

Cartography as a Cripistemology: Reflections from an Autistic Territory

Cartografia como uma Cripistemologia: Reflexões a partir de um Território Autista

Luiz Gustavo DUARTE

Doutorado em Saúde Coletiva. Professor efetivo no Instituto Federal do Paraná – IFPR, *campus* Palmas. Colegiado de enfermagem.
E-mail: lgduarte@proton.me

Maira Sayuri Sakay BORTOLETTO

Doutorado em Saúde Coletiva. Docente Adjunto do Departamento de Saúde Coletiva. Universidade Estadual de Londrina – UEL.
E-mail: mairuska@gmail.com

Abstract:

This article presents a discussion based on a cartography performed by a researcher diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder. This cartography is made by mapping the lines of desire of the research process itself, which took place over six years and included both master's and doctoral degrees. Considering the elaborations of Deleuze and Guattari regarding cartography as the mapping of the affectations experienced in a given existential territory, it is understood here that this process, when produced from a crippled territory, becomes entangled and gains potential as a cripistemology. It is, therefore, a way of producing knowledge without erasing people with disabilities (PWDs).

Keywords: Crip theory, cartography, autism spectrum disorder, philosophy of disability.

Resumo:

O artigo traz uma discussão elaborada a partir de uma cartografia realizada por um pesquisador com diagnóstico de Transtorno do Espectro Autista. Esta cartografia, é feita pelo mapeamento das linhas de desejo do próprio processo de pesquisar que transcorreu durante seis anos, compreendendo o mestrado e doutorado. Considerando as elaborações de Deleuze e Guattari a respeito da cartografia como o

mapeamento das afetações vivenciadas em determinado território existencial, compreende-se aqui que esta, quando produzida a partir de um território crip - aleijado – emaranha-se e ganha potencial como uma cripistemologia, sendo, portanto, uma maneira de produzir conhecimento que rompe com o apagamento das pessoas com deficiências.

Palavras-Chave: Teoria crip, cartografia, transtorno do espectro autista, filosofia da deficiência.

INTRODUCTION

The map presented here derives from a cartography produced over the years that the lead author, with his supervisor and coauthor, completed during his master's and doctoral degrees. Over six years, a study involving the routines of a street clinic in the city of Londrina-PR was conducted. This research presented, via articles, dissertations and theses, possible maps, which were created throughout this experience.

During this process, not only was an analysis and mapping of these experiences in the office built but also, as this process unfolded, a cartography was constructed of the process of researching and building analyses and maps. In this article, we propose to present, in an autistic existential territory, discussions mapped throughout this period that reflect dialog related to housing; thus, this self-analysis, which is typical of the cartographic references discussed by Deleuze and Guattari, also intertwines with theories known as cripistemologies.

Thus, this article aims to contextualize this conceptual and procedural process and present cartographic concepts and proposals of crip theories. With a contextualization of the territorial position of autism, this mapping can be woven.

BECOMING A RESEARCHER AND CARTOGRAPHER

The cartography theory was proposed by Deleuze and Guattari and based on the work of *Anti-Oedipus* (2011a); it continues to be developed in their subsequent publications. Over the years, it has gained its own body of knowledge due to the efforts of other authors, thinkers and researchers. In this approach, ways of producing knowledge are not based on traditional concepts of scientific practice, in which the method is unique and is considered neutral and objective in the eyes of the world, with the nullification of the researcher themselves in the production of knowledge.

The map produced in this type of cartography results from the monitoring of the affects lived throughout the experience of the one who produces it. Deleuze and Guattari state that this is the mapping of the lines of desire that run through our body when we experience it. What is considered and mapped is not at the level of representation but instead reflects what is being produced; what acts as agency or inhibits agency; or what acts as an agent of production or even anti-production (Costa and Amorim, 2019).

The lines of desire are lines of becoming that run through bodies. They are incessant flows that force, fray and strive to live. They are lines of constant movement that guide the real itself. They occur at pre-individual latitudes and longitudes that compose an individual, arising from singular events of the plane of immanence, which are recognized by their forms and functions in another plane, the organizational plane (Deleuze, 2002; Deleuze and Guattari, 2011b).

The molecular plane of immanence is where reality is not representative; it has no function and is not lacking. All connections between multiplicities, lacking a hidden dimension (N-1), leave behind 0, the starting point, which insists on starting something. It is pure becoming. Thus, it must be understood that the process of desire occurs at a pre-individual level but that its composition is articulated at the organizational level in the individual (Deleuze and Guattari, 2011b).

