



## **Pina Bausch in Brazil: fruit, costumes, happiness and *Água***

**Gloria Luz Godínez Rivas**

Universidad Veracruzana – Xalapa-Enríquez, Mexico

**ABSTRACT – Pina Bausch in Brazil: fruit, costumes, happiness and *Água*** – This article approaches the work of Pina Bausch and the creative processes of the *Tanztheater Wuppertal* Company. The focus is on the work developed during her residencies in several cities around the world, a cartographic repertoire that provides a trans-border and trans-modern historical perspective from the stage. Through the analysis of several scenes of her *Água* (*Water*) piece (2001), and the stereotypes of pleasure, identity, gender and happiness, Bausch's relationship to Latin America (especially Brazil) is described here as an exercise in cultural cannibalism.

Keywords: **Dance-Theatre. Performance. Cannibalism. Body. Gender.**

**RÉSUMÉ – Pina Bausch au Brésil. Des fruits, des vêtements, du bonheur et *Água*** – Le présent article offre une vision générale de l'œuvre de Pina Bausch et ses processus créatifs au sein de la compagnie *Tanztheater Wuppertal*. Dans cette optique, nous nous concentrons sur son travail lors de ses séjours dans plusieurs villes du monde et nous le décrivons sous la forme d'un répertoire cartographique qui apporte une perspective historique transfrontalière et transmoderne du point de vue de la scène. À partir de son parcours urbain, nous expliquons en termes d'anthropophagie culturelle, sa relation avec l'Amérique latine, en particulier avec le Brésil, en analysant certaines scènes de sa pièce *Água* (2001) qui remet en question certains stéréotypes comme le plaisir, l'identité, le genre et le bonheur.

Mots-clés: **Danse-Théâtre. Performance. Cannibalisme. Corps. Genre.**

**RESUMEN – Pina Bausch en Brasil: fruta, vestidos, felicidad y *Água*** – En este artículo nos aproximamos de manera general a la obra de Pina Bausch y a sus procesos de creación con la compañía *Tanztheater Wuppertal*. Desde este marco nos centramos en su trabajo en residencia por algunas ciudades del mundo y lo describimos como un repertorio cartográfico que aporta, desde la escena, una perspectiva histórica transfronteriza y transmoderna. A partir de los recorridos por las ciudades, explicamos en términos de antropofagia cultural su relación con América Latina, particularmente con Brasil analizando algunas escenas de la pieza *Água* (2001) con las que se cuestionan estereotipos como el placer, la identidad, el género y la felicidad.

Palabras-clave: **Danza-Teatro. Performance. Canibalismo. Cuerpo. Género.**

## Introduction

Pina Bausch, one of the most notorious personalities of the performing arts of our time, is the subject matter of this text. In the first section, we offer a general biography and a brief analysis of how she constructed her collective work along with the members of the *Tanztheater Wuppertal* Company who, apart from their characteristic performing style, came to be known as co-creators. As an example of how this process would unfold, we will refer to the memoirs of the Brazilian dancers Regina Advento and Ruth Amarante, which offer a perspective to Bausch's work from a Southern Latin-American viewpoint.

As will be seen in the following sections, these dance-theatre pieces are characterised by their hybrid nature, a product of ambiguous combinations of stage language, poetry and multi-media techniques that allow for a transgression of limits. These combinations are identifiable as much in the technical structure of the pieces as in the body metaphors employed and the absence of linear narratives in them, which testifies to the premise that Pina Bausch's stage proposal is liminal.

After a cursory review of the methodology, we shall focus on the pieces co-produced with cultural institutions from several countries. The practice of wandering about the cities and towns of the world not only expanded the dancers' insight, but also enhanced their creative work. In order to identify their trajectories, places and intensities, we shall group these pieces under the umbrella term of 'cartographic repertoire'.

The danced cartography thus expounded, we shall pause on the map of Latin America in order to identify our hybrid knowledge heritage, which makes us especially receptive to the liminal work of Bausch. We shall analyse several crosses between Mexico City, Buenos Aires, Sao Paulo and Santiago de Chile before landing in Brazil.

Finally, we shall analyse the piece *Água* (*Water*) through the lens of Oswald de Andrade's *Manifesto antropófago* (*Anthropophagic Manifesto*)<sup>1</sup>, appropriating the humid pleasures of eating, dancing and playing with our bodily surfaces in the context of *Carnaval*, as the wild transvestite savages and trans-modern goddesses that we are now.

