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# Mass Culture and the Laboratory of Late Modernism in Patrícia Galvão's *Parque industrial*

Sarah Ann Wells

*O presente artigo analisa o romance Parque industrial (1933), de Patrícia Galvão (Pagu), como uma tentativa de repensar a forma do romance em relação com a esfera crescente da cultura de massas nos anos 30 no Brasil. Minha proposta é ler o romance como um texto do modernismo tardio preocupado, pela primeira vez, tanto com o registro quanto com a produção da figura emergente e instável das massas. Eu focalizo em duas mídias: o cinema, especificamente na montagem soviética, e a voz humana, mostrando como Pagu negocia com elas. A partir das teorias contemporâneas de Walter Benjamin e a reflexão mais recente de Roberto Schwarz, situo o romance de Pagu como parte de uma batalha mais ampla em torno de como escrever com e através da lógica da reprodução seriada.*

In 1933, Patrícia Galvão, alias Pagu—artist, writer and recent adherent to the Brazilian Communist party—published her first novel, *Parque industrial*, subtitled “romance proletário.” Set in São Paulo in the early 1930s, *Parque industrial* interweaves multiple but incomplete narratives, preferring instead to expose the reader to jagged puzzle pieces of experiences. Its chapters feature bold titles, interrupted by graphics that divide them into short, pithy scenes. Not coincidentally, its first chapter opens with an advertising slogan, “São Paulo é o maior parque industrial da América do Sul,” (17), which also gave rise to its title. In fact, throughout its many scenes and chapters, the novel submits the processes of mass culture—including advertising, popular magazines, radio, and above all film—to a critique and attempted rehabilitation,

underscoring them as part of a larger, continuous struggle. In this article, I explore how the novel tests both the potentials and limits of mass culture during the 1930s, inaugurating a departure from the premises of its *modernista* predecessors. In contrast to the focus on aesthetic exploration rupture that characterized these, *Parque industrial* engages the problem of how to narrate contemporaneous struggles in a language that takes into account an emergent historical agent: the masses. Cinema, in particular, embodies changes in technology, spectatorship, and collective identities advanced by her contemporaries, including Walter Benjamin, Siegfried Kracauer and Sergei Eisenstein.<sup>1</sup>

At the same time, the novel reveals a palpable ambivalence with respect to the cinema, critiquing its close relationship to capitalism and the subjectivities of spectatorship it seemed to engender. As a result, at different moments Pagu also turns to the materiality of the present, embodied voice as an antidote to the spectacle of cinema. In this way, as though to rehearse the possibilities of modernist literature in the age of mass culture, in *Parque industrial* Pagu negotiates between media, cinema and the voice, in a response profoundly conditioned by the political and economic crises of 1930 and the perceived decadence of the early *modernistas*. Ultimately, *Parque industrial* constitutes a laboratory of the problem of writing in Brazil in an emergent media ecology, in which formerly new media such as cinema and the radio are no longer novel opportunities but seemingly unavoidable, contradictory facets of daily life, increasingly brought under the wing of both the state and consumer culture. In order to engage with its tumultuous present, the novel suggests, one must confront the languages of these consolidated media.

### Pagu and the Late Modernist Laboratory

In the first decades of the twentieth century, São Paulo had been positioned as the stage for the most triumphant of the Latin American avant-gardes, ripe with futurist promise.<sup>2</sup> It would be up to those writing in the wake of this period to trace the residual oligarchical system that underpinned this modernizing thrust, to probe the underside of this futurity. In this sense, the revision of modernism that occurs in the 1930s anticipates later, more explicitly theoretical critiques of the period. In his well-known essay, “A carroça, o bonde e o poeta modernista,” for example, Roberto Schwarz reflects upon the early work of Oswald de Andrade in ways that echo Pagu’s project in *Parque industrial*. Through a reading of Oswald’s *pau-brasil* poetry of 1924, Schwarz puts forth a critique of the celebratory mode of *modernista* primitivism in Brazil. The “formula” of the early Oswald, Schwarz writes, consisted of the juxtaposition of past and present elements of Brazilian history in order to form an allegory of the country as a whole (12). This strategy was not unique

to Oswald but persistent in Brazilian letters; what was unique was the inversion of values that Oswald inaugurated (3). In Schwarz's reading, Oswald's early *modernista* texts overturned the pessimism associated with what was once considered Brazilian "backwardness" (and what has been rebaptized, in the late-twentieth- and early-twenty-first-centuries, as "multiple modernities").<sup>3</sup> Instead of being a lack, the apparent coexistence of different systems or historical periods was something to be celebrated and, implicitly, aestheticized, in what Schwarz labels "um ufanismo crítico" (13), an aestheticization that recalls a broader, Latin American avant-garde interest in the homology between *new world* and *new writing*.<sup>4</sup>

This paratactical writing in which distinct elements of Brazilian life co-exist, as it were, on the same plane (as in the "carroça" and "bonde" of his essay's title) is also a means of decontextualizing the unequal elements of Brazilian society. In this sense, it is akin to the leveling effect achieved between background and foreground in Tarsila do Amaral's paintings from the period, both of which have the effect of reducing the contradictions that they simultaneously invoke (23). While he admires Oswald's attempt to achieve reciprocity with the cultures of the center (26), Schwarz considers it ineffectual for the historical density of the Brazilian situation, with its legacy of colonialism, slavery, and imperialism (23). Ultimately, he writes, the value of Oswald's early poetry lies not as an act of deconstruction but in revealing, perhaps unintentionally, such processes.

Written in 1977, Schwarz's essay comes in the wake of a series of vindications of Oswald as a cosmopolitan writer by brothers Augusto and Haroldo de Campos (Aguilar 32), but it can also be read in terms of the revisionist readings of the avant-gardes that begin in Latin America and Europe in the post-1968 context, in which writers such as Peter Bürger and Ángel Rama returned to the movements of the 'teens and 1920s and inquired into their legacies.<sup>5</sup> Writing from this vantage point, Schwarz noted that the notion of progress inherent to the avant-gardes had not only failed but has also been subsumed into its ostensible opposite, the logic of late capitalism. In this sense, returning to the primal scene of *modernismo*, he searches for the seeds of its negation. The beginning of this broader rereading of the movement, I would argue, can be found in writers of the 1930s, many of them *modernistas* themselves.

