

Dialogical Anthropophagy: looking at Tarsila do Amaral

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Abstract:

This paper presents a dialogic reflection on carnivalization in Tarsila do Amaral. The painting *Anthropophagy*, composed by the syncrisis of *A Negra* and *Abaporu*, in dialogue with modern aesthetics, is the *corpus*, in comparison with other works of the author-creator. Our theoretical foundation is based on the concepts of dialogism and carnivalization of the Bakhtinian studies, mobilized together with verbivocovisual analytical description. Our aim is to reflect on the constitution(s) of identity(ies) through alterity(ies), that is, how much the voice of the other constitutes the voice of the self, composed of a clash that, in the case of Tarsila, constitutes the stylistic trait of her aesthetics, of an artistic identity and an image of Brazil. The relevance is related to the reflection on these conceptions, at a moment of resistances, ruptures and confirmations of traditions, such as the one experienced at the beginning of the last century, although used in another way, since being another historical time. The idea of nationality, of Brazilianness, of the self-other, internal-external, proper-alien rises brighter, as does the urgency to think of another-identity/otherness, heterogeneous, special, responsive and responsible, in the discursive link that constitutes a new-old era and this is the ethical proposal of this work.

Keywords:

Anthropophagy. Dialogism. Tarsila do Amaral.

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INTRODUCTION

In this work, we propose a reflection on the ambivalence of Tarsila's works, especially on the anthropophagic carnivalization that breaks with the tradition from where the artist appears as a painter, influenced by the Parisian cosmopolitan avant-garde. We focus on the framework that named a Brazilian identity movement: *Antropofagia*. Considering Bakhtinian studies, we sought to understand the cultural movement that constitutes Tarsila's subversion in her stylistic verbivocovisual¹ traits (strong colors, rounded shapes in harmony with right angles, sounds in expressions and verbliness expressed in the titles of the works). The structure of this text is constituted by a theoretical discussion and growing analysis of *A Negra*, *Abaporu* and *Antropofagia* (composed by *A Negra* and *Abaporu* interwoven). The Brazil of Mário de Andrade's (2016) *Macunaíma*, who is born big, miscegenated and stolen by the giant, is anthropophagically constituted in Tarsila.

Transforming the lounges of the art galleries in open halls, agoras, with thematic works and subject representations not allowed or frowned upon, is a form of subversion, since it reverses hierarchies by bring up social issues and subordinated and exhorted

¹ The notion of verbivocovisuality has been developed by Paula since 2014 and deepened in her ongoing research project (2017a). Some first results have started to be published (PAULA, 2017b; PAULA; SERNI, 2017; PAULA; LUCIANO, 2020a), with others in press (PAULA; LUCIANO, 2020b, 2020c). This conception does not appear, with this nomenclature, in Bakhtinian works, but as the Circle does when mobilizing conceptions from one field to another (from music, physics or biology to the studies of language, cases, respectively, of polyphony, tone, voice, rhythm, centripetal and centrifugal forces and living organisms, for example), Paula, in the wake of other researchers (like Brait with the composition of the verb-visual binomial), takes the term *verbivocovisual* from literature (used by the Noigandres group, based on Joyce, also in another context, to conceptualize concrete poetry in its maximum potency) as a metaphor for the Bakhtinian conception of language, as she understands that the notion that comes from the Circle predicts what she calls the three-dimensionality of language as mental potential (what Bakhtin (2000) designates as "the potential language of languages") instilled in the ideological sign (as signifier/acoustic image, signified/abstract concept and socio-cultural valuation or, if we want to call Hjelmslev, expression plane and content plane with form and substance of each one unfolding), materially expressed depending on the architectural saying project of the author-creator of a given utterance (verbal, visual, musical or syncretic). From this point of view, every utterance is verbivocovisual, as the verbal itself already contains a vocal/musical intonation expression and refers to a referent image, alive in the world. We analyzed Tarsila's paintings in their explicit imagery and verbal composition, without forgetting the vocal social intonation that constitutes them.

subjects. Transforming the space of a bourgeois group (its I) in the central space of others who do not circulate there, as central characters of the scene, means dethrone kings and conceive the tradition of a Brazil that, to date, has not the opportunity of being fulfilled and worthily itself, its other. Thus, denouncing the existence of social and economic (class), race and gender differences breaks paradigms.

First generation anthropophagy, developed by Mario and Oswald de Andrade from Tarsila's painting, syncretizes what she miscegenates in the canvas. *A Negra* and *Abaporu* entwined under the blue sky illuminated by a slice of orange and on cacti and tropical (banana) foliage. Both with bodies of deformed proportions (small head and breast and gigantic foot), yellow (whitened), in the foreground, almost like a puerile drawing, they reflect and refract the birth of a still young nation which is rediscovering itself (not by chance, *Macunaíma* is from the same period). An identity born great, composed by the miscegenation between races, genders and classes. The no longer indigenous Brazilian, the Brazilian black-white-Abaporu Tarsila, metonymic, metaphorical and metalinguistically portraits and self-portraits of herself by her others, of an art other than her own and of Brazil no longer virgin, but nation of mixture in digestion, *Antropofagia*.

However, this anthropophagy is not democratic and free, as it is hierarchical, abusive, exploitative, racist, as the painter denounces, even though her work seems naive, with tones of primary colors also mixed (blue with yellow and green) and simple strokes. The explosion of criticism occurs through the emphasis on the subjects that set the canvas, in the foreground. The slaves occupy the mansion. Just because they exist in this space (canvas, art gallery, unequal Brazil), *A Negra* and *Abaporu* intertwined already resignify everything, as they reveal a retrograde modernism, a colony country (with the same predominant mentality until today, practically a century after Tarsila's aesthetics) that is reborn backwards, because it enslaves its people and explore the riches of its forests and towns, a country portrayed, often for export (and exploitation), as a paradisiac nation, inhabited by a "cordial" people, inhabited by beautiful women-objects, where "just by planting, everything grows", "country of the future" that does not arrive, since it does not admit the dignity of the heterogeneity that constitutes it.

This analysis is based on the Bakhtinian conceptions of carnivalization, dialogue, identity/otherness and ideological sign. We start from the premise, also Bakhtinian, that art reflects and refracts life with a certain aesthetic-ethical finish. By considering the notion of utterance for the Circle (VOLOCHINOV, 2013, 2017; MEDVIEDEV, 2012; BAKHTIN, 2000), we think that, since there is only one Russian designation for enunciation and utterance, this conception has the dual function of process and product. That is, in other languages it corresponds to speech and text, respectively. Enunciation and utterance designated by the same Russian term leads us to understand that discourse (enunciation) does not materialize in text (utterance), but is the text itself. Process and product together and at issue, which makes us understand why the Bakhtinian Circle

considers the utterance as a link in the discursive chain, since the social, historical and cultural process is connected to the retrospective and prospective memory (born as response and pregnant of response); and singular act, since unique in a given space-time situation with the subjects that compose it, always, in a situated way. In addition, every utterance is generic, as it is produced, circulates and is received in a sphere of activities, consisting of specific marks. In this sense, both the utterance and the genre² are characterized by their thematic content, their compositional form and their style (authorial and generic). Finally, every utterance is dialogic (responsive and responsible) to another utterance located in the small and the big time, as well as it marks an authorial voice, always social. Based on this complexity, we analyze Tarsila's anthropophagic aesthetics.

BAKHTINIAN CARNIVALIZATION: ANTHROPOPHAGIC DIALOGUE

The Bakhtinian carnivalization process (2008) concerns the relationship between cultures (popular and non-popular), subjects and societies. The term *narodnyi* means not only “people”, “persons”, but also “state”, “nation”. Hence, the ambivalence of carnival: a clash between the oppressed and the oppressor, “unofficial” and official, low and high, inversion of visibility and importance, family life, in the streets and squares. Carnivalization of Tarsila's anthropophagy is based on dialogic contradiction: *A Negra*, thus named – with the adjective used as a proper noun – in which the color, in fact, the race, names the unnamed subject and the artist's own painting. The adjective marks who is and what is at the center of the scene. On the one hand, it turns visible a being erased historically and marks the position of the author-creator, who brings this subject to light and puts it unique in the painting, with gigantic dimensions that take up practically the entire space. On the other hand, this subject, thus named, is restricted to its color/ethnicity, therefore, it remains objectified: it is not a being, but a thing: its race, “A Negra”, marked by the definite article, which specifies and singularizes the subject – after all, it is not just any black woman. If this, on the one hand, catches the eye and screams the erasure of that being that iconizes its people, even with its feminine uniqueness, with its features, face, body, etc., on the other, it remains without identity, because without a proper name, called by its blackness. The title of the painting explains the valuation of the author-creator who brings to light those who have never been in the center of the painting before and this marks the critical voice that takes this being/people out of the