## Pina Bausch

Born in Solingen, Germany, Pina Bausch (1940-2009) is one of the most important choreographers in the history of dance of the twentieth century. She studied with Kurt Jooss at Essen's *Folkwang School*, and with Antony Tudor at the *Julliard School* in New York. She danced with the New American Ballet with Paul Taylor, and with the *Metropolitan Opera* with Tudor. In 1962, Jooss invited the young ballerina to go back to Germany to work at the *Folkwang Tanzstudio*, where she began to train as a choreographer. In 1973 she was offered the position of director at the Wuppertal Ballet Company, to which she would devote her life entirely. In the 1970s and 1980s, the *Tanztheater Wuppertal* became the most notorious dance-theatre group internationally, and a reference point for stage dance, transcending and widening its disciplinary limits<sup>2</sup>.

However, success would not come easy, as Pina's early works hardly won the hearts of the local audiences used, as they were, to the summer-saults, pirouettes and historical representations (with characters, linear narratives, fiction and all) typical of classical ballet. Little by little, Pina went on building her own language at the *mise-en-scène*: a dramaturgy of bits and pieces that takes us from one place to another, from a children's song to the experience of biting into a juicy fruit, from a vibrant dance with the arms to a video-installation, from toying with dresses to the delicate gestures of an almost motionless ballerina. With a hybrid, fragmented and heterogeneous language – characteristic of postmodern theatre and dance<sup>3</sup> – Bausch challenged an ideological programme that defined, fixed and reproduced what should at the time be considered as professional dance.

## Creative Processes

The road was long and full of experimentation. A crisis was reached when, in 1976, Pina Bausch created a musical inspired in Bertolt Brecht's *The Seven Capital Sins*. The Company came out divided from the staging of this piece. Dancers rejected the work of the director and told Pina how horrible they thought it was: 'I had the feeling that I would never be able to stage a piece with them', she later commented (Servos, 2001, p. 300). However, in 1977 Pina came back with *Bluebeard*, a new project for which

willing dancers had to state their reasons to participate, and from this moment onwards, dancers at the *Tanztheater Wuppertal* would take part as co-creators.

This new working method, developed throughout the Company's professional career, consists primarily of a set of questions that lead to other questions, and a set of images that must later be put together in order to create a piece. Until 2009, each one of the 35 choreographies would be called '*ein Stück von Pina Bausch*' ('a piece by Pina Bausch'); not just dance or theatre, nor just poetry or music, but all these languages together, for, as Bausch herself put it, '[...] the world of movement, dance and poetry plays a very important role, but it shouldn't be unswerving...' <sup>4</sup> (Adolphe, 2007, p. 40).

Susan Broadhurst (1999) has used the term 'liminal' <sup>5</sup> to refer to Pina Bausch's hybrid pieces. As Turner (1966, p. 95) puts it, 'The liminal phase is necessarily ambiguous', and in it 'the mood of may be' (Broadhurst, 1999, p. 12) prevails. This ambiguous mood, halfway between performance, dance, multimedia techniques, music and theatre, characterises Bausch's work. Apart from the transposition of theatrical languages, the pieces contain themes in which hypothesis, fantasy, conjecture and desire are prevalent. The *Wuppertal* dance-theatre is a modern theatricality, and its hybrid features are clearly explained by the notion of liminality. Moreover, as the Argentinian Jorge Dubatti (2016, p. 12) points out, we must bear in mind that the scenic event constitutes a 'permanent liminality'.

*Tanztheater Wuppertal* pieces are the result of long creative processes that begin with one hundred or two hundred questions, phrases or words about a subject written down by Pina, and to which dancers would then answer in their own way with movements, ordinary gestures, words or songs. The most important question for the choreographer was 'what is it that *moves* people?'—both physically and emotionally. The preoccupation was not how dancers move, but why they move, an aspect that makes them co-creators rather than just interpreters. A well-known reflection of Pina's is contained in the following extract from an interview:

J. M. Adolphe: On several occasions you have said that what interests you is how people move, how to find movements...

P. Bausch: When I say things like that I think of nothing else but movements, but in the sense of setting oneself in motion, of moving and being

moved internally. *Bewegt* in German means both ‘moved’ and ‘commoved’ (Adolphe, 2007, p. 40)<sup>6</sup>.

At Bausch’s invitation to appeal to their memories, dancers go back to their childhood, to the people who were important to them, to the countries where they had lived and the communities from which they hailed. This can be seen as much in the piece *1980*, in which the Brazilian Ruth Amarante engages in the games she used to play as a little girl – which derived from the improvisation of US and Australian women, as Amarante had spent five years in the United States (Fernandes, 2005, p. 114) – as in *Masurca Fogo*<sup>7</sup> (1998) where Regina Advento, born in Belo Horizonte, brings her memories to a scene in which a hen flies towards the stalls, an homage to her grandmother who used to raise chickens in her house up in the mountains: ‘as you approached them with the corn, they started flapping all over the place’ (Wiegand, 2017, n.p.), remembers Regina, adding that she had proposed the image to Pina and in the process it was decided that Beatrice Libonati resignified this memory. These aesthetically-reconstructed memories show something of the Brazilian dancers and of Brazil.

