



ANALYSING BRAZILIAN MODERNISM FROM A POSTCOLONIAL PERSPECTIVE: THE IMPORTANCE OF ANTHROPOPHAGY IN THE MOVEMENT TOWARDS A DECOLONIZATION OF THE MIND

Michelle Andressa Alvarenga de Souza

Catholic University of Brasilia, Brazil

This paper investigates how Brazil should be placed inside the field of postcolonial studies. This country is rarely mentioned in the textbooks of this field, even in a Latin American context. This could be due to its process of colonization, to its singularity in America (being the only Portuguese colony) or to its unique decolonizing process. Albeit Brazil has followed some of the steps defined by postcolonial authors to describe former colonies of Africa, Asia and Latin America, my research shows how Darcy Ribeiro is a fundamental source of knowledge that allows a postcolonial reading of Brazilian literature. Based on his studies about indigenous culture, this work builds the idea that Brazilian national liberation was achieved in the early years of the 20th century with the anthropophagic movement. It uses one of the most important lines of the Anthropophagic Manifesto (*Tupy or not tupy, that is the question*) to discuss the matter of hybridity in Brazilian literature.

Keywords: Postcolonial, Literature, Anthropophagy, Hybridism.

Introduction

The examination of knowledge production regarding power, location and subject position is one of the most consolidated features of the postcolonial field. Its need to investigate issues such as places of enunciation, the building of postcolonial knowledge and the constitution of postcolonial subjects is what moves this paper to address anthropophagy as the ultimate mode of expression in the process of the decolonization of the mind in Brazil.

It is rather uncommon to find the term postcolonial associated with Latin American countries and with Brazil it is not different. This has to do with the fact that the term was generated and dissipated predominantly in Anglophone scholarly environments.

Walter Mignolo's idea of postcoloniality brings to light an alternative manner to tackle the main issues that classical postcolonial theory seeks to investigate. The term, being born in the subcontinent, has helped in the effort to make sense of Latin America's post-colonial condition.

To think postcoloniality from Mignolo's perspective, one must approach the matter through border thinking. This manner of seeing a nation's formation is the only way through which an intellectual can achieve the "other thinking that is only possible when different local histories and their particular power relations are taken into consideration" (67).

This idea of border thinking is essential to understand the alternative hypothesis towards anthropophagy to be presented in this paper. It will begin by reviewing the etymology of the word,

followed by a discussion of the anthropologic aspect of the *tupinambá* rituals. This aims at disclosing a reflection about the new loci of enunciation offered by Darcy Ribeiro. It then discusses the formation of Brazilian literature based on a misrepresentation of the self, which was shaped after a European model. It concludes with important remarks on Brazilian modernism, bringing anthropophagy back in the 20th century through the metaphor of a critical swallowing.

Anthropophagous versus Abaporu: the Etymological Approach towards Border Thinking

It is not unusual to find etymologic definitions in academic productions, especially if a work deals with nomenclature that has been the subject of controversy and discussion. Anthropophagy is certainly one of these terms, at least when one thinks of Brazil's ambiguous placement in the field of postcolonial studies. In order to address it in the modernist perspective aimed by my research, it is required for us to understand the origins of the word.

It comes from the Greek *anthrōpophagia* (*anthropos*: human being + *phagein*: to eat). This is the classic Western definition for “the eating of human flesh by human beings” (Oxford dictionary), which usually possesses the word “cannibalism” as a synonym.

This work, however, proposes a new semantic approach towards “the eating of human flesh by human beings”. This alternative view of the lexicon is important when one thinks from the perspective of border thinking.

Presenting an alternative vision of anthropophagy to the Occidental world is a challenge. It is so because the anthropophagy practiced in the Americas is known to the world because of works produced by European men, some of which have survived the savage “man-eating” rituals. Hans Staden's book *Die Wahrhaftige Geschichte und Beschreibung einer Landschaft der Wilden, nackten, grimmingen Menschenfresser, in der Neuen Welt Amerika gelegen (...)* provides a vivid description of the ceremonies, including some illustrations made by Théodore De Bry. Jean de Lery's *Histoire d'un voyage fait en la terre du Brésil* also depicts a notion of the New World that is hard to dissociate from cannibalism. As it is clear, the notion of anthropophagy that is studied today has actually been defined by European men, who could not fully understand what those ceremonies meant to the indigenous tribes that captured them.