² The discursive genre (BAKHTIN, 2016) is an utterance (every utterance is characterized as a generic utterance) constituted in the spheres of activity (in use, as a responsive and responsible act). Exactly because there is no separation between the activities of these Bakhtinian notions (even though they have their peculiarities which are not possible to explain here, since it is not the objective of this article), we emphasize that both have coincidences of three characteristics: the thematic content, the compositional form and the style (authorial and generic). After all, the project of saying by an author-creator materializes in an utterance that, in turn, materializes in a discursive genre and, therefore, shares its architectural composition, just as it can also change it, since the genre is “relatively stable”.

kitchen as a criticism and a mark of Brazilianness, while also demonstrating that this subject can appear when another, white and rich, allows this to be done, when the lady of the plantation, the *sinhá*, calls the black slave-woman to be seen as her other, as we shall see in the relationship with *Autorretrato ou Le manteau rouge*; thus, it also marks the hierarchy between these subjects – author-creator and aesthetic object-subject. These women, even though of the same gender, as they belong to different social classes and ethnicities, have different voices and power of adhesion – miscegenated with Abaporu (“the man who eats”, without a definite article. Man in the sense of being human, without a generic mark, without definition of sexuality and with the anthropophagic identity of transformation, carried out by cultural interaction with the other – metaphorized self-portrait: the self as an, aesthetic-ethical, other), intertwined (not for nothing is it the breast of *A Negra* that stands out – the wet nurse, the provider of the *sinhá* and her children, the woman-object bed-and-table of the master – while Abaporu’s feet is what enlarge him – the barefoot man, coming from the earth, planted on the ground, as Oswald says, with a small head).

Tarsila’s Anthropophagy is classist, generic and interracial. If, on the one hand, the author resignifies the notion of the canonical portrait (before, turned to important figures of society) by putting two subjects representative of the people as mark of Brazilianness and nation; on the other hand, these subjects (black and indigenous like her other self-portraits) express typical contradictions of a society marked by a tradition that denounces the ambivalence of Tarsila herself (her origins of Brazilian high rural class and her choice of life, according to modernist values, influenced by the vanguards). The dethronement takes place in conflict, in the dialogical game of contradictory opposites. As Paula and Stafuzza (2010, p. 134) explain about the carnivalization process studied by Bakhtin:

The dialogical debate between these two worlds reflects and refracts the conservative and homogenizing values of the ‘official’ world through the voice-action of the ‘unofficial’. The communication between these two coexisting worlds reflects languages, cultures and societies that coexist and dialogue: the interaction between the ‘official’ and the ‘unofficial’ world reveals dialogue as a clash between forces-spheres, genders, languages, ideologies and voices, between I-other, space-time. (PAULA; STAFUZZA, 2010, p. 134).

Still according to the authors,

Thus, dealing with culture in its general conception (inclusive carnivalesque culture) requires thinking on the dialogue (in the Bakhtinian sense of the term, of collaboration and conflict) existing between social groups. As Paula, Figueiredo and Azevedo (2009), we think of culture from the point of view of its movement, which means thinking of culture, as stated by Bakhtin (1987), as circular: cultural circularity, which occurs in the spheres of activities, intrinsically related (and almost confused) with the formation and transformation of discursive genres (without which, there is also no language, in the Bakhtinian sense of the term). (PAULA; STAFUZZA, 2010, p. 135).

Thinking about the relationship between cultures, social groups and cultural events puts the carnivalesque dialogue into play as an ambivalent circular struggle in the midst of gladiators. According to these scholars, the concept of circularity presupposes that

elements of popular culture interact and compose the so-called erudite culture, as well as elements of the so-called official culture are found in popular culture. Circularity means, in short, cultural interaction, reciprocal influence between the popular and the non-popular, the official and the unofficial, the serious and the comic, given the imprecision of their relations, which suggests permeability/circularity between the spheres of activities and cultural manifestations, without blending them – after all, it is not because the popular inhabits certain social spheres that it automatically becomes official. Just as genres are interrelated, so are socio-cultural spheres, but they do not blend, because they have their peculiarities: specific subjects, spaces and times. In short, from the point of view of cultural circularity, according to Bakhtin (1987), cultures move in several directions and establish incessant interactions, determined by specific historical realities. In addition, cultures are not pure and secularized. On the contrary. They are constantly changing while remaining in defined spaces and times (as relatively stable – such as discourse genres). (PAULA; STAFUZZA, 2010, p. 136).

The fact that Tarsila brings *A Negra* and *Abaporu* to portray what she perceives to be *Antropofagia*, as the mark of miscegenated Brazilianness, as a circular clash between cultures and subjects, does not transform the art gallery and other places in the public square and it does not strip her of the act of greatness of speaking up for who never had voice and visibility (although, again, on her paintings as – aesthetic – object). Ambivalence also marks the culture of a country formerly a colony of exploitation with the *Tupiniquim* stray dog syndrome drooling for the metropolis and trying to be part of it. Showing that the country is not white, European or North Americanized, that it has been and is sacked by giants who steal our wealth and exploit our land and our people by bringing these subjects to the light of her paintings is an act of recognition of their importance, albeit marked, this relevance, by the voice of authority of the upper class – in this case, by a white artist, from a traditional social group.

This author-creator reflects and refracts her history as part of Brazilian history and presents the contradictions of this nation both in a metalinguistic, metaphorical and metonymic way, and as an author. Ambivalence, in transformative digestion, governs the anthropophagic dialogue that constitutes the nation-being and that is what appears latent with Tarsila's Anthropophagy: the relevance of contradictions as a human compositional element. Faced with this dialogical ambivalence, we enter Tarsila's works to reflect on her *Antropofagia* as a Brazilian worldview of Bakhtinian carnivalization, not utopian, but as a constitutive contradiction of our being.

TARSILA'S *A NEGRA*

A Negra (1923), by Tarsila, is impregnated with the cubism and primitivism of

the avant-garde that influence the author-creator, especially in this phase of her aesthetics. This painting goes back to a slave-like Brazil and, in this sense, Tarsila bringing the slave quarters to the art gallery as another portrait of herself, as will be seen in the relationship with the painting *Autorretrato ou Le manteau rouge*, produced in the same year and with common elements (the hand position of the two subjects in the two canvases), means to invert the order of the world, since *A Negra* would be a mirror of herself, her “negative” (term of photography), her reflection and refraction. This inversion performed by Tarsila is significant, especially, when we consider the context of the work’s production, as Capivari (city of the artist) was one of the last cities to abolish slavery and the Amaral family was one of the big landowners at the time. Thus, an Amaral being an artist meant a subversion against tradition and the hypocritical religious conservatism of the period, even more so, in a rural city in the State of São Paulo. This “black sheep” Amaral painting a naked black giant, like a wet nurse with immeasurable breasts, on the whole canvas, like a mirror of herself (of her identity), is, on the one hand, an act of rebellion, because it marks her axiological position and reveals the hypocrisy of exploitation and social inequality. The contradiction of the images, placed side by side, also reveals, on the other hand, despite the centrality and visibility given to *A Negra* (no name, called allegorically by her race), prejudices and hierarchies, as we can see:

The fact that a woman is the object painted by a woman is very expressive. The painted Brazil born of a wet nurse. Therefore, one of the breasts on display, giant, in the foreground. That is, also, what explains the gender of the subject of the picture who, without this, would become asexual, given the marks common with a black person in the rest of the body. This breast, which has fallen so much from feeding the sons of the plantation of the *Sinhá*, represents the country’s provider: the black female labor force of that time. Working hand, as marked in this element (hand) of the painting, unlike the hand of Tarsila’s self-portrait, that, despite being in the same position, is more delicate, a hand from someone from another social class – a white Brazilian-European (French) woman –, which is marked by the predominant colors of the canvas (red and blue, which can refer to the French flag), as well as in the makeup, hair and luxurious coat, used at a dinner in honor of Santos Dumont, in Paris, signed by Jean Patou, a modernist who tried to free the female body from the corsets of that time.

At the same time that the black woman (another/alter) symbolizes part of the constitution of Tarsila’s identity, created by slaves, divine wet nurses, with their Afro popular cultures, the hierarchy between their social classes distinguishes them by the characterization of each subject, in each work. *A Negra* is painted with traces that refer to the colonial and authorial past, given the possible iconographic origin of the model that rises from life to art, to the painting, as an aesthetic subject-object – a subject, because it is another version of the author-person; an object because it is an allegory of the author-creator (and) of Brazil.



Source: Tarsila do Amaral's travel album

Figure 1 – Family employee



Source: MAC-USP.