On the organizational plane, with representations, forms and derived images, the movements of becoming are not perceptible, and there is an organization of what is perceived. Such organization fixes the forms and subjects; furthermore, so that these perceptions of lines of desire, i.e., becoming, are not restricted to an analysis that investigates only such perceptible modes on the organizational plane, it is necessary to recognize them; thus, no interpretation represents only reality (Deleuze and Guattari, 2011b).

If there are such lines of desire that run through individuals, there are also movements that occur from the mixture or relationships between bodies that are not necessarily human but that will produce realness. With the existence of a geography of the land, states, and seas, there is also that of people. Deleuze (1998, p. 9) explains it as follows:

For example, I try to explain that things and people are composed of quite different lines and that they do not necessarily know which line of themselves they are on or where to make the line they are drawing pass: in short, there is every type of geography within people, with hard lines, flexible lines, lines of flight, etc.

This geographical direction is established by Deleuze's own philosophy. This is because his philosophy is a procedure of geographical thought, which occurs in types, without hierarchies, where

privilege is in the constitution of spaces. One does not have history or linearity as a north or fixed point but rather allocations by spaces and topographies that locate, map and punctuate where such a plot takes place and where these ways of living, inhabiting and thinking unfold (Machado, 2009).

There is no way to establish an *a priori* in the making of maps, or even an ideal map, because we would be flowing into a teleological common sense or a morally divine common sense. Hence, the cartographies flow according to the flows and breaks that desire produces. The effects and countereffects of events follow, as there is no way to separate oneself as a researcher from such mixtures. Bodies mingle, becoming flows, and there is no presumably neutral observational method that displaces this process (Prado Filho and Teti, 2013).

It is from these points that Deleuze and Guattari develop the notion that all territory is existential. The territory is where beings are organized and where subjectivation takes place. It is the plane where investments emerge, whether in social environments or political or cultural relationships, among others (Guattari and Rolnik, 2013). For such formations, assemblages, which are inseparable from desire, are necessary. Assemblages are minimal units of the real, in which there is a tetravalence distributed along the vertical and horizontal axes. In horizontality, we have segments of expression and content; it is the assemblage called “machinic bodies”, which organize these in space and time and occur in the passions and actions between the bodies; it is a mixture in which the events occur. The vertical axis, on the other hand, concerns the territories and reterritorialization that will seek to stabilize them; however, together with the existence of a deterritorialization that breaks them, they are collective assemblages of enunciation because they operate in these semiotics, legal regimes, advertisements, or oaths (Menezes, 2006).

As Guattari and Rolnik S (2013, p. 323) put it:

Territory can be relative both to a lived space and to a perceived system within which a subject feels “at home”. Territory is synonymous with appropriation, with subjectivation closed in itself. It is the set of projects and representations that will result, pragmatically, in a whole series of behaviors and investments, in times and in social, cultural, aesthetic, and cognitive spaces [...] itself, engage in lines of flight and even go off course and destroy itself.

Hence, the territory is an agency since it is in the place where such productions will be brokered and produced. These always occur in a territory, not outside it, because an assemblage is always territorial; thus, the territory is also formed by assemblages. In this articulation, territories are formed by being reorganized, but are also deterritorialized, to establish themselves in other territories. This, of course, always involves lines of desire (Enes and Bicalho, 2014).

In this geophilosophy that Deleuze and Guattari proposed, I leaned forward to map the affects (Silva e Sousa, 2020). I did not seek to map the planes of organization or how situations were represented or constructed in a specific utterance but rather how those affectations produced certain estrangement, sensations, and agency in certain ways, that is, how the lines of desire behaved in the face of such conditions.

With this territory being built, in the becoming of a researcher, who was affirmed in the course of cartographic construction, breakthroughs were not only expected but also desired. The explosion that emerged as a seismic tremor in this cartography occurred with the diagnosis of autism at the beginning of the doctorate. Thus, in the face of this fracture, the territory of autism arises, and with it, there are attempts at recognition and affirmation of what is established with such territory.

RECOGNITION OF THE AUTISTIC TERRITORY

In the cartographic process, the cartographer initially faced two essential questions for the starting point of the lines of future maps: the exhausted body and the thresholds of deterritorialization. The first, the exhausted body, refers to the image of the sedentary body that, with the least effort, already realizes that the weight of its flesh is not the same as it was minutes before movement. However, what I bring is a body exhausted from the affectations of being in the South of the world in times of capitalist realism¹. Each cartography is unique; however, there are territories in the molar planes that are common, which have already been addressed by Deleuze and Guattari, and that are present in this production of crushed, destroyed and depotentiated subjectivities. I cannot fail to recognize that, even in this condition, I have a social face that opens doors for me in this capitalist organization. I am white, male, straight, and cisgender, in addition to several other molar characteristics that I understand make my insertion in the world less violent than that of minorities who have their bodies attacked at all times throughout history.

