

# Maps of women on the asphalt: dialogues about the cultural complex of machismo

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## Abstract

In this text, the author adopts an essayistic methodology driven by the desire to restore the soul's polis to poetry. Using Jung's active imagination technique, the author engages in a dialogue with a graffiti located in Salvador, Bahia. This artwork is part of the "Mourning" series conceived by the Bahian artist Thalita Andrade. The graffiti in question portrays a woman whose image underwent significant transformations during Jair Bolsonaro's government, becoming a more direct object of reflection on the ongoing political and cultural changes in Brazilian society. From this perspective, this article aims to analyze how the change in the graffitied image, seemingly so confined, may also reflect a need

for collective change. To do so, in addition to the post-Jungian concept of cultural complexes, the author utilizes Jung's theory of psychic energy, along with contributions from the fields of art history and literature. ■

**Keywords**  
cultural complex of machismo, active imagination, analytical psychology, urban art.



\* The author created the name "Alvena Seixas" through a process of active imagination, inspired by a graffiti image in Salvador, Bahia.

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## Maps of women on the asphalt: dialogues about the cultural complex of machismo

### Woman, sit down here with us!

Dearest reader, possibly a scholar or simply curious about the convolutions of the human soul: before we embark on our academic reflections, I would like you to search your life history for a moment when your existence was violated simply because you were born in a body culturally classified as feminine. I believe this exercise may not be very difficult – perhaps you can recall more than one such situation. Now, let's delve a bit deeper, in case you are a woman who doesn't fit into this cultural classification: find a moment in your life when your soul was violated because you were born in a body that couldn't contain the expansiveness of your soul. I imagine that for you, this memory of violence may appear even more swiftly and perhaps with greater intensity.<sup>1</sup>

While acknowledging the uniqueness of the memory you've invoked, it's important to emphasize that this violence isn't something that affects only your soul but concerns all of us as a collective of women. In light of this, post-Jungian psychology presents a concept that seems to fill a gap not only in Jungian theoretical elaborations but also in clinical practice – that is, in your praxis. This concept is known as the cultural complex, which consists of emotionally charged clusters of ideas that tend to coalesce around an archetypal core in an identified collective (KAPLINSKY, SINGER, 2010). In other words, they tend to view psychological suffering as stemming from collective suffering that also relates to cultural aspects such as sexism, racism, consumerism, and so on. This perspective diverges from what once underpinned clinical practice, which assumed

an individualizing viewpoint or simply ignored the cultural entanglements at play. In summary, we will now embark on the bittersweet waves of the Salvador breeze to discuss this topic with a “friend” I will introduce to you.

### A woman, a wall, and mourning

Engaging with images in our Cartesian culture might, at first glance, seem strange, especially for those not familiar with Jung's work. However, this technique is common in traditions that do not solely structure themselves through a predominant rationalistic way of thinking. The technique of active imagination, developed by Jung, is an important way to access unconscious contents, which can be a valuable source of self-awareness. Through imaginary dialogue, we can integrate unknown aspects of the psyche and find new perspectives regarding both the individual and the collective. According to Jung (2015):

Active imagination, as the term suggests, designates images endowed with a life of their own, and symbolic events unfold according to a logic that is peculiar to them—meaning, logically, if conscious imagination does not interfere. It begins with focusing on a starting point (p. 188).

Through the practice of active imagination, Jung realized that the conscious mind is limited in its ability to produce new contents and significant insights. By relying solely on our conscious mind, we often find ourselves constrained by habitual thinking structures and patterns, hindering us from fully exploring the richness and depth of the unconscious. However, when we open ourselves to active imagination, we allow the flow of images and symbols emerging from

<sup>1</sup> If you do not fit into any of the mentioned cases (possibly a cisgender heterosexual male reader), take this moment to search your memory for an episode in which you violated a woman's soul or a situation in which you displayed behaviors that were inconsistent with the cultural standard of masculinity and also had your own soul violated.

the unconscious to find a space for expression in consciousness. It's as if we're opening a door to a vast inner realm where possibilities are infinite.