Available at: <http://bit.ly/2FeLrrdTA23>

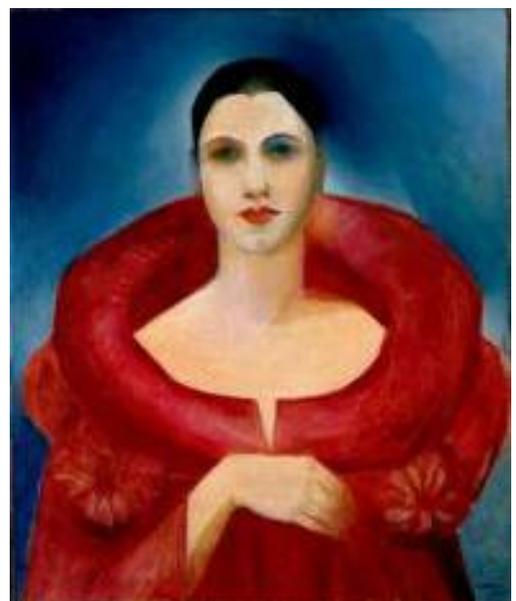
Figure 2 – *A Negra* (1923)



Painted wooden sculpture, 19th century, Bahia.

Source: Private collection, SP. (*In Araújo, 1988, p. 188*).

Figure 3 – Iemanjá



Source: MNAB.

Available at: <http://bit.ly/3kd4IIdTA23a>

Figure 4 – *Self-portrait or Le manteau rouge*

Likewise, concurrently, the painting presents cubist and primitive aspects that reveal the contradictory ambivalence of the visibility of Tarsila-the black woman. After all, in a slave system, what is a black woman for? To provide more slaves, to feed and care for the children of the *sinhá*, to do house chores and satisfy the master's sexual desires. Everything out of obligation, since she is understood as an object to be used and not as a person. The primitivism of the black woman's bodily traces refers to that Brazilian colonial slave past, while the cubism of the canvas refers to the Parisian avant-garde, where the painting was produced, when Tarsila had classes with Fernand Lèger, as well as the colors of her self-portrait, which reveal a high-class, avant-garde, delicate and Parisian Tarsila. In other words, while the black woman-Tarsila refers to the Afro popular culture that constitutes the miscegenated Brazilianness of the Brazilian author-creator, the self-portrait produced in the same year reveals a Brazilian-European (French-Parisian) Tarsila, immersed in the white culture of her social class. Not coincidentally, in *Antropofagia*, the black woman changes color and her raciality is erased when mixing with Abaporu.

Raciality, gender and the social group as marks of Brazilianness reveal the valuing point of view of the artist who explains her authorial creative vision to affirm the country's identity from another's (woman, black, slave) point of view, different from herself (woman, white, Brazilian high social class). An explored other one, historically erased, used as an object (domestic, maternal, sexual and aesthetic), without a voice or prospects. In addition to the coloring (predominantly earthy-brown) and the title of the painting, the mouth, painted with exaggerated size, is one of the features that marks the black woman's raciality, as well as her nose. Although large, that mouth is closed, with its thick crooked lips turned downwards, which shows sadness, tiredness, sacrifice and lack of voice. This black woman that some critics consider to be an employee of the Amaral family, refers to the times of slavery of a former colony of exploitation country and to the late abolition of the nation, as well as expressing the author's view about these questions. The painting portrays an image of blackness, womanhood and Brazil. The painting presents itself, as highlighted by Volóchinov (2013, 2017), Medvedev (2012) and Bakhtin (2000) on the utterance, as an ideological sign, based on life, with an aesthetic finish.

The mirrored contradiction is described by Eulálio as follows:

The living model proposed in an indifferent nude pose will be transfigured with complete dramatism. And her Negra overflows monumentalized in the spirit of traditional African statuary, in a free stylization in which expressive vigor and majestic hieraticism are underlined with all emphasis. [...] The ritual figure of the mediating ancestor, seated on the floor as if in a throne, legs crossed, performed with the expressionist presence a plunge into the unconscious. Rediscovering deep inside herself the black dresses of her South American childhood as a planter's daughter, she agrees to demystify the paternalistic fabric, all bad conscience, of the official black mothers, and undresses them in a loving gesture that is pure daring both at the form as at the content level (2001, p. 104).

A Negra goes from being the portrait of a slave as a source of support for the author-person-creator becoming an archetype. Without leaving the marks of slavery, the dialogue with the sculpture of the black Iemanjá, from Bahia, made in the 19th century, with bare breasts, also elongated, with her legs crossed and her small head, refers to the goddess of the seas, to African religion and culture, which represents the people, the fertility deity, the seas, considered the mother of all Orixás, which originates all. The black-goddess-mother of the (new) world inaugurates another birth of a, modern (avant-garde), nation, without leaving its primitive origins (of a slave colony, full of social inequalities, prejudices and discrimination). According to Araújo (1988, p. 188), in Brazil, Iemanjá established herself as the most popular deity among the Orixás, celebrated at the most diverse parties and popular rites, present in songs, literary and religious texts. She also represents a syncretism of races. In the Northeast, she symbolizes the seduction of the mermaid of the seas, who has a dual role: a mother who loves and protects men from the seas (fishermen, etc.) and a lover who, when she wants a man, kills him to relate to him at the bottom of the sea, which brings us back to Tethys, in Greek mythology. In this sense, Tarsila's black woman, due to her proximity to the mentioned sculpture, becomes a goddess. An Afro-Brazilian archetype, icon of a popular, black and female Brazil

The compositional form of *A Negra* thematizes the content of the painting, marked by the author's style. Style and form give the finishing aesthetics to the pictorial enunciation, always generic. Focusing on two parts (upper and lower), we analyze, from the elements that constitute the subject-painting (enclosed), some reflections and social refractions of Tarsila's enunciative aesthetic composition.

In the upper part, elements of Cubism appear: the horizontal lines in earthy tones and the slanted banana leaf, crossing the canvas, make up the background of the painting, its setting. The banana leaf, a typically tropical and, even more, Brazilian trait, in the way it is arranged on the painting, carnivalizes the scene, as it crosses the earthy horizontal modern and abstract harmony, leaves the ground (supporting the black woman, since she is sitting on it) and overlaps the abstract lines. Brazil, marginal, marked by the leaf of an eccentric fruit, a country still in transition (from rural to urban), with the head (bald, with small eyes, the wide nose and fleshy and closed mouth highlighted) of an exploited and voiceless subject which also supports the functioning of the country, and deified as an African-Brazilian primitive Orixá, miscegenates with the European avant-gardes' abstract modernity, semiotized by the horizontal lines. This "strange" element cuts the painting's linearity, acknowledges, by strangeness (for European modernism) and familiarity (Brazilian), in its cultural and social I-other relation (individuals and nations), an image of Brazilianness.

The coexistence of cultures leads to what, in *Antropofagia*, occurs between *A Negra* and *Abaporu*: the amorous intertwining as a way of penetrating each other, forming

a third that is constituted of the former two. Neither one nor the other, but both in one, in a different being-culture. And this metaphorical idea of cultural cannibalism, marked by devouring, digestion and the stomach, composes the notion of anthropophagy developed by Oswald in the first dentition, inspired by Tarsila.

This painting of Tarsila dialogues with Paul Klee's *Angelus Novus*³ (1920), with its head disproportionate to the body, materializing what Bakhtin (2008) calls "lower bodily stratum" as a way of inverting rational logic. The gigantic body of the black woman on the bottom of the painting, with legs, hand, arms, and enormous torso and breast as opposed to the small head at the top of the picture expresses the body as carnivalizing/carnivalized element of hegemonic rationality.

Benjamin (1987), in his essay "On the concept of History" uses Klee's new angel drawing to explain the role of history (look back in order to not forget the lived events while going to the future, with the awareness of that experience). The illustration that makes us think of the dialogue with *A Negra* is exactly the opposite valuation in terms of head and body proportions, since, while Klee's angel has a large head with a small body, marking the importance of the mental at the expense of the corporeal features, Tarsila's *Negra* has a small head on a gigantic body, with emphasis on her sexuality and motherhood expressed by the breast, which reveals a reversal of expressiveness and valuation as a way to introduce the world inside-out: rationality gives way to the suppressed flesh, to sex, to the emotional-volitional sense of passions, diminished in the world of mental and Christian logic. This disproportion is further evidenced by the space taken in the painting, as the above is much smaller than the below, this below that turns gigantic, that is, the slavery of black women and their Afro culture who leave the slave quarters and under the hidden altars to occupy the canvasses in the mansions of art galleries as a representation of an anthropophagic Brazil because they support it. A carnivalesque valuation expressed by Tarsila, this white upper-class woman created by blackness, dressed in Parisian nuances (as she self-portraits herself).

Also, unlike Klee's angel, Tarsila's black woman stares at us. This act marks the extent to which the black women who carry the country are erased and devalued. In addition to being placed in giant proportions on the painting, she looks directly at the viewer (us) with her head up. Although with her mouth closed, fallen and askew, Tarsila's black slave-goddess fears nothing. Tarsila introduces us to the historical exploitation framework suffered by this woman, by this social group. She denounces the hypocrisy when painting a black woman who presents herself to us, from the front, eye to eye, as if to tell us with her eyes "I exist and I am here". The eyes stare at us, small and tilted upwards, in an expression of defiance, even though the suffering mouth is silent. The eyes speak to us. They scream their existence and, in a way, their pain and donation –

³ Drawing available at: <http://bit.ly/3iw6mEANPK>.

which reminds us Macabeia, in *A Hora da Estrela* (2017): “*eu me doo o tempo todo*” (first person of both the verb to hurt and the verb to give in Portuguese: I give/hurt myself all the time”).