However, as is typical of these map productions, I cannot fail to mention that my body is exhausted. Mark Fisher introduces this issue well when he presents us with how capitalist realism

¹ Capitalist realism, a concept introduced by Mark Fisher (2020) to explain the contemporary post-Soviet reality, as an alternative to the term neoliberalism. This is because what capitalist realism brings is a poverty, or total absence, of virtual or non-virtual alternatives to the capitalist system, summarized in the maxim that it is easier to imagine the end of the world than the end of capitalism.

penetrates us, as it “conditions not only the production of culture but also the regulation of work and education, acting as a kind of invisible barrier and limiting thought and action” (Fisher, 2020, p. 33). In this context, there is not only a reconfiguration of how we see the past but also how we are unable to project our own future outside the possibilities that capitalism offers, a limitation not only of action but also of thought.

This is part of the production of a tired, exhausted body, depleted of any desire that is not a misinterpretation of desire based on a lack of material goods, spaces, time, etc.; however, the exhausted body that wrote this article manages to deal to some extent with some assemblages. Thus, the presentation of lines of great intensity throughout the cartography is closer to the body of this researcher, which is orderly, neurotic, sedentary, and inserted into the capitalist realism that aims to capture and bureaucratize even minimal daily activity. It is in these bursts of territories that the exhausted body is able to recognize the production of becoming and escape the lines of conservation.

Deleuze (1995) recognized that this exhaustion was one that is far beyond tiredness. From this distance, this exhaustion, which is not to be confused with fatigue, is the depletion of the possible; within this distance, the possible can be produced by couplings and by renouncing necessity, sense, eschatology, or interpretations and significations. As Henz (2010, p. 83) noted, “exhaustion is the very possibility of engendering a politics that disseminates combinations, silences, transmutations of parasitized things, selves and impersonals”.

The other point that adds to such exhaustion is situated on the limits of deterritorialization. This is because the process associated with the experiences of the cartographer will enable the analysis of becoming, of subjectivities, assemblages, and flows, among multiple processes that often occur simultaneously, thus provoking an extreme disaggregation of these existential territories that until then were helpful to the researcher's life. Of course, capitalism also needs certain points of deterritorialization to capture these territories and turn them into regimes of enunciation for social subjection and machinic servitude. However, we also create territories and destroy them, rearrange them, etc., to produce cartography, the cartographer needs to address others and himself. There is no representative cartography; everything is visceral. One feels the uneasiness, nausea, and change of the destruction of conservative lines that are already very well established when one finds other bodies with becomings so potent that they promote the destruction of their own territories; thus, what was previously well-established in your way of living no longer belongs to you, and there is no more space for that previous organization.

This self-analysis is not a simple process, much less one of a short duration. These sedentary lines, which live in capitalist realism, are called into question by multiple “simple” encounters. What Deleuze makes of Spinoza, “what can a body do?” (Deleuze and Parnet, 1998, p. 49), remains valid. The goal here is to understand what threshold of encounters with this body will cause this limit to be crossed limit and disaggregate it so that there are no more territories. How do the already established existential territories support their rearrangement and/or destruction?

Thus, there is no way to distance the exhausted body from the threshold of deterritorialization. It is an exercise in self-analysis to understand that the body of the exhausted researcher does not admit to crossing certain thresholds. It is in the care of the self that a cartography is produced that does not give in to resentment, which does not disaggregate subjectivity itself.

Until that moment, it was noticeable that there was a construction within this exhausted body, where the sad affects seemed to populate and produce the researcher himself, who was captured by the numerous hard and flexible lines of the state apparatus. However, something was not working; before a cartographic proposal is made, it is necessary to understand that a discovery of secrets is not hidden behind an obscure veil that blurs and separates true knowledge from us. Cartography is performed via functions; it tends to function for a use that is not preestablished. It is a production. Of what? We do not know, and therein lies its intrinsic potency.

Despite being a form of knowledge production that occurs from an experience of affects and affectations, something was always bothering the cartographer. When witnessing other cartographers, other experiences, or even going into the field, this tiredness, exhaustion, and difficulty in feeling what everyone seemed to feel, whether in discussions in the research group or in other cartographic productions, always moved me and made me think what could be causing it? As I have revealed thus far, some arguments seem to make sense. The notion of an exhausted body and the theft of our imagination from other futures are elements that seem to support a good proposal regarding such a way of existing. However, these elements do not explain everything, nor do they propose to do so.

This difficulty is based on the extreme difficulty in understanding and experiencing such affectations of what is currently conventionally called autism. From the moment of this diagnosis, at the beginning of the doctorate and the process of living in the field, what had been produced until then in cartography led to a rupture. It was an earthquake that appeared to have multiple epicenters.