In the 1500's the Tupi-Guarani ethnicities had no idea of what anthropophagy meant. They were not aware that they were anthropophagous nor that eating someone else's flesh was a mortal sin. They were, however, aware of themselves and of their acts and their own language possessed a word to name this “man-eating” individual: *Abaporu*.

This word derives from the Tupi-Guarani language and means precisely “the man who eats people”. It is formed from three different words: “aba” (man), “pora” (people) and “ú” (to eat). Therefore, it must be acknowledged that the Brazilian indigenous tribes already had a word to define themselves before the Portuguese arrived and started calling them anthropophagous. In order to build what Mignolo calls as a new locus of enunciation, it is fundamental that the natives' beliefs are analysed from their own perspective and not from the imported perspective of their conquerors.

The very notion of anthropophagy must be revisited when being approached by an anthropologic perspective. The first thing to acknowledge is that this man-eating practice was not a physiological urge to eat, nor a mere act of cannibalism. On the contrary, it was an extremely important manifestation of the natives' culture and the closest thing they had to a sacred ritual. By eating the defeated enemy, the people of the tribe would acquire his strength and wisdom and be better prepared to defend themselves.

The classic victim of cannibalism in Western reports was the white male prisoner, which, very often, was not suitable to become a meal. The cultural importance of the rituals did not allow the native to digest “bad meat”, especially because the ceremony was attended by everyone in the tribe and all were supposed to eat. The description of the ceremony (Ribeiro 31) illustrates how, in the very end, anthropophagy was a choice and not a physiological impulse of hunger.

The cultural and collective character of these ceremonies made almost imperative that the capture of the warriors to be sacrificed happened within the Tupi group. Only these – for

sharing the same values – would be perfect to the part that had been given to them: of a proud warrior, who would talk with arrogance to his killer and to those who would devour his flesh. Hans Staden's text proves this dynamic: he was taken to anthropophagic ceremonies three times, and three times the indians refused to eat him, because he cried and defecated, asking for clemency. A coward could not be eaten.

Ribeiro introduces an aspect that was rescued during the modernist movement and that is absolutely important to the understanding that the indigenous tribes of Brazil were not mere cannibals. The sacrificing and further eating of a human being's flesh was done only because the sacrificed human being was respected among the tribe and seen as a strong and powerful individual. This meant that by eating his flesh the tribe would acquire his qualities.

The anthropophagic rituals were the most important cultural manifestation of the original tribes of Brazil, who expressed a strong respect for these ceremonies and for the prisoners. The captives, on their turn, should be prepared to be devoured physically, but not morally. Such was the respect and relevance of these cultural and spiritual manifestations in the Tupi-Guarani culture that some indigenous communities were used to practicing acts of anthropophagy even within their own ethnic group.

When the first colonists arrived in Brazil in the 16th century they brought a new religion with them. The Jesuits' insistence in attracting the natives' attention to Christian values aimed at stopping practices that, for the European eye, were monstrous. Sexual freedom and homosexuality, for instance, were accepted by the Tupi-Guarani groups. Needless to say, these practices were widely suppressed by the Catholic Church.

The primary evangelization of the native was followed in the 18th century by the violence of the *bandeirantes*, a time when the expansion of the territory should be achieved by all means. These two elements combined have resulted in the almost extinction of the *tupinambá* ethnicity, and of its anthropophagy as well.

The Formation of Brazil: the Three Matrices Converging in the Constitution of the Neobrazilian Self

One of Mignolo's greatest contributions to the distinction of Latin America in the field of postcolonial studies is his belief that when European colonists arrived in America they did not find the Other. What they did find was a difference in its very interior, as the New World became Europe's far Occident and the Caribbean began to be called *Las Indias Occidentales*. Being the far Occident transformed Latin American peoples in exceptional colonial individuals, who were not placed into Said's "Otherness" (1979). It is precisely this characteristic that contrasts these peoples with the African and the Asian. It also explains how miscegenation and hybridity were possible at the very beginning of the colonization process.

