

Body and Transgression in Bakhtin and Bataille: A Debate of Excesses
/ Corpo e transgressão em Bakhtin e Bataille: um debate de excessos

*Anderson Lopes da Silva **

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this essay is to present, in comparative terms, how political-aesthetic excess is the common element of issues like the body and transgression arranged under different contexts in the works of Mikhail Bakhtin and Georges Bataille. Thus, despite coming from different fields (from dialogical studies of language and observations of general economy), both authors move through mutual ground to the production of meanings which is based on ephemerality, ambiguity, and ambivalence of excess.

KEYWORDS: Excess; Carnivalization; Taboos; *Sensibilia*; Corporeality

RESUMO

O objetivo deste ensaio é apresentar, em termos comparativos, como o excesso político-estético é o elemento de aproximação entre os temas do corpo e da transgressão que, dispostos sob contextos diversos, são facilmente encontrados nas obras de Mikhail Bakhtin e Georges Bataille. Assim, ainda que oriundos de campos distintos (dos estudos dialógicos da linguagem às observações da ordem de uma economia geral), ambos os autores transitam por um terreno comum às produções de sentidos que, em suma, é calcado na efemeridade, ambiguidade e ambivalência do excesso.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Excesso; Carnavalização; Tabus; *Sensibilia*; Corporeidade

* Researcher GP USP/CNPq [National Council of Scientific and Technological Development] Linguagens e Discursos nos Meios de Comunicação (GELiDis) [Language and Discourses in the Media], São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil; Researcher of Núcleo de Estudos em Ficção Seriada e Audiovisualidades (NEFICS) [Center for Studies in Serial Fiction and Audiovisualities] from Universidade Federal do Paraná - UFPR/CNPq [National Council of Scientific and Technological Development], Curitiba, Paraná, Brazil; Rede Obitel Brasil (Equipe UFPR/Unisa), Curitiba, Paraná, Brasil; <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4865-4201>; anderlopps@gmail.com

Introduction

Though Mikhail Bakhtin (1895-1975) and Georges Bataille (1897-1962) share very close interests, it is possible to affirm that even today there is a scarcity of academic productions that place the intellectual paths, texts, and concepts of both authors side by side, in direct dialogue. On the other hand, works that escape such an assertion are Andrei Khorev's thesis (2000), *Two heterologies: Georges Bataille and Mikhail Bakhtin*, and Jared Lemole's dissertation (2005), *Carnival, sacred and sovereign: The intellectual intersection of Bakhtin and Bataille*. With in-depth analyses, these works draw exhaustive parallels between the two authors on shared conceptual grounds.¹ However, neither of them focuses solely and exclusively on the theme of excess in Bakhtin and Bataille.

Thus, as a modest attempt to revive the comparative debate around Bakhtinian and Bataillian thoughts, this essay seeks to demonstrate the points of confluence (without ignoring the disagreements, *per se*) starting with the theme of political-aesthetic excess as a guiding subject in the discussions developed by the Russian and French thinkers. Excess, it is worth pointing out, starts from distinct bases for the two intellectuals, but, in the course of their propositions, finds support in cosmovisions that are very close to one another: like streams coming from springs that are far from each other, but that, in a natural way, flow into rivers that are close to each other.

As the question of the self and the other is something very relevant in Bakhtinian work, it deserves, in comparative terms, a specific correlation with the questions of alterity in Bataille's vision. In an effort to correlate points of contact between the works of Bataille and Bakhtin, the research brought by Khorev (2000) brings up the understanding of excess as an important element in the authors' intellectual production,

¹There are other academic works that construct indirect discussions or even occasional correlations between the two intellectuals, such as the articles "Un monstre du rire et un rire monstrueux: directions pour une étude sur François Rabelais et Georges Bataille," by Stéphane Charitos (1988), and "The engendered blow job: Bakhtin's comic dismemberment and the pornography of Georges Bataille's 'Story of the eye' (1928)", by Roland Champagne (1990). There is also the work entitled *Reading grotesque material: Bakhtin, Bataille, and transgression in Lautréamont's 'Les Chants de Maldoror'* (suggested by Google Scholar), by Andrew Kingston and Paul Éluard. However, given the lack of other fundamental data such as year and place of publication, the latter study could not be found in its entirety in any online scientific article bank (hence, it is cited here with due considerations of suspicion).

especially since the emergence of the term heterology² in the 1930s as a concept nominally common to both Bakhtinian and Bataillan works. Khorev (2000, p.1) explains: “The ‘heterologies’ of both Bataille and Bakhtin essentially deal with centrifugal forces and phenomena, ‘deconstructive’ in relation to authority-centered literary, linguistic, or social structures.” The author further states that “Bataille’s conception of exteriority in the context of the problem of the Other is based on the same initial premise as Bakhtin’s,” (Khorev, 2000, p.277). Thus, such a zone of possible contiguity between the thought of the two authors lies in the reflection on social relations, excess, and otherness, explains Khorev (2000).

However, even though this essay is more concerned with finding the similarities than the differences between the two authors, it should be noted that Khorev (2000, p.279) points out that the view of excess for both authors is not always confluent—there are observable dissensions. The researcher, when talking about the comparison between the terminological choices of Bakhtinian “surplus” (in Russian, *izbytok*) and Bataillan “excess” (in French, *excès*), also draws attention to the issues of translation of some of the Bakhtinian works directly from Russian into English by Vadim Liapunov. Moreover, without giving further details, he opines that the use of the term “surplus” presents a qualitative difference in comparison with the meaning of the word “excess” in Bataillan vocabulary (Khorev, 2000, p.300). Something that, for him, consequently interferes, even if slightly, in the way the productions of meaning are thought of in both authors.

In this sense, the argumentative structure put on display also presents how the issues of corporeality are read by the authors, specifically at the points that touch the body in excess, the body in constant opening, the grotesque body, the body in a threshold situation, the body that refers to *sensibilia* and not only to *sapientia*. Finally, as a way of condensing the previous discussions, the theme of transgression as a temporary suspension of the rules in force is brought into play with the intention of reflecting on how the ideas or visions of the two thinkers can be put into dialogue about the inexistence of an overcoming of interdictions as a final and complete overcoming of the systemic barriers placed in the social fabric.

² According to Khorev (2000, p.305), “Heterology, Bataille’s as well as Bakhtin’s, is from the outset posited as anti-systematic, at least in what concerns the traditionally established system of social, political, cultural, and linguistic norms.”

1 The Bakhtinian Excess

When entering Bakhtin's reflections on excess, before anything else it is fundamental to establish that the foundations of this thought find their *locus* of enunciation in the interweaving of the ethical and the aesthetic (mainly through two very complex points in his work: the carnivalesque worldview and the excess of vision).³ Throughout Bakhtin's intellectual path, such interlacing is expressed as indissoluble and present both in the process of construction and in the reading of the forms that the aesthetic finish takes in an empirical object.

