

# Between Silence and Healing: Folds in Time and Contemporary Art

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## **ABSTRACT**

In the light of the concept of *folding*, we will focus on the analysis of artistic proposals that opposes the hegemonic narrative, highlighting projects that articulate different knowledge, pointing out inconsistencies of the present and thus generating raw material for the formulation of a reflection on new political configurations. We will stop at the saints that are part of the series *for pain, tiredness and exhaustion* (2018) of Castiel Vitorino Brasileiro and *Monument to the voice of Anastacia* (2019) by Yhuri Cruz. Projects that reorder issues such as silencing and exclusion, understood as central axes to question the place occupied by historically subordinated groups. Although art has historically functioned as one of the fundamental resources for the construction of hegemony, through the creative recombination and synthesis of various elements, fertile ground is set for counter-hegemonic healing exercises that promote new methodologies and epistemologies. By manipulating concepts related to decolonial thinking, these artists foster a new political and social order, highlighting interconnections that permeate continuous processes of exclusion on different temporal, spatial and imaginative scales<sup>1</sup>.

**KEYWORDS:** Folds; Afro-Latin American Studies; Healing Processes; Contemporary Art; Decolonial Thinking

## **RESUMO**

À luz do conceito de *dobra*, nos deteremos na análise de propostas artísticas que se contrapõem à narrativa hegemônica, destacando projetos que articulam diferentes saberes, apontando inconsistências do presente e gerando assim, matéria prima para

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<sup>1</sup>This article is the result of the doctoral research *Colonialidad y cuerpo: the relations between power, art and decolonial thought*, added to the debates generated at the XIX Hispanic and Lusophone Conference: *Silenced Voices* at the University of California on April 19, 2019 and the 1<sup>st</sup> Continental Conference on Afro-Latin American Studies at the Afro-Latin American Research Institute at Harvard University in December 11, 2019.

a formulação de uma reflexão sobre novas configurações políticas. Destacamos os santinhos que integram a série *para dores, cansaços e esgotamentos* (2018) da Castiel Vitorino Brasileiro e *Monumento à voz de Anastácia* (2019) de Yhuri Cruz. Projetos que reordenam questões como silenciamento e exclusão, entendidos como eixos centrais para questionar o lugar ocupado pelos grupos historicamente subalternizados. Embora a arte tenha funcionado historicamente como um dos recursos fundamentais para a construção da hegemonia, através da recombinação e da síntese criativas de variados elementos, instaura-se um terreno fértil para exercícios de cura contra-hegemônicos que promovem novas metodologias e epistemologias. Ao manipular conceitos relacionados ao pensamento decolonial, esses artistas fomentam um novo ordenamento político e social evidenciando interconexões que permeiam contínuos processos de exclusão em distintas escalas temporais, espaciais e imaginativas.

**PALAVRAS-CHAVE:** Dobra; Estudos Afro-Latino-Americanos; Processor de cura; Arte contemporânea; pensamento decolonial

Contemporary art and decolonial thinking are the central elements in this work which, besides going through peculiarities of a complex theme, is also interested in examining issues aligned with the recent field of *African-Latin American Studies*. The focus of these analyzes is the broader understanding of how contemporary societies experience, in their respective territories, proposing a (re)dimensioning of social relations, whether they are based on sociopolitical, spatial or cultural and artistic issues. In this sense we will approach how the poetics of two artists present cultural projects that start from the reflection on subordination and silencing categories, taking this as a central axis to think about the place occupied by subordinated groups within the persistence of colonial logic in contemporary Brazil. Thus, focused on the themes of ancestry, turning over stories of slavery and emancipation, thus highlighting weaknesses of the myth of racial democracy and the possibility of understanding contemporary art as a space of rearticulation of the past, fostering healing processes.

Considering the arc defined for the analyzes that will be drawn here, I initially evaluate the possibility of constructing different parallels from the concept of *Afro-*

*Latin American studies*, aimed at encouraging and promoting research that encompasses distinct social classes and their potential for narrative rearticulation and epistemological circulation. The researchers, George Reid Andrews and Alejandro de la Fuente in *A criação de um campo: estudos afro-latino-americanos* (2018), they point out that this field is not restricted to a search for reconstruction of the past, but it reinforces the construction of epistemes concerning contemporary struggles for racial justice. Given this prerogative, it is noteworthy that the authors state that “uma compreensão mais rica destas histórias de raça, cultura, nação e mobilização é indispensável para imaginar um futuro de igualdade, respeito, convivência e inclusão” (ANDREWS & FUENTE, 2018, p. 37). I consider the inheritance of colonial models of thought and conduct and other configurations of power systems as powerful triggers of artistic making, proposing counter-hegemonic alternatives and new political imagery.