The epigraph by Aristides do Amaral which opens *Parque industrial* insists immediately that we are in a transformative period, having just entered into a new era. These statistics on the curtailing of production with the economic crisis of 1929–1930 locate us in a city on the cusp of a global upheaval; the 1929 crisis led to great instability in Brazil, including rapid deflation, the retraction of consumer markets, and a drop in foreign credit, all of which heightened its continued dependency on foreign capital (Cardoso 103). The

ratcheting up of industrial production—with its apex in 1928, the epigraph tells us—is followed by a plummeting, due to the “depressão econômica que aflige o mundo inteiro e cuja repercussão começamos a sentir desde o mês de outubro de 1929” (15). Throughout the novel, references to the recent crisis abound, sketching explicit affinities between the context of the novel’s production, its audience, and its subject matter: “Os professores penetram nas classes depois de falar muito sobre a crise. Sovadinhos. Recalcados” (38).

Like Oswald’s poem, *Parque industrial* employs the motif of the *bonde*, opening the novel with a scene whose cinematic register is undeniable: snaking through the city streets, this modern form of transportation rushes past a group of workers, flashes a message of propaganda, and receives a rude gesture in response.<sup>6</sup> Later scenes link the streetcar to a global network of exploitation: “O camarão capitalista escancara a porta para a vítima que lhe vai dar mais duzentos réis, destinados a Wall Street” (26). According to Schwarz, Oswald’s streetcar juxtaposed with the house-drawn cart represents the *modernista* carnival of difference in which decontextualization meant freedom (14). In stark contrast, Pagu’s streetcar seems to invoke this same technology as an apparatus, like the camera itself, to register, perhaps unconsciously, the injustice visible in the streets of São Paulo. The “uneven” texture of Brazilian life during the 1930s is not celebrated as in the early Oswald but submitted to a critique. The leveling effect that we find in Oswald and in Tarsila (in the visual field) is here transposed onto the collision between distinct, simultaneous forces, interests, and desires, adopting, as I explore below, the techniques of montage.

For Pagu there is no gesture, moment, or image that is not contextual, not linked to another in a web of class struggle. *Parque industrial* historicizes the present as a clash of forces, in contrast to the celebratory juxtaposition, with its emphasis on novelty and rupture, that we find in her predecessors.<sup>7</sup> In fact, *Parque industrial* was written as a point-by-point response to many of the basic premises of Brazilian *modernismo*, a movement in which Pagu also participated, tangentially. On the one hand, the novel clearly draws from several tendencies within the earlier movements of the ‘teens and 1920s in Brazil, including the city-portrait genre of books and films: Mário de Andrade’s *Paulicéia desvairada* (1922), Antônio de Alcântara Machado’s *Pathé-Baby* (1926), and city films such as *Fragmentos da vida* (Jose Medina, 1929) and *São Paulo, Sinfonia da metrópole* (Adalberto Kemeny, 1929). Pagu was “discovered” by Oswald and Tarsila in the mid-1920s; like Oswald, she participated in the *antropofagia* movement of the late 1920s, although in the traditionally feminine role of muse rather than demiurge. Her first contribution to Oswald’s *Revista de Antropofagia* (in its second, more militant phase or “dentition” that began and ended in 1929) was a drawing; she also recited poems of her own design and works by Raul Bopp and Oswald.<sup>8</sup>

Yet *Parque industrial* is a novel that cannot have been written during this moment of *modernismo*, and to elide this difference is to smooth over the novel's passionate sense of engagement, its anger and resentment towards its immediate predecessors' aesthetic wager. Throughout, early *modernismo*'s claims to novelty are described with the stilted language of that very movement that it had parodied: the overstuffed rhetoric of Parnassianism, which had dominated Brazilian poetic production up until the late-teens. In the first chapter, entitled "Teares,"—the novel begins, it is worth emphasizing, with a machine—"Nos salões dos ricos, os poetas lacaios declamam: 'Como é lindo o teu tear!'" (19). Employing the principles of montage, this pompous declamation follows immediately a description of the loom as a source of labor (9). Yet, its late modernist status is due not only to its satire of the earlier movement and its premises, which would, after all, be a symptom of all avant-gardes in their repudiation of the recent (if not the ancestral) past as barren. *Parque industrial* also signals a shift towards late modernism in Brazil because it adopts, more indirectly, a sense of *modernismo* as itself historical, as subject to a process of aging. In fact, Pagu, like Oswald in the notorious preface to his novel *Seraphim Ponte Grande*, inverts the terms by which modernism claims its authority. Written in 1928 but not published until 1933, *Seraphim*'s preface repudiated the earlier *modernista* prerogative of freedom and what Oswald had come to see as its underlying capitalist logic, in this way undoing his previous work. The new era that Oswald felt himself responsible to was signaled in the inauguration of the journal *O homem do povo*, which he and Pagu co-founded and co-edited in 1931. Traces of this ephemeral periodical are apparent in *Parque industrial*; for example, in the novel's critique of bourgeois feminism in Brazil—first developed in Pagu's column "Mulher do povo"—the narrator contrasts what she sees as a kind of hobby for rich women in Brazil versus the vital necessities of workers (70).<sup>9</sup>

At the same time, *Parque industrial* suggests how the avant-gardes contained within them their own possibilities of negation (Guedes 124). Throughout the novel, brief descriptions suggest the "bureaucratization" of both the political and aesthetic avant-gardes of the 1920s through fashion. In one scene, a character arrives to the seamstress shop where she works wearing "um lenço novo, futurista, no pescoço" (24), the gift of a rich lover. In another, "Dona Finoca, velhota protetora das artes novas," intones, "Como não hei de ser comunista, se sou moderna?" (37). Given this historical juncture, Pagu asks, *how* (with what formal strategies, materials) should a revolutionary write? Given that experimental art practices are, by the 1930s, increasingly subsumed under the logic of capitalism—on film sets, in fashion and in interior design—from where should an author draw her models? Given that consumption is now draped in the guise of experimental, radical production—the fashion of the "isms" that have been consolidated, after their initial

rupture—how is it possible to avoid, as one of her characters states, putting “aspas na Revolução” (76)?

As Pagu had feared—perhaps reflecting her own anxieties about her rapid “conversion” to Communism<sup>10</sup>—social critique had indeed become its own *tendency*, which implicitly puts her own text on shaky grounds. This anxiety is drawn into the content of the novel, which asks how it is possible to distinguish between fads and earnest critique. The commitment that *Parque industrial* expresses with respect to the revolution—implicating both the hope for a geopolitical shift and the very form of the novel itself—can thus be seen as an attempt to acknowledge and overcome the fact that rupture itself had become consolidated during the 1930s.