Understanding carnivalization as an aesthetic and political phenomenon begins by conceptualizing that it is characterized by a large universally popular cosmivision (Bakhtin, 1984b)⁴ permeated by a latent ambiguity,⁵ as one can see by the views (sometimes consonant, sometimes dissonant) of the authors of Bakhtinian tradition mentioned here. In this sense, within the processes of carnivalization, moralizing issues have their importance lowered and the lightness, the comic and the grotesque are seen as something appreciable; they are not condemned, but, on the contrary, are elevated to the level of naturalization of life. Therefore, in the carnivalesque perception of the world, hierarchies are maladjusted, orifices and protuberances or human waste and secretions rise to a position never imagined for the field of literary creations: laughter takes the place of seriousness and authority is ridiculed. Thus, in this space, we intend to put into dialogue, under a critical eye, the tensions involving the carnivalesque perception of the

³ In this essay, specifically, excess through carnivalization is addressed, however, the works of Bubnova (2000) and Machado (2010) are recommended to reflect on excess through the "excess of seeing" and "outsideness." "This ever-present *excess* of my seeing, knowing, and possessing in relation to any other human being is founded in the uniqueness and irreplaceability of my place in the world. For only I—the one-and-only I—occupy in a given set of circumstances this particular place at this particular time; all other human beings are situated outside me. *Cognition* surmounts this concrete outsideness of me myself and the outsideness-for-me of all other human beings, as well as the excess of my seeing in relation to each one of them, which is founded in that position of outsideness," states Bakhtin (1990, p.23, emphasis added). For reference, see footnote 12.

⁴ BAKHTIN, M. *Rabelais and His World*. Translated by Helene Iswolsky. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984b.

⁵ Ambiguity is a "term that translates the occurrence of more than one meaning in words, phrases, propositions or texts (...). Ambiguity in language is associated with the phenomena of connotation and polysemy (...)" (Ceia, 2009, para. 1-2). Even if ambiguity is related to ambivalence, it is necessary not to confuse the terms as synonyms. [Our translation. In Portuguese: "Termo que traduz a ocorrência de mais do que um sentido em palavras, frases, proposições ou textos (...). A ambiguidade na linguagem está associada aos fenômenos da conotação e da polissemia (...)."]

world and its connections with excess (through carnivalized laughter, grotesque realism, the body in excess, the metaphorical relations of rebirth and death and, finally, the transgressive but temporary character that forces the norms, the hegemony and the social order to submit to questioning).

According to Renfrew (2015),⁶ the Bakhtinian work dealing with Rabelais was first published in Russian in the year 1965, but it began being written in the late 1930s and continued throughout the following decade. It is valid to note that the work is part of an emerging framework of “(...) the linguistic turn that drives a fundamental shift in Bakhtin’s thought in the late 1920s; and, like the chronotope, carnival does not derive from or depend upon a theory of language” (Renfrew, 2015, p.130).⁷ “Thus, we can speak of the ‘carnival writings’ as a distinct group or period within Bakhtin’s work, with their own motivation and internal consistency,” claim Morson and Emerson (1990, p.433).⁸ Morson and Emerson’s (1990, p.66)⁹ organization of the Russian thinker’s ideas shows that even Bakhtin’s discourse gains a hyperbolic tone in a process of metalinguistic reflection and refraction on the theme of excess present both in carnivalization and in his writing style on the subject.

Therefore, it is in Menippean satire that Bakhtin (1984a)¹⁰ locates the most explicit forms of the ethical and ideological development of carnivalization processes. “The carnivalistic nature of the menippea is even more pronounced. Carnivalization permeates both its external layers and its deepest core. Certain menippea directly portray festivals of the carnival type,” Bakhtin (1984a, p.133)¹¹ states. Or as Medeiros (2008, pp.3-4) puts it: “Summarizing some of Bakhtin’s information about the Menippean [satire], one can conclude that this genre has a mixture of elements that are, apparently, heterogeneous, such as: elements of the fantastic tale, philosophical dialogue, adventure, underworld naturalism, and utopia, among others.”¹² Excess in satire manifests itself,

⁶ RENFREW, A. *Mikhail Bakhtin*. New York: Routledge, 2015.

⁷ For reference, see footnote 6.

⁸ MORSON, G. S., EMERSON, C. *Mikhail Bakhtin: Creation of a Prosaics*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990.

⁹ For reference, see footnote 8.

¹⁰ BAKHTIN, M. *Problems of Dostoevsky’s Poetics*. Edited and translated by Caryl Emerson. Introduction by Wayne C. Booth. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984a.

¹¹ For reference, see footnote 10.

¹² In Portuguese: “Resumindo algumas das informações de Bakhtin sobre a menipeia, pode-se concluir que este gênero possui uma mistura de elementos que são, aparentemente, heterogêneos, tais como: elementos

according to the author, from a perspective where its existence is “quite acceptable for accomplishing the task of satire, which generally looks for trenchant and offensive transgredient deposits in the existence of a goal-directed and internally meaningful human life” (Bakhtin, 1990, p.184).¹³ Therefore, thinking about carnivalization processes, as Bakhtin (1984b)¹⁴ explains, necessarily brings to mind the combative and transgressive attack of Menippean satire, the undesirability of norms, conventions, hierarchies, Christian asceticism, and the suppression of laughter and body. In short, a questioning posture of the social that, with balance, does not lose sight of the production of meaning that comes from the aesthetic activity involved in these questionings. As Lachmann (1988, p.121) reminds us: “Bakhtin rejects a reduction of carnival functions to a purely socially critical element.”

With the statement that the “carnival is the people's second life, organized on the basis of laughter,” Bakhtin (1984b, p.8)¹⁵ opens the discussion to think about the relations between excess and carnivalized laughter. According to Lachmann (1988, p.136), the realm of laughter in carnival is also the realm of excess:

The language of the carnival (a system composed of signs which, when selected according to particular rules and combined in sequences, produce cultural meaning) has at its disposal a certain number of paradigms determined by the principle of laughter. These paradigms are: gay relativity, instability, openness and infiniteness, the metamorphic, ambivalence,¹⁶ the eccentric, materiality and corporeality, excess, the exchange of value positions (up/down, master/slave), and the sensation of the universality of being. These

do conto fantástico, do diálogo filosófico, da aventura, do naturalismo de submundo e da utopia, entre outros.”

¹³ BAKHTIN, M. Author and Hero in Aesthetic Activity (ca. 1920-1923). Translation and notes by Vadim Liapunov (including material from the editor of the Russian edition, S. S. Averintsev and S. G. Bocharov). In: BAKHTIN, M. *Art and Answerability: Early Philosophical Essays*. Edited by Michael Holquist and Vadim Liapunov. Translation and notes by Vadim Liapunov. Supplement translated by Kenneth Brostrom. Austin: University of Texas, 1990. pp.4-256.

¹⁴ For reference, see footnote 4.

¹⁵ For reference, see footnote 4.

¹⁶ Ambivalence is a “concept that refers to terms or statements that have opposite meanings, both of which are valid. It is a particular form of ambiguity. (...) It is linked in origin to human attitudes and behavior. It occurs in the attribution of opposite feelings to the same individual. Common cases are the ambivalence of acceptance and rejection, love and hate for the same person,” (Ceia, 2009, para. 1). Even though ambivalence is related to ambiguity, it is necessary that the terms not be confused as synonyms. [Our translation. In Portuguese: “Conceito que remete para os termos ou enunciados que tenham sentidos opostos, sendo ambos válidos. Trata-se de uma forma particular de ambiguidade. (...) Está ligado na origem às atitudes e comportamentos humanos. Ocorre na atribuição de sentimentos opostos ao mesmo indivíduo. Casos comuns são os da ambivalência da aceitação e da rejeição, do amor e do ódio pela mesma pessoa.”]

paradigms determine both the semantic qualities and the form acquired by all facts of the culture of laughter: even those elements which intrude into the culture of laughter from other realms are subordinated to them.

