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ON INTERMEDIALITY:¹ Cinema, Maracatus, Tattoo and Post-Tropicalisms

SAMUEL PAIVA

Associate Professor at the Federal University of São Carlos (UFSCar), where he works in the area of Theory and History of Audiovisual Communication at the Department of Arts and Communication, developing activities in teaching, research and extension related to the Bachelor of Arts in Image and Sound and the Postgraduate Program of Image and Sound. He is the author of the book *A figura de Orson Welles no cinema de Rogério Sganzerla* (2018) and co-editor of the books *Viagem ao cinema silencioso do Brasil* (2011) and *XI Estudos de Cinema e Audiovisual – Socine* (2010). He recently finished his post-doctoral research in film and intermediality at the University of Reading, supported by FAPESP.
E-mail: sampaiva@uol.com.br
ORCID: 0000-0002-3803-9846

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Abstract

In the 1990s, Brazilian cinema witnessed the emergence of a generation whose filmmakers' proposals were largely characterised by intermediality, that is, by the encounter of cinema and other media. In Recife (Pernambuco), the Manguebeat movement emerged, deeply rooted in music, which led to the *Árido Cinema* as the cinematic side of the Mangue Movement, which reverberates until today. Considering this premise, this article analyses the politics of intermediality based on Pernambucan cinema and its Tropicalist readings involving case studies such as the short *Maracatu, maracatus* (Marcelo Gomes, 1995) and the features *Árido Cinema* (Lírio Ferreira, 2005) and *Tatuagem* (Tatoo, Hilton Lacerda, 2013), experiencing a method guided by the concept of intermediality.

Keywords

Politics of Intermediality; Cinema and Other Media; Post-Tropicalisms.

Time and Space Relationships

Starting from the premise that time and space are intrinsically related, my intention in this text is to draw a kind of temporal and spatial map focusing on the city of Recife, which is located in the state of Pernambuco. This temporal and spatial map covers since the 1990s until nowadays, expanding relations which advance simultaneously to the past and for the present moment. To do this, I will take Tropicalisms that have crossed cinema production in Pernambuco as a research vector, investigating tensions involved in the generation of the *Árido Cinema* as it became known as the cinematic aspect of the Mangubeat Movement. With its multiple expressions, this movement had undoubtedly an especially musical exuberance. Therefore, the relationship with music is at the heart of the understanding that Alexandre Figueirôa, one of the first researchers to discuss the *Árido Cinema* in academia, has about this generation of filmmakers who, like Mangubeat, created "a brand" as "an attempt to identify and unite this production around shared ideals" (Figueirôa, 2000, p.105).

In turn, Amanda Nogueira (2009, p. 84) identifies the *Árido Cinema* as a group of directors responsible for the "invention of a cinema", that is to say, the "new cinema from Pernambuco", including a vast filmography of short films, fiction, documentaries, music videos and television programs¹. Part of this production is also analysed by Gabriela Lopes Saldanha (2009), who in her dissertation entitled *Árido Cinema generation: the cosmopolitan cinema of the nineties in Pernambuco*, includes the feature films *Perfumed Ball* (Paulo Caldas, Lírio Ferreira, 1996), *The Little Prince's Rap against the Wicked Souls* (Paulo Caldas, Marcelo Luna, 2000), *Mango Yellow* (Cláudio Assis, 2003), *Cinema, Aspirins and Vultures* (Marcelo Gomes, 2005), *Árido Cinema* (Lírio Ferreira, 2005), *Bog of beasts* (Cláudio Assis, 2006) and *Happy Desert* (Paulo Caldas, 2007). From this broad spectrum of possibilities, the short film *Maracatu, maracatus* (Marcelo Gomes, 1995) and the feature ones *Árido Cinema* (Lírio Ferreira, 2005) and *Tattoo* (Hilton Lacerda, 2013) will be considered here as the case studies, to be discussed from the theories or even from a historiographic method guided by intermediality.

Briefly summarizing the Pernambucan scene in the 1990s, some historical facts refer to the 1992 release of the *Crabs with Brain* manifesto, signed by musicians such as Chico Science (from the band Chico Science & Nação Zumbi) and Fred Zero Quatro (Mundo Livre S/A). Two years later, in 1994, these bands released their first albums, respectively, *Da Lama ao Caos (From Mud to Chaos)* and *Samba Esquema Noise (Samba Noise Scheme)*. In parallel to this musical movement, there was also a strong mobilisation in the field of cinema, which had in fact been taking place from works in super-8 in the 1970s to a production of short films (16mm and 35mm) in the 1980s, until reaching feature productions in the mid-1990s, especially with the release of the aforementioned *Perfume Ball*, a production that was a milestone to the so-called "Brazilian Film Revival" (Nagib, 2002) in that decade.