### Montage, Spectator, Masses

In contrast to the first wave of *modernismo*, those writing in its aftermath became increasingly preoccupied with the problem of how to represent the masses, a new figure simultaneously registered and produced under late modernism in Brazil and in Latin America more broadly. Writers sought to create alternate conceptions to the avant-garde to represent their affective, as opposed to combative, relationship to the masses.<sup>11</sup> Across the region, mass media drew rural habitants to the city (Romero 393); it shaped not only national imagined communities but also the global “community” of the masses, inaugurating what some critics have seen as an alternative public sphere.<sup>12</sup> In Brazil, many artists and intellectuals saw in the consolidating national and international industries of film and radio a means of communicating with a population whose literacy rates were estimated to be very low.<sup>13</sup> Writers attempted to draw closer to both the visual and aural immediacy of these media in a search for a connection with what would come to be known as the *massas*. In the first (and very difficult to access) edition of *Parque industrial*, for example, Pagu employed short sections, graphic marks, and large print, as though to draw her readers closer towards the visuality of the cinema and to foreground the book itself as a visual medium.<sup>14</sup> We find the same desire present in the tabloid form, art-deco letters, photographs and playful graphics of *O homem do povo*. In addition, the language of *Parque industrial* unfolds in pure exteriority, a flood of sounds and images, as in the following description: “Duas mãos nodosas agarram o pescoço da mulata velha. Corina esconde a cena com a porta. Está acostumada. Sai. Modifica o batom, sorrindo no espelho da bolsa. Tomo o 14. A rua vai escorrendo pelas janelas do bonde” (27). This exteriority has been interpreted by some critics as “dehumanizing,” because the consciousness of the characters is not constructed with great depth (Daniel 102). But this view overlooks the fact that the novel presents an explicit challenge to the realist novel, with its emphasis on depth

and interiority, and a turn towards other modalities of registering its tumultuous present. In this sense, *Parque industrial* positions itself less as a document of an era than a collection of newsreels, accompanied by ephemeral sites of inscription. It is an attempt to record the sonic, visual, and textual spaces of a city in constant mutation: the graffiti on workers' bathrooms in the garment factories, the lewd drawings scribbled on the tables of popular bars, the personal ads in the middle-class publications, the consumption-obsessed dialogue of the salons of the wealthy.<sup>15</sup>

*Parque industrial* invokes the cinema in two principal and interlocking ways: first, through its frequent scenes of film-going; second, through its attempt to translate the logic of montage to the printed page. Like the motif of the moving street car that opens the novel, references to film spectatorship snake through *Parque industrial*, yoking together its disparate social spaces. Working-class women are invited to a “sessão de moças” (27) at the movies. At school, young women exchange snatches of conversation about movie-going:

—Você viu a Cinearte de hoje? Fala do cinema russo . . .

—Escuta! Você sabe o que é o comunismo?

—Não sei nem quero saber. (Galvão 34)

*Cinearte* was the most widely-read film journal of the 1920s and 1930s in Brazil (with up to 100,000 readers at its most influential), featuring articles on screen stars, Hollywood and national cinema, and feminine beauty “tips.” In this brief snatch of conversation, bourgeoisie norms envelope and supersede their alternative, Soviet cinema. The battle lines have been drawn in this momentary sequence of adolescent girl speech.

Indeed, the entire novel stages the clashes of desires between and among different social classes and sites. A later snapshot grounds cinematic spectatorship in a similar juxtaposition of images. The scene is the Colombo theater, a poster of Greta Garbo on its façade:

opaco e iluminado, indiferente aos estômagos vazios, recebe a aristocracia pequeno-burguesa do Brás, que ainda tem dinheiro para cinema. Na porta, o enigma claro de Greta Garbo nas cores mal feitas de um reclame. Cabelos desmanchados. O sorriso amargo. Prostituta alimentada, para distrair as massas, o cáften imperialista da América. (86)

K. David Jackson has effectively described this shot in terms of the novel's larger project to provide a photographic negative that exposes the underbelly of progress: “The negativity of the text finally resides in the dissolution of the icons of modernity—from cinemas to factories to bodies—into symbolic forms of historical, social, or political decay” (146). The dissolution is



achieved precisely through a comparison to the antithesis of the poster, a description of which immediately follows: “Cartazes rubros incitam a revolta. Línguas atrapalhadas, mas ardentes, se misturam nos discursos” (*Parque industrial* 76). Thus, the pale prostitute Garbo, whom the narrator views sympathetically as a dupe of the culture industry, is defined vis-a-vis the “hot” colors, inefficient and for this reason more authentic, of the rumblings of the revolution.

The nascent sense of what filmmaker Glauber Rocha will baptize, three decades later, an *estética da fome* is visible in this quote: the privileging of smeared, imperfect visuals as an antidote to the slippery smoothness of Hollywood.<sup>16</sup> With increasing urgency throughout the 1930s, Brazilian artists and intellectuals expressed a growing fear about the uniformity of globalization and argued for the benefits of a national film industry, often depicted in vitalist terms.<sup>17</sup> The texture of Pagu’s own prose, as well as her drawing together of the time of narrating and the time of writing, suggests its own aesthetics of hunger, the tone of crisis that permeates the novel’s pages. In *Parque industrial*, if the shot of Garbo attempts to provide an x-ray of the violent processes that sustain globalization, the subsequent “shot” of the Communist placards reframes the image through contrast. Throughout the novel, there is no reference to a medium or site of inscription, without another, often antagonistic form appearing immediately afterward.