Carnivalized laughter is excessive, then, because it manages to break the barriers imposed by the instated hierarchy. Carnivalized laughter is ambivalent, as Renfrew (2015, p.134)¹⁷ states, precisely because it manages to commune the “inside out moments that break, even if temporarily, the pre-established orders by proposing, for example, the spectacle of “comic crownings and uncrownings (the carnival king/fool).” (Renfrew, 2015, p.134)¹⁸ In this way, excess and laughter foment the experience that allows the bodies the transgressive act, which reveals to the bodies the opportunity to place themselves as a collective whole that confronts, in a denaturalized way, the norms taken as fundamental to the social fabric and the maintenance of the status quo.

In short, putting carnivalized laughter in contact with excess, starting from the point that it is a generative (and extremely skillful) force able to put into tension multiple and contradictory elements (Shields, 2007, p.121), shows that this correlation is a demonstration of the liberating power that excess and laughter have in common. But beyond that, it makes perceptible the (re)creative and (re)generative force of carnivalized laughter as a tool to rethink the world, a way to question limits (millimetrically placed under the veil of naturalization) and a means to understand how it is possible to face these limits.

2 The Bataillian Excess

Bataille’s vision of excess is, by far, the one that most walks down paths that do not traditionally, necessarily and exclusively belong to the humanities. This is because the author’s multiple fronts of action extend from literature and art to the economic field, the latter being the birthplace of his conception of excess. To this end, Bataille postulates a thesis that is very different from all others hitherto discussed in economics. The author, contrary to the classical readings that defined accumulation as being at the core of the

¹⁷ For reference, see footnote 6.

¹⁸ For reference, see footnote 6.

logic of economic supply and demand, presents excess from a notion of expenditure. The discussions first appear in the 1930s, with the article *La Notion de Depense* [The Notion of Expenditure] (published in the French journal *La Critique Sociale* in 1933), and are resumed in depth and maturity years later with the work *La Part Maudite* [The Accursed Share] (1949). Bataille thus understands excess from what he calls the expenditure, expense, or outlay necessary for the maintenance of the life of subjects in the social fabric, of economic systems and flows, and, extensively, even to the environment of natural sciences. Criticizing the insufficiency of the classical utility principle, he announces the “principle of loss” as an alternative to think about human activity beyond the reduction of reproduction and conservation processes (Bataille, 1985, p.118).¹⁹

Taking examples of these so-called unproductive expenditures, the author demonstrates, how such different universes and practices have an intimate connection by what he calls activities that have an end in themselves. Bataille (1985, pp.118-120),²⁰ when speaking of jewelry, gambling, cults, sacrifice, sex beyond its reproductive ends, the anthropological phenomenon of *potlatch*,²¹ and the arts, points to excess as the expenditure, the spending, the loss located on a level of elemental condenser. In other words, “For Bataille there is no expenditure without excess, just as every excess implies some kind of spending” (Borges, 2012, p.31).²²

This discussion of excess is located in an area that the author termed “general economy,” (Shaviro, 1990, p.35) In an attempt to synthesize the argumentative ambitions of this area, it is feasible to understand it as a turn in the economic thought that later extended to the Bataillian philosophical field and defined very well how excess was present in all spheres (human, animal, natural, social) as a necessary category to the

¹⁹ BATAILLE, G. The Notion of Expenditure. In: BATAILLE, G. *Vision of Excess*. Select Writings, 1927-1939. Edited and with an Introduction by Allan Stoekl. Translated by Allan Stoekl, with Carl R. Lovitt and Donald M. Leslie, Jr. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1985. pp.116-129.

²⁰ For reference, see footnote 19.

²¹ *Potlatch* is a ritual of the Indigenous tribes of North America (such as the Haida, the Tlingit, the Salish, and the Kwakiutl) and Melanesia (Oceania). The ceremony concerns a religious feast completed with a renunciation of all material goods accumulated by the honored person, which are to be given to relatives and friends. In many cases, the goods are simply destroyed after the ceremony, and thus excess as expenditure proves to be the example par excellence discussed by Bataille (1985). For reference, see footnote 19.

²² In Portuguese: “For Bataille there is no expenditure without excess, just as every excess implies some kind of spending.”

processes of survival and maintenance of life by the expenditure of this *accursed share*, since it is *unproductive*.

Thus the space of Bataillian general economy, for Hegarty, is the perfect definition of a “realm of excess”: This realm of excess is the general economy, but the general economy is also the process whereby the homogeneous realm interacts with excessive phenomena” (Hegarty, 2000, p.33). Therefore: “The general economy redefines the economic such that not everything is under ‘the economic,’ but everything is part of one economy among many - this many is the general economy” (Hegarty, 2000, p.33). It is necessary to emphasize that, by locating excess in the centrality of this general economy, what Bataille is exposing, beyond a shadow of a doubt, is that excess is not an element of the sphere of individuality, “but traverses every system from the individual to the world and to the cosmos” (Noys, 2000, p.13).

Hence, it is possible to see how the peculiar academic and literary path of Bataille, notably by daring to propose *sui generis* reflections such as the notions of expense, excess and expenditure in the field of general economy, reveals an author far ahead of his time. Ffrench (2016), on the other hand, with a look specifically at the author's literary production, goes further and points out that:

Georges Bataille is the author of some of the most distinctly transgressive and singular fictional writings of the 20th century.... Bataille's fictional texts perform excess, both in terms of their themes and events, and in their form and shape. Often incomplete, punctuated by silence, fractured and fragmented, they reveal in this very lack of closure and completion the limits of language (Ffrench, 2016, p.189).

It is also relevant to point out, still on his intellectual trajectory, how excess was not restricted to his economic reflections or separated from his artistic creation process, because, as Díaz de la Serna (1997, p.140) states: “It is undeniable that Bataille wanted to install his thought in the vertigo of disorder, of excess.”²³

²³ In Spanish: “Es innegable que Bataille quiso instalar su pensamiento en el vértigo del desorden, del exceso.”

3 Body in Excess: From a Carnivalized Perspective to Experiences of *Sensibilia*

The theme of the body in the carnivalesque worldview is not an occasional or merely illustrative issue; on the contrary, the body in Bakhtinian writings about Rabelais' work is a central figure of discussion (so powerful that Bakhtin (1984b)²⁴ nominally dedicates the fourth and fifth chapters of his work to address the subject). Thus it is more than valid to explain some points of interest to understand the corporal centrality in the carnivalesque perception of the world.

The first point concerns the theme of the lower material stratum and its connection with the lower bodily stratum (Bakhtin, 1984b, p.370)²⁵ through the viewpoint of carnivalization that dethrones hierarchies by means of “blows and abuse, the main *loci* of the lower material and lower bodily strata” are topographic, concrete and perceptible debasement. And, just as importantly, the lens of grotesque realism reinterprets sacred and elevated things from the material and bodily plane.

Rabelais is the greatest example of one who manages to merge in his literature the most exemplary images and texts of how the body coexists with the lower material stratum. Therefore, as Renfrew (2015, pp.140-142)²⁶ states, Bakhtin presents through the Rabelaisian work a body that is symbolic and at the same time alive, excessive, and pulsating. A body that is shown as “essential both for carnival itself (as ritual spectacle of the Middle Ages) and for the carnival symbolic, the images that migrate to later culture and literature” (Renfrew, 2015, pp.140-141).²⁷ From this it is possible to note, first of all, that excess shows itself as a very powerful way of shaping the carnivalized body, such that it demarcates a before and after in the Bakhtinian writings of that time. In other words “Exaggeration and overemphasis are indices of value; the greater the scale of the body's ingestion and copulation, the greater its value” (Renfrew, 2015, p.141).²⁸

One of the most striking features of grotesque realism, as part of Bakhtin's carnivalesque worldview, is thus debasement, that is, when something/someone is brought to the material and bodily plane (earth and body in their indissoluble unity). For

²⁴ For reference, see footnote 4.