Thinking the matter of hybridism from a Brazilian perspective, it is accurate to say that it was used as a tool for colonization in two fronts: biological hybridism and linguistic hybridism. In one of the most famous descriptions about the formation of the Brazilian people, Darcy Ribeiro, a great researcher of Brazil's identity, states that:

We originate from the confluence, from the intershock and from the intermarriage of the Portuguese invader with native indians and black Africans – one and another caught by slavery. At this confluence, which happens under the Portuguese regency, different racial matrices, different cultural traditions, shattered social formations confront each other and melt together to create some *new people*, in a new model of social structure. New because it emerges as a national ethnicity, culturally differentiated from its original matrices, strongly miscegenational, dynamised by a syncretic culture and singularized by the redefinition of its natural cultural characteristics. New also because it sees itself and is seen as a new people, a new species of human being, different from all the existing types.

New people, yet, because it is a new model of social structure, which inaugurates a unique form of social-economic organization, founded upon a renewed type of slavery and on a continuing servitude in the international market. New, still, because of the improbable joy and amazing will of happiness of this mistreated people, that encourages and touches all Brazilians. (17)

During the first centuries of European domination, the integration between the Portuguese colonizers and the native indians happened in two different ways: through the *cunhadismo* practice and through slavery. The *cunhadismo* practice consisted in inserting the white man in the native tribe, by giving him an indian wife. As soon as the marriage was settled he became part of the community and was accepted by the tribe as an equal. This practice was responsible for the enormous amount of mestizos who inhabited Brazil in the years following the beginning of the colonization. According to Ribeiro “without the *cunhadismo* practice, the creation of Brazil was unthinkable” (73). This has to do with the fact that the territory was actually occupied by *mamelucos*¹, who entered the unknown parts of the country to expand the colonizer’s dominion. Slavery, on the other hand, integrated the indigenous people in the European society not to be part of it as members, but to be used until death, just like the African slave who would be introduced in the Brazil around 1531.

Sexual activity between European men and native women produced what Ribeiro calls neobrazilian individuals, a race which is neither white nor of “reddish colour” as Pero Vaz de Caminha wrote in his letter to the Portuguese king. This new people did not fit in that colonial society and really did not belong anywhere. These first neobrazilian generations were orphans and suffered a double rejection: from their fathers, who saw them as non-European, thus impure people; and from their mothers who, following the Tupi-Guarani tradition, believed that the child belonged to its father. These first Brazilian persons, the so-called *mamelucos*, were nobodies in a no one’s land.

On what regards the language, the Tupi-Guarani language remained the mother tongue of the neobrazilian community until the XVIII century. The *mamelucos* spoke mainly the *nheengatu*, which is a variation of Tupi-Guarani that is formed from the effort of speaking Tupi with “the mouth of the Portuguese”. It was the most important language in Brazil during the first three centuries of the colonization process, being spoken extensively among the new natives and the missionaries.

I would like to focus on the detail that the *nheengatu* language was a variation because of the effort to speak it with the mouth of the Portuguese. This apparent linguistic detail brings out a significant topic for this analysis: the metropolitan had supremacy over the native and “the people of the land” were despised.

The Brazilian individual started to recognize himself more because of the strangeness he caused to the Portuguese than because of his identification as a member of new sociocultural communities. The aforementioned *mamelucos*, being given the task to expand the colonial territory, desired to mark their difference and superiority in relation to the native indians. Here, we start to identify the colonial difference (Mignolo) that generates an internal racism within the Brazilian society and within the individuals, who were not comfortable with their indian inheritance.

This phenomenon was not reserved to the mestizos who possessed a European father and an indian mother. Even the son of white Brazilian parents was ashamed of its non-European condition and resented not being born in Europe. This happened because in the social configuration of colonial Brazil he would occupy an inferior position in the society when compared to those who actually came from Portugal. Hence, he refused being considered native, tried by all means to fit in the European model and also mistreated the *mameluco*, considering him an indian and ignoring his hybrid genealogy.

It is clear by now that the already hybrid Brazilian nationals did not accept their true condition, their true selves. It is also clear that colonization was only possible because of the success of biological hybridism. It supplied the colonial enterprise with the human force that Portugal lacked by the time colonization started. According to Ribeiro (137), it is estimated that around 5,000,000 native indians

¹ *Mamelucos* is the name given to the first generation of *caboclos*, which are the sons and daughters generated from the intermarriage between an Indian woman and a white man.

inhabited Brazilian lands around the 1500's whereas in Portugal, at the same time, the entire population did not reach more than one million.