In Salvador, amidst the sea breeze, car pollution, and urban violence, various types of images appear on the walls, be it graffiti<sup>2</sup> or tags, establishing dialogues with the population. Urban art has thus become an integral part of life in major cities, sometimes as a means of protest, other times for commercial purposes, or even driven by the aesthetic and ethical need to break the prevailing grayness of the metropolises.

This article proposes an analysis based on the concept of cultural complexes, that is, the inseparability between the individual and the collective. Therefore, I consider the walls as emblematic spaces because in our culture, they serve to separate (or attempt to) the private from the public.

Among the graphic beings inhabiting the walls of downtown Salvador, I highlight a woman who resides in a place of intense pedestrian movement, vibrant commerce, and traffic (Image 1). There, she can be perceived by a more attentive passerby or in moments when traffic congestion forces us to slow down. It was in a moment like that when I first encountered her, in the year 2017<sup>3</sup>. In that instant, I heard her cry, telling me the following: "Mourning, for, regardless of who we are, we are together."

That phrase echoed within me for several days, prompting me to return to the location on foot to get to know her better. Upon arriving there, I noticed her face covered by a black hood and her feminine body holding something resembling a dark bar bent by the strength of her arms



Source: Personal archive.

**Image 1 – Alvena (Salvador, 2017).**

(Image 1). After an exchange of glances between me and the woman who inhabits that wall, she told me her name: Alvena. Under the hood, she chuckled at how little I knew about her, despite crossing her path for years. I was willing to listen to what she had to say and recognized that, like me, she was also a woman inhabiting Salvador. Thus, I heard the repetition of the phrase I initially heard her shout: "MOURNING, for, regardless of who we are, we are together."

At this moment in our dialogue, we were graced with the presence of Clarice Lispector, who mentioned a passage from her book "The Passion According to G.H." to us:

[...] I must hold this hand of yours - even if I can't invent your face, your eyes, and your mouth. But, although severed, this hand doesn't frighten me. Its invention comes from such an idea of love as if the hand were really connected to a body that, if I don't see, is due to my inability to love more (2012, p. 14).

<sup>2</sup> Graffiti are images drawn on walls and have a form understandable to any observer. In contrast, tags do not have this commitment to content comprehension; on the contrary, they often use alphabets that only certain groups understand. The need to classify what is graffiti or a tag has been decreasing in academia, as it has been demonstrated that the debate often succumbs to elitist precepts. In this research, this differentiation is also not important.

<sup>3</sup> At the time, Brazil was under the government of Michel Temer, following a coup that removed the country's first elected female president, Dilma Rousseff.

In this book, Clarice Lispector invites us to reflect on our humanity, asking us to hold her hand as she shares her reflections. In return, she offers us her own hand so that we may reflect on ourselves. The author uses the metaphor of the cockroach – an insect she finds repulsive – to create an intricate game that reveals the depth of our humanity. As G.H., the main character, reflects on this “Other,” she ends up ingesting it, facing what repels her. This symbolizes a journey of profound and challenging self-discovery.

Lispector warns us about the danger of merely surviving without realizing who we are and where we are. This state of “insipidity” or “sad affect” (SAWAIA, 2003) prevents us from mobilizing the necessary struggle and mourning to find meaning in our lives.

In the presence of Clarice, I saw Alvena straining against the bar of existence. Her cry reminded me of the author’s words when she sought help from another to sustain an emotion. In Clarice’s case, it was the existential emptiness of a middle-class woman; in Alvena’s case, the vulnerabilities inherent in her graphic existence in the urban environment. By engaging in a conversation with Alvena, I perceived a possibility of approaching the anxieties of our collective existence. Her cry inviting us to “be together” prompted me to contemplate mutual care among women, counter to the predispositions of a machismo cultural complex that leads us to compete with each other. In this direction, I acknowledge how challenging it is to find aspects of life that do not reflect the impact of some form of group trauma (KIMBLES, 2014).