²⁵ For reference, see footnote 4.

²⁶ For reference, see footnote 6.

²⁷ For reference, see footnote 6.

²⁸ For reference, see footnote 6.

the author, debasement is not of an abstract moral order nor has a very relative significance. No, for Bakhtin the relation between the lower material and lower bodily strata takes place via a perception that the “downward movement” is something proper to all the joy that covers the popular, carnivalized and grotesque vision (Bakhtin, 1984b, p.370).²⁹ It is in the “lower bodily stratum” that the author will focus his discourse by putting in scene the belly, intestine, anus, excrement, reproductive organs and other orifices that many prudish writings would not even mention because such matters are linked to an alleged “lower” view of the body, that is: “The ‘positive regenerating force’ of the lower bodily stratum, while it is a component of the carnival symbolic in general terms, is also a site of direct signification” (Renfrew, 2015, p.142).³⁰

Another relevant point of this body in excess, in the carnivalized view, is precisely what exceeds the norms or limits imposed on it. It is “the exuberant and ambivalent body reveling in excess that he [Bakhtin] praises in *Rabelais*” (Morson; Emerson, 1990, p.440).³¹ The body in excess is also the body of openness, an unfinished body, an incomplete body, a cracked body—an open body, even in the collective sense of the excess bodies that come into view in the carnival ritualistic. Or as Lachmann (1989, p.124) points out, the “dramas of the body” (that is, “the drama of birth, coitus, death, growing, eating, drinking, and evacuation”) are not understood from a perspective of “the private, individual body, but rather to the larger collective one of the folk.” As Morson and Emerson (1990, p.449)³² rightly remind us, along with the non-finality of the grotesque body, other values celebrated by Bakhtin are precisely “the interdependence of bodies and the messiness of life.”

In this sense, the incompleteness of the body coupled with the bodily low now make the focus not on the “boundaries of the body,” but rather on its orifices “which are important precisely because they *violate* the boundary between the individual self and the world. (...) In carnival, an individual body is important only as a part of the body of the people.” (Morson; Emerson, 1990, p.226, emphasis added)³³ Thus, consequently to the ideas presented above, it is relevant to observe how the body becomes the “stage of

²⁹ For reference, see footnote 4.

³⁰ For reference, see footnote 6.

³¹ For reference, see footnote 8.

³² For reference, see footnote 8.

³³ For reference, see footnote 8.

eccentricity” in the perception of the carnivalized and grotesque world, as pointed out by Lachmann (1989, p.146).

It is the body that transgresses its own boundaries, that plays up its own exaggeration: the grotesque body. Bakhtin reconstructs the image of the grotesque body contained in Rabelais's text and increasingly shifts it into the focal point of his interest. In doing so, his prime concern is the return of the body in the Renaissance, whereby the revaluation of the role played by the body in the cosmos is decisive.

Through this path between the body in excess and the transgressive body, it is possible to see how Bakhtin dialogues directly with Bataille's writings about the body, excess and transgression. Lemole (2005) points out this correlation when he says that, in both authors, the body becomes a prominent concern because it emphasizes the impossibility of perfection and completeness. “Unlike a classical statue devoid of indications of mortality and vulnerability, the carnival body is ‘open’” (Lemole, 2005, p.3). In another attempt at terminological comparison, Lemole (2005, p.iii) points to the few correlations in academia between Bakhtin's and Bataille's thoughts, despite the fact that the authors share interests such as death, excess, transgression, and discourse. In this way, the researcher points out that:

The common intellectual ground shared by Mikhail Bakhtin and Georges Bataille routinely suffers from a dearth of consideration. (...)Both Bakhtin and Bataille inherited the Wagnerian Nietzsche's nostalgia for effusive communal ritual, collapsing the boundaries between bodies and the boundary between life and death (Lemole, 2005, p.iii).

Therefore, as we can see, the body in excess is an element commonly addressed in Bakhtinian and Bataillian visions, either through a carnivalized eye, or through the ways of experiencing limit-experiences. The incompleteness and unfinishedness of the body in excess interconnect the paths taken by both authors as a discursive centrality on the relations of humanity with its environment. “Thus bodies in Bakhtin and Bataille are ‘open,’ mainly in comic and inglorious ways, and death is the cynosure of festival,” states Lemole (2015, p.iii). It is something that can also be thought of from what Borges (2012, p.86) points out when talking about Bataillean terms like *déchirure* (tear or laceration)

and *blesure* (wound) in a context of communication of bodies in excess, in an experience of consummation, *jouissance* and eroticism. Thus, the erotic experience in Bataille in the path of open bodies is given by the figure of eroticism (without reproductive purposes, therefore, sovereign, potentially orgiastic and directed to consummation and the idea of expenditure in itself) as the “fusion of bodies aiming to overcome the anguish and the lack, characteristic of a being that lives on the principle of insufficiency” (Borges, 2012, p.87).³⁴

Regarding the experience of the body in excess in Bakhtin’s carnivalized view, many times it presents itself as something that goes beyond rules, including the rationalizing understanding of the reasons that lead the body to excess: it is a body that Bakhtin idealizes as a “brawling, spitting, medieval body - which is granted no special historical task, nor any ‘historical momentum’ toward a more harmonious and articulate form,” affirm Morson and Emerson” (1990, p.439).³⁵ From this perspective it is possible to problematize how the body in Bataille also experiences excess without, however, an ultra-sophisticated reflection in intellectual terms to understand what happens in the body from this. This is what Borges calls “the body’s will to excess”: “In the experience, therefore, the body plunges into ignorance to affirm it is *sensibilia* [as opposed to *sapientia*]. A condition of sovereignty, ignorance is a necessary attribute of the body in excess” (Borges, 2012, p.82).³⁶

The openness of the bodies in Bataille, equally, reverberates in Bakhtin’s understanding about how the inner-self relates to the outer-world from the experience “that, at the limit, abolishes the boundary between the inside and the outside, affirming the body as the will to excess in continuity” (Borges, 2012, p.88).³⁷ That is, the openness and experiences lived by the body are read in Bataille, according to Borges (2012, p.88),³⁸ by the manifestation of the “will to excess” and the communication of the “insufficiency of being (desire, anguish, lack, wound)” in varied forms of experience.

³⁴ In Portuguese: “fusão dos corpos visando à superação da angústia e da falta, próprias de um ser que vive sobre o princípio de insuficiência.”

³⁵ For reference, see footnote 8.

³⁶ In Portuguese: “Na experiência, portanto, o corpo mergulha na ignorância para se afirmar como *sensibilia* [em contraposição à *sapientia*]. Condição de soberania, a ignorância é atributo necessário do corpo em excesso.”

³⁷ In Portuguese: “que, no limite, abole a fronteira entre o interior e o exterior, afirmando o corpo como vontade de excesso na continuidade.”

³⁸ In Portuguese: “vontade de excesso”; “insuficiência do ser (desejo, angústia, falta, ferida).”

