilization and socialization, a way of life, a way of being in the world (Marx, 1985).

The fact is, as Lhuillier (2014) advocates, regarding work in the capitalist context, there is a strong cursed part, exploitation, alienation and a lot of illness in the face of this organization of human tasks in this environment. However, social relations are dialectical. The study of popular artists presented here reveals another world of work, another way of being in this capitalist and consumerist society.

The subjects studied have their sufferings, but of a different order. When Dejours (2004) reveals that the more rigid the organization of work, the more suffering and the less possibility of adapting work to one's personal needs, this situation described by the author is real in relation to work in the salaried, estranged and abstract logic, in which there is separation of the worker from the means of production, imposing a social relationship of work to meet the pressing needs of production of exchange values and reproduction of capital (Marx, 1985).

The work of artists of popular culture is constituted as a work in its concrete dimension, as a vital activity of human beings, of the realization of their existence and of social interaction. Therefore, it does not assume a form of work that is estranged, fetishized, de-fulfilling and de-effecting autonomous and creative human action (Antunes, 1995).

The popular artists investigated are free. They are people fulfilled and mobilized by the affection of joy. Thus, through art, and because they are not subject to a prescribed work organization, artists have the human strength to think and exist increased, potentiated (Chauí, 1995, p. 65; Spinoza, 1677/2013, p. 239).

It is observed among the participants that work transforms the world and also ends up revealing to each subject how he is, invisibly, because the essential of the work is not seen (Dejours, 2005). In this way, work is beyond the artists' doing, it is action and, therefore, subjective mobilization (Dejours, 2012; Facas, Silva and Araújo, 2013).

### 3.2 EFFORTS AT INTELLIGENCE AND ELABORATION – "ART IS A JOY. WHEN YOU WORK WITH JOY, YOU HAVE NO WEIGHT."

By analyzing the notion of subjective mobilization in Dejours (2011, 2012), a look at the concept in the context of working in the face of a prescribed work organization is identified. Thus, the root of the concept lies in the effort of all subjectivity of the working subject, a flow of intelligence under a specific action in the process of facing the real of work.

According to Dejours (2011, 2012), the subject's search to transform suffering into pleasure occurs through subjective mobilization, and the characteristics of this are the use of psychological resources through a space for discussion and a collective work focused on the search for recognition, that is, pleasure at work. The artists studied here are not subordinated to a prescribed work organization, since they are free to make their art, according to the following statements:

"I usually do a play in 3 days, a week, but there's no time." (Maria Amélia da Silva)  
 "In these more than fifty years with art, I worked every day ... Art is a joy. When you work with joy, you have no weight." (Maurino Araújo)  
 "The best part is the creation. I live art 25 hours a day, I am inspired by everything, by the newspaper article I read, by an exhibition I go to, by a paper I find on the street. I have several creations, I create all the time, I carry a sketchbook, on my trips, I'm always drawing." (Josafá Neves)

Based on the perception of these artists about their work and on the conception of Lhuillier (2013) when he highlights that the process of salaried work does not encompass the entire world of work, because, although work in capitalism is exclusionary, alienated and flexible, there is still in the dialectical process of Brazilian capitalism a part of work as a creative and civilizational human action.

In view of this, it cannot be said that artists do not carry out subjective mobilization, just because they are not in a work context in which they need to face a prescribed organization and transform suffering into pleasure. According to Dejours (2011), subjective mobilization implies constant efforts of intelligence and elaboration with a view to facing the

difficulties of work organization. The artists studied, at all times, use their practical intelligence and carry out a complex and permanent work of psychic elaboration.

"When I'm working I feel happy, I want to finish, but do it well. ... I model all kinds of saints, but it's the piece that takes the most work that I like the most." (Maria Amélia da Silva)

"And in principle it's distressing when you take matter and want to transform it... It's hard work in that sense. But it is compensated by the pleasure and joy of exercise. He has anguish, but he has the pleasure and joy of exercise." (Maurino Araújo)

"You go to sleep already thinking about work. After breakfast, I lie in the hammock and start working, I can imagine. Painting the canvas involves imagination, elaboration. After I do the research and decide on the theme, I make the sketches that are the drawings for the painting. Then I make the sketch on the canvas, I use charcoal for this. I work a lot with my eyes, I spend hours looking at the screen." (Josafá Neves)