Uncovered and in large proportions, the female body in a male sexist country, known for the exploitation of these subjects in an objectified way, specifically, for its servile sexuality (the exploitation of prostitution, including of children, as a “passport” for foreigners who see Brazil as a paradisiacal place and in which the explorers paradise includes women as something to be consumed) is another trait of criticism of this hypocritical patriarchal society that stands out as democratic and apparently open with regard to the body, even when, today, in the 21st century, we live a strong conservative and traditional, religious and xenophobic wave that oppresses both women and men in the name of a supposed God and a (false) Christian morality, placed as “good” and “right”.

Gigantism is a technique widely applied in Tarsila’s anthropophagic works and synthesizes the opposition between body and mind. The critical discourse of her work also responds to the discourses of eugenics, which Francis Galton (1865) turned scientific, and which were employed as social prophylaxis by several nations, including the most genocidal racial cleansing policy undertaken by the Nazis. The eugenicist discourse – in which “agents under social control can improve or impoverish the racial qualities of the future generations either physically or mentally” – legitimized the discourse of “pure race” as opposed to “sub-races”, aligned to the slavery processes and the expropriation and exploitation of Africa and South America. For the followers of eugenicism, the “inferior” races would have a reduced intellect and their usefulness in the social hierarchy would be only physical, which is used as an alibi for the exploitation of entire social groups and, in the case of women, in addition to the exploitation of domestic work, motherhood and sexuality, which is latent in *A Negra*, due to the large breast on display, in the foreground, as a mark of her gender, her femininity, her sexuality, her being, her existence, her abuse (and, for eugenicists, her usefulness). In this relation, the features of subversion reflect and refract exclusionary discourses, by bringing to light elements that re-present this subject (black woman) from the front, as criticism of the author-creator (also a woman, white and upper-class), as her mirror, given the creation (function of the wet nurse in the slave society) to the patriarchy, which diminishes and erases women by exploiting them as bodies of small minds. Body is the characteristic that, until today, sums up the woman, her beauty (not considered in her diversity, but as a standard, in general, idealized and unattainable) and that is not the case of *A Negra*’s body.

The giant body of *A Negra* is ambivalent, because, while it responds to eugenics, it reveals the empowerment of subjects that, when invisible, become bigger. The body, which is matter of exploitation and abuse, of women in slavery (to date, not just black women and in the slave system, for sexual servitude is still active and stimulated), is also

her power, since it escapes the hypocrite shackles of the repression of Christian morals that, even today, burn/condemn women who “dare” to live their autonomy and be free, with their bodies and minds, from the same size, in whatever way they want (or, as it has become *non sense*: “my body, my rules”).

Gigantism takes on a dual function. When it comes to the subversion of the imposed rational logical order, the body of *A Negra* contrasts with the artistic scope of a classical image of the female body, since the work does not represent the classic stereotype of beauty, either by its color, either by its size (all the disproportionalities of her body) or by the forms expressed as they are (the breast on display is not a hard breast, but fallen/used/explored). The negation towards classicism is reinforced. Big feet and a large hand, the body that closes itself between the crossed legs (which refers to the denial of the so abusive and never consented exploitation) and the breast on the arm, reaching the leg, in the foreground, as the first element of the painting (the femininity that draws the attention, as the first trait seen in a woman who, in *A Negra*, represents two types of exploitation: sexual and the servitude of the wet nurse, who nourishes the society that exploits her), almost at the center, in a way, anchoring the utterance in the construction of the grotesque body, as understood by Bakhtin (2008, p. 23):

In opposition to modern canons, the grotesque body is not separated from the rest of the world, it is not isolated, finished or perfect, but it surpasses itself, it goes beyond its own limits. Emphasis is placed on the parts of the body in which it opens up to the outside world, that is, where the world enters it or leaves it or it itself goes out into the world, through holes, protuberances, ramifications and outgrowths.

The large fallen breast that occupies almost the entire centrality of the painting draws attention to the deformity of the classic, idealized body, and brings forward another construction of the beautiful and of beauty – a rupture confirmed in *Abaporu* and *Antropofagia*, as analyzed in this paper. According to Bakhtin (2008), one of the traces of grotesque realism is the downgrade to the bodily plan and this construction explores not only the relation between life and death, but also the fusion of these elements, aligned to the fusion of *A Negra* with the ground on which she is sitting (on the banana leaf that crosses the painting, as already stated), in a chromatic tone on tone between the sandy ground and her brown, earthy, skin. The ground rises, as well as her body becomes gigantic in reverse to the sublime abstract sky and the rational logic of her small head.

A Negra who refuses to be violated (sexual object) gives life (motherhood is what stands out, on display) and sustains/feeds Brazilianness in Tarsila’s creations, with its apex, as we will see, in *Antropofagia*, in which she resumes what is already in the painting here analyzed, in another way, since interlaced with *Abaporu*, which we will examine below. *A Negra* being the first painting of the painter’s anthropophagic phase,

we see it as an uterine begin for the following works, establishing a discursive chain of re-affirmation responsive to the idea of modernist Brazilianness. In this sense, Tarsila anthropophagy approaches Bakhtinian dialogism, as we analyze here.

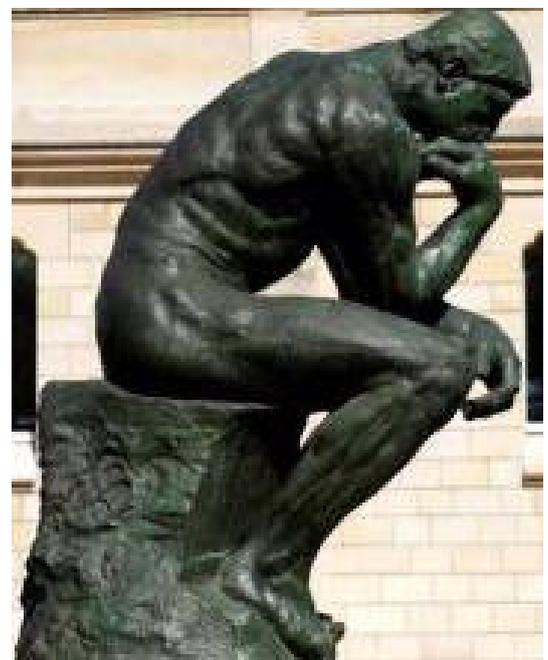
ANTHROPOPHAGIC-DIALOGIC THINKER: *ABAPORU-CANNIBAL-TARSILA*

Abaporu (1928) is one the of the best-known works of the Brazilian modernist period. It represents anthropophagy as an artistic, philosophical and social expression. Tarsila creates this work using cubist techniques and reaffirms her style, with a typical architectural aesthetic finish. In her production, she performs valuation acts ordered by her social constitution:



Source: <http://bit.ly/33lwD1LTA28>

Figure 5 – *Abaporu* (1928)



Source: <http://bit.ly/3bTVXjyAR03>

Figure 6 – *The Thinker* (1903)

The context of its creation is the peak of the 1920s, before the crises and the wars. *Abaporu* is not just a subject, it is something else, different from a seated human,

since it is the representation of the transformation of one culture into another, not in a direct way. *Abaporu* was the name given by Tarsila, inspired by the idea of anthropophagy, taken from a Tupi-Guarani dictionary, “aba” and “poru” together mean “man who eats”. This name and this painting enhance Tarsila’s anthropophagic ideals, created, by Oswald, in the *Manifesto Antropófago*. In the first number of the *Revista de Antropofagia*, Oswald presents the conceptualization of anthropophagy, inspired by Tarsila’s work, when writing that

Only ANTHROPOPHAGY unites us. Socially. Economically. Philosophically. Only law in the world. Masked expression of all individualisms, of all collectivisms. Of all religions. Of all peace treaties. *Tupi, or not Tupi* that is the question. Against all catecheses. And against the mother of the Gracos. I am only interested in what is not mine. Law of man. Law of the anthropophagite (ANDRADE, 1928).

The masks that Oswald mentions refer to *Abaporu*, which he called “the man planted in the ground”, the cannibal that devours culture and reinvents it. Tarsila’s niece, who has the same name but is known as Tarsilinha, holder of the painter’s copyright, states in her book *Abaporu, uma obra de amor* (2015): “the painting ended up becoming a symbol of everything that modernism wanted to say. Anthropophagy, in the sense of absorbing European culture, dominant at the time, and transforming it into something national, all of this was synthesized with *Abaporu*.” (AMARAL, 2015, p. 12).