There was, therefore, a significant interaction in terms of the intermediality between music and cinema and vice versa, in a way that artists from the two fields became collaborators among themselves, building a dynamic that was known as "brodagem", from the slang "brother" (Nogueira, 2014). Thus, musicians began to compose soundtracks and sometimes also were present as supporting actors in some films. At the same time, filmmakers directed music videos for the bands. In short, an intermedia relationship was formed and it can be understood from different points of view, which I intend to observe from cinema. As an initial example, I am going to analyse one of the first movies of the *Árido Cinema*, the short film *Maracatu, maracatus* (1995), launched one year after the release of the aforementioned albums, whose production established a strong connection with the music of Chico Science & Nação Zumbi.

¹ According to Amanda Nogueira, the term "*Árido Cinema*", referring to the cinematic aspect of Mangubeat, was created by journalist and filmmaker Amin Stepple, who stated in an interview to Estado de S. Paulo newspaper in 1997: "*Árido Cinema* is the mangubeat in the form of cinema" (apud Nogueira, 2009, p. 58). Later, Lírio Ferreira directed the film of the same name - *Árido Cinema* (2005) - which will soon be discussed.

On the other hand, ten years after Marcelo Gomes' work, the movie directed by Lírio Ferreira, *Árido Cinema* (2005) was made. This title is not by chance homonymous to the generation in discussion, and indicates how some aesthetic and political principles remain relevant later, an aspect reiterated even further in the movie directed by Hilton Lacerda, *Tattoo* (2013). The *Árido Cinema* aesthetics indicates a trend that is characteristic of the cinema produced in Pernambuco, that is, its interest in intermediality as an artistic and political strategy.

Regarding the concept, intermediality implies a theoretical field in construction. The term "intermedia" was created in 1966 by Dick Higgins (2012), a multimedia artist related to the Fluxus group, to designate some artistic expressions that did not fit into the more traditional arts (painting, sculpture, theatre, etc.) precisely because they were between media. As examples (cited by Higgins), the following can be remembered: the ready-made by Marcel Duchamp; the collages, environments and happenings by Allan Kaprow; and the combines by Robert Rauschenberg, among others. In Higgins' text, a juxtaposition of the terms art and media is already clearly evident, an aspect that will be discussed in other works by authors and researchers dedicated to the subject, with which the same juxtaposition will prevail.

Clüver (2011, p.9), for example, states that "intermediality is a relatively recent term for a phenomenon that can be found in all cultures and epochs, both in everyday life and in all cultural activities we call 'art'". In turn, Moser (2006, p. 94) recognises that, in the nineteenth century, with the overcoming of the restricted character of access to art because of the cultural industry, "one of the consequences of this new situation for our problematic is that media and art have approached, and that the mediation of art is henceforth better known and established." Therefore, in the field of studies on intermediality, the arts are recurrently considered as media.

However, such agreements do not imply constant consensuses. Clarifying the state of the art of studies on intermediality, Ágnes Pethö (2018, p. 165-187) constructs a synthesis of what she considers "paths in a theoretical jungle", proposing three paradigms on the construction of the field until the present moment. The first concerns "media borders" and is related to researchers largely derived from literary and semiotic studies, who sought to investigate the "crossing of media borders"². For example, Irina Rajewsky, who categorized three groups of inter-media phenomena: (a) "transposition or media transformation", (b) "media combination" and (c) "media references" (Rajewsky, 2012, p. 58)³ –, and this proposal is often recognised as a point of support for other researchers (see Clüver, 2011; Diniz, 2012; Diniz & Vieira, 2012). In relation to this first paradigm and its assertion about the border metaphor, it is also clarified that the intermedia is on the opposite path to that of the transmedia or media convergence, which presuppose the collapse of the borders as a characteristic of the digital era, which would be a post-media era. In this case, Pethö quotes Henry Jenkins (2006) to show this opposition.

The second paradigm proposed by her implies being "in-between". Here the idea of crossing the border (as in the previous case) is no longer so important, but instead the notion of being on the border is the key, as she says, to be in an "in-betweenness" situation. The philosophical reference, in this case, comes from poststructuralism. From Michel Foucault's notion of "heterotopy", for example, intermediality can be understood as being in between spaces, times, and media forms. On Jean-François Lyotard's notion of figural, Joachim Paech (apud Pethö, 2018, p. 169), for example, talks about the "perceptible figure of the mediatic difference that disturbs the order of discourse."

The third paradigm presents itself with its interest in the "connection between the real and the

² In fact, the border metaphor related to intermediality studies is recurrent among many researchers in the field (see Costa et al, 2018).

