

Glory! The Great Surge

(For Athos Bulcão)

Adriana had spoken to me about the “surge” of the sea, in this world of baroque convulsion in which angels’ bodies look like or are sustained only by the convulsive disorder of the waves, swells, billows, tidal waves, tides flowing with the energy converting sea currents into optical currents, with the loss of direction imposed against the mesh, beyond the grid, corroded, imperfect, split, cracked like wounded skin, flesh cooked in fire, blue baroque-rococo sea, coastal territory of scrolls, bends, spirals, body parts, yet all a paradoxical conceptual entirety of fragments in the totalization of the surface, with its folds, beachcombers, white, monochromes, light, the harbor upon arrival after navigating, roaming, sliding on the surface that is simultaneously constructed, a near masonry of tiles and liquidity moving under the mirrorlike calmness of the water, which becomes stained, checkered, shattered, corroded, displaced, harmoniously unmatched, with a rocky and aqueous quality akin to parts of the troubled waters of the Negro and Solimões rivers as they meet to form the Amazon River, an ocular bore that twists the sight unfolding the soul into a Leibnizian fold, in a philosophical destabilization of the political-argumentative meaning of the form and of baroque monuments as in Argan’s analysis of that instability of the soul mirrored in physical construction; a gongoresque specter of pictorial excess, of visual excess, of the excess of history, of reread colonial excesses, rearranged for exposing the system of an order in crisis, mirrored in the anatomy of fragmented bodies with touch-hands gripped to instruments, horns or architectural details at the top, falling heads of discontinuous bodies, bellies-clothing-scrolls-sea, groundless feet, apart from inverted clouds descending upon the oceanic cathedral, which is abysmal, abyssal, whirling-vertigo, inner convulsing sea with no sky, given in insignificant beaches, cracked light, an exposed body with fragments joined by the deconstruction of the monumentality of the picture’s corroded edges, like the crooked precision of a

straight line by Mondrian as a blue rectangle, a tile, water, a watercolor, a carré of nebulous transparency, Venusless seashells, vulvas and bodies with no organs joined in the libidinal desire of pure energy-force without an anatomical reality and a pure visual drive – movements that end in convex edges searching for a contact with the other tiled body, a cosmic coitus, the devouring feminine space – a vagina dentata cerulea – or transparent, marine monsters embodied in the swells of the tide of sight, all taken unsurpassed – a sea of weights, an Ocean of architectural fragments in convulsion within the whirlpool that is followed by the current, but one which floats, and does not give way to gravity because it's the Sea; ocean of hairs, plants, seashells, spirals, scrolls, ornamented cilia in the ocean where they navigate, row, blow, roam aimlessly, without a compass, without an astrolabe, without a sailing chart, but with a right course along the crooked lines of the parts that have been integrated by the inarticulateness of the surface's homogeneity, disarranged by its breaks, fissures, differences, noncombinations, for the sea of scourges defeats the body, gets the body, plunges the body, takes the body, involves the body, journeys the body, carries the body, it becomes ornamented like a rebound-body that rebounds sight on a sinuous visual path in the right direction (from left to right), defenseless, with no return, no fluctuation, no navigation, without any possibility of resistance other than the full experience of that which is wished for and done by a potent artist in the full exercise of her potency: To navigate in that art is an experimentation with the grandeur of confronting the Amazon, or Mao Tse-tung on the Yellow: There is a saga of sight: a dip in the water that becomes marching history, a counter-march, directions, detours, ruptures, falls, support in the void, risk, the solidity of the impalpable, freezeless cold, warm white-light, the flesh of matter raises the inorganic temperature of blue and white and restores the humanity of those bodies – each and every one of the tiles, regardless of their human or anthropomorphic forms – through the presence of earth where there seemed to be purely water and light, dissipation and movement, the disaggregation and drowning of sight, since once drowned, sight transforms the bluish water into a lens with which it scrutinizes the world's surface, experiments

the conflict between its logocentric logic (the grid!) and the unpredictability of desire, of chance in the mirrorlike waters, the skin of the world, a maculate cornea, a sea of beauties, once everybody travels through here – I didn't see any spectator who did not enter; I didn't see any not travel; I didn't see any not become marveled; I didn't see any who disliked art; I didn't see any refuse sensitivity; I didn't see any reject the symbol; I didn't see any visually illiterate spectator before this illegible; I didn't see any who stood still (even if he/she didn't move), because there seems to be a movement of the optical nerve, upon a wink over the surface of the painting, like the comber on the sea on a summer afternoon with clear skies: that is a painless, godless Baroque, a pure visual happening – I'd like to be a dove in this sea without announcing the mainland other than the possibility of navigating endlessly, for the duration of sight in Camões' sea.

Rio de Janeiro, 23 March 2001.