Also known as the “Faceless Human”, Tarsila’s painting represents the one that does not have identity yet (because the face of the *Abaporu* is not clear) and can, therefore, take on other faces, in interaction with other subjects and cultures, in a dialogical-anthropophagic process, appropriating itself of the other’s culture and creating its own, with resignified techniques, aesthetics and ethics. The concept of grotesque, as is treated by Bakhtin (2008), can be introduced by means of misshapen/disproportionate bodies that break with the aesthetic order and the cosmic hierarchy. The grotesque is assumed by the need for renovation, as a subversive force:

Necessity presents itself at a certain moment as something serious, unconditional and imperative. But historically, the ideas of necessity are always relative and versatile. Laughter and the carnival view of the world, which are at the base of the grotesque, destroy unilateral seriousness and the pretensions of unconditional and timeless significance and liberate human consciousness, thought and imagination, which are thus available for the development of new possibilities (p. 43).

The rupture semiotized by the grotesque body of the *Abaporu* is the driving discourse to reflection and criticality to the hitherto art models experienced in Brazil, an ode to renewing the classical techniques and redefining them in the production of new art forms, aesthetics, philosophies and society. The seriousness deposited by the stylistic

traits of Tarsila breaks with the traditional canon and establishes a new movement, driven by anthropophagic carnivalization grounded in the grotesque of corporal disproportions (enlargement of the “lower bodily stratum” and diminution of traditional logic, with the focus on the lower part of the canvas and a bottom-up construction of the subject), in the non-marking of the subject’s gender (there are two canonical interpretations on this painting: that of Oswald, anthropophagic; and that of Tarsilinha, which we will deal with later, revealing *Abaporu* to be a self-portrait of Tarsila, naked, made as a gift for Oswald), and in the inversion of the upper for the below.

Dialogism, which constitutes identity by otherness in anthropophagic discourse, is evidenced in manifestos and poems. In response to the *Abaporu*, Oswald produces. The historical and social construct of this relationship allows the reformulation and the scope of these discourses between the modernists, which reverberates in works and artists, as in the iconic Mário de Andrade’s *Macunaíma* (2016).

Tarsilinha (AMARAL, 2015, p. 44) presents, through the studies she did with her family, based on evidence of her great-aunt’s places, objects, stories and writings, another interpretation possibility for the painting: that it has been elaborated as a self-portrait (stylistic feature of the painter), naked, made by means of a mirror (same strategy as Frida) as a present for her husband:

The reflection, distorted due to the tilted position of the mirror, stirred the artist’s imagination. It was a snap. She knew how to perceive poetry in the details, she had this keen artistic flair for those who do not see the obvious in things, but go further. Tarsila saw in the scene an opportunity for creation. In the mirror, the artist’s head appeared very small. The foot, giant. Her eyes of painter were enchanted by that unusual, different and, for this very reason, interesting vision. Tarsila must have spent a lot of time watching herself. Hours, maybe. The immense foot... The head, tiny... The mouth and eyes almost disappearing, the hand lying beside the big foot... What a different figure! That image seemed provocative, daring, perfect, good-natured. It was engraved on her retina, glued to her thoughts. It became an insistent obsession. (AMARAL, 2015, p. 44).

Another indication of the reading of the work done by Tarsilinha, among many others, is anatomical: Tarsila’s second toe, like the subject of the painting, was bigger than her big toe.

In the same manner as in *A Negra*, gender explicitation in the stylistic figurativization of the subjects of some of Tarsila’s works occurs when necessary to mark the axiological position of the author-creator (in the case of *A Negra*, evident by the presence of the defined article and by the gender morpheme in the title of the work, as well as by the exposed breast). Other than that, the characterizations of the subjects do not distinguish men or women by their bodies, produced exactly by the same traits, which, on the one hand, denotes equality among beings and, on the other, in the case of *Abaporu* (without any corporal mark nor any determinant), undefines the subject’s

gender and sexuality. This allows the pertinence of both Oswald's anthropophagic (cannibal man) and Tarsilinha's (Tarsila's self-portrait) readings. Who said, by the way, that the anthropophagic man is necessarily a male? Mystery, a trait that also marks Tarsila's style with regard to sexuality, appears in the same way in both pictures and, as we will see later, in *Antropofagia*: the genitalia hidden by the legs, crossed in *A Negra* (and in *Antropofagia*), bent and disproportionate to the rest of the subject's body in *Abaporu*.

The body, in Tarsila, as we have already said, while is explicated in a deformed way and valued for its monstrous proportions, has also its private parts preserved. If, on the one hand, this equates the subjects (man and woman, indefinite and indistinct – in the case of *Abaporu*, this is also marked by the face, unrecognizable), on the other, it reflects and refracts religiosity and the moral Christian tradition, that makes up the imaginary (and another aesthetic phase⁴) of the artist.

The subject-object relationship, the hierarchy (class) and the race are relevant marks of the criticism to the sexual exploitation of the black woman (another other of the artist), for, in that painting, the artist exposes the breast (gender and sexuality) of the black woman, while she shows herself, in the *Autorretrato* with a coat that covers her body, in the same way that, as self-portrayed man-cannibal, *Abaporu*, although becoming an object, through a metalinguistic act of exotopically looking on herself, unfolded in another of herself (other-I), Tarsila preserves herself by covering part of her body with the position that depicts and undefines sexuality, gender and face (unmarked) of the subject. In *Antropofagia*, we see that the entanglement between *A Negra* and *Abaporu* reflects and refracts the entanglement between genders, races and classes in an anthropophagic and dialogical miscegenation constitutive of both the artist and Brazil.

Another stylistic trait of Tarsila is the production of portraits and self-portraits (Oswald's⁵ being one of them, also from 1923, the year in which she produced *A Negra* and *Autorretrato*, Mário's⁶ and several of herself⁷ – again, like Frida). The close-up angle on the black woman, even if not just towards her face or bust (as with Oswald, Mário and even in some self-portraits), can characterize a full-length portrait. The possibility of *Abaporu* being a self-portrait gains more sense, as does the mixture between the black woman and Tarsila-cannibal herself, in *Antropofagia*, given the life story and social issues between them, giving rise to a third new-other Brazilian woman, fully anthropophagic and inaugural (Adamic, or rather, Lilithian) not only of an artistic movement, but of a nation's image (anthropophagic Brazilianness) – we will return to this question.

⁴ An example of Tarsila's religious esthetic production: <http://bit.ly/3hp9osNTA27>.

⁵ Reproduction available at: <http://bit.ly/32mg0nkR01> and <http://bit.ly/3kbUmbtR02>.

⁶ Reproduction available at: <http://bit.ly/2Rj4JOFR03>.

⁷ Two examples of reproductions of self-portraits available at: <http://bit.ly/3bZafzdAR01> and <http://bit.ly/3khXiDLAR02>.

Abaporu dialogues with *A Negra* by the stylistic aesthetics of the author-creator, not only because they are potential self-portraits cultural mirrored, but also through the disproportionate traces of the bodies, the bright colors (a lot of green and yellow as well as earthy tones), influences from cubism, tropical elements, gigantism, inverted logic perspective (focused on the “below” – feet, legs, hands, arms and breast – with the decrease of the “high” – the head), genitals hidden by the legs, among other elements.

However, the context of the creation of *Abaporu* gives significant new contours to the painting. If the gigantism of *A Negra* is confirmed here and marks the connectivity with the land in a stronger way, the painting’s color palette (referring to Brazil’s flag) confirms the expressivity of *Abaporu*’s Brazilianness and his belonging as a national symbol. The social voices of the nation’s valorization, Brazilian products and art are latent and dialogue with the first phase modernist generation, which can be seen in various productions of that time, as occurs, for example, with the *Manifesto da Poesia Pau-Brasil* (which found echo, resonance and reverberation both in the Concrete movement of the 50s and the *Tropicália* of the 60s, as also in the Marginal Poetry of the 70s):

Only Brazilians of our time. The basics of chemistry, mechanics, economics and ballistics. All digested. No cultural meeting. Practical. Experimental. Poets. No bookish reminiscences. No supportive comparisons. No etymological research. No ontology. Barbarians, gullible, picturesque and sweet. Newspaper readers. *Pau-Brasil*. The forest and the school. The National Museum. The kitchen, the ore and the dance. The vegetation. *Pau-Brasil*. (ANDRADE, 1924⁸).

The sun and the cactus refer to an arid and colorful Brazil. These elements dialogue with the banana leaf existing in *A Negra* as a representation of Brazilianness. The same occurs between the breast and the sun, both protruding signs of life. The sun refers to the opposition sky (high)/ground (low) and the central figure of the *Abaporu* connects these elements, with emphasis on the hand and the giant foot, to the detriment of the small head, given the upward angle, from earth to heaven.