³ "Transposition" indicates adaptations of one medium to the other, for example, from a literary text to the cinema. "Combinations" refer to media, such as cinema, opera, etc., which result from the union of various media: cinema, in this case, brings together images and sounds. An example of "references" could be a filmic text that is related to a literary genre or vice versa (see Rajewsky, 2012, p. 58-59).

intermediate". Moreover, some contemporary thinkers interested in the hybrid condition of cinema come into discussion at this point. Alain Badiou, Jacques Rancière, Giorgio Agamben, Lúcia Nagib and Raymond Bellour are all mentioned. A point several of these authors have in common, despite their different positions, is the "defense of impure cinema", referring to André Bazin (2013), more precisely to his text published in the 1950s.

It follows from these three paradigms, especially from the third, our idea of understanding the *Árido Cinema* through the politics of intermediality. This is because the proposal under discussion here is in line with the notion of "politics of impurity", according to Lúcia Nagib (2014), who in turn dialogues intensely with Alain Badiou (2013) and Jacques Rancière (2005, 2010). While for Badiou, "all arts flow through the cinema" (apud Pethö 2018, p. 170), which is the seventh art not in the key of an evolution, but as a kind of flow of the other arts; while for Rancière there is a question of a configuration of heterogeneous intervals that results from the fact that "cinema is the other for itself" (apud Pethö 2018, p. 171) for its relations with politics and other forms of art; for Nagib, there is the assumption that cinema, like every work of art, is implicated in a dialectical crisis. In her conception, intermediality is related to "an ever-present dialectical crisis, the site of a profound dilemma between the depurative drive inherent in all artistic forms and the awareness of its insufficiency" (Nagib, 2014, p. 27).

This idea is very opportune for the consideration of the Pernambucan cinema in question, especially at that moment, in which one media (the cinema) requested others (especially music) as a way of overcoming obstacles due to the absence of public policies for audiovisual production. Moreover, in her understanding of "politics of impurity", Nagib also associates the notion of "dissent," as proposed by Jacques Rancière (2010), since, for her, using diverse media in a film tends to suspend the possible didactic character of the work, introducing dilemmas.

Summarizing the concept of intermediality, before discussing the movies *Maracatu*, *Maracatus*, *Árido Cinema* and *Tattoo*, it is still appropriate to clarify why it is important to discuss Tropicalism. In fact, in the context of Pernambuco of the 1990s, something that we can think of as a confrontation of Tropicalisms was in question in the city of Recife. Between 1994 and 1998, therefore, in the interval of time that includes the release of both albums – *Da Lama ao Caos* and *Samba Esquema Novo* - and of the *Árido Cinema* first films, the Secretary of Culture of the State of Pernambuco, at the time governed by Miguel Arraes, was the writer Ariano Suassuna. Suassuna was the creator of the Armorial Movement which, in turn, gave continuity to the ideas on "Lusotropicalismo" by Gilberto Freyre. In spite of his remarkable work, with novels and famous plays often adapted to cinema and television, Suassuna was much criticised by the artists of the Mangue movement due to his armorial position. He, in turn, also criticised these artists for their proposal, which, incorporating foreign terms already in their conception (Manguebeat, *Árido Cinema*), was more in line with the Tropicalist strands derived from the Tropicália of the 1960s, considering their own manifestations in the state of Pernambuco, as we shall see further on.

Maracatu, Maracatus

In the short movie directed by Marcelo Gomes, the title already indicates an enlargement of the *maracatu* from singular to plural. Between the fictional and the documentary, referring to the connection between the real and the intermedia, the narrative begins with a fact that really occurred: when looking for Mestre Salustiano, a popular artist on the subject of maracatu, the film crew, with the intention of inviting him to participate in the short, in response heard his refusal, which eventually became a kind of film prologue. Mestre Salustiano expels the film crew. This sequence indicates a confrontation of media involving Maracatu itself as a form of popular art; television represented as a team that arrives to record a report; and cinema that, ultimately, records the scene.

Curiously, the Master associates the film crew with foreigners, although they were members of

Parabólica Brasil, the Pernambucan film company responsible for the production of this short (Cláudio Assis appears as the cinematographer, Adelina Pontual as the sound technician and the third member is Marcelo Gomes himself). The expel of the film crew replaces an issue that refers to the text written by Paulo Emílio Salles Gomes (1980), *Cinema: trajetória no subdesenvolvimento*, more precisely to the idea that the "occupiers" (that is, the colonizers) manipulate the "occupied" (the colonized) in their image and likeness in order to reproduce their interests. Thus, television is perceived by Mestre Salustiano as the occupant. However, the crisis that is established here between maracatu and television will be mediated later in the film.