Pina annotated everything that she liked and disliked:

It is with this stuff that I build every frame, as one would use bricks and mortar in a house [...] It is not that simple: I know what I’m looking for, but I have no idea where I’m going to find it. I feel it but can’t see it; sometimes it appears neatly, and others it’s a big blur (Pina Bausch apud Jurado, 2009, p. 13).

At the end of each improvisation, dancers would repeat what Pina had selected, and later, as they returned to their improvisations, these fragments would be combined, and pieces would be assembled – as in a video montage – at the threshold between theatre and dance.

### Cartographic Repertoire

Bausch created one of the first European companies with people from other parts of the world. Its hybrid aesthetics and confluence of bodies – skins, statures, weights, interbreeding, cultural identities and genders – attest to the group’s ethical position and a politics of transculturation. In order to explain in other words the reality that we are living—the same reality that the Wuppertal company has been representing over the last decades –

we resort to the term ‘trans-modernity’, to refer to a world in which, among other things, ‘it is no longer possible to retrieve the immovable national identities’ (Rodríguez Magda, 2004, p. 11), as migrations have led to intermingling as much in colonized countries as in the countries of the colonizers, producing ‘trans-ethnic communities in delimited territories’, as well as ‘trans-territorial ethnic communities’. Following this idea, the *Tanztheater Wuppertal* is a little trans-ethnic community.

In *Masurca Fogo* we see the Belo-Horizontian Regina Advento carry out a juggling exercise with cubes in her hands and head, in clear allusion to the African women who sell fish in the streets of Lisbon. The beautiful mulatto woman remembers having seen immigration policemen show up as the women hid their baskets, ‘sitting on top of them to wait and wait, until the policemen left, and the women went back to fetch the fish and carried on with their business’ (Lopes, 1998, n.p.). It is interesting that an international production financed with Portuguese money should make references to the colonies of yore, as Cape Verde and Brazil.

Some people criticised the piece saying that what they had seen on the stage was Africa and not Lisbon. But that was precisely Pina Bausch’s contribution, to make visible what in the eyes of the colonizer remains invisible, that is, the strong presence of the Cape Verdean community in Portugal. On these reflections, Claudia Galhós cites Gil Mendo from Lisbon’s High School of Dance:

Unfortunately, I think Lisbon has a provincial side, manifest in our supposedly being a multicultural city, where people from various origins live, albeit separately. From the perspective of our community, we live as though we were in a village. We incorporate the fact that we constantly pass by people from other places and with totally different cultural memories, but we seem to make nothing of it. And whenever someone visits from abroad, they perceive this (Galhós, 2010, p. 228)<sup>8</sup>.

What *Masurca Fogo* evidences is ‘the trans-ethnic cosmopolitanism’ (Rodríguez Magda, 2004, p. 11) that questions the European identity, as it does the Portuguese and Brazilian ones – that is, identity in general. Chilean thinker Ronald Kay (1988, p. 109), Pina Bausch’s second husband, defined the work of the *Tanztheater Wuppertal* as ‘a way to see history’, to which we could add, a trans-border way of seeing it.

Border crossing is present in Pina Bausch's work. In over ten of her creations on residence in American, Asian and European cities, 'the other' (i.e., the foreigner) make themselves visible, disturbing the established, homogenizing order: *Palermo, Palermo* (1989), Palermo, Italy; *Tanzabend II* (1991), Madrid; *Nur Du* (1996), Los Angeles, California; *Der Fensterputzer* (1997), Hong Kong; *Masurca Fogo* (1998), Lisbon; *Wiesenland* (2000), Budapest; *Água* (2001), São Paulo; *Nefes* (2003), Istanbul; *Ten Chi* (2004), Saitama, Japan; *Rough Cut* (2005), Seoul; *Bamboo Blues* (2007), Calcutta and Kerala, India; and the posthumous piece, '*...Como el mosquito en la piedra, ay sí sí sí...*' (2009), Santiago de Chile.