Given these factors, I gravitate toward the concepts of cultural unconscious and cultural complexes, which aim to demonstrate how culturally shared traits constitute our identity construction. The first is defined as an area of historical memory situated between the collective unconscious and the manifest pattern of culture (HENDERSON, 1985). In other words, it represents an aspect of the unconscious related to a historical period smaller than the collective un-

conscious, which encompasses the already-lived possibilities of human history, and greater than individual history. It is characterized by the specific attributes of each culture in which individuals develop. The second concept is an amplification of the first, from the perspective of Jungian Theory. Thus, cultural complexes are defined as:

The cultural complexes are dynamic systems of relationships that fulfill the individual’s basic needs for belonging and individual/group identity through linking personal experiences and group expectations, as they are mediated by processes of ethnicity, race, religion, gender, and/or social identity (KIMBLES, 2014, p. 79).

In this way, cultural complexes manifest themselves according to the dynamics of the constellation defined by Jung (archetypes and the collective unconscious), leading us to adopt attitudes and behaviors without conscious control, but with contents related to cultural traumas.

Among these cultural complexes, we find in our society the construction of what it means to be a woman, and alongside it, what can be classified as its opposite, the complex of being a man. From this dynamic emerges the sexist belief that belonging to the “male” category confers superiority over those whose gender identity does not fit the same definition. When this complex is constellated alongside the complex of capitalism, we can analyze the tendency of cultural perception of women as commodities, arising from the social relationship that transforms a woman into an oppressed being solely due to her gender (GAYLE, 2004). If we consider how these complexes are intertwined, we can recognize the argumentative fallacy in the idea of “women who are sexist,” as no woman benefits from sexism. When a woman reproduces sexist behaviors, she is linked to the cultural complex that oppresses her; on a personal level, she is still unable to perceive the cultural intricacy that constitutes her.

Given this elucidation, I turn back to the dialogue with Alvena. Since I identify with the cultural complex of being a woman in our society, Alvena conveys to me a sense of support. Her strength in straining against the bar of existence and her cry of “MOURNING” evoke mutual support among women in our daily struggles. After all, only a woman knows what it means to walk alone at night on a dark street, to notice someone approaching, and the subsequent relief when that someone is another woman. We are sustained and also sustain our fellow women by bearing the burdens of the cultural machismo complex. Thus, seeing Alvena with her face covered and her body exposed, I hear a cry of support and, at the same time, a call for embracing our bodies.

Alvena’s cry goes beyond the mourning of death and combat. By putting the phrase in the first person, she may show that she is fighting, but when I pronounce and think of the word in the first person, I engage in that fight as well. In other words, we don’t fight, as in this sense, there is someone else fighting on my behalf. I fight. This “I,” covered by a hood (a mask?), represents all of us in a collective.

Canadian psychologist and Jungian analyst Marion Woodman (1999) devoted part of her life to researching what has happened to the feminine in the face of modernity’s problems. The limited contact with the unconscious, marked by the rationalization of our symbolic world, appears to be one of the most powerful agents eroding our psyche.

In this sense, the ability to have ideas without the crutch of reason is crucial because it values surrender to the mystery, trust in the body’s movement, and its capacity to receive what life offers—emphasizing the awareness that we cannot control life. This attitude enables various modes of writing and critical foundations for androcentric prescriptions in scientific knowledge (JAGGAR, 1997).

It is worth noting that feminine aspects consist of a set of affective and behavioral charac-

teristics present in men, women, and non-binary individuals, constructed throughout human history and engraved in our collective psyche. Is the disembodied head, in both men and women, in all individuals, a collective compensation for years of stagnation (Foucault, 2011) of the feminine? Is it now necessary to show only our heads? If so, when will we reclaim our bodies? Where are they?