The carnivalesque principle of the demotion comes into play and composes the sense of deconstruction/rupture with canonical art. This inversion already manifested in *A Negra* (of the mind by the body) establishes the contrast between the high and the low, in a dialectical-dialogical game (PAULA; FIGUEIREDO; PAULA, 2011) of composition of denial and complementation between worlds, voices and subjects, since they are constituted through opposition, as stated by Bakhtin (2008, p. 18):

The ‘high’ and the ‘low’ have an absolute and strictly topographical meaning there. The ‘high’ is the sky; the ‘low’ is the earth; earth is the principle of absorption (the grave, the

⁸ Manifesto published in *Correio da Manhã*, on March 18, 1924, integrally, available at: <http://bit.ly/2RlhmbHMA>.

stomach), and, at the same time, of birth and resurrection (the motherly breast). This is the topographic value of the high and the low in their cosmic aspect. In their bodily aspect, which is never severely separated from its cosmic aspect, the top is represented by the face (the head), and the bottom by the genitals (BAKHTIN, 2008, p. 18).

In this sense, the body is connected to the earth and has a uterine and seminal character of motherhood and of fertility. Life is connected to the lowest existence processes, because, without the body, there is no copulation, fertilization nor connection with existence. *Abaporu*, with its large members, takes up this construct of demotion, of rooting in the ground: the bare feet planted in the ground and a hand splayed on the ground semiotize this sense. The disproportion reveals the axiological position of the author-creator who reflects and refracts the modernist nationalist social voice of the early 20th century, since, through the members connected to the earth, the body, with its representations of the lower abdomen, is valued (by turning the members gigantic), in contrast to those linked to top (which is semiotized by the small head), as also occurs in *A Negra*.

What some may see as a criticism to intellectual impairment refers, by Bakhtin's notion of degradation, to the reinvention of life, to the subversion of the hegemonic order, first anthropophagic proposal (early twentieth century) as an artistic expression. The aesthetic anthropophagic act of Tarsila dialogues with the definition of Bakhtin's degradation (2008, p. 19):

Degrading means entering into communion with the life of the lower body, that of the belly, that of the genitals and, therefore, with acts such as coitus, conception, pregnancy, childbirth, the absorption of food and the satisfaction of the natural necessities. Degradation digs the bodily grave to give rise to a new birth. And, therefore, it has not only a destructive, negative value, but also a positive, regenerating one: it is ambivalent, at the same time denial and affirmation.

Degradation in Bakhtin is a producer of new meanings, as it is the negation and affirmation of the material absorbed and re-valued in the process of life and death among the elements of the utterance. In *Abaporu*, this process occurs with the idea of anthropophagy, elaborated by Tarsila in her works and by other modernists in their respective productions. The human sitting on/born of the earth, with its massive limbs and a small head, degrades the canonical hierarchy of the idealized body in art. Aguilar (2011) dialogues the figure painted by Tarsila with sculpture *The thinker*, from Rodin, not only because of the position of the body of both subjects (one of the hands supporting the head and legs bent), even if the angle of each subject is different: while Rodin's thinker is arched forward, his body writhed in the act of restraint, as well as being fully proportional and ideally defined – muscles, face etc.; the *Abaporu* Tarsila's thinker, is more upright (as suffering a 45 to 90 degrees rotation) and is configured, as already

mentioned, by the body-head disproportionality, the indefinite face, in an act of contemplation, in a hot environment (“melting the brain”). *Abaporu* recontextualizes Rodin’s work, which, by the title (even though the sculpture is totally symmetrical from the body-mind point of view), magnifies the intellect by the act indicated both by the position of the subject’s body and the name of the work.

The first version of Rodin’s sculpture was made to represent the poet (and the poetry) of Dante Alighieri’s (2011) canonical *Divine Comedy* – originally placed before the gates of hell and later, in a larger version, becoming independent and iconic, like Michelangelo’s works. In contrast, Tarsila’s thinker-*Abaporu* metaphorizes modern (specifically pictorial) art, the aesthetics of Tarsila, herself and Brazil. Tarsila’s criticism, with the angular and bodily inversion, creates a rupture with Adonic aesthetics and reveals the painter’s conception of anthropophagy: a mastication that comes from the outside, that, digested with the national identity elements, is resignified and results in a third element, which would be the genuine Brazilian, with its mixed cultural identity. This is what occurs with this painting, as, while *The Thinker* refers to classical (Adonic) aesthetics, due to its proportionality and rationality, symbol of the valorization of the mind at the expense of the body (feelings, physiological needs, sexualities and other issues), *Abaporu* reveals himself as the cannibal contemplator who refers to Dionysian-Rabelaisian aesthetics, disproportionate, sexual and gluttonous, with corporal valorization. Not a body of nonexistent perfection, therefore ideal, but a human body, perfect in and through its ailments.

Carnivalization is found in the exposition of the deformities of gigantism, dwarfism, the grotesque, partying, guts, sex, the belly instead of the brain, the earthly world instead of the world of ideas. It is no wonder that Modernism, in response to the romantic heart and realistic head, elects the stomach as the body part representing anthropophagy by the digestion of devouring imported and imposed cultures, by vomiting the transformation and creating another one, to be experienced and exported. The mundane stops being frowned upon in order to be celebrated. The body that, in Christian logic, is cursed for its vicissitudes, seen as an anomaly to be contained by its vices, to be suppressed/repressed, becomes exalted, as explained by Bakhtin (2008). In other words, carnivalization reverses, as Tarsila does, by the mind/body change, the Adonic Cartesian logic of beauty and repressive “perfection” for a “defective”, bacchant and earthly humanity. With this alteration of valuation, the criticism to those who transform culture and knowledge into something inaccessible, exclusionary and normative is made explicit, as if only one logic, rule, cultural, linguistic, political or moral manifestation, etc. was valid and the others should submit to an elite group.

The process of parody and irony via the ridicule, also typical of carnivalization, makes up Tarsila’s responsive criticism to the Adonic world represented by Rodin’s *Thinker* because she desacralizes its logic by deformation introducing another logic of

and to the world, earthly logic, the contemplation of creative leisure, of devouring (people, cultures, languages, knowledges and flavors), as *Abaporu* does. Bakhtin (2008), when turning to the conception of parody as acid comic dialogism, using the style and aesthetics of the other, marked by a certain caricature (given the exaggeration – in Tarsila’s case, by the technique of disproportionality – gigantism and the reduction of the portrayed subject’s body parts), shows how much comicality establishes another enunciative plasticity, based on festivity and universal laughter that bring out the collective logic, the popular territory. Relativizing the Adonic thought with the parody of Rodin’s sculpture desacralizes the canon of classical perfection by through anthropophagy, that absorbs and reinvents beauty by another logic, good humored, of contemplative idleness instead of automated work (this appears more visible in another canvas of Tarsila, the painting *Operários*⁹) and rational reflection.

The *Antropofagia* project of saying is gestated by Tarsila in a procedural way, with the relativizations dethroned by the inversions of *A Negra* and *Abaporu*. In *Abaporu*, the artist anticipates the anthropophagic discourses of the modernists with the practice of the techniques of absorbing the other and swallowing the author. The Dialogism created by Bakhtin, Medvedev and Volochinov, with its responsive and responsible sociohistorical significance from the other approaches the anthropophagic thought. In Tarsila, *A Negra* is an inaugural anthropophagic gesture and *Abaporu* represents the affirmation/confirmation of that gesture. Tarsila semiotizes *Antropofagia* as a manifesto in the third painting, maturing the ongoing process from the previous two paintings. Her triad of productions semiotizes many parameters of the modernist movement, although anthropophagy will follow other paths later. As we will see in our last analysis, *Antropofagia* can be considered a dialectical-dialogical synthesis (PAULA; FIGUEIREDO; PAULA, 2011) of Tarsila’s discourse.

TARSILA’S BLACK-CANNIBAL DIALOGIC *ANTROPOFAGIA*

The swollen contours, the gigantic feet, the faceless figures, the opulent vegetation, the sun, the breast, the cactus and the banana leaf are elements that catch our eye in the work *Antropofagia* that go beyond the interaction between the painter’s artistic creations and with other artists. The center of the painting occupied by the giant feet is the foundation for the rooting of the beings, connected to the soil by the vital link marked by the breast, in a loving position that originates another/third party:

⁹ Reproduction available at: <http://bit.ly/3mj4ReUTA33>.



Source: <http://bit.ly/33lwD1LTA29>.

Figure 7 – Antropofagia (1929)

The grotesque body free of any mask, resting on its scenery as a substratum of social being in contemplation and the loving embrace of the black woman and Abaporu in *Antropofagia*, reveal another logic, another way of life that, by the proposal of the trilogy of Tarsila's paintings, symbolizes the Brazilianness that comes from the land and inverts the world of mental work in favor of creative leisure. The two beings that are intertwined in *Antropofagia* are not only those of the previous paintings, but a third, another. They are also act, as Bakhtin (2000) explains, from the very necessity for a response that Anthropophagy (artistic and social movement) needs and is Tarsila that challenges herself metalinguistically, since, in the triad analyzed here, the author's architectural saying project is synthesized in *Antropofagia*: the paintings explains, both verbally by the titles as by its material visual composition composed of the two others (*A Negra* and *Abaporu*) originating a third, the very process of anthropophagic creation. If *A Negra* represents a negative self-portrait of the painter and *Abaporu*, a mirrored metaphorical self-portrait of Tarsila-character cannibal, in *Antropofagia*, the cannibal-black woman-Tarsila, born from the intersection of the two others (subjects and cultures), has a triple metalinguistic meaning: character constituted by the black woman (at the same time slave and divinity), by the Abaporu thinker-cannibal-Tarsila, in a propositional dialectical-dialogical synthesis of the anthropophagic movement under development by her and her modernist companions, as well as a third, product of the anthropophagic swallowing process.