A multiplicity of possibilities is visible in what Shaviro (1990) presents, in the deliberate intention of putting Bataille and Blanchot in conjunction, when talking about the idea of “experience” and “impossibility” as points of convergence between the two authors considered to be theoreticians of excess (especially of the body that experiences limit-situations). According to him, “Impossibility is even experience at its most vital, at its most extreme point” (Shaviro, 1990, p.28). In addition, this near impossibility of defining experience beginning with the body—in a true unspeakability or untranslatability of the senses—is also close to what Marion (2002, p.xxi) classifies as the excess in which the saturated phenomena are constituted. Even though much care must be taken in this attempt of correlation, especially because Marion works from a very specific phenomenological perspective and equally singular hermeneutic applications in the theological field, it is still possible to draw a parallel between the idea of the experience of the body (*sensibilia*) in excess as brought by Bakhtin and Bataille with events that go beyond the understanding or processing of logical-rationalizing ideas (*sapientia*).

A saturated phenomenon is one that cannot be wholly contained within concepts that can be grasped by our understanding. (...) [T]here is always an excess left over, which is beyond conceptualization. (...) Although this idea of unrestrictedness has obvious consequences in the theological domain, it applies equally beyond this, opening the possibility that all phenomena might give themselves in a way that exceeds our capacity to grasp them and conceptualize them (Mackinlay, 2010, pp.1-2).

Another possible way of understanding the body is what Zavala (1996, p.230) puts into question when he talks about the dissenting character of corporeality in the social fabric. According to the author, under the rubric of carnivalization, the political and collective body is one that manages to gather within itself the greatest possibilities of transgression of a certain context or situation. “The body is the zone of ambivalences, the dwelling of the [social] imaginary underground to reinvent it,” Zavala (1996, p.239)³⁹ states. And by social imaginary, specifically in the reading proposed by the author regarding the political body, it is understood how it can be an operative concept capable

³⁹ In Spanish: “Y el cuerpo es la zona de ambivalencias, la morada del subterráneo imaginario para reinventarlo.”

of “capturing the cognitive value of imaginary constructions, their materiality as a socially symbolic act and their ideological function” (Zavala, 1996, p.91).⁴⁰ Moreover, thinking about the body, now, in the Bataillan writings, is also to walk through imaginaries and materialities that, according to Piel (2016, p.12), always have the notion of excess as the basis of the constructions of a philosophy of man (humanity), philosophy of economy and philosophy of history crossed by the contestation of the systems and prevailing norms imposed in the social.

Finally, to discuss the body in excess from the perspective of the carnivalesque worldview is to think about how corporeality overflows into direct signification, in the words of Renfrew (2015, p.142).⁴¹ Put another way, the author is talking about how the body becomes an element that simultaneously experiences grotesque realism through debasement, decadence, and degradation, without leaving out the experience of carnivalizing and liberating laughter, the experience that is not oppressed by morals and good manners. In the words of Bataille (1985,⁴² 1962),⁴³ it is a body that experiences orgiastic sex, the experience that speaks and even feels the abject things it spews out in the scatological processes—a body that is affected by excess and infects other bodies in an excessive way. In short, a body in excess, in the Bakhtinian and Bataillan understandings, transgresses the norms and barriers imposed on it; a body in excess does not easily allow itself to be aesthetically and politically restricted by hierarchical, censorial, disciplinary, and authoritarian directions.

4 Transgression as a Temporary Suspension of the Rules

The theme of transgression in the carnivalesque worldview is very connected to ambiguity and ambivalence, especially from the sense of transgression as a potential ephemeral transformative force or even as a paradoxically extreme and singular rupture of hierarchies. This qualifying conception of carnivalization, as Barreira (2016, p.12)

⁴⁰ In Spanish: “captar el valor cognitivo de las construcciones imaginarias, su materialidad como acto socialmente simbólico y su función ideológica.”

⁴¹ For reference, see footnote 6.

⁴² For reference, see footnote 19.

⁴³ BATAILLE, G. *Death and Sexuality*. A Study of Eroticism and the Taboo. New York: Walker Company, 1962.

points out, “has the power to regenerate social disfigurements by questioning social codes, helping to mobilize the imagination as a form of political, religious, and cultural practices.”⁴⁴ Therefore, thinking about transgression is to reflect on how, many times, the verb “transgress” is coated with other terminologies with parallel (but not synonymous) meanings, such as to profane, subvert, and circumvent, that is, terminologies crossed by political-cultural procedures from the carnivalizing process (Barreira, 2016, p.14).

Bakhtinian ideas about transgression, festivities, criticism, and social relations (above all, by the destabilizing presence of laughter in this transgressive process) are preceded by reflections by authors such as Jacob Burckhardt, Georg Misch, Vladimir Propp, and Ernst Cassirer, as Brandist (1999, pp.16-26)⁴⁵ and Ponzio (2008, p.170) comment. Especially through Cassirer, states Brandist (1999, p.25),⁴⁶ Bakhtin’s thinking was shaped to consider how the German author discussed the emergence of critical consciousness connected to humor to later put laughter on the agenda as a politicized prototype of *Ideologiekritik* (critique of ideology). Looking further into the roots of the past, both Brandist (1999, p.24)⁴⁷ and Stam (1989, p.87) perceive the Nietzschean discourse as a possible propellant of Bakhtinian ideas, and to some extent even of Soviet academic thought as a whole, about the relations between carnival and transgressive subversion. Pointing out the need to contemporize this correlation by realizing the considerable similarities and differences between Bakhtinian and Nietzschean thought, still, Stam (1989, pp.87-88) states that:

Bakhtin’s formulation about “carnival” almost inevitably bring to mind similar formulations by Nietzsche concerning the “Dionysian.” As a well-educated multilingual polymath, Bakhtin was familiar with philosophical writing, and indeed makes scattered references to Nietzsche in his writings. (...) Both Nietzsche and Bakhtin recognized that carnival was a real cultural practice and not merely a textual entity.

Another essential point to understand transgression in this context is the idea of temporary temporality of the transgressive effect on the social order. It is to say that the

⁴⁴ In Portuguese: “tem o poder de regenerar desfigurações sociais pelo questionamento dos códigos sociais, ajudando a mobilizar a imaginação como uma forma de práticas políticas, religiosas e culturais.”

⁴⁵ BRANDIST, C. Bakhtin’s Grand Narrative: The Significance of the Renaissance. *Dialogism*, n. 3, 1999. pp.11-30.

⁴⁶ For reference, see footnote 45.

⁴⁷ For reference, see footnote 45.

main thesis of transgression in Bakhtin's (1984b)⁴⁸ carnival vision is that it is a temporary suspension of the norms, never a definitive break of them. The importance of understanding this proposition resides precisely in the conception that the restraints imposed by the social structure are not constructed or destroyed overnight, that is, understanding the complexity of these structures makes it possible to understand, for example, how the surface of an eventual transgression, sometimes, can simply be translated as co-optation, reappropriation or even domestication of a transforming force by the State or other disciplining and regulating agents of the social fabric.