A question began to hover around the days of these experiences: How does one make a cartography, map these affectations, and guide those paths that require a dive into the affectations when

the one who performs them is someone who has no interest in socialization? Who already has a condition that seems to establish great difficulty in expression? Who has difficulty communicating and understanding contexts, nonverbal stimuli?

It is from this world that the cartographer in question starts from a literal thought in a symbolic world. He considers a way of producing knowledge on the basis of affections and relationships by someone who seems unable to flow along flexible lines. Among the various questions, one question can condense several questions and can be expressed by doubt: how can one be able to produce cartography while being autistic?

Traditional science methods, universalist methods and protocols are not designed for people with disabilities (PWDs). PWDs, when not ignored, were those living errors of nature that needed to be excluded, expelled, and disowned, to the point that society could flourish without its ugliness and uselessness, instead hovering around good and perfect productive bodies (Laes, 2020).

With the affirmation of an autistic territory, the production of knowledge via cartography gained a vector of potential instead of a constraint within the body. This occurred due to the very nature of cartography, as Deleuze and Guattari (2011a, p. 30) put it:

The map is open, connectable in all its dimensions, detachable, reversible, and susceptible to constant changes. It can be torn, reversed, adapted to montages of any nature, and prepared by an individual, a group, or a social formation.

These maps, therefore, can be crippled if necessary; they do not have a fear of denying universals to the extent that the lived affectations subvert them. Because of this, cartography can be viewed as a cripiSTEMology.

CRIPISTEMOLOGIES

The term cripiSTEMology was created by Lisa Duggan in 2010 and has since been used in publications with McRuer. Part of the challenge has been related to recognizing PWDs in disability studies and how PWDs have become objects of knowledge for such studies. The latter is especially important because, for the authors, disability studies can have a consensual harmony that suffers from a lack of divergence. Thus, cripiSTEMologies can be understood as an umbrella term where these “varied,

unstable crip positions² could be construed as deeply imbricated in, and trying to do justice to, a range of necessary and queer turns in disability studies: phenomenological, transnational, affective” (Johnson and McRuer, 2014, p. 133).

As they put it (Johnson and McRuer, 2014, p. 134):

[...] we suggest cripistemology to sharpen the neologism while performing similar cultural work: thinking from the critical, social, and personal position of disability. Yet the term also expands the focus from physical disability to the sometimes-elusive crip subjectivities informed by psychological, emotional, and other invisible or undocumented disabilities.

There are multiple crip theories. They arise in a way of producing knowledge that comes from the body itself so that the body, the environment and the relationships can then be discussed. Thus, not only does an analysis or discussion about something ensue, but also, as this knowledge is produced, life is affirmed (Greiner, 2023).

Considering the affirmation of life, the modes of existence and the very resignification of shocking and/or pejorative terms, the cripistemologies have in their genealogies contributions from the discussions arising from *queer* theories, the black movement, the feminist movement and manifestos that do not start from their own issues in the European-white-cis-man norm (McRuer, 2006).

We can think of crip theories, then, as the introduction of crises and ruptures in the universalist solutions that capable, nondisabled bodies propose; these theories enable us to think critically, starting with the disability (McRuer, 2006). This is because the notions of disability commonly emerge from a game between poles: luck/misfortune, lacking/complete, perfection/imperfection. Thus, these concepts are fractured when PWDs meet the experiences of themselves.

Overall, these definitions support theories and legislation that concern PWDs. These subjects are thought of and faced in ways that they are “included” in certain systems, with practices that depart from normalizing devices in which biopolitics acts to keep such bodies on the sidelines and excluded, even when they are present in various territories of society, as they always end up distancing themselves

² The term ‘crip’ lacks a direct counterpart in the Brazilian context. It derives from the term ‘Cripple’ (originating from the Proto-Germanic ‘*krupilaz*’), which refers both to those unable to move physically and those who must crawl. The word used in the Portuguese text is ‘*aleijado*’. Roughly speaking, *aleijado*, derived from the Latin ‘*laesio*’, which means wound or bruise. Both terms — *aleijado* and cripple — function as nouns or verbs, but throughout history and usage, they have also translated into words used as insults. In the Brazilian context, if we consider the abjection and intentionally targeted PWDs that the term *aleijado* connotes, it is possible to adopt this term as an equivalent (Mello, 2016).

from the idealized capable body. Given the context, the term *crip/alejado* functions similar to the term *queer/bixa*, which is used in the search, via resignification, to remove the idea of being *crip/cripple* as something pejorative.

Such points consider the normalization of bodies, where the directions need a norm established by able-bodies.