From the indicative of Andrews and Fuente, open bridges to be made and in this particular case the researcher Jota Mombaça, points out that “que el amor y cuidado del cuerpo necesitan coexistir con un proceso radical de re-articulación de los significados que atribuimos al cuerpo”<sup>2</sup>. Given what Mombaça exposes and aligning this argument to the authors' proposal, it is possible to state that in addition to a space for creation and reflection, art offers a zone of debate about the ills of a life threatened constantly, conceiving strategies to foster alterity. Some artists develop various projects to think about how the relationship between contemporary art, the humanities and political participation articulate in the interest of identifying and questioning the interconnection that permeates the continuity of the silencing processes that occur at different temporal and spatial scales, making use of various disciplines that are linked to the arts and help in their understanding and development. Some cultural institutions are stages of initiatives that present a critique of colonial structures, and question remnants of coloniality that permeate our present,

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<sup>2</sup> Interview published in the newspaper *La República* (08/07/2017).

so different geographies point to the growing interest that the theme has been acquiring in contemporary debates<sup>3</sup>. This reflection highlights the importance of the existence and resistance of different identity consciousnesses, as well as of other distinct processes of communication and cognition.

Researcher Sandra Martínez Rossi states that in contemporary production, would it be possible to identify an American conceptual root mostly associated with issues of immigration, segregation, social injustice and cultural identity (ROSSI, 2008, 572). It is clear that in the last decade we can find a growing interest in this debate in the production of artists around the planet, since the themes that were historically issues associated with the periphery, have been acquiring more and more centrality in the debates about the reality of the planet and the future of humanity as a whole, as the refugee crisis, environmental issues, sharpening of class contrasts, are increasing every day, becoming part of a global agenda of articulation and political struggle. The emphasis on such issues can best be understood when analyzed in the light of colonial processes that continue to highlight the darker face of our past today, such as racism, patriarchy, expropriation, and multiple forms of oppression, structures that maintain and update. understanding categories of bodies, thus defining possible and desired existences and circulations. One of the concepts that help to reflect on the acceptability of bodies is that of coloniality of power, that in the words of sociologist Lucas Trindade Silva,

se forma no colonialismo (pacto colonial) do século XVI e se reproduz para além dos processos de independência política formal – define a “classificação social básica” e hierárquica – pretendente a fundamentação científica no século XIX – entre os povos dominantes (metrópole) e os povos dominados (colônias) “em torno da ideia de raça” (QUIJANO, 2002, p.13), enquanto conversão da diferença cultural em diferença natural – racialização arbitrária de elementos genéticos como a cor da pele e

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<sup>3</sup> For more details see: SILVA, A. N. S.. Approximations and distancing between contemporary art and decolonial thinking: Documenta 14 and MASP. In: Helena Pina; Felisbela Martins. (Org.). *The overarching issues of the european space: a strategic (re)positioning of environmental and socio-cultural problems?*. 1ed.Porto: Universidade do Porto, Faculdade de Letras, 2019, v. 1, p. 112-125.



características anatómicas (SILVA, 2016, p. 143).

In this sense, 16<sup>th</sup> century mercantile colonialism would reproduce itself beyond the period in which it traditionally fits, since the processes of political independence formulated during the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries did not abdicate the hierarchy of power distribution, thus underlining social organization and cultural logic that permeates the formation of today's society and its epistemological and legal structures, defining unequal contours for the experiences of multiple groups that share the same space / time. Argentine researcher Walter Mignolo wrote works such as *Histórias locais/projetos globais: colonialidade, saberes subalternos e pensamento liminar* (1999) y *Desobediencia epistémica. Retórica de la modernidad, lógica de la colonialidad y gramática de la descolonialidad* (2010), where he claims that the claim to epistemic rights has a decolonial potential by changing the terms of the debate itself, not just the themes, thus overcoming an ideal vision that seeks the domination of all realities. This concept helps the participation of other epistemologies, in the same sphere of value as those already imposed and traditional (historically based on epistemic privilege). Mignolo states "son las historias y las memorias de la colonialidad, las heridas y las historias de humillación las que marcan el punto de referencia para los proyectos políticos y epistémicos descoloniales y para la ética decolonial" (MIGNOLO, 2010, p.33).

Another central concept that I use in my research is that of border epistemology, postulated by the Columbus-American anthropologist Arturo Escobar. The ideas brought by the author contribute to the understanding of the need to widen the possible epistemological fields, claiming space for discussion and elaboration of a theory and historiography that does not only depart from academic formulations, because even though it sets out from this space, this article has the interest of debating issues that do not fit into the categories already established by a positivist and Kantian philosophy that works with parameters based on linearity and sequentiality canonical science. In *Mundos y conocimientos de otro modo* (2003),

Escobar understands border epistemologies as “o que emerge nos momentos de fratura dentro do imaginário do sistema-mundo produzindo uma dupla crítica (do eurocentrismo, ao mesmo tempo que das tradições excluídas). [...] É o deslocamento e ponto de partida como crítica e afirmação de uma ordem alternativa do real” (ESCOBAR, 2003, p.66).