With all these pieces, Pina Bausch created – involuntarily – a cartographic repertoire or a danced cartography of sorts; maps in which cities are connected by the flux of dance; cartographies that commemorate the journeys across the world in which both choreographer and dancers went on collecting expressions from different cultures: children's games, popular dances, images of poverty, of madness and prostitution, colours, rites, music and greetings in different languages. These *mise-en-scènes* can be observed collectively from transcultural and subaltern perspectives.

### The Latin American map

Our intention in this article is to highlight Latin America in Pina Bausch's work. It is a territory inhabited by fragmented bodies, constantly devoured by colonialism. We are consumers of culture with bodies that carry anomalies and alterities, something that had already been explored in Bausch's pieces since the seventies, and which we perfectly understand in our hybrid societies. We know that multiculturalism is a global phenomenon and yet, Latin America is 'heterogeneous and multi-temporal', which has made Néstor García Canclini (2009, p. XVI) declare: 'Latin America is running out of national projects'. Far from scaring us, that assertion encourages us to formulate discourses from our marginalised locations and 'produce and imagine new ways of using our bodies, as well as power and desire', as Sayak Valencia Triana (2010, p. 10) states from Tijuana.

Going back to the cartographic repertoire of the *Tanztheater Wuppertal*, four capitals stand out in the map of Latin America: Buenos Aires, Mexico City, Sao Paulo and Santiago de Chile. These four megalopolises

are no longer ruled by the centre-periphery logic, but are connected by an economic, cultural and media network. They are the stages in which pieces like *Bandoneón* (1981), *Danzón* (1995), *Água* (2001) and ‘...*Como el mosquito en la piedra, ay sí sí sí...*’ (2009) were created, in that order. These urban expanses, teeming with people, and full of cars, garbage, sounds, markets, shopping centres, dance halls, theatres, bars and popular festivals, as they are, show their social contrasts, but also open up spaces for street wandering and reflection.<sup>9</sup> These megalopolises have a history of lost opportunities, overpopulation, extreme poverty and wealth, and failed presidential elections; in brief, a lack of control of economic, political and social processes that turns us into carriers and consumers of *hybrid cultures* (García Canclini, 2009).

The bodies that move across the streets of Buenos Aires, dance in the halls of Mexico City and seat at the dining tables of Sao Paulo reveal forms of incorporating the history of each nation, most evidently through public gestures like greeting, asking, picking up a partner, playing, praying, drinking, eating, dancing, selling our bodies, cross dressing, begging, forgetting and remembering the dead; customs and ways of co-existence in this world. Some of these gestures and movements are taken to the stage in the work of Pina Bausch: in her pieces, the itineraries and wanderings in the urban areas of Latin America are incorporated in the form of metaphors.

### **Pina Bausch in Brazil**

#### *Fruit*

We shall now focus on the piece *Água* (*Water*) produced after a residence in Sao Paulo in 2001. This piece approaches beauty and pleasure in an almost inebriating way. It is as though the famous choreographer from Wuppertal had identified in Brazil the potency and pleasure of eating, the taste. At a certain moment, a ballerina appears onstage peeling an orange in order to noisily bite into it. A man approaches with a microphone to amplify the sounds of tasting. Between savouring and rejoicing, the woman tells us how she discovered, after a nightmare, a wonderful starred night sky. This is clearly an invitation to eat up the world, to bite into it and savour it, as though we were authentic cannibals and knew the secrets of fruit, skin and desire, as though we delighted in food as union and communion. This



is the savage wisdom that Oswald de Andrade (1928) attributes to Brazilian people, reacquiring the image of the anthropophagus built by European colonizers to refer to the native inhabitants of Brazil and the rest of Latin America.

The exuberant nature of Brazil is present in *Água* in a video by Peter Pabst. Projected on the walls of the theatre are aerial images of the luxuriant vegetation of the Amazon rainforest and the power of the waters of the Iguazú waterfalls, in all their glory and immensity. Some thinkers of the sixteenth century, like Bartolomé de las Casas, identified the good and pure Indian with the inhabitant of Paradise, a geography full of colour, fruits, plants and animals, in the confines of which working was practically unnecessary. Counter to this view, however, other theoreticians of the Conquest, as Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda, built an image of the Indian as barbaric and cannibalistic, alongside the notion of an inferior race that justified the exercise of power over an entire population, and the building of an empire.<sup>10</sup> These imaginaries were also taken on by the colonised peoples themselves and the mixed races. Some of them identified with the noble savage, and others with the anthropophagite, assuming two opposed postures *vis à vis* the colonizer: one of acceptance and another one of resistance. The act of eating fruit and shamelessly savouring it, propagating with the help of a microphone the sounds of the tongue and the saliva, can be interpreted as an apology of pleasure: eating becomes a savage gesture, as is done in the jungle, with joyful noise, devouring without protocol, tables, chairs or cutlery, spilling the sap upon the earth. Our interpretation of this scene of *Água* comes from the southern part of the American continent, where Pina seems to have identified the vital force of the cannibal announced almost one century earlier by Oswald de Andrade (1928, p. 4) in the following words: 'Anthropophagy. The absorption of the sacred enemy. To transform him into a totem'.