Having introduced the prologue and the initial credits, the presence of the foreigner continues in the next sequence of the short, in which we watched a young black man (played by Ailton Guerra) playing drums, with a shirt that shows a reference of the British band The Smiths, in a space soon expanded by the camera movement, which starts to frame props used by the "caboclos de lança" of the rural maracatu.⁴ The sequence is involved in all categories proposed by Irina Rajewsky: it is cinema (as a combination of image and sound media) but, more than that, it presents a transposition of the percussive beat of bands such as Chico Science & Nação Zumbi (actually in the respective soundtrack), simultaneously presenting another musical record considering the reference to the British band inscribed on the T-shirt of the boy.

From this place, the protagonist, played by Jofre Soares (icon actor of the Brazilian *Cinema Novo*) approaches. He is a *caboclo de lança* who, and because he is old, will not participate in the rite, which nowadays takes place during the Carnival. But he prepares the *caboclo* clothes so that one of his descendants can wear them, as soon as the dress has been baptized in a *candomblé terreiro*. The conflict between generations then becomes one of the narrative engines, since the young *caboclo de lança* (a character played by Meia Noite, a *Capoeira* artist) cannot understand the importance of maracatu, except as a form of Carnival. At one point, the old caboclo (Jofre Soares) defines maracatu:

Maracatu was born in the sugar plantation, with the Indians, caboclos and black African slaves. Maracatu is not just a game. Maracatu is the cry of the Native Indians, of the slaves, the cry that comes from inside against the wickedness of the white man. Maracatu is also war.

In parallel to the caboclo's scenes, there is the young black drummer (with the shirt that bears the image of The Smiths). The film incorporates the transposition of this mixture of local and foreign elements which was already present in the album *Da Lama ao Caos*, by Chico Science & Nação Zumbi. The band took maracatu as a sign of cultural resistance related to people historically oppressed by European colonization and, anthropologically, incorporated the foreign into its pop aesthetics, including English terms associated with the expression of the mangrove (Manguebeat, Manguetown). The same can be said of the album *Samba Esquema Noise*, by Mundo Livre S/A, which refers to the title of its main reference, Jorge Ben's album *Samba Esquema Novo* (1963), adding a word in English.

Recalling the dilemma which Lucy Nagib relates to intermediality, there is a conflict in this conception of the new, which is also expressed in the relationship between media. The film and music albums in question go against an official current of Pernambucan culture, accustomed to dealing with popular rites in the stereotyped perspective of symbols of cultural purity. In this regard, Nara Aragão Fonseca (2006) analyses *Maracatu, Maracatus*, highlighting the interfaces between cinema and the mangue scene in Pernambuco, among several films, albums and other artistic expressions, drawing attention to this aspect:

⁴ According to Virgínia Barbosa (2016): "*Caboclo de Lança* is a character from Rural Maracatu or *Maracatu de Baque Solto* - also known as *Maracatu de Orquestra*. The origin of this maracatu is not yet fully unveiled. Some of the researchers is unanimous in admitting the mixture of Afro-indigenous cultures; other, as results of combined popular manifestations - *bumba-meu-boi*, seahorse, coronation of the black kings, *caboclinhos*, *folia de reis* - existing in the hinterland of Pernambuco. "

In Pernambuco, maracatu became one of these symbolic elements and, to become a symbol to be explored institutionally by the State, was summed up to a set of stereotypes that associated the condition of poverty with a supposed "cultural purity". The official discourse of popular culture in Pernambuco is confused with the folklore tradition, which embodies a vision of what the spirit of its people would be (Fonseca, 2006, p. 62).

As the researcher acknowledges, *Maracatu, Maracatus* goes against this official discourse and its ideal of purity and, for this, resorts to some discursive strategies that try to problematize the question. In its re-reading of the traditions, the film gains space among the media, escaping from a past conception of cultural heritage in the face of contemporary reality. To do this, the fusion between fiction and documentary is fundamental, as it occurs in the referred scene of the prologue, in which Mestre Salustiano interprets himself and expels the television crew, calling our attention to the current reality of the popular artists.

The religious syncretism, investigated in the perspective of a connection with reality, also corresponds to the hybridism of the media forms invested in this short. At a certain moment, the old caboclo climbs up the steps of a hill on the outskirts of Recife coming to us, spectators, breaking the fourth wall, to speak of his devotion to São Jorge and also to Ogum, who appointed him with a mission to make the caboclo's clothes of maracatu. As Nara Fonseca discusses, religious syncretism is highlighted at this time, with the presentation of simultaneous devotion to a saint of the Catholic church and to the corresponding orixá in the religion of African origin, referring to the history of oppression of slaves in sugarcane plantations. In the words of the researcher:

This syncretism, while reinforcing the symbolic importance and the local character of the manifestation - because it is directly related to the way in which the exploitation of slave labour in the sugar cane industry in the Northeast has taken place - also seems to reinforce the contradictory character and its superposition exploited by the manguebeat (Fonseca, 2006, p. 67)

Syncretism as a question is updated by the way in which the montage of maracatu and rock scenes is alternated, resulting in a relationship between past and present marked by the relationship between media and a situation of violence: the drummer dances punk-rock to the sound of the band Devotos, the song "Asa Preta" (Black Wing), whose lyrics just thematises racial discrimination⁵.