Brazil was built upon a demographic policy that constituted of exterminating indigenous peoples combined with the intermarriage between the white male colonizers and the native women. In accordance with an evaluation set forth by Father José de Anchieta in 1584, by that time Brazil possessed 57,000 souls, of which 25,000 were white from the land (neobrazilian); 18,000 natives and 14,000 black Africans (Ribeiro, 134).

The table below can give us an idea of Brazilian demography from the 16th throughout the 19th century:

	1500	1600	1700	1800
“White people” born in Brazil (Mestizos)	-	50,000	150,000	2,000,000
African slaves	-	30,000	150,000	1,500,000
Indigenous individuals already “integrated” into society	-	120,000	200,000	500,000
Isolated indigenous individuals	5,000,000	4,000,000	2,000,000	1,000,000
Total	5,000,000	4,200,000	2,500,000	5,000,000

After analyzing this table, it is important to call attention to three things. (1) The indigenous society diminished drastically. (2) Around the 18th century, there were as many Black slaves in Brazil as white people and (3) The white population increased significantly in the 19th century after the Portuguese royal family established itself in Rio de Janeiro in 1808.

Looking at the data presented in the table, it is possible to acknowledge the numbers that resulted from the success of biological hybridity. What Ribeiro very clearly presents is that the *mamelucos*, being rejected by both parents, took their white father's part when helping him in the Portuguese enterprise. Therefore, the building of one's identity in this hybrid (but subaltern) configuration gave predominance to the culture and to the models of European inheritance.

A Literature Built Upon a Complex of Inferiority

To develop this section of my paper I disclose Fanon's complex of inferiority. This complex impels the colonized (black African) to acquire characteristics typical of the white community in order to fit in. Therefore the language a Black individual speaks, the clothes he wears, the habits he possesses are essentially European. Fanon defends that “as painful as it is for us to have to say this: there is but one destiny for the black man. And it is white” (2008: xiv).

It may seem strange to apply this particular theory to Brazil, especially because the word postcolonial should not be used to describe Latin American communities. Latin American countries are not to be called postcolonial, but post-Occidental (Retamar, 1974) because their experience was different from the experience of the colonies of Great-Britain and France. Hence, Latin American countries should not import these terms, under the risk of performing a sort of neocolonialism.

This being so, how can we bring a theory built based on the experience of the French Empire to Brazil, the only Portuguese colony in America? To begin with, it is important to state that Brazil imported around 12 million African men and women to work as slaves. These individuals have a fundamental part to play in the constitution of Brazilian people and of Brazilian culture.

No other country in Latin America has shared so much the African experience of slavery as Brazil did. When this matter is addressed in the works of Mignolo and Retamar, it is focused in the Caribbean experience, which cannot be compared to the Brazilian proportions of buying and selling Black people as commodities. In fact, Mignolo's, Quijano's and Dussel's contributions, although valuable to my research, are not sufficient no make sense of Brazil.

If we take a closer look at their books, it won't be hard to notice that Brazil is very often put at the margins, not because it is inferior, but because they focus on the experience of colonization and decolonization of the former Spanish Empire. As a Brazilian researcher, I must be careful in my assumptions because the works mostly used to situate Latin America in the field of postcolonial studies were written focusing on the countries once dominated by Spain. Albeit Brazil shares many similarities with these countries, it also possesses significant differences that must be respected.

It is extremely difficult to apply the definition of postcolonialism to 19th century Brazil. Even though the country was politically independent, the colonial structures and the colonial prejudices were kept intact. Brazil became independent in 1822, changing from a colony of the Portuguese Empire into a free monarchy in America, whereas all its neighboring countries were becoming independent republics.

Among the many Brazilian idiosyncrasies, its transformation from a colony to the center of the Portuguese Empire in 1808 may be the most important to be taken into consideration for the analysis this paper intends at. The reason is very simple: when the Portuguese royal family eloped from Portugal escaping from Napoleon (and protected by the British Navy) they brought around 15,000 people with them. Needless to say, these thousands of people were predominantly white and wealthy. These newcomers brought with them a collection of cultural apparatus that Rio de Janeiro had never seen before. For them, libraries, museums, theaters and banks were built. This event is essential for this work because the arrival of the Royal Family in Brazil was the first step to its independence. It took place in 1822 when Don Pedro I declared Brazil independent from Portugal. That means to say that whereas all the rest of America was bearing arms and fighting for their freedom, Brazil's oligarchies negotiated the country's independence with a member of the royal family.