Based on this argument I seek to shape the concept of *folding*, which can be understood in its most common sense: as a plane that turns along a line and overlaps with another part of the same material or object, or also as the act of multiplying something by two - doubling. Both senses interest me, since when thinking about the activity performed by some artists in contemporary times, I turn to the action performed in opposition to linearity, considering that formulate projects diverge from historical sequentially, allowing encounters between past and present, “doubling” linearity. chronological and promoting a future possibility different from that proposed by the current order of facts. In this sense, the act of doubling time would be the establishment of a meeting between the past and the present moment, as a proposal to change reality, aiming at a different future from the one already imagined. Empowering the forms of occupation and elaboration of the world.

Thus, in my research, acquires centrality the concepts debated by the theoretical Denise Ferreira da Silva, which establishes an approach to contemporary art beyond the Kantian premises, set of propositions that formulated many of the critical traditions of the present, thus establishing a “locus generativo para o engajamento em uma reflexão radical sobre as modalidades de subjugação racial (simbólica) e colonial (jurídica) que operam com plena força no presente global” (SILVA, 2019, p.46). In realizing such distancing in the exercise of criticism, the work of art departs from the condition of object, and from all the premises that the term holds, therefore, the object as viewed by the scientific field, or discursive of the field of art, is nothing but that a mixture of the on-epistemological pillars of universal reason, the basis of Western philosophy and modernity, and which sustains the

modes of operation of the subject in the moments of appreciation, production and presentification of an artistic work. The author also points out that “Quando desenredada do sujeito, a reflexão sobre a obra de arte libera a imaginação da rede de significação sustentada pela separabilidade, determinabilidade e sequencialidade” (SILVA, 2019, p.55).

So, I can say that, the history of art departs from its Renaissance genesis which was limited to the artistic production of Western civilization and functioned as an area of knowledge that sought to study art objectively over time, classifying and establishing a periodization that emphasizes artistic characteristics. distinctive and influential. These are the foundations that established part of artistic practices as the basis for imagery elaboration of the ideas of nation and economic and political power. Going a little further in this analysis I turn to the Argentine historian and political activist Ezequiel Adamovsky, who states “a cultura visual é um dos recursos fundamentais para a construção da hegemonia, mas é também um terreno fértil para exercícios contra-hegemônicos” (ADAMOVSKY, 2016, p. 158).

Deepening these issues a little further, it is important to recognize in the work of the Castiel Vitorino Brasileiro and Yhuri Cruz, since some projects of these artists propose new analytical possibilities of the past, and at the same time also assume ethical positions in the present, fostering racial justice in opposition to current violence. Thus, the *fold*, while allowing the meeting between distant points, if considered by the perspective of linearity, is also endowed with a poetic power that strengthens / multiplies the possibilities of existences that articulate discourses about themselves and about the other. For this, these artists use forms that go beyond the material question, using formats selected for their possibilities of circulation, in this case, the holy cards. Castiel Vitorino Brasileiro and Yhuri Cruz, develop works that use as media the holy cards - small printed cards depicting mass-produced Catholic devotions for the use of religious followers. They typically represent a religious scene

or the figure of a saint in a small size for ease of transport with him, and on the back may have prayers, dedications, or honors.

I stop at the holy cards in the series *for pain, tiredness and exhaustion* (2018) from Castiel Vitorino Brasileiro that were distributed during the performance *Healing Plants* (2018), held at Pracinha do Itararé (Vitória, Brazil) on June 23, 2018 and at Morro da Fonte Grande (Vitória, Brazil) on July 1, 2018 (Images 1, 2, and 3). Castiel's creative process is seen as an experience of incorporation, as she understands her black, testicular and feminine body as a place of memory. His artistic production is located at an epistemic crossroads, presenting escape routes from coloniality. The series features a set of *mandingas*, to ease pains of bodies violated by racism. *Mandinga* are amulets produced and used in search of protection and power, an African term from the Muslim kingdom of Mali, which flourished in the Niger Valley and Senegal around the 13th century and according to anthropologist and historian Leonardo Bertolossi, the mandingos are symbols “do intercâmbio cultural entre a Igreja das irmandades e os calundus, as bolsas de mandinga refletiam a diversidade de idéias e práticas da “medicina mágica”, muito popular na América portuguesa do século XVIII” (BERTOLOSSI, 2006). A term of great interest to psychologist Castiel Vitorino, who understands the occupation of art spaces as a space for the elaboration of epistemological weapons of war against the colonization of thoughts and desires, equipotent with practices such as capoeira and the congo, she states:

O adoecimento é uma experiência psíquica-corpórea. A saúde dos violentados, demanda modos de cura que estejam atentos para pontos específicos de nossos corpos, pois as dores da alma são sentidas na pele, carne e osso. silenciamentos fazem a garganta doer. Em nossos gestos, há pensamentos. E o pensamento, se produz no movimento do corpo. Sob orientação de uma benzedeira negra, utilizei do passado para compreender o presente e produzir temporalidades e corporeidades mais saudáveis<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> Source: Artist's website: <[https://castielvitorinobrasileiro.com/perfor\\_plantas-que-curam](https://castielvitorinobrasileiro.com/perfor_plantas-que-curam)>. Accessed December 5, 2019.