I put forward here a theory of what I call “compulsory able-bodiedness” and argue that the system of compulsory able-bodiedness, which in a sense produces disability, is thoroughly interwoven with the system of compulsory heterosexuality that produces queerness: that, in fact, compulsory heterosexuality is contingent on compulsory able-bodiedness, and vice versa (McRuer, 2006, p. 19).

McRuer (2006) outlines some points that he considers important when considering the principles that are intrinsic to the *crip* theory. These are: 1. Claiming disability and a politics of disability identity while building a conflicting relationship with this political identity; 2. reclaiming the *queer* history of coming out, as in, “coming out of the closet, onto the streets”; 3. demanding that an accessible world is possible; 4. insisting that a world with disabilities is possible and desirable, emphasizing that counterglobalization and other leftist movements that fail to begin conceptualizing this idea need to be mutilated; 5. inserting in the disputes of private/privatized and public cultures a discussion of how nondisability and disability are conceived, materialized, spatialized and populated.

These points indicate the paths that the *crip* theory follows. This proposal is that, insofar as access is considered, it must have its own concept that moves toward the point at which necessary discomforts arise and are faced. As Piepzna-Samarasinha (2018, p. 16–17) quotes “access as service begrudgingly offered to disabled people by non-disabled people who feel grumpy about it” to “access as a collective joy and offering we can give to each other”.

It is the statement that anti-capitalism should, and will be debated, regardless of authoritarian strategies. PWDs are not situated as narrative prostheses³ or are used only as a target of rehabilitation actions. Do not fall for the statements: but is not everyone a little disabled? (which can easily be extended to the LGBTQ+ population, women, or other minority crowds.) As McRuer (2006) noted, it is a way of saying, “you don’t need to be taken seriously, do you?” This universalization itself is a way of erasing the suffering and daily struggles of these people.

³ Concept presented by Mitchell and Snyder (2001) that relates to how disabilities and PWDs are used in literary or cultural stories as levers for advancing the narrative, limiting the potential for other ways of understanding and representing PWDs.

An important direction, when looking at the ideal corporeal realities exposed in the most varied capitalistic axioms, is to be able to consider the following question: how can we cripple this? This is in the pursuit of effective accessibility, as we recognize the existence of PWDs and question the moral values imposed on these bodies. This process necessarily involves the way of life under neoliberal rationality in a capitalist system, in such a way that the very leftist movements do not consider such accessibility issues “beyond the ramps”⁴ (McRuer, 2006; Russell, 2016).

Cripistemologies, therefore, seek an affirmation of life from the perspective of PWDs so that those systems and solutions created and thought out by capable bodies and nondisabled people have their theories and concepts crippled. The quest is to show that many of the things that are already socially established are based on ableist foundations, in which access to care, to the city, to fun, and to sex, among other dimensions of human life, will be limited to normalized, capable bodies.

AFFIRMATION OF THE AUTISTIC TERRITORY

During the development of the maps, the recognition of certain cognitive modes of sensory perception did not seem to be similar to what other cartographers and researchers noted. The existential territory of the researcher occurred in a way in which there was difficulty in organizing words, understanding certain modes of writing, figurative expressions or even exhausting simple meetings, or group experiences, in which the effort to adapt to the “colors” was the same as that of the environment always present.

Gradually, this destruction, typical of cartographic production, gives rise to the construction of a perception unique to the researcher. The mimicry of the behaviors and speeches of others slowly lost their meaning and significance, and the construction of the affirmation of existence from a body that perceives the earthquakes of territories that were previously solid ground, provoke a process of knowledge production and, within this the process, of another type of production, which is coveted in cartographic practice.

⁴ Term used by Marta Russel in her book of the same name, where she argues that PWDs do not have an adequate inclusion policy in the American system. This inadequacy not only affects PWDs but also signals the future of society, as the issues of corporeality presented by PWDs and restricted access show a prelude to other segments of society.

With the beginning of the doctorate, those chameleonic aspects, representative and recognized by many autistic people, begin to gain a voice in the researcher himself as the cartographic process unfolds, followed by the diagnostic confirmation of autism spectrum disorder (ASD).

ASD, before functioning as a catalyst for an identity, emerges as a territory where the researcher can recognize himself; it is part of his way of existing and is an affirmation of his differences. This is because a type of “chameleonism” is an aspect of recognition often cited by people with ASD (Silva, 2019). Starting from a “social disability”, as defined by diagnosticians, which usually occurs in situations in which there is a need to exert a particular trait, the subject tends to adapt to the “colors” of the place and becomes a condition of existence itself. That is, the body is constrained, limiting behaviors and actions in favor of mimicry.

This chameleonic expression exemplifies the compulsory able-bodiedness cited by McRuer (McRuer, 2006). This is because the body is constrained to the point of needing to adapt to certain norms established by nondisabled people to be recognized as a capable body. The associated embarrassment also causes suffering (Silva, 2019).