One similarity that Brazil holds when compared to the other Latin American independent nations is its submission to England and to France after colonial rule ended. While England colonized and managed the economy, France colonized and managed the intellect.

Brazilian state-formation was quite special in the Latin American configuration and it shares much of the experience of the African nations. Not only was it colonized by a different country, but its decolonizing process was also extremely peculiar.

So in this sense, this work cannot ignore an important reflection made by Fanon, an author who understood the psychological effects of slavery. Revisiting his complex of inferiority is relevant to justify the importance of the modernist movement in the process of the decolonization of the mind.

This notion is also explored by Edward Said, who defends that it is necessary to use the language of the colonizer in a critical way, in order to "decolonize the mind" (1994: 370). This is an urgent necessity because "culture includes a refining and elevating element, each society's reservoir of the best that has been known and thought" (1994: xiii).

To approach the theory of a complex of inferiority in a Brazilian perspective, it is important to reflect on the *mamelucos'* acceptance of their indigenous inheritance. When the neobrazilian reject their true/complete selves and become the most important allies of the Portuguese colonists in the process of colonization of other tribes and occupation of the territory, aren't they wearing the white mask described by Franz Fanon in *Black Skin White Masks*?

When it comes to the matter of independence, it is relevant to mention that it helped develop a feeling of nationalism that culminated in the Romantic movement. The indian character depicted in Romantic poetry and novels is idealized, whose characteristics are similar to those of a medieval knight. He does not present barbaric features or attitudes, he is kind to the Portuguese, he is loyal to his family and, most importantly, he is not anthropophagous.

In Gonçalves Dias's *I-Juca Pirama*, the evil *timbiras* are anthropophagous whereas the captive Tupi, the hero of the poem, is described with Western feelings and with aspects of morality that were unfamiliar to the original Tupi-Guarani culture.

By the end of the 19th century, when these Romantic works started dealing with the matter of slavery, they depicted a universalized African who had no voice and no identity. In one of the most famous poems of the period, Castro Alves's *The Slave Ship (1869)* denounces the monstrosity of the Middle Passage and the suffering of the human beings in the vessel's dungeon. The closing stanza illustrates his urge to stop the slave trade. He does not ask Brazilian authorities to stop importing them, but appeals to the man who first crossed the Black Atlantic.

*Fatalidade atroz que a mente esmaga!
Extingue nesta hora o brigue imundo
O trilho que Colombo abriu nas vagas,
Como um íris no pélago profundo!
Mas é infâmia demais! ... Da etérea plaga
Levantai-vos, heróis do Novo Mundo!
Andrada! arranca esse pendão dos ares!
Colombo! fecha a porta dos teus mares!*

Atrocious fatality that crushes the mind!
Extinguish at this moment the filthy brig
The trail that Columbus opened,
Like a rainbow in the profound sea!
But it is too much infamy! ... From the celestial region
Raise, you, heroes of the New World!
Andrada! tear away this flag from the air!
Columbus! close the door of your seas!

Brazilian literature was generated by following the Portuguese model. After independence, it was highly influenced by French and English writers. As Candido explains, the form of literature produced in Brazil followed the European standard, but the substance was genuine and local. As I hope this paper has been able to illustrate, the genuinely Brazilian could not find a place in literature for the same reason it could not find a place in society: because it was rejected within the Brazilian people's selves.

It is at this point that the modernist rescue of anthropophagy shows its relevance in decolonizing the mind because it is through their idea of a critical swallowing that the complex of inferiority is overcome.

Anthropophagy as Border Thinking: A Postcolonial Response in Art

"Only anthropophagy unites us: socially, economically and philosophically". These lines, taken from the Anthropophagic Manifest (1928), bring to light the relationship between knowledge production and power, location and subject position.

When approaching the Brazilian Modernist Movement, the first event that we must account for is the Week of Modern Arts (São Paulo, 1922). In it, the artists dared to challenge the cultural standards of art production in Brazil and by doing this they've utterly changed the cultural paradigm of the country.