All of these aspects may lead us to see that this set of contents that permeates being a woman is intrinsically linked to the cultural complex of machismo. In this way, navigating through and beyond the walls of Salvador, we will delve into the transformations that have occurred in Alvena, driven by changes in our political landscape, in parallel with our collective wound.

### **Cultural complex, a woman, and a misogynistic government**

I met Alvena in 2017, but I now focus on the year 2019, marked by the inauguration of an extreme right-wing government in Brazil. At that time, the president of the country, Jair Bolsonaro, stated that foreign men could “feel free” to come to the country “to have sex with a woman” (MARIZ, 2019). Bolsonaro was opposing what he referred to as “gay tourism.” Hearing this statement from the president of a country where, in addition to alarming cases of homophobic violence, 1,326 women fell victim to femicide that year<sup>4</sup>, can deepen wounds caused by the cultural complex of machismo. Given this political context, beings like those in the “Mourning” series emerged in the streets of cities, and from this observation, we can measure a certain urgency in bringing the issue of violence against women under public scrutiny, raising possibilities for discussion and reflection.

Since the beginning of Bolsonaro’s presidency, our hands – which already needed to be

<sup>4</sup> Data from occurrence reports filed with the Civil Police in all 27 Federative Units, available in the booklet “Violence against Women in 2020” by the National Public Security Forum.

joined – had to support each other even more strongly. During the transition from a fearful coup government to an openly genocidal government, a slogan/image of collective support created by the artist and tattooist Thereza Nardelli went viral on social media with the words “No one lets go of anyone’s hand” (Image 2).

The rise of Brazilian conservatism was felt by various populations that make up the country. Graphic entities are not immune to collective transformations, especially those conceived and displayed in the streets of large cities. When I crossed paths with Alvena again in downtown Salvador, I noticed transformations in her forms (Image 3). She now held something even more distinct than a bent bar in her hands: she now displayed a vulva. It seemed to me like a dual movement of unabashedly showing a corporeal existence and, at the same time, protecting her own body. That was the first thing I heard her say when I encountered her again after this collective blow.

Similar to our previous conversation, I approached her, politely asked for permission, and inquired about her interest in having a chat. As always, she warmly welcomed me and invited me to sit between her feet on the sidewalk. To avoid disrupting the bustling flow of pedestrians, I complied. Thus, while she observed me from top to bottom, our exchange of gazes led us to reflect on the struggle of our bodies for dignified existence – a web we weave through small images of the feminist movement, which over more than a century continues to prove so necessary.

The Feminist Movement can be seen in three main waves: the suffragettes, the cultural revolution, and the institutional revolution (SCOTT, 1995). In the first wave, we had a movement led by white middle-class women who demanded the right to vote, as well as the opportunity to work outside the domestic sphere. In the second wave, the aim was not only to have the right to actively use spaces and institutions but also to belong to these spaces by challenging gender



Source: Thereza Nardelli. Available at: [https://www.behance.net/thereza\\_nardelli/](https://www.behance.net/thereza_nardelli/) Accessed in: January 2023.

**Image 2 – No one lets go of anyone’s hand.**

prescriptions – it was a struggle that expanded the scope of justice to include issues previously understood as private, such as sexuality, domestic service, reproduction, and violence against women (ARRUZZA et al., 2019). Thus, the maxim “the personal is political” was consolidated, intertwining the economic and material foundations of society with prevailing cultural norms, in order to question the dichotomous separation between public and private matters. The third wave drew attention to how the differences among women make the struggle multiple, as demands are intersected by issues of race, class, sexuality, and other categories. A deconstructive perspective marked the tension between the previously mobilized categories.

In the wake of these movements, feminist struggles remain in continuous transformation. Even though the issues and problems confronted



Source: Talitha Andrade. Available at: <https://www.instagram.com/tali.boy/>.

**Image 3 – Alvena (Salvador, 2019).**

are rearticulated, the rights of historically marginalized individuals are always under threat. Therefore, even though the demands of first-wave suffragettes may seem distant and achieved, we must remain vigilant about the nuances of our most fundamental political rights being denied.