Moreover, when Nara Fonseca talks about "contradictory and overlapping character exploited by manguebeat," this brings to the fore a tropicalist dimension referenced in what Celso Favaretto, for example, perceives as a characteristic procedure of Tropicália in the 1960s, that is, "to submit archaisms in the light of the ultramodern" (Favaretto, 2000, p. 113), sometimes working with condensations and displacements of elements of culture, with the creation of images from allegorical and parodic rhetorics.

This is an interesting way to understand several images released in the Manguebeat and Árido Cinema context, such as Chico Science himself, in shows, wearing costumes mixing *caboclo de lança* elements, such as the colourful headdress that refers to the indigenous headdresses, while singing pop rhythms accompanied by the maracatu percussion. This image, which is certainly a reference for the film by Marcelo Gomes, calls into question the allegorical dimension that Favaretto understands as a Tropicália procedure in its dreamlike propositions:

Tropicalist images are dreamlike constructions; they can be interpreted as the analyst does with dreams, that is, operating in the opposite direction to that of its formation process. Starting from the parodic manifestations, in which the "relics of Brazil" are outdated by the continual decentration of their current versions, one reaches the

⁵ The band Devotos appeared in 1988 in Alto José do Pinho, Recife. Initially it was called Devotos do Ódio (Devotees of Hate). In addition to *Maracatus, Maracatus*, the trio founder of Parábólica Brasil - Adelina Pontual, Cláudio Assis and Marcelo Gomes - directed the short *Punk Rock Hardcore* (1995), about the musicians of the neighbourhood.

allegory of Brazil (Favaretto, 2000, p. 113).

This continuous decentering of history versions suggests a state of transit, in-betweenness, which, on the one hand, displaces the filmic discourse on the borders between cinema, maracatu and music and, on the other, also transits between distinct physical realities and metaphysical suggestions. Thus, the scene related to the baptism of the garment is exemplary: in a small *terreiro* where there are images of Christian and *candomblé* saints, we see the trance in the ritual guided by the mãe-de-santo, Dona Neta (interpreting herself), and some other ritual participants, including the young *caboclo de lança* who will carry forward the questioned tradition. Having baptized the clothing, later the maracatu procession will appear in a parade as a carnival group through the hills of Olinda, but now from the point of view of the other young black man, the drummer. The group, however, is interrupted by a Catholic procession, accompanied by religious followers and police officers who are in the street, preventing the manifestation of the others (maracatu).

The revolt with this situation of oppression of the white culture which is imposed against blacks and Native Indians echoes the voice of the old *caboclo de lança* - "maracatu is also war" - followed by the movement of the young *caboclo* who wears the baptized clothes, now imbued with a warrior spirit which expresses itself in his capoeira movements, that rhyme with the dance movements of the rock drummer.

Further on, the *caboclos* arise in the midst of the sugarcane field, where they lift their spears and fight with stylized gestures that send us back to a colonial time in Brazil. We begin to hear an instrumental composition on the soundtrack: "O Rasga", by Antônio Nóbrega, a track included in the album by the Quinteto Armorial (*Do Romance ao Galope Nordestino, From the Romance to Northeastern Galloping*, 1974). Taking into account this song, we are therefore in the context of production related to the proposal of the Armorial Movement created by Ariano Suassuna in the 1970s. Antônio Nóbrega is an artist, musician, dancer from Pernambuco, who has an erudite background, but turned to popular art. It is reported that in the early 1970s, he received an invitation from Ariano Suassuna to join the Quinteto Armorial as a violinist. To create erudite music with popular roots was precisely the idea of this musical group, entirely in tune with the armorial proposal, as its name indicates. Therefore, it is very symbolic, in *Maracatu, Maracatus*, the inclusion of this song in question – "O Rasga" – in the scene of the battle in the middle of the sugarcane field. It presents the very clash between different conceptions of popular art. The warriors dance and fight at the same time, with and against the armorial music.

Such an ancestral reference of the mythical clash of white, African and indigenous cultures gives way to the present time, with fast scenes of sugarcane mills in ruins, followed again by images of the hill where the young drummer dances the song "Monólogo ao Pé do Ouvido", by Chico Science & Nação Zumbi (*Da Lama ao Caos*, 1994). "Modernizing the past is a musical evolution": Chico Science's voice epitomizes the discourse which the film tried to build throughout its narrative, accentuating distinct visions of popular culture, but opposing the official perspective and its ideal of purity, instead proposing a resistance that stands in the way of impurity, in terms of dialectic and dreamlike constructions between past and present, rural and urban, regional and international.