**Image 1. Rodrigo Jesus**

*Castiel Vitorino Brasileiro.*

*Plants that heal. 3 hours action,  
Vitória, Espírito Santo, Brazil.*



**Image 2. Idem**

This research is carried out with the cooperation of a benzedeira, an agent that constitutes an important element of popular culture in Brazil, articulating a healing process that consists in performing a prayer accompanied by gestures, usually associated with herbs with supernatural powers. As a rule, it is someone from the community who has received the teachings of the ancients orally (which is why there are few records of any formulas, as well as the secret of their prayer). The series consists of six holy cards: *Compress for eye pain; Bath for anxiety attacks; Rosemary tea; Ointment; Soap and Syrup for sore throat*. These recipes are developed with the benzedeira Yasmim Ferreira, thus using the past to understand the present, forging



healthier temporalities and corporealities. Here is an excerpt from the accompanying text:

como expectorar silenciamentos  
aglutinados em minha garganta?  
o que impede minha fala?  
EU VOU GRITAR  
tentaram me calar  
EU VOU GRITAR  
oralidade é ciência?<sup>5</sup>



**Image 3. Rodrigo Jesus**

*Castiel Vitorino Brasileiro*

from the series "for pain, tiredness and exhaustion"

Castiel articulates elements of ancestral wisdom mixed with premises from an anticolonial perspective, in this sense the recipes are accompanied by formulations

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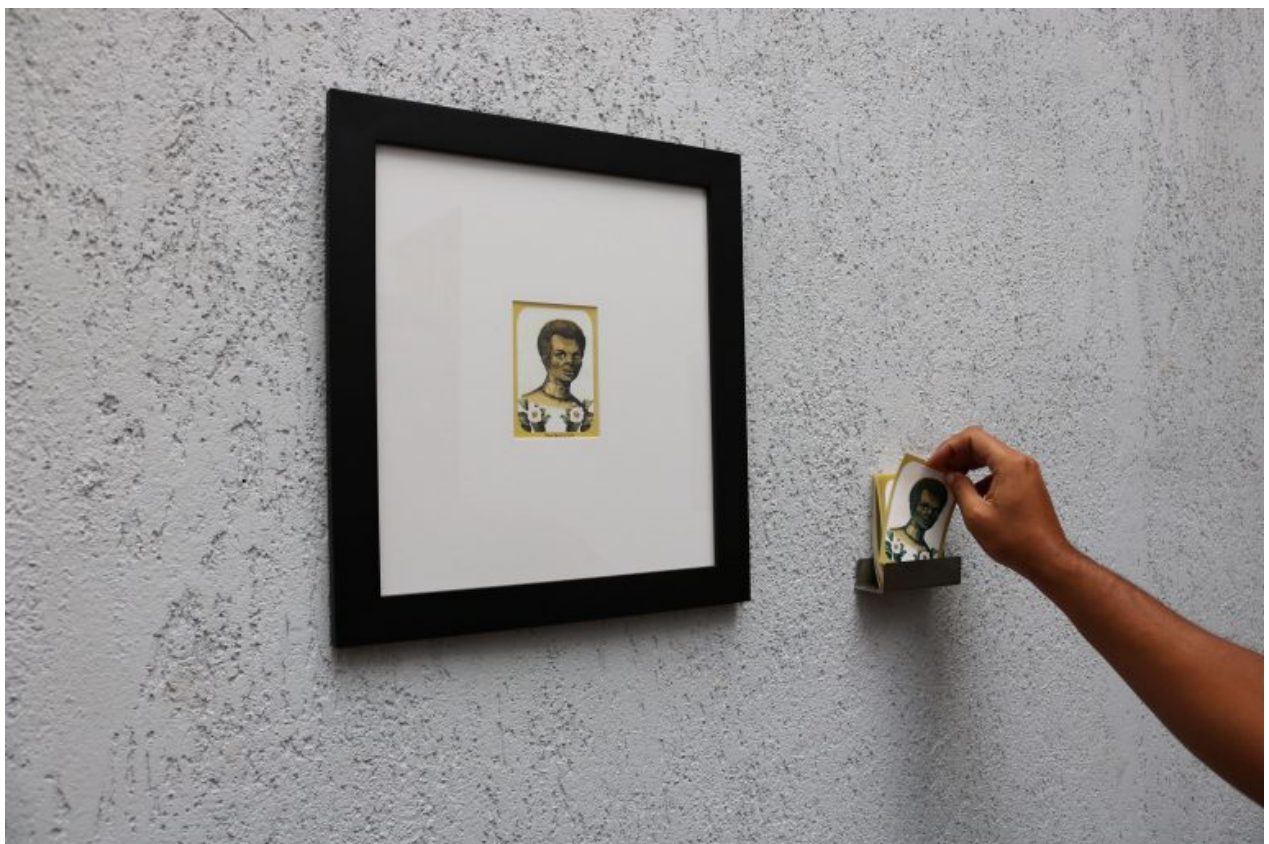
<sup>5</sup> *Idem.*