Critics have often noted the cinematic effect of Pagu’s prose, and in particular the influence of Soviet montage in their descriptions of the novel.<sup>18</sup> Outside of a more generalized taxonomy, however, few have explored this observation—specifying, for example, the theories of montage that most approximate Pagu’s writing (given the polemics among the central Soviet figures).<sup>19</sup> Nor have they explored whether Pagu’s relationship to montage constitutes a formal adoption (*Parque industrial* is structured like a film) or if, in contrast, it develops a less analogical relationship, inextricably linked to her struggle to articulate the masses through the form of the novel. I understand montage as the elaboration of meaning through the stitching together of shots—or, in Pagu’s case, images—and in particular through the cinematic equivalent of juxtaposition and superimposition, in which meaning accrues through a syntax of contrasts. During the 1920s, the Soviet artists-theorists of montage developed practices inaugurated by the U.S. filmmaker D.W. Griffith and heightened them through the audacity of their juxtapositions and debates and theoretical reflections.<sup>20</sup> In Soviet montage cinema, linear, sequential narrative gives way to parataxis, and also to dramatic, often choppy cuts with saturated images. While during these same years the filmmaker Humberto Mauro had declared Soviet cinema “inadaptable” to the Brazilian context,<sup>21</sup> in *Parque industrial* Pagu attempts an act of translation from Soviet screen to Brazilian page. This, however, is not exclusively a problem of

analogy but also one of politics: it is an attempt to think through the contradictions of capitalism at a moment in which different forces are jockeying for the power to speak both to and for the masses.<sup>22</sup>

More specifically, Pagu appears to be adopting Eisenstein's assertion that montage works through collision. In the words of the filmmaker, it proceeds "[b]y the conflict of two pieces in opposition to each other." This model of montage contrasts with Vsevolod Pudovkin's conception of montage as *linkage* (in the words of Eisenstein, "[i]nto a chain . . . Bricks, arranged in a series, to *expound* an idea," 30.) In this sense, Eisenstein's theory of montage corresponded to a dialectical conception of history, in which the collision of two oppositional shots produces something new (Edwards 247). Eisenstein often worked with visual homologies: the shot of a circle in one context, for example, will be followed by a circle in a very different one, a technique that Pagu also adopts in her spatialization of the class struggle in *Parque industrial*. The gaping, expressionist mouth of the factory, for example, recalls its opposite, "as portas de ouro da grande burguesia" (37): two contrasting images of the same kind of object throw class difference into relief.

Similarly, two strikingly cinematic images, appearing at separate moments in *Parque industrial* simultaneously diverge and connect. Both recall the use of spilled blood as a visual motif in Eisenstein's *Strike!* (1925): first, "Sangue misturado com leite" (18); later, "Esta gasolina é o nosso sangue!" (86). The transformation of the image of blood throughout the course of the novel mirrors the desired change that Pagu wishes for her proletarian protagonists: from spilled fluids on the city street to a coming to consciousness of the historical processes that lead to this spillage. As the class struggle builds to a crescendo in the novel's second half, the attempted revolution is preceded by a sense of the collective which is achieved through clashes and fluids, in a visual spectacle that could not be more Eisensteinian: "Tiros, chanfalhos, gases venenosos, patas de cavalos. A multidão torna-se consciente, no atropelo e no sangue" (78); "Uma mulher pequena fica no chão, gritando com a perna triturada. Os seus cabelos loiros, lituanos, escorrem lisos pela testa suada" (94).<sup>23</sup>

As in Eisenstein's theoretical reflections, Pagu employs montage on different scales: on the level of the chapter, the section, the paragraph, and even the sentence.<sup>24</sup> In addition, like the intertitles of Eisenstein's silent films, the chapter titles of *Parque industrial* frame spaces of this broad social strata: at times "revealing" what custom has kept hidden, including racial politics ("Ópio de cor"); at times cataloging labor and gendered laboring bodies ("Teares"; "Trabalhadores de agulha"; "Mulher da vida"), and social spaces ("Casas de parir"; "Habitação coletiva"); at times explicitly employing Marxist terminology as a means of situating a scene into a broader vision of the world ("Em um setor da luta de classes"; "Onde se gasta a mais-valia"; "Proletarização");

at times describing character “types” (“Um burguês oscila”; “Em que se fala de Rosa de Luxemburgo.”) The juxtaposition of these titles themselves suggests another operation of montage, in which different sectors are forced into connection (comparison and contrast) with each other, united only by the novel’s elasticity and, beyond it, the referent of the city of São Paulo and the global struggle.

At the same moment that Pagu was struggling with the relationship between revolutionary form and content, Walter Benjamin was engaging in a similar project. I am thinking, more specifically, of the increasingly urgent Benjamin we find in “The Author as Producer,” originally a speech given to an anti-fascist group of writers one year after Pagu published her novel. This text shows us what was at stake for a writer contemporaneous to Pagu, with similar political convictions, deeply committed to a materialist view of literature’s specificity (that is, to the specific materials that comprise literature in a given historical moment). Benjamin wrote “The Author as Producer” as an address to the Institute for the Study of Fascism in 1934. In this urgent context, he argued for considering the author not as a distanced or specialized observer of the present—“only by transcending the specialization in the process of intellectual production—a specialization that, in the bourgeois view, constitutes its order—can one make this production politically useful” (87)—but an agent (or “producer”) deeply imbedded in a context which he or she also helps to shape.<sup>25</sup> Benjamin notes the distinction made by the Soviet writer Sergei Tretiakov between “the operating writer” and “the informing writer.” For the former, “[h]is mission is not to report but to struggle; not to play the spectator but to intervene actively” (81). In the process, the distinction between author and public, or author and reader, also becomes unhinged, as is apparent in the Soviet press (83).

Pagu’s work resonates with Benjamin’s assertion of the new role of author as laborer, a participant who shapes the masses through the materials of mechanical reproduction. Her rediscovery by Brazilian and international intellectuals comes courtesy of Augusto de Campos’ *Pagu-Vida-Obra* (1982), a work whose title suggests that her life is a kind of work, equivalent or prior to the work (text) itself.<sup>26</sup> Literary critics are quick to point out events in her life that comprise her *body of work*, in the largest possible sense. Thus, we find references to Pagu as the introducer of soy into Brazil; as the first woman arrested in Brazil on ideological grounds, at a rally protesting the Sacco and Venzetti trial; as modernist muse during the 1920s; as a beauty contestant in a Fox Film competition (she lost); to Pagu interviewing Freud on a boat to China; Pagu protesting and getting arrested in France; her narrowly missing the grasp of the Nazis in Germany during these same years; her trip to Hollywood, about which we know nothing; Pagu later writing pulp fiction under the pseudonym King Shelter; and introducing Faulkner and Joyce into

Portuguese.<sup>27</sup> On this view, and perhaps more than any of her contemporaries, Pagu's life—her activism, travels, the circuits of intellectuals and artists she participated in, her multiple pseudonyms—is itself an aesthetic and political praxis.