Confrontation of Tropicalisms

Twenty years before the birth of Mangubeat and the Árido Cinema in the 1990s, Ariano Suassuna was the main mentor of the Armorial Movement, which emerged in Recife in the 1970s. As Herom Vargas explains:

The general proposal of the *armorials* was to produce Brazilian art based on the *sertão* cultural roots which opposed the constant appeal of composers and artists to the foreign influences considered as obstacles to the construction of an identity for national art (Vargas, 2007, p. 35).

In the armorial proposal, the contact with foreigners would only be important regarding a mythical origin, at the time of the ancestral encounter of diverse cultures that form the Brazilian culture, especially its medieval Iberian links. Therefore, it is a different proposal from that which Manguem and the *Árido Cinema* had in mind, admittedly internationalised and hybrid. The interest of the armorials, on the other hand, was to look for artistic elements whose essence would keep connections with that Iberian medieval culture, preserved in the hinterlands of Pernambuco, whose region opposed to the coast brought foreign influences with greater pressure. According to Herom Vagas (Ibid, p. 46), Suassuna's thesis follows Gilberto Freyre's ideas, for whom miscegenation is related to a myth of origin.

Based on this, it can be deduced that, in this influence of Gilberto Freyre on Ariano Suassuna and the Armorial Movement, there is a repercussion of Freyre's "Lusotropicalismo". Lusotropicalism, according to the historian João Alberto da Costa Pinto (2009), is conceptually defined in a 1958 text: "Integração portuguesa nos trópicos" (Portuguese integration into the tropics), written by Gilberto Freyre (1960). The starting point for the construction of this concept concerns the fact that, for Freyre, Portugal would have inaugurated a certain type of civilization in the fifteenth century, with the union of the European and the tropics, from which a new type of knowledge would have arisen constituted by pragmatic experience. Supposedly, it would be observed there, in the empirical relationship between the European and the tropics, "fraternal practices of assimilation" (Pinto, 2008, p.150), not ethnocentric, but *mestiço*. Because of this appeasing character of the conflicts between colonizers and colonized, lusotropicalism was incorporated into the ideological field of Salazar's policies, which by this way found justification for maintaining Portuguese rule over the African colonies.

In counterpart of this lusotropicalist and later armorial thought, comes another notion of Tropicalism, which serves as a platform for the Manguem Movement proposals. The reference here is the tropicalist movement which, at the end of the 1960s, with artists such as Caetano Veloso and Gilberto Gil (in music), Hélio Oiticica (in visual art), José Celso Martinez Corrêa (in theatre), Glauber Rocha and Rogério Sganzerla (in cinema), took up issues previously proposed by the Modernist Movement of the 1920s.

Within the framework of the possible relations between the Modernism of the 1920s and this Tropicalism of the 1960s, especially regarding the tensions between national and foreign references, it is especially worth remembering Oswald de Andrade's *Anthropophagic Manifesto* (1928) as something considered from several perspectives. Analysing this manifesto, Benedito Nunes (1995) recognises the local/universal dialectic, establishing several different plans of analysis of the Oswaldian work. Such plans are also perceptible in the objects of our study, for example, in the question of the return to the historical past of Brazilian society, with oppositions confronted in the fields of Law, Morals, and Religion, involving conflicts between whites, Indians and blacks and institutions such as the State, the Church and local authorities.

Having these relationships in mind, we can think of synchronic temporalities capable of crossing the Cultural Anthropophagy of the 1920s, the Lusotropicalism of the 1950s, the *Tropicália* of the 1960s, the Manguem Movement of the 1990s, and more, before or after these periods. Such dynamics suggest an idea of post-Tropicalism not as something that comes after Tropicalism, but which is beyond a precise circumscription of times and spaces of a recognisable historical phenomenon⁶.

⁶ Here there is consonance with the proposal by Stefan Solomon (2017), curator of the exhibition *Tropicália and Beyond - Dialogues in Brazilian Film History*, when he includes in his curatorial work tropicalist films such as *Terra em transe* (*Earth in trance*, Glauber Rocha, 1967), *O bandido da luz vermelha* (*The red light bandit*, Rogério Sganzerla, 1968) and *O rei da vela* (*The king of the candle*, José Celso Martinez Corrêa, Noilton Nunes, 1982), but goes further, involving contemporary filmmakers whose works draw on tropicalist ideas and strategies in different senses. The exhibition *Tropicália and Beyond: Dialogues in Brazilian Film History* took place at Tate Modern, London, UK, from November 9th to 12th, 2017.