The production of the social system, which is continuously reestablished and updated in terms of organizing and standardizing life, fixes functions in certain spaces, which those who are in ASD disagree with. Such nuance of differentiation is often expressed by characterizing the condition as a lack of interest in such social norms. However, if there is a norm to establish a possible relationship, it is because it was necessary for a series of differentiating norms to be suppressed to the detriment of those that emerged as adequate.

A SPECTRUM SURROUNDS AUTISM

The current diagnostic criteria for ASD are based on a set of signs and symptoms that include deficits social interaction, repetitive patterns in behavior and deficits in communication, both verbal and nonverbal. These conditions do not present themselves in a way where the combination of one condition with another will characterize a greater severity. In fact, they function as couplings that form a singularity through a multiplicity (American Psychiatric Association, 2014).

In recent history, the term autism was first used in 1911 by Eugen Bleuler to describe one of the symptoms of schizophrenia, in which Eros is removed from the Freudian psychoanalytic term autoerotism; this term was an attempt to alter a pathology via a dissociation effect. Notably, this way of thinking, described as autistic, is not guided by goals but rather by affect and desires, which are

extracted in schizophrenia, hence the distance between the interior and exterior in autistic children (Dias, 2015).

In 1942, autism was used by Leo Kanner to describe a unique child-oriented category, removing it from childhood schizophrenia and establishing it as a nosological category of its own. This decision was made on the basis of the determination of unusual relationships with people or situations and the disregard and exclusion of everything that is external to the relationships (Bialer and Voltolini, 2022).

According to the diagnosis, for Kanner, such children are not able to maintain affective relationships of any kind. He categorized this relationship not only as nonnormal but also as conditions of speech and preservation of “sameness” (Marfinati and Abrão, 2014).

There was an establishment of normal and necessary types of behavior. Such standardization not only provided homogenization for expectations of children but also targeted women, as mothers were seen from a moralizing point of view, where the blame fell on them if their children were diagnosed. Kanner was not reluctant to use the term “refrigerator mother” to assign the probable cause of autism to the mother; in contrast, he encouraged it (Bialer and Voltolini, 2022).

These universalizations indicate that, in the very dispute of knowledge production, the anomaly of those bodies affected by standardization acted in a way that affirmed their existence. In this case, the parents and family members of autistic children produced studies that questioned the statements blaming the mothers and proposed other origins for the condition (Lopes, 2020; Bialer and Voltolini, 2022).

Kanner made an important contribution to the diagnostic definition of autism, producing his studies in the United States. However, in 1943 in Vienna, Austria, Hans Asperger, in his professorship thesis, proposed the definition of a condition called infantile autistic psychopathy, characterized by severe impairments in social interaction and motor and speech disorders, in addition to being present only to males. This definition had lower circulation due to language restrictions, as it was restricted to a smaller audience (Dias, 2015).

Both Kanner’s and Asperger’s elaborations, despite their historical and geographical outlines, did not fail to resonate throughout the 20th century or the 21st century, as both established a way of characterizing this condition, which was hegemonically adopted owing to their similarities in nosological descriptions. Since this period, especially since the 1980s, the diagnosis has been included in the International Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems (ICD) and in the Diagnostic

and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) published by the American Psychiatric Association (APA), leaving aside a psychoanalytic perspective and adopting a biological model with a grouping of symptoms and with its own designation in the manuals (Fernandes, Tomazelli and Girianelli, 2020).

Only at the beginning of the 21st century was autism referred to as ASD, which is included in the DSM-5 (its fifth edition). It is understood as a neurodevelopmental disorder that is a fusion of the diagnoses of autistic disorder, Asperger disorder and pervasive developmental disorder because, according to the manual, “the symptoms of these disorders represent a single *continuum* of impairments with intensities ranging from mild to severe in the domains of social communication and restrictive and repetitive behaviors rather than constituting separate disorders” (American Psychiatric Association, 2014, p. xlii).

Even though this spectrum has been studied by multiple fields, the moral burden, attributed to a certain autistic identity, is maintained, producing exclusions and suffering, whether in the people who are in the topography of the ASD or in their family members. This is because autism, with other disabilities, not only involves processes of modulation and nosological characterization but also suffers from the biomedical perspective, in which disability is seen as a personal tragedy and the territory in which the person is excluded is inserted (Oliver, 1990; Ortega, 2009).

The use of the term “spectrum” to refer to the condition was proposed by Lorna Wing in 1981. As a psychiatrist with an autistic daughter, she proposed the term in an attempt to expose the complexity of the condition, including abandoning the first original proposal of calling it *continuum*, which could lead to a perception of being in a kind of continuous and linear line of symptoms so that a “triad of disabilities”, comprising social skills, communication and imagination, could form combinations (Mas, 2018).