Moreover, and as Guedes notes in her study of *Parque industrial*, the novel struggles with the tension inherent in its subtitle, *a proletarian novel*, with how to convey the mass struggle in a form that is historically linked to the consolidation of the bourgeoisie individual (55).<sup>28</sup> For Guedes, the novel must partially (and productively) fail as a result of this tension, dialectically destroying the novelistic form to propose an alternative (24, 38, 112). And, as Benjamin suggests, it must also look to other forms, particularly to the more fragmentary forms of mass culture, to forge a new role for both authors and readers. In this sense, “romance proletário,” the subtitle of *Parque industrial*, can be interpreted in two ways: as a novel *about* the proletariat and as a novel *of* the proletariat.<sup>29</sup>

One scene in the novel dramatizes with particular intensity the interlinking problems of the author as producer/laborer, the materials of mass culture, and the spectator/masses. In the chapter “Proletarização,” Otávia (one of the novel's more central characters and, in the view of several critics, a figure for the author herself) realizes her attraction to Alfredo da Rocha, an Oswaldian figure who has committed class treason and joined the proletariat. The scene describes something like a first date in which they watch a Soviet film together, charting the burgeoning attraction between them, depicted, simultaneously, as a process of political awakening. This is one of the few scenes in the novel where we see sexual attraction from a woman's perspective, an attraction not predicated, as in all other scenes, on the exchange of goods and labor but on the pedagogical process that both characters are undergoing. In this scene, that is, politics and sexual desire mutually implicate one another. Significantly, it takes place in the cinema: a clichéd space for illicit romance that Pagu attempts to reinhabit as the doubled allure of sexual and political awakening. Prior to the lights dimming, Otávia feels herself drawn to Alfredo. Then her desire seems to spread to the collective that inhabits the theater: “No escuro, Otávia quer arrancar de cada cabeça tácita de espectador, de cada braço silencioso, a adesão às crispações emocionais em que se envolve. Aperta a mão de Alfredo” (93). These “crispações” are qualified by the adjective “emocionais,” in an apparent attempt to temper the scene's sexual nature. The *crispações* suggest an orgasm but also a painful, even irritation or violent sensation, as in a convulsion; not waves of pleasure but contorted irritation, almost as if the body were reacting inadvertently to the stimulus of screen and collective spectatorship.

As we have seen above in the discussion of montage by means of collision, *Parque industrial* pits this sensation and its pedagogical temporality against

the seamless, “abracadabra” logic of the Hollywood film and a Brazilian film industry increasingly modeled after it. (In the workers meeting that takes place in the following scene, an anonymous voice proclaims cinema to be the “imperialist opium” sent by the United States to curtail the Revolution.<sup>30</sup>) In this cinema scene, however, the collective political awakening—with its hint of a kind of political orgy—is curtailed by the spectators’ lack of interest in the Soviet film they are watching: “Mas muita gente não espera o fim da sessão. Um grupo de garotas sai lastimando alto os dez tostões perdidos numa fita sem amor” (93). The scene ends with women exiting the theater in disappointment, but with the desired seed planted for at least a few of the spectators: “na fila da frente, dois moços trabalhadores se entusiasmam, se absorvem no drama proletário que passa. Um deles falou tão alto que as palavras chegaram inteiras aos ouvidos de Otávia.—Ninguém compreende aqui este colosso!” (93).

Through recourse to the cinema, Pagu seeks the construction of a body that would supersede the bourgeois, individual subject and thus constitute a new mode of perception, the body of the masses.<sup>31</sup> While film-going in Brazil was, in contrast to Western Europe and the United States, originally a purview of the upper-classes rather than the working-classes (Stam and Johnson 21), by the 1930s it was a more extended pleasure, if still predicated on economic access to tickets. The irony of what the anonymous writer in the last issue of *O homem do povo* deems “o cinema das massas . . . o cinema russo” being rejected by these same masses is not lost on Pagu, although she is not able to resolve it or explain it away.<sup>32</sup> It is in this sense that we might read this scene of watching the Soviet film as a *mise-en-abyme* moment of the novel itself. For it, too, struggles with the modalities of mass culture with the hope of transforming these into a revolutionary energy. And it is left with a sense of unease about the ability to create a cultural object directed towards the unified *massas* that are forever betraying their heterogeneity in terms of interests, desires, and tastes but also, as I suggest below, in modes of social and political experience such as race and gender.

### The *Voz* and the *Massas*

The above scene also suggests the difficulty of schematizing or representing the masses through an appeal to cinema. Thus, while she tests out cinema’s strengths and limitations, Pagu simultaneously tries out a different, much earlier medium: that of the voice. Before the start of the novel proper, a note in capital letters greets the reader:

A ESTATÍSTICA E A HISTÓRIA DA CAMADA HUMANA QUE SUSTENTA  
O PARQUE INDUSTRIAL DE SÃO PAULO E FALA A LÍNGUA DESTA

LIVRO ENCONTRAM-SE, SOB O RÉGIME CAPITALISTA, NAS CADEIAS  
E NOS CORTIÇOS, NOS HOSPITAIS E NOS NECROTÉRIOS. (16)

Significantly, Pagu does not use the metaphor of the camera/visuality here but that of recorded speech. From its opening lines, the novel positions itself as a sonic archive, as the statistics that open the novel are transmuted into voices. (In this sense, it is worth noting that the Soviet cinema that interests Pagu in the novel is silent; voice and image are juxtaposed, at the moment in which sound film, both national and international, is having an enormous impact on the industry.) Indeed, the first chapter (“Teares”) features snatches of conversation with no bodies attached to them, as though recording the city’s working-class tones in an attempt at pure sonority.

Once again, and as in the montage of visual images discussed above, different voices or aural images stage a competition amongst themselves. While a radio station “vomita fox trotes da parede” (70) (“fox trot” was a synonym for U.S. jazz during the period), the voice of the proletariat is depicted as a fluid, dynamic drive towards the Revolution.<sup>33</sup> During a labor union meeting, for example, the narrator depicts the voice as a natural force: “É um cozinheiro que fala. Tem a voz firme. Não vacila. Não procura palavras. Elas vêm” (29). The crowd reacts in unison: “À voz da verdade, todos se agitam nos bancos duros. A sala toda sua” (30). It is as though the voice were responsible for a kind of alchemy: at the moment of proletarian speech, the group of people becomes a collective. The narrator represents this through metonymy. Each of the workers shouts a fragment that represents collective anger and the desire to struggle, as though the sentiments of a Greek chorus had been shattered and redistributed among those present.