Politics of Impurity

In its title, the feature film *Árido Cinema* (Lírio Ferreira, 2005) already transposes elements of the homonymous movement. In turn, the narrative also establishes intermediality as an argument: the protagonist, Jonas (Guilherme Weber), works on television. He is a weatherman who travels from São Paulo to Pernambuco for his father's funeral and, on the way, he meets Soledad (Giulia Gam), a videomaker who is making a documentary about the lack of water in the hinterlands.

Another intermedial reference appears with José Celso Martinez Corrêa, director and actor whose history is confused with that of the Teatro Oficina and with the Tropicalism itself in its origins (from the staging of *O Rei da Vela - The King of the Candle* -, a play by Oswald de Andrade, 1933, staged by the Oficina in 1967), that plays a character in the *Árido Cinema* called Meu Velho (My Old Man), a nickname which evokes time. His figure confirms this fact by the way he is characterised in the work, an elderly man with long grey hair and beard, who is a religious leader.

According to Lírio Ferreira (see Nagib & Paiva, 2017a), at the time of the *Árido Cinema* filmmaking, José Celso Martinez Corrêa was also working at the Teatro Oficina acting as Antônio Conselheiro, a character inspired by the historical figure of the religious leader involved in the Canudos War (1896-1897), a conflict reported by Euclides da Cunha in *Os Sertões* (published in 1902). The images of *Meu Velho* and Antônio Conselheiro are therefore intercepted by José Celso Martinez Corrêa. In addition, the story of Antônio Conselheiro had already provided the plot for the first film directed by Lírio Ferreira, the short *O Crime da Imagem* (The Crime of The Image, 1994). Now it returns to the *Árido Cinema*, which, like the aforementioned short, also has as one of its main scenarios - in a clear allusion to one of the primordial spaces of *Cinema Novo - the sertões* (see Xavier, 2007), now revisited in a narrative about "the excess of information and the lack of water".

Incidentally, this is a phrase which will be projected in an audiovisual installation at one of the fundamental sequences of the film, a scene in which the image of *Meu Velho* reappears in video after being captured by Soledad's camera. It is a sequence that shows the many historical layers elaborated from the intermediality, like a media archaeology. In addition to the literature by Euclides da Cunha and his Tropicalist re-reading by Teatro Oficina, Mangubeat aesthetics is also present (symptomatically there are people bathing in the mud of the mangrove). The artistic conception of the scene is due to the art director, Renata Pinheiro. She states that for this film sequence, elements of her exhibition *Arqueologia da Amnésia* (*Amnesia Archaeology*), which she had performed at the Museu de Arte Contemporânea (Museum of Contemporary Art) in Olinda (see Nagib and Paiva, 2017b), have been transposed to the screen.

Almost a decade after her involvement in Lírio Ferreira's film, but shortly before directing *Amor, Plástico e Barulho* (*Love, Plastic and Noise*, 2013), Renata Pinheiro was the art director of another film which has a strong investment in music: *Tattoo* (Hilton Lacerda, 2013). In these two movies, DJ Dolores is the soundtrack creator. Musician, filmmaker and designer, he is also part of the Manguê's history from the beginning when, together with Hilton Lacerda, they played at parties, created album covers (including *Da Lama ao Caos*, by Chico Science & Nação Zumbi), directed music videos and just recently co-directed *Lama dos Dias* (*Mud of the Days*, Canal Brasil, 2018), a series which presents a remediation of the Manguê Movement. Proposed by Bolter & Grusin (1999), the concept of "remediation" is summarized by Walter Moser as follows:

In this attractive book [*Remediation*], the two authors [Bolter & Grusin] dwell on a paradox they place in the vital centre of the media. On the one hand, all new media intends, in short, to provide direct access to the real - it will make its transparency, even its inexistence (immediacy) in relation to what it will mediate. On the other hand, this erasure of the media is achieved by an increase in the level of the media apparatus and the media will proudly display its sophistication of media functioning (hypermediacy) (Moser, 2006, p.56).

In short, the idea of remediation implies operations between media (as Moser summarises) such as "resume, reproduce, re-present, reuse, recycle, revisit, transfer, transmit, transcode, transpose, etc." (ibid). This proposal by Bolter & Grusin is related to the first paradigm discussed by Ágnes Pethö who, in fact, recognizes the concept of remediation as seminal for the studies of intermediality.