Although a spectral concept enables autism to have a combination of different symptoms, it appears in English as a *spectrum* disorder (*autism spectrum disorder*). This term comes from Latin and indicates the appearance or vision of something, or even a simulacrum. The word derives from *specio*, a verb that indicates to look, see or warn (Ferreira, 1991). The fact that specter, over time, has gained the meaning of a phantasmagoria is also interesting.

Much closer to the use proposed by Wing, the spectrum is conceived as a visible, or perceived range of something, as initially used in physics in the study of optics, where it was applied to seeing the rainbow of colors produced by the light that passes through a prism. In addition to this use, today, we have the spectra of light, radiation, and sound.

Before ASD is conceived as a diagnosis, it is presented here as a territory, not only of its spectral bands but also of its latitudes, longitudes and transversalities. Being in ASD is an element of composition that can present an identity but cannot be reduced to that identity. It forms part of the existential territory of the cartographer, which, in addition to this, has other mountains, seas and fields that are not in a diagnostic classification.

Notably, singularity is not formed by the sum of conditions but rather by how they are composed in geography; it is far from being dominated by matter. Thus, when such a composition exists, it is in the order of the intensities that run through the body and how they are established only over time. As Deleuze and Guattari state (Deleuze and Guattari, 2012, p. 204), there is no possible metric, since one is in the field of intensities, where the quantities:

[...] are not addable and displaceable: a temperature is not the sum of two lower temperatures; a velocity is not the sum of two lower velocities. However, each intensity, being itself a difference, is divided according to an order in which each term of the division is distinguished from the other by its nature.

The condition of being in the world, from an autistic territory established throughout cartography, is not presented here under normative characteristics. However, it is important to establish that the existential territory of the researcher occurs in a social territory that was previously established by his own existence; thus, autism also has its historical emergence and relations of lines of force that have been cemented over time.

Hence, among the possible processes of subjectivation, the affirmation of life, such as the affirmation that one lives in a territory based on disability, also becomes a geographical location on the basis of difference. Cripistemology appears to displace the hegemonic discourse of disability as a condition that is strictly located in the sphere of the individual and moves it toward the problematization of these very socially established concepts, including those regarding disability and cure, treatments or even idealisms (Braidotti, 2013; Greiner, 2023).

This social production that confines disability in the individual is part of the proposed *disability studies*. Throughout its development, and particularly since the 1980s, physical, intellectual, and visual disabilities, among others, are understood by the bodies of those who experience them as the affections resulting from social standards that are designed to purge PWDs from the concepts of society and ideal humans (Ortega, 2009).

This proposal for the understanding of disabilities and how they occur in relationships with society has resulted in gains in ASD singularities from the discussion of neurodiversity, which is a term

popularized by sociologist Judy Singer in 1998; it affirms differences in the ways of being that are common to those with ASD. This definition distances itself from the limiting and excluding concepts where autism is exclusively guided by the homogenized concept of the disease (Araujo, Silva and Zanon, 2023). Neurodiversity, owing to its affirmation of difference, enables communication with both cripiSTEMology and cartography itself. The latter, by proposing an abandonment of Platonic idealism and a conceptual construction of life that starts from materiality, moves toward studies of how difference is suppressed and how homogeneity is honored in the axioms of the modern capitalist state.

GIANT PACIFIC OCTOPUS

I'm a chameleon

Nah, that's a bit pedestrian

I'm more like a giant Pacific octopus

Coming in for the kill

("Giant Pacific Octopus (i don't know you anymore)" ENTER SHIKARI, 2023).

On the basis of the elaborations of Deleuze and Guattari, Kokubun (2018) stated that, in the 20th century, a key to understanding the authors was schizophrenia. However, in the contemporaneity of the 21st century, this key to understanding would be disability, highlighting autism as a condition that, in this century, has its own characteristics, such as the absence of "skills", which indicate the moral implication of a deficit in communication that is gestated in the 21st century in the neoliberal world of late capitalism.

Autism does not match the economic demands of the current market. In the case of incessant production and forcible value for the production of capital, the way in which autistic needs exist must compete with the way of producing the codes established by capital. The disability associated with autism emerges in the very socially stipulated ideal way of life (Kokubun, 2018).

This disabled way of existing in the autistic realm is a crip version of the social environment itself. Thus, in the affirmation of these other ways of existing, the world itself has to be crippled for such differences to be recognized. It must be crippled because there is an epistemological construction itself on the basis of the difference that is affirmed as crippled; a cripiSTEMology that seeks, in strangeness and in anomaly, the establishment of ways of existing (Greiner, 2023).