During the time in which Pagu was drafting *Parque industrial*, the regime of Getúlio Vargas was busy centralizing labor under the auspices of the federal government, taming its anarchic energies. Vargas’s declaration after the October Revolution of 1930 defined the new Brazil that would emerge as one in which differences, including class and gender, would be subsumed into this new formation. Declaring his new government unprecedented in Brazilian history, he deemed it “a expressão viva e palpitante da vontade do povo brasileiro . . . Todas as categorias sociais, de alto a baixo, sem diferença de idade ou de sexo, comungaram em um idêntico pensamento fraterno e dominador: a construção de uma Pátria nova.”<sup>34</sup> This centralizing discourse, which Vargas would hone throughout the decade, evidently occludes the violence and repression that characterized the Brazilian state’s relationship to labor during his first regime, which discouraged (in the case of women) and prohibited (in the case of immigrants) the populations that interest Pagu.

*Parque industrial* seeks out other voices to speak a possible future for Brazil, landing on two principle figures, Rosinha and Alexandre. Each would

appear to be an attempt to represent, metonymically, the different kinds of racialized and gendered bodies that comprise the *massas*. Rosinha is a Lithuanian immigrant activist, modeled after Rosa Luxemburg, whose “voz pequenina da revolucionária surge nas faces vermelhas da agitação” (77). Immediately before Rosinha’s speech, the word *massa* is employed for the first time in *Parque industrial*, in the context of a protest, and in direct contrast to the image of the crowds entering the cinema to see the prostituted Garbo: “Mas a massa que não vai ao cinema se atropela no largo, em torno da bandeira vermelha onde a foice e o martelo ameaçam” (76). In the context of the novel, the masses are baptized in this moment, as the narrative voice attempts to reappropriate the category of the *massa* for the protest. (In fact, the word *massa* appears three times in the novel, each in the context of protest.) The chapter ends underscoring this transformation, honed by Rosinha’s voice: “A multidão torna-se consciente” (78.)

We find the second embodiment of the voice in Alexandre, the Afro-Brazilian worker of booming voice and physical prowess who first appears in the chapter “Em que se fala de Rosa de Luxemburgo,” in the context of rising hopes about revolutionary fervor. The temporality is important here: after Alexandre’s voice, the following scene is the one of Otávia and Alfredo in the cinema. In this sense, the failure of the revolutionary cinema is bookended by two examples of the potential of the proletarian voice: “a voz possante domina, contagia, marca um minuto da revolução social” (88). This is a figure of orality as primitive knowledge, creating an alternative community, as well as temporality, to that of the culture industry: “Alexandre não sabe ler nem escrever. Mas a realidade social, pela sua boca, exalta as multidões.—É a palavra de um trabalhador para os outros trabalhadores!” (87).<sup>35</sup> As with Rosinha, immediately after the appearance of Alexandre’s voice the workers are transformed into the masses, who “se galvanizam” (87). The chapter ends with this lingering sonic archive: “Alexandre ri. A sua voz imensa intervém:—Matam os operários, mas o proletariado não morre!” (90). The voice, generally of an ephemeral materiality, is rendered solid, transcending the death of the soon-to-be martyred body that pronounces it.

What I am suggesting, then, is that the proletarian voice is offered up as an antidote to a phenomenon that is also emerging during the period, one connected to the struggle to represent the masses: that of populism in its emergent construction of politics as spectacle. In the journal *O homem do povo*, Pagu and Oswald struggled to speak for and to the masses in a way that would circumvent the consolidating discourse of the state and replace it with an internationalist rhetoric of solidarity.<sup>36</sup> Written in the first years of the Vargas regime, *Parque industrial* also wants to intervene in a period in which the regime’s consolidation of the representation of the masses is still being developed. We know that the voice was far from innocent, and would be

increasingly linked, throughout the decade, to both populist and fascist regimes as a means of subsuming or taming class struggle.<sup>37</sup> This, however, has not yet been consolidated when *Parque industrial* was drafted, and Pagu attempts to make the novel into its own kind of recording of this living speech: the voice of the other, so central for 1930s novels in Brazil.<sup>38</sup> The resonant voices of Rosinha and Alexandre, the novel suggests, produce a different kind of spectator than the filmgoers depicted in other scenes.

Yet here, too, Pagu's novel is ambivalent, for her desire to represent the collective is undercut through the very language used to invoke it:

Mulheres, homens, operários de todas as idades. Todas as cores. Todas as mentalidades. Conscientes. Inconscientes. Vendidos.

Os que procuraram na união o único meio de satisfazer as suas reivindicações. Os que são atraídos pela burocracia sindical. Os futuros homens da revolução. Revoltados. Anarquistas. Policiais (31).

The mass is multiple but, as we can see from this description and in stark contrast to the consolidating discourse of Vargas I cited above, it is already internally divided. As in the scene of cinema spectatorship, in spite of its stridency the novel wrestles with questions that remain unresolved: How can the *massa* be represented as a force, if it also contains (most obviously in the presence of worker-traitors who infiltrate the movement in order to better their own lot), the seeds of its own demise? How to articulate the separate-yet-linked character of the masses, of their potential for struggle? What is the role of the novel itself within this process: is it really a *document*, or does it perhaps also attempt to *inaugurate* this slippery identity of the masses?<sup>39</sup>

## Conclusion

The novel's final chapter, entitled "Reserva industrial," features an epigraph from Marx's *Capital*: "Sem falar dos vagabundos, dos criminosos e das prostitutas, isto é, do verdadeiro proletariado miserando" (100). The reference is to the lumpenproletariat, the unproductive and irredeemable excess that cannot be subsumed into the revolutionary struggle. This classless class figure is represented in the novel by Corina the prostitute and Pepe the drifter who, in this closing scene, crawl into bed together and eat popcorn. On one hand, this novel resounds a melancholic note, because it ends with a most unrevolutionary scene, one that recalls passive cinema spectatorship. It is no wonder that the Brazilian Communist Party ordered Pagu to publish the novel under a pseudonym (Mara Lobo).<sup>40</sup>

On the other hand, there is also a great deal of pathos here: two of the most exploited characters in the novel (both are victims of different kinds of sexual violence) find one another in a cruel, indifferent world. In fact,



during the course of the novel, it is Corina and Pepe, rather than the model proletariats, who emerge as its center of gravity. Instead of ending with the penultimate scene, in which the martyrs of collective struggle express the will to struggle again, we find those who are left out of the collective narrative of struggle, the excess of that *massa* whose articulation seems, at this particular juncture, at once necessary and impossible. If the scene of Otavia and Alfredo's cinema spectatorship had already hinted at the irreducibly heterogeneous identity of the *massas*, and if the voices of Rosinha and Alexandre had attempted to metonymically yoke this heterogeneity back into a coherent class identity, that of the proletariat, this last scene implicitly asks us to consider all of the factors of exploitation that exceed class identity, including sexual abuse and race (not coincidentally, both characters are described as mulatto).<sup>41</sup> With every attempt to shore up a collective identity, a different level of experience undoes that same collectivity. Writing with and for the *massas* inevitably produces nothing so much as clashes, a montage of conflicting forces on many different planes. Perhaps no other novel from the "long" *modernista* period stages with such energy the mediated nature of this problematic and productive term.