Therefore, Mancuso's (2005, p.94)⁴⁹ statement is surgical in pointing out that: "Carnival is not necessarily an ideological sign per se, but on the contrary, it is a sign of reflection." Dissecting this quote, there are at least three foundations of the transgressive view of carnival as a temporary and constantly disputed action, namely: (1) Carnival would be an "ideological sign if it were read as a refractory sign; a sign in which what would appear as enunciation was not the integration of classes or inversion of classes—which is almost the same—but, rather, the refraction of classes," (2) "That is, where the class struggle is not placated, but where it is manifesting itself: *a carnival in which real killing would be a revolution. Precisely, the carnival fictionalizes the revolution; for him, when there is carnival, there is no Revolution,*" and (3) therefore: "The conclusion is that the revolution becomes the carnival in reality; or on the contrary, the carnival is a revolution frustrated or the most efficient way to avoid a Revolution" (Mancuso, 2005, p.94; emphasis added).⁵⁰

This connection between transgression being simultaneously and ambiguously temporary in its repositioning of an inside-out world (Ponzio, 2008, p.172) and a particular tool of control of what causes fear and is seen as dangerous (Hegarty, 2000, p.109), opening space for Barreira (2016, p.16) to doubt: "Could this inversion, however,

⁴⁸ For reference, see footnote 4.

⁴⁹ In Spanish: "El carnaval no es necesariamente un signo ideológico per se, sino que, por el contrario, es un signo (del) reflejo."

⁵⁰ In Spanish: "(1) Sería un signo ideológico si fuese leído como un signo refractario; un signo en el cual lo que apareciera como enunciación no fuera la integración de las clases o la inversión de las clases – que sería casi lo mismo –, sino la refracción de las clases. (2) Esto es, donde no se esté aplacando la lucha de clases sino donde se la esté manifestando: un carnaval en que se matase de verdad sería una revolución. Precisamente, el carnaval ficcionaliza la revolución; por ello, cuando existe el carnaval no existe la revolución. (...) (3) La conclusión es que la revolución es el carnaval hecho realidad; o al revés, el carnaval es una revolución frustrada o el modo más eficiente para evitar una revolución."

be merely an escape valve to placate the popular revolt in the face of social tensions? Is carnival only a moment of illusion (...)?”⁵¹ Knowing that there is no yes-or-no answer, given the complexity of the issue, what the author says is that the ambiguous character of the carnival transgression must, in the end, meet both possible layers of meaning. In other words, transgression has to do with the possible maneuvers of domestication, consent, and control of the social structure by hegemonic forces disguised in a transgressive (and illusory, according to him) regime present in the street party and collective joy; but it also presents itself as the ephemeral subversion of these same maneuvers of co-optation from a reading that perceives carnivalization as an aesthetic and political-cultural concept (Barreira, 2016, p.18).

Finally, this essay reaffirms the communicable nature (complex, ambiguous and dialogical) of the carnivalesque word arranged in the public square, as Bakhtin (1984b)⁵² describes the term *plochtchádnoie slovo* (the word of the public square). Thus, the understanding brought here is in no way consistent with the position taken by Morson and Emerson (1990, p.447)⁵³ when they attest only to the *mediation* role of the “carnival word” since, according to the authors, it would have no actual communicative capacity. In opposition to this, the communicability of the word of the public square is demonstrated by the combinatory capacity of ambivalence that moves between the claim of subversion of the social order (from the “unofficial parties,” as found in the medieval period) and the co-optation of the transgressive content (by the “official parties”) that gradually lose their deregulating force of the norms and are assimilated by hegemonic arrangements of forces and controlling agents of the sociopolitical and ideological conjunctures, for example, from the Renaissance period on, as Ponzio explains (2008, pp.177-181). Thus, contrary to Morson and Emerson (1990),⁵⁴ this work solidifies its argument in what Ponzio (2008) highlights about the location of the discursive richness of the forms of communication being present precisely in the “double tone” of the language produced in the public square: “The figure of the double tone, which unites praise and insult, says Bakhtin, crowns and dethrones at the same time” (Ponzio, 2008,

⁵¹ In Portuguese: “Seria, porém, essa inversão tão-só uma válvula de escape para aplacar a revolta popular diante das tensões sociais? Seria o carnaval apenas um momento de ilusão (...)?”

⁵² For reference, see footnote 4.

⁵³ For reference, see footnote 8.

⁵⁴ For reference, see footnote 8.

p.181).⁵⁵ And, by extension, the temporary transgression of the norm maintains its ambiguity, without, however, losing relevance in the conformation of carnivalized thought.

Equally important, understandings of excess and transgression are another way in which Bataille turns to excessive phenomena and links them to such complex issues as the inevitability of death, sovereignty, religion, labor relations,⁵⁶ politics and Nazi-fascist authoritarianism, experience, sacrifice, eroticism, and the pleasures of the body. Placing the interdict as that which is created to be challenged, overcome and transgressed, the author points out that: “There is in nature and there subsists in man a movement which always exceeds the bounds” (Bataille, 1962, p.40).⁵⁷ Thus, thinking about transgression in the author’s view, in an indisputable way, raises a reflection on the relations between excess and violence as one of the means of transgressive action (Bataille, 1962, pp.41-42).⁵⁸ However, it is worth noting: “The transgression of the forbidden is not an animal violence. It is a violence, yes, but exercised by a being susceptible to reason (...)” (Bataille, 1970-1987 *apud* Díaz de La Serna, 1997, p.79).⁵⁹ One possible caveat on the subject is in what Noys (2000) calls a careful and critical reading of the theme of violence in Bataille as a way of not falsely and easily associating Bataillean reflections with the culture of violence or lightly claiming that the author celebrates it. “However, in breaking the (violently imposed) taboos on violence Bataille is not aiming to increase [a transgressive] violence but to examine how these strict taboos generate their own violence” (Noys, 2000, p.134).

In this sense, the observations brought by Hegarty (2000, p.109) and Noys (2000, pp.84-87) laconically operate by demonstrating how Bataillian thought perceives

⁵⁵ In Portuguese: “A figura do duplo tom, que une elogios e insultos, diz Bakhtin, coroa e destrona ao mesmo tempo.”

⁵⁶ It is emphasized, as Castro (2016, p.114) points out, that “excesses and extremes have always exerted fascination, but they have been controlled through the creation of interdicts. It was the creation of interdicts that enabled human beings to build a civilization organized under the sign of collective work. For Bataille, all interdicts are related to reproduction and death (...)” Our translation. In Portuguese: “Os excessos e os extremos sempre exerceram fascínio, mas foram controlados através da criação dos interditos. Foi a criação dos interditos que possibilitou ao ser humano construir uma civilização organizada sob o signo do trabalho coletivo. Para Bataille, todos os interditos estão relacionados à reprodução e à morte (...)”

⁵⁷ For reference, see footnote 43.

⁵⁸ For reference, see footnote 43.

⁵⁹ In Spanish: “La transgresión de lo prohibido no es la violencia animal. Es violencia, sí, pero ejercida por un ser susceptible de razón (...)”

transgression from at least six major paths, namely: (1) transgression is read, endogenously, from the taboos⁶⁰ (of death, eroticism, and sacrifice, for example) that are questioned/questionable (otherwise, if there were no taboo, there would be no reason to have transgression); (2) transgression is a movement that always exceeds limits and taboos translate as these imposed limitations, hence, the reading of a double movement between transgression and taboo turn on the logic of simultaneous continuity and discontinuity; (3) thus, if life exists from the turmoil caused between the limiting impossibilities of the taboo and the possibilities of overcoming these limits by transgression, it is worth remembering that pure transgression or pure taboo would mean the end of life; (4) transgression is intentional; (5) transgression does not belong to the realm of individuality only, because: “Even if it is the individual acting alone, transgression (...) can only occur with the loss of the self in the Other;” (Hegarty, 2000, p.109) and (6) transgression, as a social phenomenon, can be seen in two subdivisions: organized transgression and boundless transgression:⁶¹ (A) the former is exemplified by festivals, ceremonies, and sacrifices as fundamentally stable transgressive forms that, by their frequency and regularity, do not affect the intangible stability of the prohibition/interdict since they are expected to occur, and, in turn, B) the latter is exemplified by transgressions that go off the rails and threaten the orders of the social fabric as moments of revolt (before these very moments are co-opted by a disciplining force and, there, become stable). In other words, Laborie’s (2007, p.8)⁶² statement aptly summarizes the previous discussion by showing how the eternal transgressive power of excess is, by extension, perennially fragile: “Excess is always threatened by new petrifications, when it loses touch with its meaning and becomes a codified language, a norm.”