In contrast with this image in *Água* is another one from the piece *Walzer*, open in 1982. On stage we see a large table with a white tablecloth around which dancers, wearing long dresses and formal suits, drink wine from elegant wine glasses and taste expensive canapés. 'Ward off unpleasant flies!' exclaims the dancer Meryl Tankard as she barges in pushing a cart with 'effective weapons' against flies. She takes from it an ordinary fly swatter and holds it before the audience: 'Take a fly swatter... to attack each fly

that comes your way', and then she proceeds to hit with it each one of the dancers who walk in line beside her. They fall on the floor one after another as if they were insects, while the rest of the dancers continue to drink, eat and talk around the table and the food platters, unperturbed. Tankard then displays flypapers, unrolls one of them and sticks it on the wall of the orchestra, while the dancers who pose as flies walk towards it to stick their noses. The audience laughs, and the exhibition continues with ever more sophisticated contraptions to kill flying insects: deadly fumes, aerosols, invisible repellents... Tankard's gestures become increasingly more violent, and at the end of the scene she spits and chases the dancers, directing hand blows to them. The audience stops laughing as the violence becomes more evident and the dancers are finally perceived as men and women representing not flies but human beings who are persecuted, while the rest of the guests keep to the etiquette and carry on with the feast as if nothing happened. The thought of genocidal operations crosses our minds, such as those carried out in America and Africa by European colonizers; another way of eating the other, or 'the low-intensity anthropophagy accumulated in the sins of catechism – envy, usury, slander, murder' (Andrade, 1928, p. 4), a form of cannibalism in disguise with the gold and high couture of the 'so-called cultured and Christian peoples, against which [this form of anthropophagy] we direct our actions' (Andrade, 1928, p. 4).

As explains Carlos Jáuregui (2008), from the sixteenth century to this date, this vast geographical and cultural space called Latin America has been determined by both a human-flesh eating monster and a fragmented body devoured by colonialism – that is, a two-way form of cannibalism. Taking the idea of cultural anthropophagy to another level, we can say that both choreographer and dancers fed on the bodily knowledge of popular dances (such as tango, polka, *danzón*, *forró*, samba, *cumbia*, *cueca* and bolero), which they would later digest in their *performatic* stomachs to create hybrid dances, giving way to 'new processes of circulation and reconversion of culture in postmodernity' (Jáuregui, 2008, p. 573) or, better still, in transmodernity, as the intermingling of the last centuries has given way to a whole set of new questions now intervened by screens and the new technology (Rodríguez Magda, 2004).

*Costumes*

In *Água*, dancer Regina Advento enters the stage alone. The voluptuous dark-skin woman is wearing a golden satin dress, her hair and flounced skirt covered with twinkling lights. The glow of her dress on her dark skin seems to transform her into an Afro-Brazilian goddess of the twenty-first century – a trans-modern goddess of sorts. The colonial history of Brazil, made visible on Regina's skin, dresses up with technological, carnival-like prostheses that in our opinion borrow some of the features of the female performances of the sixties, particularly those of Japanese artist Atsuko Tanaka<sup>11</sup> (1932-2005).

Tanaka's acclaimed performance *Electric Dress* (1956) was directed to the exploration of the role of costumes on the stage as a means of expression. The piece eventually took form with 120 wires, bearing lit-up coloured twinkling light bulbs, on her body in several layers, which, at the end of the performance, she took off one by one. The lights went off until the body surface was reduced to a black leotard demonstrating the artificial beauty of the body and questioning the idea of the natural body as support for action.

Regina Advento's solo reminds us of Atsuko Tanaka's *Electric Dress*. Although the language is different, there is undoubtedly a wink by Pina<sup>12</sup> to Tanaka's performance – an assimilation, in digestive terms. In both instances, the electric dress, as a bodily surface, communicates, exposes and dramatizes a certain notion of interiority. Both the Japanese and the Brazilian women are transformed by a sensorial and communicative surface. And, as Judith Butler (2007, p. 266) puts it: '[...] acts, gestures and desire create the effect of an internal nucleus or substance, albeit at the body's *surface*.' In other words, if such thing as an essence or interiority existed, it would only be present or hidden through the act of wearing an overdress. Brazilians know this very well, and for that reason they *produce* their bodily surfaces, dressing, overdressing and travestyng their bodies with colourful feathers, synthetic skins, dazzling sequins, plastic and bulbs. For, as Andrade (1928, p. 2) has remarked: '[...] we were never catechised. What we did was Carnival. The Indian dressed as Senator of the Empire. Acting the part of Pitt'.