Thus, several remediations occur in *Tattoo*, implying a kind of media archaeology in Pernambuco. One of them, possibly the most eloquent one, concerns the figure of Jomard Muniz de Britto and his work, especially his super-8 films. Together with Aristides Guimarães and Celso Marconi, Jomard Muniz de Britto co-authored a manifesto released in 1968, which is entitled *Porque Somos e Não Somos Tropicalistas (Why We Are and We Are Not Tropicalists)*. This attitude - to be or not to be - is explained precisely by the tensions between the different conceptions of Tropicalism then in force: on the one hand, to be is in connection with the Tropicália artists; on the other, not to be is related to the unfolding consequences of the armorial Lusotropicalism discussed above. The issue is seen in the short film produced in super-8 *O Palhaço Degolado (The Beheaded Clown)*, Jomard Muniz de Britto, Carlos Cordeiro, 1977), a film in which the clown, a carnivalesque figure, incessantly interrogates Gilberto Freyre and his theories.⁷

In *Tattoo*, the figure and work of Britto, especially his work with the theatre group Vivencial Diversiones, are recreated respectively in the character of Professor Joubert (played by Silvio Restiffe) and the theatre group Chão de Estrelas. The clown's figure referred to in the short in super-8, for example, reappears at the moment in which Professor Joubert utters a speech-manifesto on the Chão de Estrelas stage, that is to say, in the diegetic place of the film which establishes the remediation of the space of presentations of the theatrical group Vivencial Diversiones with which Jomard Muniz de Britto actually worked creatively in the 1970s, writing plays such as *Nos Abismos da Pernambucália (In The Abyss of Pernambucália)*, *7 Fôlegos (7 Breaths)*, *Perna, Para que te Quero (Perna, Why I Want You)*, among other performances by the group.

In another moment, Professor Joubert's speech-performance comes into the scene: "We are here today to define the scar we will have (...) We are here today to open the door and inaugurate the future". His speech alludes to a political dimension related to the human body, an aspect reminiscent of Michel Foucault (1987), who is even quoted at the moment when Clécio (Chão de Estrelas' director, a character played by Irandhir Santos) meets the soldier Fininha (Jesuíta Barbosa) for the first time and asks: "did you come here to watch over us or punish us?" In *Tattoo*, as biopolitics, the bodies are presented through various choreographies, in the performances of the group that sings, dances, acts, produces artistic objects, makes super 8 films, undertaking all this as a form of resistance against the dictatorship.

Shortly after the manifesto-speech, the military comes to violently repress the staging of the spectacle that is being presented. However, Professor Joubert and the Chão de Estrelas troupe resist and hold the experimental short *Ficção e Filosofia (Fiction and Philosophy)*, the film within the film, which shuffles the layers of spatiality and temporality simultaneously into the past and into the future: "Here we begin to make cave drawings of a new time" - says the voice of the poet who introduces to us the scenes of *Fiction and Philosophy* designed in *Tattoo*, emulating super-8. The scene refers us directly to the intermediality (by the summons of poetry, theatre, dance, visual arts) as a transitory, utopian and even impossible space, inscribed in the passage between media. Thus, this sequence is related to Michel Foucault's concept of heterotopia. As Pethö (2011, p. 42) explains, intermediality can be understood "in spatial terms as a transitory or 'impossible' place (heterotopia)". Or, as a hypothesis, perhaps this scene may also be related to the "dream of a gesture", according to Agamben's (2000) proposal, for whom the cinematographic apparatus implies "an intersection between life and art" (apud Pethö, 2018, p. 172).

⁷ For a significant example of the oppositions of tropicalists from Pernambuco to the views of Gilberto Freyre and Ariano Suassuna, see the short film *O palhaço degolado (The beheaded clown)*, by Jomard Muniz de Britto and Carlos Cordeiro, 1977), available on the web: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nvm1w-utZXM>.

In fact, as a gesture of resistance implying art and life, intermediality is related not only to Tattoo, but also to the other movies taken as a case study in this text: *Maracatu*, *Maracatus* and *Árido Cinema*. Overall, intermediality implies "passages" between art and life, evoking the condition of permanent conflict of history itself, as proposed by Walter Benjamin (2007). At the same time, these passages result from a reality which pulsates through media in interaction in the films themselves, following a theoretical and methodological path discussed by Lúcia Nagib (2018) in her reconsideration of Benjamin's thought for studies on intermediality.

Finally, it is worth noting that the intermedial passages related to art and life are the result of a fully conscious political attitude on the part of the artists, making us refer to several tropicalist segments that in the 1960s and 1970s faced the military dictatorship in Brazil, struggling with several arts and media (see Paiva, 2016). In the specific case of the *Árido Cinema*, proof of this is already in the origins of the Manguê Movement, in the *Crabs with Brain* manifesto (reproduced in the booklet of *Da Lama ao Caos*, by Chico Science & Nação Zumbi), which proposes an "energetic circuit" in response to the crisis of the city, with the "parabolic stuck in the mud" as a symbol-image.

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