Dear reader, words can also be seen as images. As Brazilian conservatism ascended in recent years, the following slogan/image was notably promoted: the “beautiful, modest, and home-ly”<sup>5</sup> woman. As mentioned earlier, the first battle fought by feminist movements was the right to leave home and actively participate in the polis. Thus, we can see in this historical and imagetic interweaving (DIDI-HUBERMAN, 2011) an attempt to revert to the initial and most basic struggle that we thought we had already won: the right to belong to the public space. This intricate tapestry

<sup>5</sup> In a report by *Veja Magazine* (LINHARES, 2016) about Marcela Temer, wife of Michel Temer.

can lead us to associate a still-prevailing image of women as commodities – that is, as objects owned by men. Objectified, our place cannot be one of free movement but rather confined to the underestimated realm of the private, along with other possessions of these men. Based on this logic, other rights are eclipsed and neglected, especially when considering complex articulations of intersectionality and differences within the category of “women.”

During my reunion with Alvena, she suggested that I invite another woman to join our conversation, but this time she didn’t want it to be Clarice Lispector. Alvena explained that, while it was once enjoyable to have light conversations that made her flirt with Woodman, in the current political context of rising conservatism, this had become impossible. She confided in me that we needed someone sensitive and politically engaged, and whispered Sueli Rolnik’s name in my ear. I wasn’t as familiar with Sueli as I was with Clarice, and I couldn’t call her at that moment. I decided to seek her out and promised Alvena that I would return soon. After some time, I found something interesting to share with Alvena and sat on the asphalt under her feet again, inviting Sueli to join us. She settled in beside us, charmingly adjusting her hair, and introduced us to her ideas about cartographies:

Psychosocial landscapes are also mappable. Cartography, in this case, follows and occurs simultaneously with the dismantling of certain worlds – their loss of meaning – and the formation of others: worlds that are created to express contemporary affections, in relation to which prevailing universes have become obsolete (ROLNIK, 1989).

Breaking the silence that followed Sueli’s words, Alvena told us that the bar of existence had become obsolete in the face of our current social context. Our contemporary affections as a

collective of women are no longer the same as those denounced in early 2012. Our dismantling has now occurred not in the path of care but in the exposure of the inflicted wound. More than just calling for mourning/struggle in the affirmation that we are together regardless of who we are, it was time to shamelessly display – me, Alvena, you, dear reader – this cultural wound’s increasing size that marks our bodies and souls, directly affecting our existences.

Our sense of belonging to the specific group identity we call “being a woman” carries within its archetypal core this cultural wound torn in our culture by those who hate our gender identity; a wound that affects those who identify and those who have been compulsorily identified with this identity. According to Kimbles (2014): “(...) the fantasies stimulated by cultural complexes, even when stereotypes can provide positive energy for self-realization and improvement, bring compensatory or missing dimensions to personal development” (p. 92).

In other words, looking at this aspect through the cultural complex that allows us to identify as women, we can perceive strengths but also limitations, which multiply when we think about the possibility of cultural complexes constellating concurrently, that is, when bridges are established between cultural wounds from different realms. Following this line of thought, let’s briefly explore two examples: Black women and transgender women.

In the first case, in addition to experiencing the wounds of the cultural complex of misogyny, we can add at least a few more wounds: Black women experience the bridge between this complex and the complex of racism, and in these cases, the energy between them can be seen as cumulative and consequently greater than two. Similarly, in terms of the strength of psychic energy, transgender women experience the accumulation of complexes and the bridge between the complex of misogyny and transphobia, which results in one of the most obvious consequences, perhaps being the fact that the life expect-

tancy of these women in Brazil is only 35 years<sup>6</sup>, still possibly including the complex of misogyny (ANTUNES, 2013 apud BENEVIDES, NOGUEIRA, 2020, p. 42), half of the national average. If we consider other categories informed by cultural complexes, we will find the accumulation/bridge of these complexes, such as misogyny, racism, homophobia, fatphobia, ableism, xenophobia. Crenshaw, an author who studied this theme extensively, highlights the urgency of approaching feminist studies from this perspective, recognizing that these systems of oppression often overlap and intersect, creating complex intersections in which multiple axes intertwine:

These pathways are sometimes defined as distinct and mutually exclusive axes of power; racism, for example, is distinct from patriarchy, which is in turn different from class oppression. In fact, such systems often overlap and intersect, creating complex intersections in which two, three, or four axes intersect. Racialized women are often positioned in a space where racism or xenophobia, class, and gender meet. As a result, they are subject to being hit by the intense traffic flow on all these pathways. Racialized women and other groups marked by multiple oppressions, positioned at intersections due to their specific identities, must negotiate the traffic that flows through the intersections (Crenshaw 2002, p. 177).

Crenshaw draws attention to racialized women who are often positioned in a space where racism, class, and gender intersect, making them particularly vulnerable to multiple forms of oppression. For these women and other groups marked by multiple oppressions, intersection-

<sup>6</sup> Information provided in the Dossier on Murders and Violence Against Brazilian Transvestites and Transsexuals in 2020, based on an interview. The very absence of official data on the subject can show us how this is a matter with little or no serious attention in Brazil.



ality becomes crucial to navigating the intense flow of traffic through the intersections between these oppressive systems.

From this understanding, we can analyze the concept of cultural complexes in analytical psychology, beginning to consider them through the accumulation of psychic energy generated by the bridge and concomitance of distinct cultural complexes. This means that interactions between different cultural complexes can generate an accumulation of psychic energy that can manifest intensely and complexly in individuals' psyches, leading to greater difficulty in dealing with these forms of oppression. Intersectionality, as a concept, proposes that we cannot analyze oppression or discrimination in isolation but rather by considering the interaction and overlap of different axes of power, such as gender, race, sexuality, social class, among others. From this understanding, it becomes possible to see how different cultural complexes intersect and create new forms of oppression and marginalization, disproportionately affecting individuals belonging to multiple minorities.

In the dialogue with my friend Alvena, we identified the bridge between three cultural complexes that intersect and directly affect the lives of many people: misogyny, heteronormativity, and cisnormativity. Misogyny, in turn, is a cultural complex based on the idea that masculinity is superior to femininity and that men should have power and control over women. This cultural complex manifests in various forms, such as domestic violence, discrimination in the job market, sexual objectification, and the lack of female representation in positions of power.

Heteronormativity and cisnormativity (PESSOA, 2021), on the other hand, are cultural complexes that presuppose that all people must identify with a binary gender (male or female) and that heterosexuality is the "normal" and desirable sexual orientation. These cultural complexes exclude and discriminate against people who do not fit within these definitions, such as

transgender and non-binary individuals, and perpetuate violence and discrimination against the LGBTQIA+ community.

Although in this meeting we only discussed the cultural complex of misogyny in the wake of the rise of conservatism, we have seen the exacerbation of the wounds caused by all these mentioned complexes and even others, such as the environmental and colonial complexes, topics that analytical psychology in contemporary times has been examining, but in a still timid way compared to other areas of study.

Thus, through the perspective of an imaginal transformation resulting from the intensification of energies, we can look from the standpoint of what Jung (2002) presents to us about psychic energy. By seeking concepts from physics regarding the conservation and transformation of energy, Jung argues his understanding of psychic dynamics:

According to Busse's proposal, the principle of equivalence and the principle of constancy. The principle of equivalence postulates that "for every energy expended, employed to create a condition somewhere, an equal quantity of the same or another form of energy arises somewhere else," while the principle of constancy states that "the total energy [...] always remains the same, being neither able to increase nor decrease (JUNG, 2002, p.14, par. 34).