about the issues discussed in the work of Gayatri Spivak (1985) and Grada Kilomba (2008), which point to the problem of silence and non-listening, making evident the violence that operates within culture, formulated by thoughts and ideologies resulting from epistemological and legal categories. In the piece *Syrup for sore throat*, the saint contains the necessary ingredients for the recipe and the instructions for its preparation. On the back, Castiel specifies the healing properties of each of the ingredients, such as ginger and mallow that "ajudarão a identificar e expectorar as lágrimas infecciosas aglutinadas em sua garganta" and contains the highlighted text: "para dor de garganta, provocada por gritos de raiva e desespero contra silenciamentos....". And lastly highlighting the healing properties of the fennel that "irá acalmar sua garganta, ajudando a diminuir a dor do racismo que dificulta a fala". In the exhibition catalog *The Trauma is Brazilian* (2019) the researcher Napê Rocha states that Castiel Vitorino Brasileiro has sought in his work "resgatar os saberes das benzedadeiras, rezadeiras e curandeiras pretas capixabas, que têm em seu ofício a manutenção do bem-estar e as práticas de cura por meio da integridade entre corpo, mente e espírito" (ROCHA, 2019, p. 12).

Parallels can be established with the practice of Yhuri Cruz, a political scientist who develops his artistic practice from poetic configurations between the ghostly and the real, exploring necropolitics as a neo-colonial plan, and manipulating what he calls "underground memories." Questions about monumentalisation and protagonism are explored in works such as *Memorial to the Ghost* (2018), the fresco *Monument to the Presence* (2018), mounted on the exhibition, *Formation and Deformation*, at the Lage Park School of Visual Arts and *The Horse is Levante - Monument Oxalá and the Worker* (2019) winner of the 4th Reynaldo Roels Jr. Award.

In 2019, in the exhibition *Bodies-cities*, in the Pence space (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil), Yhuri presents the project *Monument to the voice of Anastasia* (2019), composed by fresco VOZ (2019) accompanied by holy card, who were available to be taken. with visitors and distributed to their networks (Image 4). In this saint

elaborated by the artist, we find an image accompanied by the Prayer to Free Anastasia. In the image in question, Yhuri alters the elements of the image, part of the book *Souvenirs d'un aveugle: voyage autour du monde*, published in 1839 by designer and writer Jacques Étienne Victor Arago. A record that was made while accompanying an expedition in Rio de Janeiro, between December 1817 and January 1818; or possibly during his subsequent three-month visit from June to September 1820.



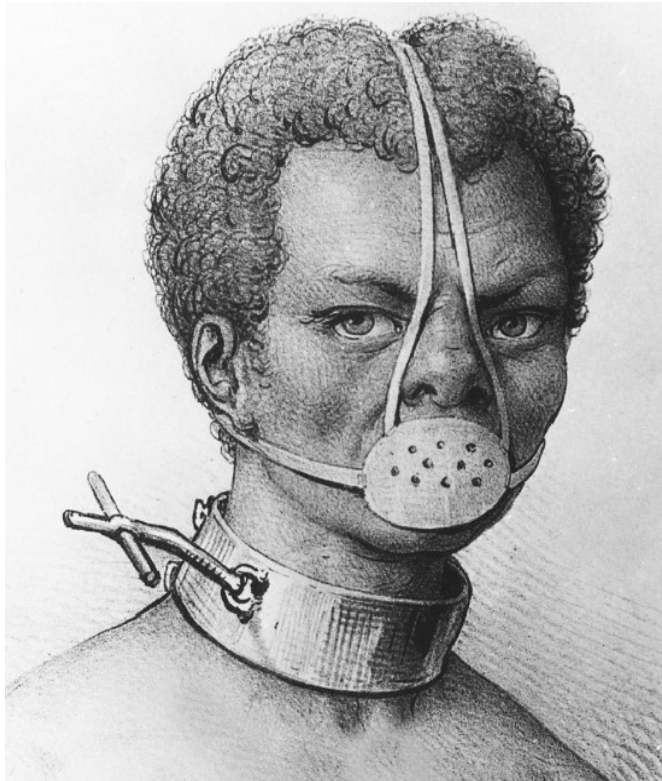
**Image 4. Yhuri Cruz**  
Distribution of saints from Oracão to Anastácia Livre, 2019