Another scene in which the body's surface and transvestism are worked upon is built with beach towels featuring spectacular male and fe-

male bodies. Dancers robe their bodies in these voluptuous naked bodies, leaving their faces visible but hiding their gender while presenting it. Male faces feature bodies in bikinis, while female dancers enhance their sensual forms with the towels or transform them into hyper masculine mulattoes. This is Bausch's parody of the notions of identity and gender; as Judith Butler would put it: '*inventions* fabricated and preserved through bodily signs and other discursive methods' (Butler, 2007, p. 266). 'One has to bear in mind that gender, for example, is a *corporal style*, an 'act', so to speak, that is at the same time intentional and *performative* (where *performative* indicates a contingent construction of dramatic significance)' (Butler, 2007, p. 271).

The towel-as-mask scene shows that the game of appearances or surfaces is a proven theatrical element, regulated by public fantasy. The landscape resulting from the relations among people may vary in rhythm, colour, light and intensity, but what may not vary are the efforts to represent our own idealizations of ourselves, the inherited gestures and the dresses, as well as the existing disputes between the bodies that we are, the bodies that we want to be, and those that are approved or rejected by society. Although transvestism in this piece is barely touched upon, in other pieces by Pina Bausch, like *Seven Capital Sins* (1976), *Carnations* (1982), *Bandoneón* (1981), and *Palermo, Palermo* (1989), the force of the transvestite is clearly exposed in various scenes, demonstrating the imitative condition of gender and its contingency<sup>13</sup>.

Pitfalls, as well as erratic and recurrent behaviour, are present everywhere and endlessly repeated. We must ask ourselves whether, from the perspective of *Água*, the value accorded to the heteronormative image, the game of appearances, and the mistaken *body worship* are not other forms of horror. In 2001, the year *Água* opened, two men were condemned to 21 years in prison in Sao Paulo, charged with the death of Edison Neris da Silva, a homosexual man beaten to death. Both the judicial process and the sentence are considered historic events, as it was the first time in Brazilian history that a crime involving sexual discrimination was judged.

Transvestism is a constant in the dance-theatre of the Wuppertal, and it reminds us of how the production of our bodies is a re-appropriation of our desires, flesh and movements, a subversive act that sublimates itself in terms of cannibalism: 'Only the elites themselves managed to practice car-

nal anthropophagy, which carries in itself the highest meaning of life' (Andrade, 1928, p. 4). This notion of the body was already announced by the reformers of theatre of the nineteenth century, like Adolphe Appia, who defined the artist as one who has no shame of his/her body, but loves it and projects it on everyone else: 'the artist-creator of *live* art sees his body reflected on everyone else's body; feels all movement in other bodies as his own movements, and lives thus, *corporeally*, in-mankind' (2000, p. 384). In its exaltation of life, anthropophagy reaches such a level of consciousness, and the carnal enthusiasm is also evident in the movements of Pina Bausch's *Água*.

### *Happiness and Água*

Though the spaces generated in this piece inspired in the city of Sao Paulo are joyful and luminous, they lead us into the absurd and into various contradictions. The effect of the paradox is however less disturbing than in other pieces by Pina Bausch. 'Drunkenness seizes he who has aimlessly walked the streets for a long time', affirmed Walter Benjamin (2005, p. 422), analysing the figure of the *flâneur*. And this apparently is what has happened to the Wuppertal Company. In *Água*, luminosity, easily perceived onstage, is an effect of the fantastic festivity of Brazil, an exuberant and musical country endowed with heat, beauty and water. 'Before the conquerors discovered Brazil [stated Oswald de Andrade, 1928, p. 4], Brazil had discovered happiness'. But one of the functions of theatre and stage dance is, according to Artaud (1978, p. 53), to make the transit from a 'every day and direct' reality into another reality, 'dangerous and archetypical'. And, is it not true that the most recurrent and dangerous archetypes – the most manipulated ones – are precisely those of goodness and Paradise, beauty and happiness?

*Água* represents the happy stage of the German choreographer, as she marvelled before other ways of living. It is interesting to see how that wink to Paradise is constant throughout the piece, as though the Brazilian cannibals had devoured the critical and melancholic glance that had characterised Pina Bausch's work during the seventies and eighties, in order to coat it with joy. André Lepecki (2009) maintains that a preconceived idea of stage dance links it to sadness.<sup>14</sup> Maybe this is why Pina's sad works were so well received, while the happy ones, as *Água*, were the most criticised.