## Notes

1. In *Cinematograph of Words*, Flora Süssekind argues that the relationship between literature and technology "came to influence a significant part of Brazilian cultural production in a decisive way only in the 1920's" (95). As Jason Borge points out, however, despite the "flashes" of cinema we find in their poetry, the medium in fact has relatively little weight in the initial avant-gardes or *modernistas*. Borge notes that writers outside of the avant-garde circles were often more concerned with grappling directly with cinema than their more revolutionary counterparts (*Latin American Writers* 20). John King also notes that the *Semana de Arte Moderna* (1922), São Paulo's seminal avant-garde happening had little to say about film in its investigation of modern art (*Magical Reels* 23).

2. Beginning in the late nineteenth century, a booming industrialization and proletarian class could be found in São Paulo, which could not be said of other Brazilian cities. By the 1920s, it had nearly a million habitants, a third of these immigrants (Daniel 100). This economic configuration, according to Mário de Andrade in "O movimento modernista," meant that the city was the cradle of the first wave of modernism (*Aspectos da literatura brasileira* 226).

3. For an analysis and critique of the current interest in alternative or multiple modernities, Frederick Cooper's *Colonialism in Question: Theory, Knowledge, History* (Berkeley: U of California P, 2005) has proven useful to me.

4. “Oswald would later call this ostensibly ‘natural’ label (brazilwood) ‘a factory brand’ (*uma marca de fábrica*), ‘a patent of invention’ (*Estética e política* 128), perhaps suggesting that in its very desire to ‘write the world anew,’ the collection inevitably reiterates not only the very fifteenth- and sixteenth-century ‘discovery’ claims whose historical primacy it seeks to displace, but colonial extraction itself” (Madureira 28).

5. See Peter Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde* (1974); Hans Enzenberger, “The Aporias of the Avant-Gardes” (1966); Ángel Rama, “Las dos vanguardias” (1973); and Fredric Jameson, “Seriality in Modern Literature” (1970).

6. On the relationship between the train and the shaping of a cinematic subjectivity, see Wolfgang Schivelbusch, *The Railway Journey: the Industrialization of Time and Space in the Nineteenth Century* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1986).

7. It is in this sense that I depart from recent critical interpretations that attempt to argue against a 1920s/1930s periodization, eliding the two decades. See, for example, Fernando Rosenberg 423–4; Jackson and Jackson 119, 133, 136–7; Ester Gabara 27. Rosenberg is a compelling scholar of the Latin-American avant-gardes; however, I differ from his interpretation, which tends to privilege the “flux” of the cosmopolitan 1920s, implicitly denigrating or ignoring the cultural production of the decade that follows. Gabara’s study virtually ignores two major forces shaping Brazilian visual cultural production during the 1930s: the Vargas regime and Hollywood cinema. Thus, while I understand the assertion that “ultimately the accepted classification of modernism into decades is artificial and unproductive” (Jackson 152), the *lack* of classification runs the risk of missing the strident critique of *modernismo* that marks 1930s production, simply replacing one periodization (the 1920s versus the 1930s) with another (1920s–1930s). In the latter decade, even the aesthetic of Tarsila, the poster child for a euphoric Brazilian primitivism shifts: from the colorful compositions of the earlier primitivist movements (embodied in paintings such as *A negra* [1923] and *Abaporu* [1928]) to the series of workers’s faces in works like *Operários*, painted during the same year as *Parque industrial*. For an additional analysis of how *Parque industrial* turns the cannibalist metaphor of the earlier *modernistas* against itself and towards “savagely capitalism,” see Bryan.

8. Guedes 35; Jackson and Jackson 117. For a review of the phases of the *Revista de Antropofagia*, see Jorge Schwartz, “De lo estético.” In “Las ágiles musas de la modernidad,” Vicky Unruh examines in-depth the implications of Pagu’s status as muse arguing that, along with Norah Lange, Pagu both collaborated in and later critiqued the ways in which women were depicted as embodied objects of the aesthetic programs of her fellow *modernistas*. Unruh offers a different take on what I analyze here as Pagu’s revisionist thrust with respect to the earlier *modernistas*, putting gender at the forefront of her critique of the movement. See especially pp. 272–74.

9. For an outline of some of the themes that Pagu tackled in this column, see Unruh 274–5.

10. At the time of *Parque industrial*’s publication, Pagu herself was a very recent, and relatively short-lived, convert to Communism. She joined the Partido Comunista Brasileira in 1931, the year before she began to write *Parque industrial* and two years before the novel’s publication. According to an interview that Oswald gave in 1954, he became an adherent after she returned from Buenos Aires with leaflets in tow: “Ela

fizera uma viagem a Buenos Aires, onde realizou um recital de poesia. Voltou com panfletos, livros e uma grande novidade” (as quoted in Schwartz, “De lo estético” 63).

11. For a discussion of the representation of the proletariat in the Brazilian novel of the 1930s, see Luís Bueno 243–282.

12. For an analysis of this phenomenon for the Latin American context, see Jesús Martín-Barbero, *De los medios a las mediaciones: cultura, comunicación, hegemonia* (Barcelona: Gustavo Gili, 1987). In considering the relationship between cinema and public sphere, the work of Miriam Hansen has been important to me; see her “Vernacular Modernism” and, more recently, *Cinema and Experience*.

13. Estimates are that the literacy rate hovered around 25% in 1929. Cf Afrânio Peixoto, “Um sonho, um belo sonho,” *Marta e Maria: Documentos de ação pública* (Rio, 1930), in Borge, *Avances* (147–151). The qualification of “literate” evidently needs to be nuanced or clarified.

14. For an analysis of the first edition of the book’s graphics and typography, see Guedes 28, 57–8 and Bryan. The latter emphasizes in particular how the book’s visuality encodes silences, arguing that these invite the reader into a more participatory role in reconstructing and reacting to the injustices depicted in the novel.

15. Newsreels and, beginning in the early twentieth-century, short narrative films based on local events (especially famous crimes) were popular in Brazil (Barnard and Rist 101; Shaw and Dennison 18). During the second decade of the twentieth century, in São Paulo, Italian immigrant filmmakers created newsreels, documentaries, and even a film school (King 22–3).