The image depicted an 18th century enslaved man (Image 5), making use of the *Flanders Mask*, a tinplate mask used during the period of slavery in Brazil, punishment against uprisings that prevented enslaved people from eating food, drink or Earth. At this time the habit of eating land (voluntary geophagy) caused an infection



incapacitating the enslaved to work. In the article *Escrava Anastácia: The Iconographic History of a Brazilian Popular Saint* (2009), Researchers Jerome Handler and Kelly Hayes focus on the processes of Arago's image proliferation associated with multiple narratives describing the life of an enslaved woman named Anastasia, becoming an image of devotion and a symbol of black pride. For them, "the mute Anastácia speaks to the graphic horrors of chattel slavery: the sexual abuse and rape, hard labour and torturous punishment endured by generations of black slaves" (HANDLER & HAYES, 2009, p. 26). The legend of Anastasia has multiple origins and variations, thoroughly analyzed in the book *Blessed Anastácia: Women, Race, and Popular Christianity in Brazil* (1998), from Syracuse University's professor John Burdick. We cannot offer a definitive answer about the processes that made Arago's image read as feminine and fused with these narratives, but in the article by Jerome Handler and Kelly Hayes, the iconography of this image is considered an interesting case, which illustrates the intersections between the processes of collective memory, visual representation and religious imagination. They point out that

And in the brief descriptions in 1822 and 1839 that explicate the picture, Arago made it plain that he was referring to at least several people. In any case, the male pronouns that Arago used in his references to this image (e.g., 'voyez cet homme,' 'c'est un esclave,' 'voici un autre') make it equally clear, despite its somewhat androgynous appearance, that the image was intended to depict a male, not a female (HANDLER & HAYES, 2009, p. 40).



**Image 5. Slavery Images:  
A Visual Record of the African  
Slave Trade and Slave Life in  
the Early African Diaspora**

"Iron Mask and Collar for  
Punishing Slaves, Brazil, 1817-  
1818"

The narrative pathways of this image relate to the history of the *Church of Our Lady of the Rosary* and *St. Benedict of the Black Men* (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil), which was built in the 18th century and became a center of devotion and place of refuge for enslaved people who fled the slave quarters and carried with them the instruments of torture and mistreatment to which they were subjected. The church functioned as a space for resistance and elaboration of the abolitionist struggle in Brazil, where José do Patrocínio, Joaquim Nabuco and André Rebouças<sup>6</sup>, held meetings that defined actions for the end of slavery. In 1968, a small museum attached to the Rosary Church, the 'Museu do Negro' was preparing an exhibition to commemorate the 80th anniversary of the abolition of slavery in Brazil. And the director includes the image of Arago's book in the exhibition, which Burdick said remained relatively unnoticed.

In this script, Princess Isabel, who died in 1921, enters the scene. In 1888, she signed the law responsible for the formal abolition of slavery in Brazil. Her death

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<sup>6</sup> On September 7, 1880, they founded The Brazilian Society Against Slavery.

occurred in France, where she was in exile with other members of the royal family. In 1953, his remains were taken to Brazil with the intention of performing the burial in the cathedral of Petrópolis (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil), but the funeral did not occur due to non-receipt of financial resources from the Union. Upon his 50th birthday, his remains were placed at the Negro Museum for a two-week vigil, attracting thousands of visitors. During this episode, the drawing of Arago was located near the sarcophagus of Isabel and according to Burdick, at that moment occurs the fusion between the cult of Anastasia and the image of Arago. In the master dissertation<sup>7</sup> historian Mônica Souza, she also points out the importance of the context of the 1970s, in which “a imagem evocava sofrimentos que ultrapassavam o período escravista brasileiro e faziam sentido nas práticas cotidianas do momento. Assim como a máscara de flandres a impedia de falar, também a ditadura brasileira fazia calar” (SOUZA, 2001, p.94).

In the early 1970s the image soon became the object of popular devotion and several Anastasia stories began to boil. There were petitions asking the Catholic Church to officially recognize her as a saint. In 1990, the Manchete Television Network exhibited a miniseries entitled *Slave Anastasia*, various theater groups performed interpretations of their life story. The persecution of Anastasia's image also faced internal and external barriers within Catholicism, a very interesting quarrel under which we can find it richly explored by the research of Mônica Souza (2001), where they focus on the path of symbolic construction that took place during the seventies. in Rio de Janeiro and the rebuilding of the memory and identity of the members of the Brotherhood of the Rosary and St. Benedict of the Black Men. His research is continued in the doctorate where he turns to oracles, belief and magic among cariocas, with emphasis on the Old Black, understood as a complex and dynamic spiritual entity subject to constant rearrangements and transformations, very present

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<sup>7</sup> SOUZA, Mônica, Dias de. *Escrava Anastácia: construção de um símbolo e re-construção da memória e da identidade da Irmandade do Rosário e São Benedito dos Homens Pretos*. Fluminense Federal University (Master in History), 2001.

in the field of the Brazilian sacred. In your article *Escrava Anastácia e pretos-velhos: a rebelião silenciosa da memória popular* (2007) presents both as complex products resulting from the creative process of reflection and elaboration of memories of slavery in “popular culture”. Devotion to Anastasia generated an immense range of representations that can be found accompanying *holy cards* with prayers or giving shape to sacred sculptures (Images 6 and 7).