His concept of psychic dynamics is expanded with the idea of entropy:

After strong initial oscillations, the opposites balance out, and little by little, a new attitude emerges, whose resulting stability is all the greater, the greater the initial differences were. The greater the tension of the opposites, the greater the energy produced; and the greater the energy, the stronger the constellated attracting

force... For this reason, an attitude produced by broad compensations is particularly stable (JUNG, 2002, p. 14 par. 49).

In view of this, we can infer from the perspective of the collective psyche that the increase in conservative energy in Brazil – which had been cultivated and amplified in closed groups for some years (such as, for example, the Olavism movement<sup>7</sup>) – when exposed and enacted for the entire collective, triggered a response from the groups violated by this complex. In the case reported here, we can observe this energetic dynamic of the complex through a specific imaginal change – Alvena – although it is not limited to her. This collective shadow has made the political game much more complex than just left and right, in order to sustain what is unsustainable: the violation of the rights of those who have been projective mirrors of unaddressed dark contents since the birth of Brazil.

### Psyche on the asphalt

As we reach the climax of our conversation, I invite you, dear reader curious about contemporary afflictions of the human soul – and who might be sitting comfortably in an analyst's chair, just as I am – to sit with me and Alvena on the “dirty” street. If you have difficulty getting up afterward, don't worry: remember that we can be holding hands and help each other back to the surface. So, sit down, settle in with me and Alvena, and let's try to see the city as our analysand (Hillman, 1995), that is, bring the polis into our consulting rooms.

From this scene, let's reflect together on how the transformation of some of our collective images becomes clearly and materially visible, not only in our consulting rooms but on the city's skin as a consequence of the mobilization of a

cultural complex. The psyche doesn't only inhabit the consulting room; it inhabits the city. We need to look at the psyche that carries a whole entanglement of characters who come to us – most of the time in the form of a single God, as the Medusa that presents herself as our analysand and doesn't always have Poseidon dwelling solely within her; most of the time the rapist Poseidon has a name, a body, and an address near hers, if not the same, and he doesn't exist individually but feeds back into a collective that cast more than fifty million votes for a man who, among many other examples, said he wouldn't rape Federal Deputy Maria do Rosário because she was too ugly<sup>8</sup>.

I glimpsed Alvena in the traffic of Salvador in 2017, and intrigued by her cry, I went on foot to get to know her. Two years later, I crossed her path again and found other traits in her presentation and presence in the world. I wonder about Alvena's transformations over the four years of Bolsonaroism in operation. A fragment of a look at 2022 reveals so many atrocities that it's hard to keep track of them all. Through excerpts from a newspaper from June 2021, we could make a cut in which in the same week we learned of the murder of the reporter Dom Phillips and the indigenist Bruno Pereira after their fights against illegal mining in the Amazon; another news story brought the situation of a civil servant who was beaten by a colleague in her workplace, and even with everything filmed, the aggressor was released without the victim even having a protective measure; yet another report told us about the extinction of the Mental Health Coordination at the Ministry of Health, with a clear dismantling of this sector in Brazil.

As I argued, Alvena resides in the wound of a wall and was conceived in everyday urban erosions. In dialogue with the cultural complex of

<sup>7</sup> The term “Olavistas” refers to followers of the Brazilian writer Olavo de Carvalho, who espouses ideas including political conservatism, anti-communism, the defense of traditional and religious values, the appreciation of erudite cultures, and criticism of progressivism.

<sup>8</sup> For this comment, he had to compensate the congresswoman. Article available at: [https://www.stj.jus.br/sites/portalp/Paginas/Comunicacao/Noticias-antigas/2017/2017-08-15\\_18-37\\_Jair-Bolsonaro-tera-de-indenizar-deputada-Maria-dô-Rosario-por-danos-morais.aspx](https://www.stj.jus.br/sites/portalp/Paginas/Comunicacao/Noticias-antigas/2017/2017-08-15_18-37_Jair-Bolsonaro-tera-de-indenizar-deputada-Maria-dô-Rosario-por-danos-morais.aspx)

misogyny that informs her, she traded the stature of a bar for the ostentatious display of her vulva. She gained horns and blushed. How do the incessantly inflicted erosions in our collective existence in recent times continue to affect her? Alvena's existence on a wall denounces the arbitrariness between the individual and the collective, private property, and the public street. The very dichotomous distinction between inside and outside is derived from a European and androcentric epistemology (WONS, 2022). The wall that distinguishes the individual and the collective was built in the fantasy of the white man. Of the people who honor us by presenting their stories, how many of them have never brought to you the wounds of the polis?