*Água* is the best example of Pina's happy vision: a holiday spirit floats onstage, so much so that it brings unease to those who expected to see references to the favelas, with all their poverty and violence. In an interview by Claudia Galhós, the German choreographer explained that she had seen and stayed in shantytowns, and that what had really impressed her was the human warmth that made everything else fade: 'It is hard to believe that people in such conditions could keep such extraordinary smiles, friendliness and musicality. I felt the need to tell them what I felt while I was there, and I felt very nice things' (Galhós, 2010, p. 238).

Bausch's contact with Latin America helped her cast away a host of deeply rooted European cultural prejudices about what constitutes 'happiness' and 'sadness'. She wanted to learn about alternatives to the way of life brought about by modernity, and she asked herself: where have we gone wrong? How is it possible to live otherwise? (Légeret-Manochhaya, 2010, p. 100). The search for alternative forms of living begins with challenging the archetypes that frame our bodies and thoughts, as well as our emotions and subjectivities.

Happiness, pleasure and drunkenness are hardly banal, as they come from atmospheres other than duel, misery and solitude. In any case, these fragile feelings are dangerously manipulated in the world of consumption. Therefore, re-appropriation of the body and its pleasure is an act of resistance. The children of Brazilian water, 'free of complexes, madness or prostitutions' (Andrade, 1928, p. 4), dance and devour with their overflowing bodies. This dance-theatre piece ends with a children's game of water shooting, the conflicts between men and women from other pieces being thus resolved to the rhythm of sea tides and cannibalistic pleasures.

What happens to the dancers when their bodies are superimposed on a video projection of a forest inhabited by leopards? And what happens when the water ceases to be a video image and actually wets the bodies of dancers onstage, refreshing them, soaking their dresses and revealing the forms underneath, their textures enhanced by the stage lights? Another life is created, affirmed Pina Bausch: 'Those are very sensual experiences. I love to put all that nature onstage for the different impression it gives us' (Servos 2001, p. 303). Beauty, fertility and love are attributes of the goddess of fresh water, Oshun, younger sister of Yemanya, the goddess of the sea, origin of life on earth. Both deities are always present in Brazilian culture. And, as we men-

tioned above, Regina Advento, the dark dancer dressed in gold satin and adorned with blinking bulbs resembles a goddess, a trans-modern Oshun that amalgamates tradition, technology, dance and performance.

Of these mixtures, combinations and hybridisations are formed our Latin American identities. We must understand our own interstices, cavities and thresholds between different worlds, to translate us and recognise our place in Pina Bausch's danced cartographies and dramaturgies of remains. For, as the poem by Ferreira Gullar goes, maybe it is art and art only that can pick up the fragments of ourselves, our multiple parts:

A part of me is the world in its entirety  
Another part is nobody, a bottomless pit.

A part of me is multitude  
Another part is estrangement and solitude.

A part of me weighs and ponders  
Another part hallucinates.

A part of me lunches and dines  
Another part gets scared.

A part of me is permanent  
Another part is unpredictable.

A part of me is madness  
Another part is language.

To translate one into the other  
That is a life-and-death affair  
Or is it art? (Gullar, 2012)<sup>15</sup>.

## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> See the original Portuguese version in: <http://www.tanto.com.br/manifestoantropofago.htm> '*Antropofagia, a absorção do inimigo sacro. Para transformá-lo em totem*' (Andrade, 1928).
- <sup>2</sup> See Godínez (2016) and Godínez (2017) for a more detailed biography of Pina Bausch.
- <sup>3</sup> Pina Bausch's name is on the long list of names proposed by the German philosopher Hans-Thies Lehmann (2010, p. 13) to illustrate his reflections on post-dramatic theatre: '[...] a new paradigm constituted by the almost-

inevitable cohabitation of *future* structures and stylistic elements and traditional components’.