**Image 6. Vicente de Mello.** Anastasia sculpture. Plaster and pigment.

**Image 7. Idem.** Santinhos with the image of Anastacia.

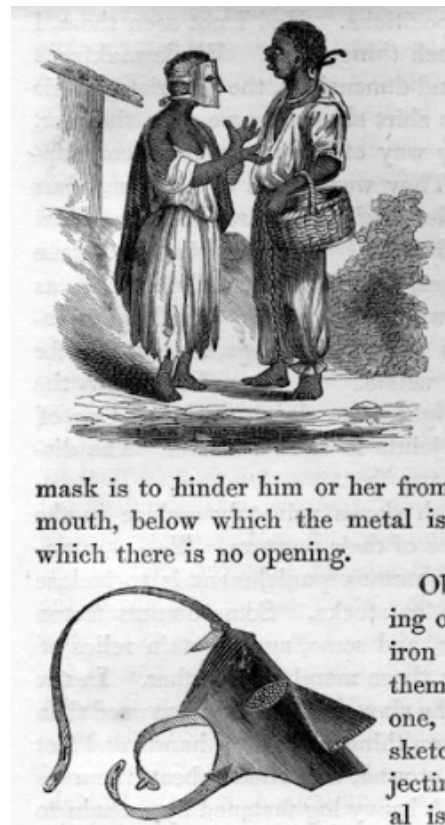


The diffusion of Arago's image associated with the Anastasia myths touches on issues related to the creation and circulation of historical images linked to violent periods in the country's recent history and also to the complex systems of cultural hybridization and religious formation in diasporic contexts. In this sense it is worth considering that during the colonial period, the owner's profit depended on the expropriation of labor and thus the illness was treated as an economic loss, so the slave structure develops apparatuses to prevent this from happening, for example in the masks registered by the drawings of the land. Frenchman Debret, who traveled to Brazil between 1816 - 1831 (Image 8), and Englishman Thomas Ewbank, who was in Brazil between 1845 and 1846, also publishing an account of his travels (Image 9).



**Image 8. Slavery Images:**

**A Visual Record of the African Slave Trade and Slave Life in the Early African Diaspora.** "Masque de fer blanc que l'on fait porter aux nègres"



**Image 9. Idem**

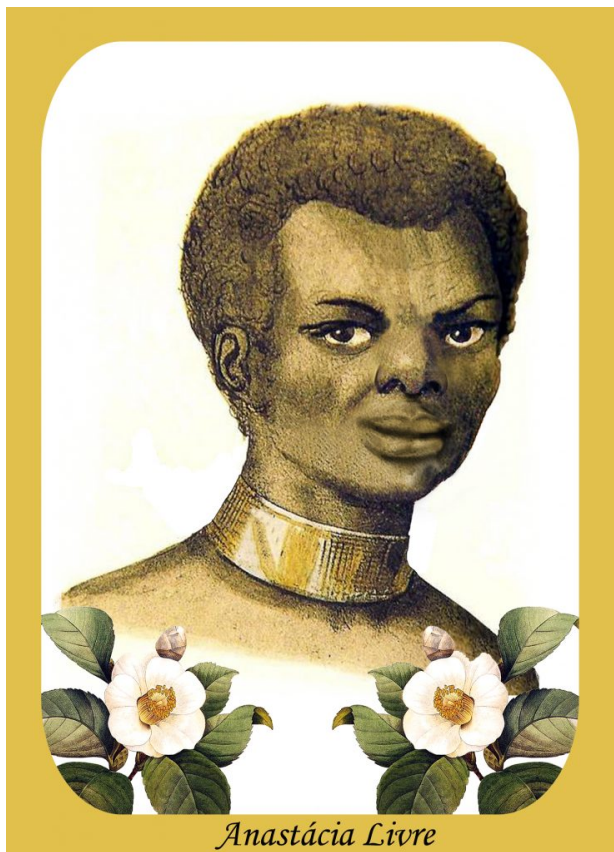
"Untitled Image (Metal Face Mask)"

In the course traced by the image of Arago, we see appropriation of an image associated with the technologies of torture and subjugation of the other, transmuted into an element of worship, faith and hope, thus containing practical and operative aspects of the path of spiritual realization in the face of present trials. In the words of Jerome Handler and Kelly Hayes

The mute Anastácia has provided an opportunity for many Brazilians to narrate a painful era in their history and to reclaim a past that, in ways large and small, continues to affect the present. But the phenomenon of Anastácia also speaks to larger issues of religious formation in diasporic settings, attesting to the importance of visual images in the processes through which individuals draw upon heterogeneous elements originating in disparate cultural contexts to create essentially new composite traditions that reflect local histories and needs (HANDLER & HAYES, 2009, p. 49).