16. Catherine M. Bryan’s “*Antropofagia and Beyond*” also develops links between *Parque industrial* and Rocha’s *estética da fome*, as well as to the Tropicalista movement of the 1960s–1970s.

17. See, for example, the writings of Humberto Mauro, the most prominent Brazilian filmmaker of the period and a fervent cultural nationalist, and Olympio Guilherme, one of the decade’s most prominent film critics, compiled in Jason Borge, *Avances de Hollywood*. In journalistic sketches such as “Cinema falado no Brasil” (1932; reprinted in Borge, 158–9), Mauro begins to sketch out a hesitant theory of national cinema that anticipates the *Cinema Novo* movement of the 1960s, although he falls short of the radical politics of Rocha, adopting a more triumphant nationalism (culminating with him becoming the official filmmaker of sorts for the Vargas regime). Guilherme’s *crônicas* include “Questão de gosto” (in Borge 144–6) and “Cinema e literatura” (in Borge 96–8).

18. See Guedes (78, 117), Owen, Jackson and Jackson, Bryan, and Chaves. The first and the last emphasize a connection to Vertov. Jackson and Jackson make reference to Pagu’s connection to Eisensteinian montage as a means of calling attention to the injustices produced by Brazil’s rapid industrialization (130).

19. After completing this article, I read Bryan’s “*Antropofagia and Beyond*,” which also explores Eisenstein’s conflictive montage as a model for *Parque industrial*. I am grateful to the anonymous reader for directing me to this essay.

20. An alternative, more strictly literary genealogy would take into account the influence of Blaise Cendrars’ cinematic writings of simultaneity on Oswald de Andrade’s oeuvre.

21. Humberto Mauro, "Cinema falado no Brasil" in Borge (2005) 156.
22. For a critique of analogical readings of European modernist literature and cinematic montage, see Trotter, *Cinema and Modernism*.
23. Pagu might have seen *Strike!* (1925), in which an image of spilled ink at the end of the film anticipates the bloodshed that will follow but also the inscription of the workers' martyrdom and the imperative of the call to "Remember!" (the film's last intertitle.)
24. In his definition of montage, Eisenstein enumerates different kinds of conflict: within the shot, within the frame, between an event and its duration (30–1); in acoustics and optics (32).
25. He will make the same claim in his later, more well-known essay, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction" [1936, 232].
26. First published in 1933 in a very limited edition apparently financed by Oswald de Andrade, *Parque industrial* remained out of print until 1981. This second (and, to this day, last) Portuguese edition does not follow the graphic design of the text with its bold "cuts" as section breaks. Elizabeth and K. David Jackson's translation into English, with critical commentary, appeared in 1993.
27. For this biographical information, the works of Jackson and Jackson, Valente, Duarte, Galvão Ferraz, and A. de Campos have been useful.
28. This problem was not unique to Pagu, as the proliferation of novels that attempt to represent industries and social spaces, rather than individuals, indicates. Consider, for example, Jorge Amado's *Cacau* (1933), José Lins do Rego's *Bangüê* (1934) or, outside of the Brazilian context, César Vallejo's *El tungsteno* (1931).
29. As she was drafting the novel, Pagu worked in a movie house in Rio de Janeiro and lived in a worker's neighborhood, at the request of the Communist Party (Duarte 371).
30. "Cada imperialista mandou o seu ópio para a tapeação da nossa mocidade inconsciente . . . Os Estados Unidos mandam o cinema" (109).
31. See Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction"; Kracauer, "The Mass Ornament"; Hullot-Kentor, "What is Mechanical Reproduction?" Both Benjamin and Kracauer developed theories of distraction to theorize a potentially revolutionary possibility in the presumably conservative practice of film-going.
32. *O homem do povo* (April 13, 1931, No. 8).
33. On the consolidation of radio during the period, see Lia Calebre, "Políticas públicas culturais"; and Renato Ortiz, "Popular Culture, Modernity and Nation" 131–3.
34. "Posse de Getúlio Vargas no Governo Provisório" (3/11/1930). As cited in Cardoso 13.
35. On the novel's inadvertent complicity in sexism and racism, see Kanost. The powerful African-American orator is also a topos in Euro-American modernist production, as in the figure of stage and screen actor Paul Robeson, also a member of the Communist Party.
36. See, for example, the article that opens the journal, in the section "A cidade, o paiz, o planeta" (March 27, 1931, No. 1) in *O homem do povo* 17; "Pamphleto e doutrina" (March 28, 1931, No. 2).

37. After 1930, radio becomes strongly politicized by state cultural politics, which begins the end of the “idea of experimental radio” (Calabre 3). For a less pessimistic interpretation of radio under the regime of Vargas, see McCann, *Hello, Hello Brazil!*

38. See Bueno, *Uma história do romance de 30*, especially pp. 243–332; 577–664.

39. In his classic study of Latin American cities, José Luis Romero shows how the *masa* is shaped through the interconnected phenomena of industrial development (and import substitution), migration from rural to urban areas, and the subsequent demographic explosion in cities (above all in Buenos Aires, Mexico City, and São Paulo) (386–7). The *masa* is that which exceeds a scheme or classification: “a new force that grew like a flood and whose voices resounded like a clamor” (385). In contrast to the proletariat, the *masa* never becomes consolidated as a class, with common goals or interests (409, 415–6). Romero’s language suggests this unaccountable or uncontrollable force, as seen from the outside: “a thousand-headed hydra”; at once “abstract and collective” (409). In his *Keywords*, Raymond Williams had noted this tension in the English word *masses* that developed over time: “(i) something amorphous and indistinguishable; (ii) a dense aggregate”; as something without distinction, on the one hand, or as unified collective, on the other (193–4). Romero writes that the only time the *masa* is unified is in protest (410).

40. Indeed, as the class struggle becomes more pronounced in the novel’s second half, the narrative seems to abandon the factory as its matrix. Immediately following the 1934 Soviet Writer’s Congress, the Partido Comunista Brasileiro adopted a resolution with respect to a worker-centered approach to art that condemned the prose of various sympathetic intellectuals; Pagu would be expelled shortly thereafter (Jackson and Jackson 120). But she would also be imprisoned and tortured due to her affiliation with the PC in the second half of the decade (A. de Campos 9).

41. My thanks to the anonymous reader for urging me to consider more the implications of race and gender for Pagu’s understanding of the *massas*.

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