According to Bakhtin (2000, p. 290), “the understanding of a living speech, of a living utterance is always accompanied by an active responsive attitude”. This is made explicit in *Antropofagia*. The painting is an aesthetic-ethical act, responsive and responsible. The metalinguistic need to interpret the world is an architectural axiological creative feature of Tarsila’s horizon, since it is recurrent in her imaginary. If we consider that, according to Bakhtin (2000, p. 271), “all understanding is pregnant with an answer and [...] produces it: the listener becomes the speaker”, the works *A Negra*, *Abaporu* and *Antropofagia* are living utterances, that respond to each other and to other aesthetics (in continuous dialogue as links in the discourse chain and, at the same time, single/singular) in a peculiar way. *Antropofagia* makes this explicit in an interdiscursive and intertextual way, as a product-process, since the painting explains Tarsila’s dialogical architectural process.

The painting represents the synthetic summit of stylistic traits and the conception of Tarsila’s aesthetic-ethical work on the notion of anthropophagy, in its birth and development in the early 20th century. The elements that mark the other canvases merge into a new being-painting-sense.

This painting miscegenates two subjects: one, with a marked gender (both by the definite article as by the designation of the gender morpheme: *A Negra*) and representing Brazilian black culture (slave and religious divinity) as another side which constitutes the elite itself, marked by the *Autorretrato* of the author-creator; and the other, with unmarked gender and two potential readings that are merged (the cannibal-self-portrait/Tarsila, the *aba-poru*. Old Tupi Guarani was structured by agglutination – in this case, the junction of “aba” and “poru” – and does not inflect gender and number. Thus, the lexeme “aba”/man is used to refer to the human being, both man and woman).

When we consider the story of the author-person (a wealthy white woman, raised in a slave space-time), we can think of anthropophagy as a subjective and Brazilian identity, as her painting mixes the cannibal-Tarsila with the black-Tarsila. Thus, her identity, like that of the country (Brazil), is constituted by the other (by the otherness of the black slave woman and African-Brazilian divinity, in addition to the European vanguards, in conjunction with tropical Brazil – cannibal/anthropophagous). This means that Tarsila herself, as a subject-object, metonymically, represents herself as Brazil in a metaphorical and metalinguistic way. This trait is common throughout all her work. A stylistic trait of her architecture, an unremitting search for the explanation of a theme: the identity of herself, of her art and of her country (independent and adult-childlike, since, still in the 20th century – and even today –, with a mentality and attitudes of slavery culture, of exploitation colony submissive to the metropolis – Portugal and the United States, respectively, depending on the historical moment – as it continues to deliver its *muiraquitã* – more serious than they taking it, is Brazil itself offering it, as has occurred).

The two beings merged in the *Antropofagia* canvas represent a new understanding of the paintings *A Negra* and *Abaporu*. The techniques used in the prior utterances return as poetic-anthropophagic reflex and refraction by carnivalizing dialogically the creation.

In an allusion process, some elements are recovered with new meanings, as well as others, unusual, appear. The decentralized face of the black woman gives space to vagueness (the traces of the past disappear in *Antropofagia*). The portrait painted by Tarsila does not appear as an isolated manifestation neither in her poetics (since this figurative theme is a recurring feature in her pictorial imagery) nor in the modernist movement, as the search for identity through heterogeneity is a hallmark of the artists of that Brazilian historical moment. The vagueness that, at the same time, does not identify, identifies as everyone (subjects-people and subject-nation) and nobody.

The undefinition on who we are is a tendency of Modernism that, ambivalently, depersonalizes art, abstracting it by showing the lack of definition of who and what we are and thereby showing that we are undefined, multiple, plural, mixed and obliterated by the muffling of our voices, made invisible and/or masked by an exquisite *Tupiniquim* way of imitating Europe or North America. The ailments are exposed with an aesthetic varnish that reveals social inequalities and differences. According to Bakhtin (2008, p. 35), masks constitute the formation of the body, above all, the grotesque, for “The complex symbolism of the masks is inexhaustible. Suffice it to remember that manifestations such as parody, caricature, grimace, contortions and “apishness” are derived from the mask, because it is in the mask that the profound essence of the grotesque is clearly revealed”.

The carnivalization of the face by the lack of definition depersonalizes “the” black woman. This, on the one hand, uncharacterizes the visibility given to this ethnic group, but, on the other hand, as was also done with the subject-abaporu, it protects the subject’s identity. In the dialogic carnivalized anthropophagy, Tarsila levels the subjects, regardless of their classes and races. Although the gender of the black woman remains (due to the presence of the breast), the non-identification by the face features generalizes anthropophagy: any black woman, no longer “the” black woman, as we also do not know if the cannibal-abaporu is Tarsila or not.

Non-identification levels, generalizes, masks and, as Bakhtin (2008) explains, the mask releases for other lives and possibilities, as it hides and reveals. The idea of proximity between the subjects in search of equality is not only present in the unidentified faces, but in the miscegenation between them, marked by their crossed legs. In *Antropofagia*, it is not only the black woman who crosses her legs, but three legs cross each other: one of the black woman is hidden and the other, on display, even bigger and with the foot more prominent, the same size as the Abaporu’s foot, which crosses his leg in front of the black woman. It is the legs of the two subjects, in the lower part of the painting and

bulging, that refer to the crossing of classes, races and genders; which leads to the idea of miscegenation: black and white, a slave and an indigenous cannibal, one of a gender marked by the breast (the black) and one without a mark.

The ambivalence of social voices that historically dwell in the subjects also leads us to reflect on eugenics, especially, when we consider the historical moment of the production of this painting (the late 20s of the last century, heading for World War II, with purist Nazi voices populating the whole world). Thus, at the same time that the lack of definition equals the subjects and the mask carnivalizes relationships, if we think of the symbolic mask of silence that shuts and turns off (and, in the first painting of the black woman, her crooked, sad mouth – turned downwards – and closed/shut that, here, simply, disappears) while screaming (through the eyes and the look of the black woman to our eyes and looks), we must also consider masking as the erasing of the voice of a subject who represents a social group as pointed out by Ribeiro (2018, p. 11-12):

The mask that enslaved people were forced to wear covering their mouths and the affirmation of the colonial project of imposing silence, a silence seen as the denial of humanity and the possibility of existing as a subject. With her, I learned that ‘the mask cannot be forgotten. It was a very concrete piece, a real instrument that became part of the European colonial project for over three hundred years’. But, even though being silenced and neglected, voices rise up.

By considering the equality of the subjects’ colors on the painting as the miscegenation between races, this erasure is confirmed, since, genetically, we know, there is a predominance of dark color (skin, eyes, hair, etc.) and, in the painting, black is much more whitened than the Abaporu is blackened. Thus, at the same time that the subjects are in the same color and, without identification, miscegenated, there is a hierarchy between them and social voices in a dialogical clash.

The relations between the paintings of other-other subjects (Negra, Iemanjá, Abaporu) and I-other-Tarsilas subjects (self-portraits), in the same way as Tarsila-character and author (creator and person), are constituted by African and indigenous cultures, these two cultures are also constituted by the white European culture represented by Tarsila, her origins, class and race influences.

We cannot avoid talking about the gender issue. After all, these are representations of women (author-creator-personage, black woman, Iemanjá and Abaporu). Women of different classes and races who cohabit and blend in a third anthropophagous, Brazilian, being, not in an egalitarian way. Gender, in a way, hierarchizes the subjects, because femininity identifies the black woman. If, on the one hand, the breast is in full sight, which can value women; on the other, this appreciation occurs through sexuality and motherhood, thus devaluating women by marking them only through resignified stereotype as power (of support and creation of subjects, art and nation).

The miscegenation between *A Negra* and *Abaporu* generates, anthropophagically, a third being, different, deformed (with two heads, two bodies, three legs and three arms – not four, by the position of the *Abaporu*, in profile), with characteristics of both “originals”, but another. In this mixture, there are still hierarchies that refer to the creation of one with the other. The hypothesis of the *Abaporu* being Tarsila’s self-portrait as is *A Negra* (her wet-nurse other), by means of metaphorical self-portraits, mirrored identities of the artist and Brazil are constructed. The large sagging breast in the foreground feeds the *Abaporu*, born of it (Tarsila, Brazilian miscegenated woman, nourished by African culture).

