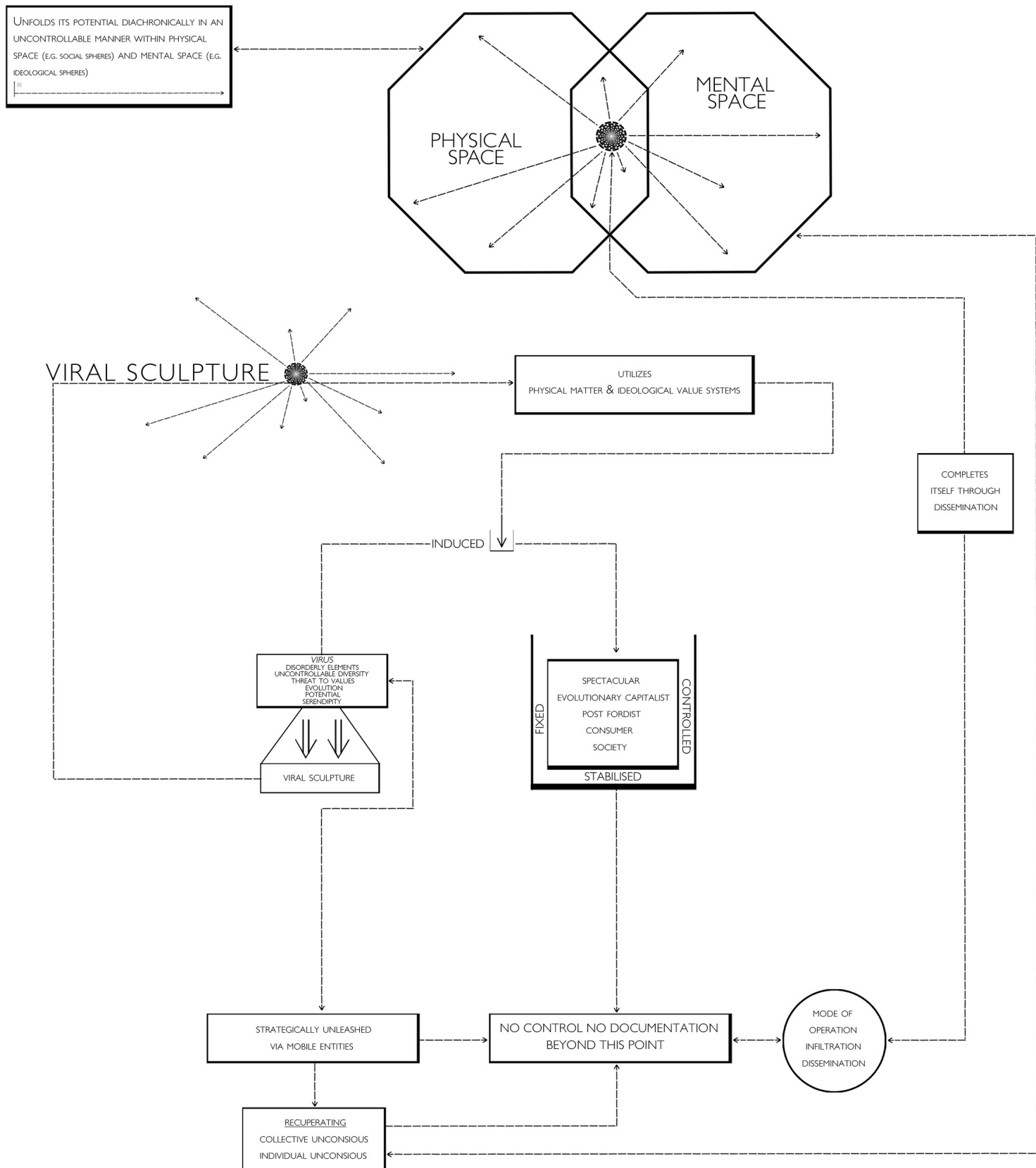


P.J.:What do you focus on especially in your interventions?

S.M.(O!L):



P.J.: Why does a part of your work focus around logos?

S.M.(O!L): The focus on logos is mainly within the framework of Viral Sculpture. There we analyze, deconstruct, challenge and draw attention to the ideological structures behind the singular logo. It is about instigating a critical debate to overcome these structures.