Another point of conjunction between the works of Bakhtin and Bataille is brought by Lemole (2005, p.7) when he states that: “Because carnival, with its emphasis on death,

⁶⁰ However: “While transgression and taboo closely correspond to continuity and discontinuity they are not as easy to regard as separate states, and Bataille is more sensitive to the necessary coexistence and mutual dependency of transgression and taboo.” (Noys, 2000, p.84)

⁶¹ But in comparison to pure transgression and pure taboo, even boundless transgression has its “limits” to some extent. “As we have seen, the same arguments apply to organised and unlimited transgression: organised transgression is never so organised that it cannot break out of its limits and unlimited transgression is never so unlimited that it can do without organisation” (Noys, 2000, p.87).

⁶² In Portuguese: “O excesso é sempre ameaçado de novas petrificações, quando ele perde contato com seu significado e se torna uma linguagem codificada, uma norma.”

reveals the continuity of life, Bataille characterizes the event as ‘sacred’ for its ability to unify a community.” Thus, he further states that “because carnival privileges waste rather than utility, heterogeneity rather than homogeneity, Bataille considers carnival an expression of sovereignty [of the bodies]” (Lemole, 2005, p.7). Therefore, the importance of death in Bataille’s academic and literary production is also shown by what Díaz de la Serna (1997) highlights as death as a “resolutive element” in Bataille’s stories. According to the author, in Bataille’s works, death is “constituted as the decisive instance that reveals the liberating character of orgiastic excess. (...) Death no longer flows into eroticism. On the contrary, eroticism and obscenity are the path that prepares death” (Díaz de La Serna, 1997, p.135).⁶³

This way of looking at the connecting dialogic threads of carnival and transgression provides the opportunity to recall how Bataille’s ideas about the division of an organized transgression versus a boundless transgression fit very well with the central thesis of Bakhtinian thought on the subject. Bataille (1962)⁶⁴ talks about this ephemeral subversion and Díaz de la Serna insightfully synthesizes it: “Transgression is not constituted as a simple return to the natural order. It momentarily suspends the validity of the prohibition, but *does not abolish it* altogether,” (Díaz de La Serna, 1997, pp.79-80, emphasis added).⁶⁵ Thus, both Bakhtin and Bataille, from different paths leading to the same end, resist the idea of a transgression that would completely and definitively suspend taboos, interdicts, norms, prohibitions, and thus an “idyllic state” of nature would be established (Noys, 2000, p.84). Ultimately, Bataille (1962, p.67)⁶⁶ reminds us: “Transgression is complementary to the profane world, exceeding its limits but not destroying it.”

⁶³ In Spanish: “La muerte desempeña a las claras el papel de elemento resolutive de todos los relatos de Bataille. (...) Constituye la instancia decisiva que revela el carácter liberador del exceso orgiástico. (...) La muerte ya no desemboca en el erotismo. Por el contrario, son el erotismo y la obscenidad el camino que prepara la muerte.”

⁶⁴ For reference, see footnote 43.

⁶⁵ In Spanish: “(...) la transgresión no constituye um simple regreso al orden natural. Ella deja suspendida momentáneamente la vigencia de la prohibición, pero no la suprime.”

⁶⁶ For reference, see footnote 43.

Conclusion

As shown in the pairing of the intellectual debate, there are many points of contact between Bakhtinian and Bataillan thought. As already highlighted by Khorev (2000) and Lemole (2005), despite occasional divergences, excess for both the Russian author and the French author is an element of unique importance in the constitution of their ideas. If, on one hand, there is a more evident discussion of excess from Bakhtin's grotesque worldview and carnivalesque laughter; we see that excess in Bataille's works as a kind of magnetic element that attracts to itself, in a dispersed but also structural way, reflections not only on the expenditure in the general economy, but also on excess through the ways of corporeality.

It is, moreover, centered on the *sensibilia* of the body that the Bakhtinian and Bataillan visions come together most vividly. In both authors, non-finalization, incompleteness, the unspeakable, the threshold between the internal and the external, the collective body, the materiality of the opening of bodies through orifices, *déchirure* and *blessure*, low material, eschatology, jouissance, orgiastic life, and the vision of bodies averse to Christian asceticism but prone to the experience of borderline situations are elements that dialogue in close contiguity.

About transgression, one can see a reading of the theme as a concept that passes through the authors' work through collateral conceptions about the processes of dethroning and uncrowning, collective questioning of hierarchies, discussion of the centrality of a disciplining order and, finally, the perspective that there are possibilities of co-optation, reappropriation or even domestication that surround such disruptive forces. However, it is in the understanding that a temporary break or suspension of the norms occurs, as opposed to a pure and definitive rupture, that transgression takes shape in the theoretical framework of the authors. Thus, the idea that a limitless transgression would be powerful enough to destabilize the veil of naturalness that covers normativity in the world it is a flawed idea, because, after all, this transgression also has its boundaries.

Therefore, it is stated that political-aesthetic excess is ambiguous and ambivalent for Bakhtin and Bataille, that is, it can be potentially transgressive and socially transformative or it can potentially serve only the maintenance of the social status quo from which it originates (clearly or not). This characteristic of plurisignification

(sometimes at a level of little precision about its meanings in a myriad of meanings, sometimes in precise duality between a choice of meanings restricted to a binomial) highlights how the pervasive character of excess is strong enough not to be framed, again, in a merely quantitative, referential way.

In an attempt to investigate the basis of ambiguity and ambivalence, we see that the space-time location of the ambiguous and ambivalent character echoed in Bakhtinian and Bataillan thought finds a starting point for the possible facets of excess in the ephemerality of meanings. Therefore, one can postulate that excess is socially tolerated (naturalized) or not depending not only on the level of penetration, co-optation, and re-signification of the norms (of gender, class, race, technological innovation and adaptation, etc.) of the system that conforms it or where it intends to insert itself, but mainly on the temporary effect of understanding that all these norms have at the moment of reading an object, subject, or phenomenon. To put it in clearer terms, ephemerality makes it possible that what is excessive in a given time-space is no longer so in the course of the temporality that surrounds it. Just as societies change (progressing or regressing, depending on the point of view from which it is observed), so excess (endowed with innate ambivalence and ambiguity) has in its temporal inconstancy the impossibility of a perpetual, closed, non-dialogical sense or of a perennial and uncontested interpretation. The ephemerality of meanings shapes excess as a plural element, open to new meanings that space-time, potentially, will configure as the basis of its reading.

Finally, as a possibility of continuity in future research, another theme that intimately connects Bakhtin's and Bataille's theoretical frameworks concerns death (Lemole, 2005). In an attempt to approximate the authors' thoughts on the subject, Khorev (2000, p.4) comments that the intellectuals establish in their works new parameters of extremely relevant "philosophical modes" about the relationship between death, body, and discourse. Thus, death could be another successful point of comparison to demonstrate a fruitful dialogue between the matrices of excess in Bakhtinian and Bataillan views.