By liberating this image from his violent colonial yoke, Yhuri Cruz poetically liberates the image of Anastasia (Image 10), while claiming new possibilities for enunciation in the historical and artistic field. Let's draw parallels with the text *Rumo a uma redistribuição desobediente de gênero e anticolonial da violência!* published with the support of the 32nd São Paulo Biennial, by the theoretical Jota Mombaça where it discusses the need for rearticulation in the face of systemic violence, making it urgent "um trabalho continuado de reimaginação do mundo e das formas de conhecê-lo, e implica também tornar-se capaz de conceber resistências e linhas de fuga que sigam deformando as formas do poder através do tempo" (MOMBAÇA, 2016, p.5). Yhuri draws parallels with the idea of *dialectical image* presented by Walter Benjamin, because when faced with the new image of Anastasia, already free of colonial technologies, we can think of the image endowed with a cognitive and historical amplitude, which is much more than establishing bridges between past and present, creates a critical space that helps readability of the present moment, Benjamin states that the historical index of the images says,

não apenas que elas pertencem a uma determinada época, mas, sobretudo, que elas só se tornam legíveis numa determinada época. E atingir essa legibilidade constitui um determinado ponto crítico específico do movimento em seu interior. [...] Não é que o passado lança sua luz sobre o presente ou que o presente lança luz sobre o passado; mas a imagem é aquilo em que o ocorrido encontra o agora num lampejo, formando uma constelação. Em outras palavras: a imagem é a dialética na imobilidade. Pois, enquanto a relação do presente com o passado é puramente temporal, a do ocorrido com o agora é dialética – não de natureza temporal, mas imagética (BENJAMIN, 2006, p. 505).



## Oração à Anastácia Livre

Festa dias 12 e 13 de Maio.  
Comemora-se todos os dias 12 e 13.

Se você está com algum PROBLEMA DE DIFÍCIL SOLUÇÃO e precisa de AJUDA URGENTE, peça esta ajuda a Anastácia Livre.

### ORAÇÃO

Vemos que algum algoz fez da tua vida um martírio, violentou tiranicamente a tua mocidade, vemos também no teu semblante macio, no teu rosto suave, tranquilo, a paz que os sofrimentos não conseguiram perturbar.

Isso quer dizer que **sua luta** te tornou superior, **conquistaste tua voz**, tanto que Deus levou-te para as planuras do Céu e deu-te o poder de fazeres curas, graças e milagres mil a **quem luta por dignidade**.

Anastácia, **és livre**, pedimos-te ... roga por nós, proteja-nos, envolve-nos no teu manto de graças e com teu olhar bondoso, firme e penetrante, afasta de nós os males e os maldizentes do mundo.

Monumento a voz de Anastácia  
Yhuri Cruz, 2019

Image 10. Yhuri Cruz

Prayer to Free Anastasia, 2019. Front and back.

A third meaning of the word *fold* is its use as slang used to express that someone has been deceived, sabotaged. In addition to making it bigger, stronger,

more parallel, the fold can be manipulated as a way to thwart historical strategies for maintaining power structures, setting up counter-hegemonic images, doubling / sabotaging fictions that give rise to violence. arranged in various spaces. How can we conclude with Jota Mombaça “Interessa, aqui, a dimensão ética que se desdobra dessas interrogações, e nesse sentido, interessa intensificar o interrogatório do pós-colonial rumo a uma ética posicionada contra as ficções de poder e atualizações da colonialidade na experiência ordinária dos dias”<sup>8</sup>. The multiple nuances of these works can be glimpsed in the photograph taken by Paulo Oliveira, where Valéria (mother of Yhuri) with the artist presents both images (**Image 11**). Through their artistic works, Yhuri and Castiel show new knowledge and practices of knowledge, not restricted to the discursive field of art and visibility. Both Yhuri Cruz and Castiel Vitorino Brasileiro develop proposals that start from a philosophical imaginary, organized by the codes of legitimacy of artistic making, and which emerge from within these codes as the internal possibility of their own dismantling, both of artistic activity and own ontology associated with these bodies and their transit places.



**Image 11. Paulo Oliveira/ CABINE**

Valéria, Yhuri e as duas Anastácias

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<sup>8</sup> Jota Mombaça. Não existe o pós-colonial! Available in <http://www.goethe.de/ins/br/lp/prj/eps/sob/pt16117914.htm>.



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