In Dejour's view, intelligence and elaboration efforts are related to the needs that workers present to arbitrate the difficulties and contradictions arising from the organization of work. It is noted that the construction of Dejours (2011) around the concept under study is oriented towards facing the obstacles inherent to the organization of work. For the author, this is accomplished through a space for discussion, in which the subjects who work, deliberate and produce agreements to carry out the real work. Despite the fact that the artists studied do not have a space for discussion and cooperation to face the difficulties of working with art, it is conjectured that there is subjective mobilization since, even though it is a work of creation that has no "weight", the artists develop efforts of intelligence and elaboration.

In addition, the author understands that subjective mobilization derives from the process of contribution and retribution. In this way, the subject's contribution to the organization of work requires retribution that is translated into recognition. It is necessary that the subjects who work are recognized for what they do, for what they contribute to the institution. Without recognition, for Dejours, the propensity of the workforce is demobilization. Recognition is symbolic and brings meaning to those who work (Dejours, 2011).

Dona Maria Amélia's "piece that gives more work", Maurino's anguish and sleeping and waking up thinking about Josafá's work, can be manifestations of creative suffering, as stated by Moraes (2013), a destination that these workers give to suffering through creation, and this is the mobilizer of changes in the lives of these subjects.

With popular and self-taught artists, the retribution for their works, symbolic recognition is important for the dimension of pleasure, but no less, or even more important, is the search in the act of making art, the joy present in the exercise of creation. The following verbalizations demonstrate this understanding:

"I am known, I don't put the year of the work, I just put my name and the city of Pernambuco, everyone knows that the work is mine. I always did what I liked. Clay is my profession." (Maria Amélia da Silva)

"I know that my works in the art market are at a very high price, it's the market's game, that's up to them, I don't suffer from it. Buyers come to me, instead of looking for them." (Maurino Araújo)

"I receive a lot of people in my studio who come to buy my work because they saw it in someone's house, someone said. That's pretty good. People who go to the exhibitions, look for me, like me, I love that." (Josafá Neves)

In the context presented, it is perceived that the artists in their creative exercises demonstrate that making art is in the freedom to think and express oneself. Thus, they are free because they exercise their capacity to think and act, they preserve their being through art; They live an ethic of joy and personal satisfaction. The joy of making art produces a contentment in itself and for others. This produces the power to act and increases the human power to think and exist. Art is, therefore, an adequate encounter, it is freedom, a way of being and acting (Spinoza, 1677/2013; Chauí, 1995, p. 65).

## CONCLUSION

The peculiarities of subjective mobilization in the work of artists of popular culture are shown from the specificity of the very act of making art, as an activity of creation, a production of oneself and of the world, an action, a social practice. As a human activity, it is a work, but a work that is not subject to a prescribed work organization. As a work, making art in the perspective developed in this study reveals a subjective mobilization, that is, intense psychological artifices, therefore, complex and permanent psychic elaboration, not to account for the organization of work, but to create.

The practical intelligence of the artists studied and their efforts at elaboration, the subjective mobilization, occur in full freedom to think, act and express themselves. Thus, subjective mobilization is not only to face suffering and transform it into pleasure; It is, above all, a joy to make art and make a living from it. It is an action of confrontation, which can also cause suffering, but a creative suffering, which drives to change, to the new, to create both the work and oneself. This way of working and living produces the power to act and increases the human strength to think and exist.

The work of artists of popular culture is constituted as a work in its concrete dimension, as a vital activity of human beings, of the realization of their existence and of social interaction. Therefore, it does not assume a form of work that is estranged, fetishized, de-fulfilling and de-effecting autonomous and creative human action (Antunes, 1995). In this way, it is assumed that there is subjective mobilization in the creative work of these artists, however, in another psychodynamic that does not involve a public space for discussion and cooperation, but surrounds recognition, practical intelligence and creative suffering.

In this sense, it is understood that this study can collaborate with research on the forms of resistance and ways of gestating life in the world of work, by considering work as a power of life; and not work, only in its dimension of alienation, that is, of the sale of labor power. Each artist of popular culture, presented here, reveals another sense of living that provides us with new elements for thinking about health at work, as well as an ethics of joy, individual and political freedom.

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