A logo is the visible end in a chain of generated meaning and its communication. In this sense the logo function is similar to those of seals, flags, emblems, insignia and such tools. Certainly they are not meant to generate transparency. So cannibalizing these logos is an attempt to induce transparency and to disturb the unconditional adaption of commercial information which is distributed with their means.

P.J.: Can design be a tool for rebellion and criticism? Could you say how it evolved in the past in this context?

S.M.(O!L): ‘Cannibalism alone unites us.’¹ [laughing]

Rebellion, for me, is cul-de-sac criticism. I am not interested in this concept because it is either referring to a behaviour driven by emotions and accompanied by a lack of insight, experience and reflection, or it refers to the act of open and/or violent resistance towards an established system – which then leads us exactly where in design?

In fact, I do not regard rebellion as an appropriate measure to approach the circumstances of our times as such. Let’s take the idea of *Antropofagia*, the practice of cultural cannibalism as it was initially developed in the Brazilian *Modernismo* movement in the 1920s. For the *Semana de Arte Moderna*² in Sao Paulo in 1922 Oswald de Andrade³ brought up the question of how to be modern and 'Brazilian' in art, language, architecture and tradition. This led him to publish *Cannibalist Manifesto*⁴ in 1928, his proposed method to overcome the European cultural hegemony and liberate Brazil from over 300 years of domination. *Antropofagia* in this context meant internalizing – cannibalizing – the dominant European culture together with their own Brazilian roots, becoming one again. ‘Tupi or not Tupi⁵, that is the question’ was Andrade’s cannibalisation of Hamlet. He practiced *Antropofagia* with mordacity, disrespect, parody and sarcasm.

Anyway, there are a lot of interesting ideas in it, even though here and now there is no need for us to redefine national identity in such terms; a different kind of identity is at stake today. If we regard the field of public relations⁶ especially in terms of the product, consumer, lifestyle, etc. circle as a colonization of the mind, then it is possible to distinguish a necessity to redefine our contemporary identity as humans and liberate ourselves from the hegemony of commercial culture. The concept of *Antropofagia* is to me a more subversive, constructive and open alternative to the binary concept of rebellion. Lets achieve a practice-oriented criticism to overcome our own cultural domination through cannibalizing it!

How do external factors influence designer's work?

Is there a place for accidental factors in designer's work, or is it rather work always based on observation and detailed planning?

P.J.: What kind of education have you received,
what was important,
what can bring potential damage and
how should it look like in your opinion?

S.M.(O!L):

Fine Art.

Everything.

Everything.

Better.

¹ 'Cannibalism alone unites us. Socially. Economically. Philosophically' is the starting sentence of Andrade's Cannibalist Manifesto. [See Note (4)]

² The Week of Modern or Art or Week of '22 is regarded as the starting point of the Brazilian modernist movement.

³ Oswald de Andrade was a Brazilian poet and polemicist 1890-1954.

⁴ Andrade, O. de, (1928) Manifesto antropófago. Translated from Portuguese by Leslie Bary: Cannibalist Manifesto. Latin American Literary Review, Jul. - Dec., 1991, 19 (38), pp. 38-47. English translation available online: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20119601>

⁵ (In English in original.) For Andrade, the aggressive and anthropophagic Brazilian Tupi native tribe is the root of Brazil. It is to be mentioned that it was very difficult for the first explorers of the 'new world' to assimilate the Tupinambá. The referential framework of the 'old world' was not working with them. With the Tupi the explorers discovered a world of shamans and spirits, free from any kind of religion. That, at least until the 17th century, made it extremely difficult for them to classify the Tupi. (For further information regarding this, see: Sandfür, T., (2001) Só a Antropofagia nós une: Assimilation und Differenz in der Figur des Anthropophagen. Düsseldorf: Philosophische Fakultät der Heinrich-Heine-Universität.

⁶ Conceptually started with Walter Lippmann and Edward Bernays:
Lippmann, W., (1922:2007) Public Opinion. USA: BN Publishing. and
Bernays, Edward L., (1928) Propaganda. New York: Horace Liveright.
(Bernays became the inventor of the term and practice of PR.)