- <sup>4</sup> ‘[...] le mouvement, la danse, la poésie, c’est un monde qui joue un grand rôle mais ne devrait pas être fixe...’ (Adolphe, 2007, p. 40).
- <sup>5</sup> In Latin, the noun *limen* means threshold, door, beginning or prologue. The term *liminal* was first used by anthropologist Victor Turner (1966, p. 95-96) to refer to the state of openness and indefinability that characterise the intermediate phase of the rites of passage. Liminality is often related to death, eclipses (solar, lunar), invisibility, bisexuality and embryos. Liminal beings are not here nor there, but in a sort of limbo between the positions assigned by laws, costumes and conventions.
- <sup>6</sup> Adolphe – A plusieurs reprises, vous avez dit que ce qui vous intéresse, c’est comment bougent les gens, comment trouver des mouvements [...] P. Bausch – Lorsque je dis des choses de ce genre, je ne pense pas que mouvements, mais à la façon d’être mis en mouvement, mû, ému intérieurement. En allemand, bewegt, c’est le même mot, mû, ému (Adolphe, 2007, p. 40).
- <sup>7</sup> *Mazurca*, the name of a seducing Cape Verdean couple dance, was chosen by Pina Bausch to call this piece made in Lisbon, Portugal. The piece features the projection of long sequences of a *mazurca* contest in Cape Verde.
- <sup>8</sup> Infelizmente, considero que há um lado provinciano em Lisboa que se reflete muito nisto de sermos aparentemente uma cidade multicultural, porque temos a presença hoje de pessoas de origens muito diversas, mas vivemos afastados uns dos outros. Dentro da nossa perspectiva de comunidade, vivemos como si estivéssemos numa aldeia. Incorporámos isto de nos cruzarmos com outras pessoas, outras origens e memórias culturais completamente diferentes das nossas, mas parece que não nos diz nada. E chega alguém de fora e apercebe-se disso (Galhós, 2010, p. 228).
- <sup>9</sup> In the book *Pina Bausch. Cuerpo y danza-teatro* (Godínez, 2017, p. 135-137), the figure of the Baudelairean *flâneur* is conjured to understand the aimless street wandering to which resident dancers lent themselves in the process of creating international pieces.
- <sup>10</sup> Let’s recall Michel Foucault (1996, p. 55) when he states that racism is part of the legitimising mechanism of war. It is the fundamental element that makes war possible, upholding it to defend one race from another race, sub-race or counter-race. The French philosopher revisits the struggle among races from



the Colonial enterprises of the seventeenth century to the emergence of the 'State racism' of the twentieth century.

- <sup>11</sup> Atsuko Tanaka is one of the most outstanding members of the Gutai group (1955-1972), led by Japanese artist Jirō Yoshihara, who invited his colleagues to 'do things that nobody else does' (Yoshimoto, 2005, p. 19). Inspired by the vanguards of Japanese calligraphy, the French painting of the time and the actions of US painters like Jackson Pollock, the members of the Gutai availed of unconventional means to present performances as creative processes. It is important to underline the influence of Japanese post-war art on these new creators. The body as a tool, as territory for research and as support for other materials was characteristic of the Gutai artists in general, but the way in which Atsuko Tanaka uses it sets her work apart from the rest and has contributed to later reflections on the female body.
- <sup>12</sup> See Godínez (2017) for more details on the relationship between Pina Bausch's work and performance.
- <sup>13</sup> See Godínez (2017) for further reflections on transvestism in *Bandoneón*.
- <sup>14</sup> Lepecki develops this idea found in one of the first texts on dance. At the end of the sixteenth century, Thoinot Arbeau (1966) coined the term choreography, using as an epigraph the following phrase from Ecclesiastes (3, 4): 'a time to weep, and a time to laugh;/ a time to mourn, and a time to dance'. According to Lepecki, instead of separating weeping from laughter, that 'and' connected the time to dance with the time to mourn, so that European stage dance acquired melancholic characteristics, as though it were destined to grieve, to sacrifice. Therefore, in our present Latin American realities, it is urgent to question the relationships between dance and skilled movement, and dance and melancholia.
- <sup>15</sup> Uma parte de mim é todo mundo  
Outra parte é ninguém, fundo sem fundo.  
Uma parte de mim é multidão  
Outra parte estranheza e solidão.  
Uma parte de mim pesa, pondera  
Outra parte delira.  
Uma parte de mim almoça e janta  
Outra parte se espanta.  
Uma parte de mim é permanente

Outra parte se sabe de repente.  
Uma parte de mim é só vertigem  
Outra parte linguagem.  
Traduzir uma parte na outra parte  
Que é uma questão de vida e morte  
Será arte? (Gullar, 2012).

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Gloria Luz Godínez Rivas is a Researcher at Universidad Veracruzana's Centre for the Study, Creation and Documentation of the Arts (Cecda).

E-mail: [lucurita@gmail.com](mailto:lucurita@gmail.com)

This unpublished text, translated by Luis Esparza Serra and proofread by Ananyr Porto Fajardo, is also published in Spanish in this issue.

*Received on September 4, 2017*

*Approved on March 2, 2018*

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