REFERENCES

BAKHTIN, M. *Problemas da poética de Dostoiévski*. 2. ed. Trad. Paulo Bezerra. Rio de Janeiro: Forense Universitária, 1997.

- BAKHTIN, M. O autor e o herói. In: BAKHTIN, M. *Estética da criação verbal*. 3. ed. Trad. Maria Ermantina Galvão. São Paulo: Martins Fontes, 2000. p.23-220.
- BAKHTIN, M. *A cultura popular na Idade Média e no Renascimento: o contexto de François Rabelais*. 7. ed. Trad. Yara Frateschi Vieira. São Paulo: Editora Hucitec, 2010.
- BATAILLE, G. A noção de dispêndio. In: BATAILLE, G. *A parte maldita*. 2. ed. Trad. Júlio Castañon Guimarães. Belo Horizonte: Autêntica, 2016. p.17-33.
- BATAILLE, G. *O erotismo*. Trad. Fernando Scheibe. Belo Horizonte: Autêntica, 2017.
- BORGES, L. A. C. *O louvor do excesso: experiência, soberania e linguagem em Bataille*, 2012. Tese (Doutorado em Filosofia) – Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo. Disponível em: <https://teses.usp.br/teses/disponiveis/8/8133/tde-19092012-091345/pt-br.php>. Acesso em: 23 fev. 2022.
- BRANDIST, C. A grande narrativa de Bakhtin: o significado do Renascimento. In: BRANDIST, C. *Repensando o Círculo de Bakhtin: novas perspectivas na história intelectual*. Trad. Helenice Gouvea e Rosemary H. Schettini. São Paulo: Contexto, 2012. p.13-34.
- BUBNOVA, T. Prólogo. In: BAJTÍN, M. M. *Yo también soy – Fragmentos sobre el otro*. Ciudad de México: Taurus, 2000. p.11-26.
- CASTRO, S. Ecos dos festejos báquicos no carnaval brasileiro moderno. In: SILVEIRA, R. A. T. (org.). *O carnaval e a filosofia*. Porto Alegre: Editora Fi, 2016. p.108-124.
- CEIA, C. *E-Dicionário de termos literários*. Universidade Nova de Lisboa, 2009. Disponível em: <https://edtl.fcsh.unl.pt/>. Acesso em: 23 fev. 2022.
- CHAMPAGNE, R. The Engendered Blow Job: Bakhtin’s Comic Dismemberment and the Pornography of Georges Bataille’s “Story of the eye” (1928). *Humour: International Journal of Humor Research*, v. 3, n. 2, p.177-191, 1990. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1515/humr.1990.3.2.177>. Acesso em: 11 mar. 2022.
- CHARITOS, S. A. Um monstre du rire et un rire monstrueux: directions pour une étude sur François Rabelais et Georges Bataille. *Romance Notes*, v. 28, n. 3, p.217–225, 1988. Disponível em: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/43800895>. Acesso em: 11 mar. 2022.
- DÍAZ DE LA SERNA, I. *Del desorden de Dios: ensayos sobre Georges Bataille*. Ciudad de México: Taurus, 1997.
- FFRENCH, P. Bataille’s Literary Writings. In: HEWSON, M.; COELLEN, M. *Georges Bataille: Key Concepts*. London and New York: Routledge, 2016. p.189-200.
- HEGARTY, P. *Georges Bataille: Core Cultural Theorist*. London: Sage Publications, 2000.
- KHOREV, A. *Two Heterologies: Georges Bataille e Mikhail Bakhtin*, 2000. Tese (Doutorado em Literatura Comparada) – University of Southern California, Los Angeles, California. Disponível em: <http://encurtador.com.br/uCK05>. Acesso em: 23 fev. 2022.
- LABORIE, J. C. O excesso: Introdução geral à Revista Tempo Brasileiro. *Revista Tempo Brasileiro*, n. 169, abr./jun. 2007. p.7-9.

- LACHMANN, R. Bakhtin and Carnival: Culture as Counter-Culture. *Cultural Critique*, n. 11, Winter, 1988-1989. Disponível em: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/1354246>. Acesso em: 11 mar. 2022.
- LEMOLE, J. E. *Carnival, Sacred and Sovereign: The Intellectual Intersection of Bakhtin and Bataille*, 2005. Dissertação (Mestrado em Artes) – Florida Atlantic University, Boca Raton, Florida. Disponível em: <http://fau.digital.flvc.org/islandora/object/fau%3A10115>. Acesso em: 11 mar. 2022.
- MACHADO, I. A questão espaço-temporal em Bakhtin: cronotopia e exotopia. In: PAULA, L.; STAFUZZA, G. (orgs.). *Círculo de Bakhtin: teoria inclassificável*. Campinas: Mercado de Letras, 2010. p.203-234.
- MACKINLAY, S. *Interpreting Excess: Jean-Luc Marion, Saturated Phenomena, and Hermeneutics*. New York: Fordham University Press, 2010.
- MANCUSO, H. *La palabra viva: teoría verbal y discursiva de Michail M. Bachtin*. Buenos Aires: Paidós, 2005.
- MARION, J. L. *In Excess: Studies of Saturated Phenomena*. New York: Fordham University Press, 2002.
- MEDEIROS, A. Sátira menipéica e dialogismo circunscrito sob a volubilidade de Brás Cubas. XVI Semana de Humanidades, Natal, 2008. *Anais...* Disponível em: <http://encurtador.com.br/IBMOP>. Acesso em: 11 mar. 2022.
- MORSON, G. S., EMERSON, C. *Mikhail Bakhtin: criação de uma prosaística*. Trad. Antonio de Pádua Danesi. São Paulo: Edusp, 2008.
- NOYS, B. *Georges Bataille: A Critical Introduction*. London: Pluto Press, 2000.
- PIEL, J. Apresentação: Bataille e o mundo. In: BATAILLE, Georges. *A parte maldita*. 2. ed. Trad. Júlio Castañon Guimarães. Belo Horizonte: Autêntica, 2016, p.7-15.
- PONZIO, A. *A revolução bakhtiniana: o pensamento de Bakhtin e a ideologia contemporânea*. Trad. Valdemir Miotello. São Paulo: Contexto, 2008.
- RENFREW, A. *Mikhail Bakhtin*. Trad. Marcos Marcionilo. São Paulo: Parábola, 2017.
- SHAVIRO, S. *Passion and Excess: Blanchot, Bataille and Literary Theory*. Tallahassee: The Florida State University Press, 1990.
- SHIELDS, C. M. *Bakhtin*. New York: Peter Lang, 2007.
- STAM, R. *Subversive Pleasures: Bakhtin, Cultural Criticism, and Film*. Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989.
- ZAVALA, I. M. *Escuchar a Bajtín*. Barcelona: Montesinos, 1996.

Translated by the article's author.

Received March 25, 2022

Accepted September 05, 2022

Reviews

Due to the commitment assumed by *Bakhtiniana. Revista de Estudos do Discurso* [Bakhtiniana. Journal of Discourse Studies] to Open Science, this journal only publishes reviews that have been authorized by all involved.

Research Data and Other Materials Availability

The contents underlying the research text are included in the manuscript.

The contents are already available on the author's thesis at <https://repositorio.usp.br/item/003021294>.