The contradictions of the social voices at stake also appear in the subjects’ positions. Not coincidentally, the black woman is larger (taller) than the *Abaporu* and three-dimensionally, the positions of the subjects are mixed and break the pictorial logic of distance and proximity (the being who is farther away should be smaller but is larger than the other one), because the body of the black woman is almost at the back of the painting (second only to the landscape that makes up the painting’s scenography – the tropical, Brazilian setting, marked by several cacti/mandacarus and a banana leaf, as well as the blue sky and the orange sun-slice, in an almost childish play with the national elements of this newborn Brazil from the early modernist 20th century), while *Abaporu* is a little more at the front, although smaller. Thus, one is taller and is at the back (as a background, hidden, erased, but as a support for the one who is immediately in front of her) and, at the same time, at the front (in the foreground, supporting, visible and highlighted); and the other, smaller, mirrored and in front of the other, in fact, interspersed with it (not only by the legs, but by the disposition of the whole body that, even with less typical features, refers to the cubist aesthetic that breaks with the classic symmetry by disproportionality, attempting to reveal several angles – points of view – at the same time and, thus, puts contradictory social voices in conflict, in a dialogical game that constitutes not only the authorial aesthetics of Tarsila and her subjects/characters, but also semiotizes Brazilian art and culture, in an anthropophagic conception of nation). The legs of the two subjects cross and reproduce these same positions (the two legs of the black woman first with the one of the *Abaporu* superimposed), but this is subverted by the uncovered breast, in the very foreground, highlighted, uniting the subjects and inverting the Cartesian logic of the visual arts and capitalist hierarchy (the rear, hidden and devalued, placed as the first and bigger: the slave woman as a divinity).

The issues of gender, race and class are interspersed, at the same time, in a hierarchical (with eugenic reverberations) and carnivalized (inverted, as a rupture) manner, in an arena that characterizes the cultural and valuing melting pot that constitutes Brazil.

The country that has as its identity a mixture between faceless subjects, of erased classes elevated, brought to the foreground, visualized as the support of the country, and of different races, that, mixed, now have the same color (the black woman,

in the portrayed miscegenation, is whitened, which would, otherwise, turn her hierarchical and invisible). The crossing between beings is indefinite (heteronormative or homosexual), but always identitary (between the self-Tarsila and the others internal/external that constitute her – black woman, slave and divinity; and Abaporu-cannibal-indigenous; and Tarsila as a metonymic, allegorical and metalinguistic character of Brazil's culture).

The support of the nation and of the subjects is marked in the foreground: it is feminine (not only by the breast, in prominence, but by the artistic creation of the painting, made by a woman who, in an exotopic exercise, portrays herself as a subject-object/aesthetic subject). The non-identification that identifies, values cultures, aesthetics and nation, metaphorically, metonymically and metalinguistically, as miscegenated, anthropophagic, creative and colorful woman-nation-art – and does it in a carnivalized way.

The Abaporu ceases to be the Brazilian thinker, as his hand no longer holds his head, but is extended to the woman. Contemplation ceases to be for the landscape and turns to the black woman. The look turned to what hegemonically is not (nor deserves to be, from a patriarchal and classist point of view) seen/valued. The hand of the Abaporu extended, directed to the black woman, and he in an inverted position to that of the original painting (in *Abaporu*, the subject is bigger, lighter and is on the left side of the painting, while in *Antropofagia*, he is on the right side, facing the left, in an inverted angle. Mirror of himself, but more than reflection, refraction, as he is smaller and darker, turned to the black woman, that, in the painting, occupies the left side of the canvas) reveals values: the black woman, mother goddess and Abaporu, seated on her right, born of her, by her (goddess) created. Both planted in the earth, in a carnivalesque perspective (from bottom to top: giant feet and tiny heads), set in a tropical scenography.

Connectivity through the earth/root is a characteristic trait of the formation of the grotesque body, as explained by Bakhtin (2008, p. 244): it is “difficult sometimes to draw a precise boundary between them, as they are so organically and essentially linked”, integrated to the landscape as a stage of the (natural) beings, rooted to the earth by their “lower bodily stratum” (although the genitalia are hidden, the subjects are sitting with their parts on the ground).

The year 1929 was marked by the crash of the New York Stock Exchange (black Thursday of October 24, 1929). *Antropofagia*, thus, for being created that year, also responds to another inversion: the economic one. In view of the collapse of the capitalist market, instituted as a standard by the Brazilian bourgeoisie, which aimed (and still aims) at American practices, the inversion of the *time is money* logic for the contemplation of the anthropophagic miscegenated creative leisure as the Brazilian wealth and logic is a subversive ambivalent act, made up of the gender, race and class contradictions that make up the country's history.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

This article looked at the issue of Tarsila's anthropophagy through the dialogical bias. We consider responsiveness and interaction as the aesthetic and ethical constituent elements of Tarsila's architecture. Our view, focused on verbivocovisuality (PAULA, 2017a, 2017b; PAULA; SERNI, 2017; PAULA; LUCIANO, 2020a, 2020b, 2020c), considered the enunciative pictorial (therefore, visual) concreteness of the works, in their chromatic, angular, dimensional, figurative and scenographic composition in relation to the notion of three-dimensional language. The verbality expressed in the titles was considered as constitutive of the works, as well as the sound intonation, as a possible potentiality. We focused on visuality in dialogue with verbality, given materiality, but we did not forget the vocal when reflecting on the intonating sonority of the voices present in the paintings, expressed by the visual expressiveness (for example, of the black woman's look in the first painting).

The aim of showing dialogism as a constitutive element of Amaral's anthropophagy was achieved by considering the process of architectural construction of *Antropofagia*, composed by *A Negra* and *Abaporu*. We can analyze each of these first two paintings independently, but we are unable to reflect on Tarsila's anthropophagy without considering, at least, the two previous paintings (and their relations with Klee, Rodin, Iemanjá, other works by Tarsila, Oswald and Mário de Andrade, The Anthropophagic Manifesto, the Pau-Brasil poetry, etc., as we attempted to do here).

Far from exhausting the multiple meanings of Tarsila's anthropophagic architecture, we presented a possible reading, based on Bakhtin's carnivalization, with the use of the Circle's philosophy to analyze pictorial works, to show, in the wake of Haynes (2008), that the dialectical-dialogic method (PAULA; FIGUEIREDO; PAULA, 2011) postulated by Volochinov, Medvedev and Bakhtin, is not only focused on the verbal, the literary and, specifically, the novelesque, but also on language, understood by Paula (PAULA, 2017a, 2017b; PAULA; SERNI, 2017; PAULA; LUCIANO, 2020a, 2020b, 2020c) as verbivocovisual.

Our reading presented an analysis of three works by Tarsila, considered procedurally and in dialogue with her authorial architecture and with modernist architecture, especially the one from the first generation. Our writing was also generated in a procedural way, including the results. Dialectical writing tried to show how much dialogism is constitutive of Tarsila's poetics, without a generalizing synthesis, but as a new thesis. The painting *Antropofagia* represents this propositional synthesis, composed of the two works previously created, but not a final, conclusive point, as it is a new, resignified utterance. As a product-process, the painting reveals the author's stylistic construction, the notion of art, the concept of anthropophagy and the idea of Brazil(ianness) of the author-creator, composed of her others (other paintings, other self-portraits, other works of other authors, other modernists with whom she lived,

other styles of painting, etc.). In this sense, identity is constituted by otherness, and by the other, their word as my other word (VOLOCHINOV, 2013). In this case, an ambivalent, masked, dialogized, carnivalized, anthropophagic, modernist, artistic, Brazilian and female word.

Our look at Tarsila's work was based on her construction of art and society. The dialogical movement existing in the works of the painter constitutes a rupture with the social and canonical hierarchy of classical art. Man (human being) is decentralized, demoted, unidentifiable (masked), the body is grotesque and carnivalized (rooted, with gigantic and diminished parts).

Tarsila's anthropophagy passes through corporeal and logical inversion. The reverse world is instituted by the focus on the "lower bodily stratum", on the rupture between planes, lines and dimensions of the painted figures, by the valuation of the invisible placed in the foreground and the lack of definition as an identity. Creative-contemplative leisure instead of the robotic work of bourgeois capitalistic logic. The reinvention of Brazil by its miscegenated riches. Heterogeneity as creation. This is Tarsila's delirious, Brazilian, artistic and womanlike *Antropofagia*, that crosses and breaks with the canons of genres, classes and races, a cannibal node of conflicting and contradictory voices in live and meaningful confrontation till today, as, although her works were produced in the last century, they reflect and refract the existing valuation contradictions that are still experienced today. Is for a forthcoming proposal to reflect on our *tupiniquim* syndrome, understood as "patriotic"/nationalistic that does not realize the regression and social historical maintenance of exploration and deletions of groups, subjects, races and genders. We still need to accept our *Antropofagia*, our divine blackness (of *A Negra Iemanjá*) and our indigenous-Abaporu culture, not to reverse orders, but to subvert them and, in fact, to be born old, pregnant of other logics and ways of being/existing.

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