The year is now 2023, and a glimmer of hope is possible. However, over the next four years, will our cultural complexes at least have the possibility of dialogue? Where will the blue shadow of conservatism be? Dear reader – and perhaps a companion in the care of our collective wound – regardless of changes in government, something is fundamental: we need to fight against hope-

lessness within us, as this is a constituent gear of the alienation process. Let us allow the following invitation to resonate in our bodies:

Therefore, we must – in retreat from the realm and glory, in the gap opened between past and future – become fireflies and thus form a community of desire again, a community of gleam, of dances despite everything, of thoughts to transmit. To say yes in the night crossed by gleams and not be content to describe the no of the blinding light (DIDI-HUBERMAN, 2011, p. 154-55).

One possible strategy for experiencing grief and the struggle against hopelessness may be the cultivation of memory, and consequently, the fight against any historical forgetting. Also, to heed the request of Clarice Lispector and the slogan/image of Thereza Nardelli, in which our hands come together. ■

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## Resumo

### *Cartografias de mulheres no asfalto: diálogos sobre o complexo cultural do machismo*

*Neste texto, a autora adota uma metodologia ensaística impulsionada pelo desejo de devolver a polis da alma à poesia. A partir da técnica de imaginação ativa desenvolvida por Jung, a autora estabelece um diálogo com um grafite situado em Salvador, Bahia. Essa obra é parte da série “Luto” concebida pela artista baiana Thalita Andrade. O grafite em questão retrata uma mulher, cuja imagem sofreu importantes transformações durante o período do governo de Jair Bolsonaro, tornando-se objeto de refle-*

*xão mais direto sobre as mudanças políticas e culturais em curso na sociedade brasileira. Nessa perspectiva, este artigo se propõe a analisar o quanto a mudança da imagem grafitada, aparentemente tão circunscrita, pode também refletir uma necessidade de mudança coletiva. Para tanto, além do conceito pós-junguiano de complexos culturais, a autora faz uso da teoria junguiana sobre energia psíquica, aliada ao aporte proveniente dos campos da história da arte e da literatura. ■*

**Palavras-chave:** complexo cultural do machismo, imaginação ativa, psicologia analítica, arte urbana.

## Resumen

### *Cartografías de mujeres en el asfalto: diálogos sobre el complejo cultural del machismo*

*En este texto, la autora adopta una metodología ensayística impulsada por el deseo de devolver la polis del alma a la poesía. A partir de la técnica de imaginación activa desarrollada por Jung, la autora establece un diálogo con un artista de grafiti situado en Salvador, Bahía. Esta obra es parte de la serie “Luto” concebida por la artista bahiana Thalita Andrade. El grafiti en cuestión representa a una mujer, cuya imagen sufrió importantes transformaciones durante el período del gobierno de Jair Bolsonaro, convirtiéndose en objeto de*

*reflexión más directa sobre los cambios políticos y culturales en curso en la sociedad brasileña. En esa perspectiva, este artículo se propone analizar cuánto el cambio de la imagen del grafiti, aparentemente tan circunscrita, puede también estar reflejando una necesidad de cambio colectivo. Para tanto, además del concepto post-junguiano de complejos culturales, la autora hace uso de la teoría junguiana sobre energía psíquica, aliados al aporte proveniente de los campos de la historia del arte y de la literatura. ■*

**Palabras clave:** complejo cultural del machismo, imaginación activa, psicología analítica, arte urbano.

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