Here, cripiSTEMology emerges in a statement by Asperger of those points listed as problematic in children with autistic psychoses. Asperger cites that such psychopathy causes children to not have the capacity for social relationships, and as he stated, “no one really likes these people,” since “the community rejects them.” Even with the originality of the thinking of such children, he stated that “originality can be nonsense, eccentric and useless” (Sheffer, 2019, np).

It is from this nonsense and uselessness that normalization breaks. If an autistic person cannot have their expectations fulfilled by normated and expected behavior, it is through the edges that we are able, even in the face of suffering, to affirm a way of existing. As Deligny (2015) brings from her experience with autistic children, when they are usually spoken of, not even children consider them as anything other than “autistic”; that is, somewhere in these possible normalized relationships, they appear as only a trace. There remains a place where the fissures of these *topos* have already been established and scrutinized. Instead of the “between,” only the common is possible.

In these *topos* that the cartographer finds himself, there is a singular combination of the multiplicities in which such conditions appear and language is not excluded. It is not a simple task to express, either in a cartographic way or through literature, the desiring flows that arise from a schizoid process in a body of cognitive rigidity and obsessions, along with “sameness,” as was cited. However, such expression is a worthwhile task. Because the paradoxes are valid, these ways of thinking are considered normal to the point of being produced as axioms of the modern capitalist state and in a standardized language under the aegis of divine spelling. Thus, they socially validate superstitions to differentiate them from neurotics, producing not only unwanted bodies but also regulating the concept of the desired human being. The perfect human being is without any deficiency, whether in body, behavior or thought.

Here, the denial of the chameleonic as a way of existing is proposed, as written by a *becoming-giant-Pacific-octopus*. The affirmation of difference develops through the coloring of the normative, by the acceptance of the diversity of functionalities to the point that they reach the world and cripple it. *Becoming-giant-Pacific-octopus*, although often recognized for its ability to camouflage, uses this camouflage not only as a defense configuration but also for hunting. In addition to this trait of its body, it jets around in more extreme situations. Furthermore, in addition to blending with its environment in an attempt to defend itself from possible predators, it also does so to procure food. As an invertebrate, its shape can also change, resulting in its adaptation to places that are practically impossible and unimaginable for the conformation of the human body.

According to the crip theory, the release of these flows allow self-care. However, these flows affect their own relationships, exposing the fears of PWDs to institutions, groups and relationships (McRuer, 2006). Thus, the foray into cartography not only gives rise to a desire to continue this approach and these experiences with homeless people and health services but also implies a reorganization of the researcher himself in his cartography, not only as a chameleon researcher seeking to go unnoticed by mimicking his surroundings but also as a giant pacific octopus in a process of self-analysis, which can help him understand how his body can combine these encounters to affirm the events starting from the differentiation of the autistic way of existing.

If there is literality and cognitive rigidity in autism, each condition that breaks repetition affects it as a seismic tremor. From this, there are also reflections and aberrant creations that occur; if there is detail, there is also conciseness and objectivity.

POSSIBLE CRIP CONSIDERATIONS

These brief approximations between cartography and cripistemologies from an autistic territory point to issues that emerge from the very movements of PWDs to cripple the established norms. It is from these movements that the production of knowledge itself can enter the discussion in a way that considers the subject involved with this process.

PWDs have in cripistemologies one of several possibilities of facing existence in such a way that the difference and singularity of their bodies can be affirmed. This statement does not exclude the issues of possible treatments for issues specific to each body, such as chronic pain, movement restrictions, and verbal communication, but rather implies that these bodies are unique in terms of their potential and that ableism, in the form of compulsory able-bodiedness, contributes to the maintenance of the oppression of minority crowds.

Cartography, therefore, as this mapping shows, is an exercise in releasing the flows of desire and contributes to the extent that it does not conceive of the body or idealized relationships but rather becomes entangled in the direction of what Johnson and McRuer (2024, p. 116) call Living Cripistemology: “What does it mean to call someone living Cripistemology? One answer might be that the conditions of a person’s life repeatedly form the basis for creative interventions embodied in enabler logics”.

Finally, the *becoming-giant-Pacific-octopus* offers a unique way of expressing that interpreting someone on the autistic spectrum as “functional” often includes the capitalist mode of production in

the category of “functional.” However, to be functional is not to produce according to the demands of the state apparatus or to react in appropriate and expected ways to certain social situations or encounters but rather to function in what is valid in one’s existence and in one’s own way of existing. This necessary positive nihilism is not intended to settle on gods and suns that will be eternally “coming” and provide salvation and rehabilitation from these “misadjusted” behaviors but, in the intensity of these ways of being in the world, affirms their existence.

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