The recently-proclaimed Republic (1889) still operated under its colonial basis, with a strong agrarian economy, monopolized political environment, and segregated society. The Black individual, a free citizen by law, had not yet been integrated into society - not even as a paid worker. At this time, the last component of Brazilian identity arrived in the image of the European immigrant - who, coming mainly from Italy, France and Germany, became the greatest workforce of the first half of the 20th century.

It has been said how biological and linguistic hybridism were used in Brazil as tools for colonization. Cultural hybridism, on the other hand, was only accepted by Brazilian society in the first phase of Brazilian modernism – in which the Anthropophagic Movement is inserted. Being inaugurated in 1922 with the Week of Modern Arts, this literary movement was the pioneer in freeing Brazil from its mental complex of inferiority, which had locked the country into European forms and themes and impeded the development of national arts.

The Brazilian modernist movement has formulated what Said denominates as “works of reconciliation”, which were composed under the premise of cultural anthropophagy. These works were compositions that explored the national without denying their colonial heritage. It was an elaboration close to what Bhabha denominates as a *third term*, a pre-condition for political, social and cultural stability. It is the only capable instrument for translating the actual condition of a former colony.

The Week was an event that took place in São Paulo on February 13th, 15th and 17th of 1922 and involved a small group of writers, painters, poets, sculptors, architects and musicians. It represents the first moment when all forms of art united in order to modernize Brazil, invent and place the country in the twentieth-century industrial society.

Industrialization brought a significant shift to the city of São Paulo, which was changing extremely fast to fulfill its demands. The locomotive, the automobile and photography became familiar to the population. It comes as no surprise that the Modernist boom revealed itself in this city, which, becoming the most important industrial pole in Brazil, was more strongly connected with cities like London and Paris.

It is significant to mention this fact because Brazilian Modernism was strongly influenced by the European Vanguards. This empowered the artists with the tone of rebellion required to accomplish a complete rupture with normative behavior. In the field of literature, *Simbolismo* and *Parnasianismo* (late 19th century) were literary movements that exalted the formality of the language, writing in such a refined way that just a small part of the population was able to appreciate their literature.

Brazilian pre-modernism, on the other hand, started taking the masses into consideration, both as characters as well as possible receptors for their works. Lima Barreto is a great name of the period and his style became radically modified, in order to reach the suburban spheres of Brazil. Zélia Nolasco-Freire defends that Barreto’s greatest contribution to Brazilian literature was his *innovation through language*. The informality and simplicity with which he composed his novels was one of the reasons that impeded his recognition as a respected intellectual by critics.

These critics failed to understand that Barreto’s critical use of Portuguese was a tendency that would be the central weapon of the modernists. His ideals of Brazil being mentally colonized went against every paradigm of his time and it was precisely his defying attitude that made him the great precursor of the claims that would erupt in 1922. Brazil was in need of a revolution, not just in art or literature, but in all sectors of society. Barreto defended that: “The time has arrived in the world, for us to change the society, to change humanity: not practically because it changes nothing, but socially, which is everything”. (1956, v. XIII: 165).

The type of literature produced in the country in 1910’s was not satisfying to Brazilian intellectuals anymore. It was not social, it disregarded the masses and remained restricted to a selected and educated bourgeoisie. A proposal for a *new literature* started with Lima Barreto’s generation and was achieved only after 1922. A new literature that would portray the common people, as well as the popular cultural manifestations and beliefs; and that would be accessible to all Brazilian classes.

The Week of Modern Arts served as a catalyst of this cultural inquietude and resulted not only in a new literature but also in a new way to interpret Brazil. Brazilian Modernism inaugurates a new lyrical research, both in themes and forms. In the themes, the modernist movement transmitted messages that were already found in Lima Barreto’s literature, the level of the literary codes, however, were now registers of radical innovations, especially in poetry (Bosi, 2006: 345).

The poets from this generation have wounded the intimacy of the artistic expression and altered the natural stream of signifiers. One of the best examples to be given is a poem by Manuel Bandeira entitled

Trem de Ferro, which composes a sonorous imitation of a locomotive starting to move. Its richness can be found in its rhythm and musicality based on the metric and on the use of alliteration and assonance.

Bandeira was one of the writers who participated in the Week of 1922. In the event, the artists were ridiculed and booed at, and some did not even manage to finish their declamations. The strangeness they caused is justified by the fact that these writers and artists were highly influenced by the European vanguards, especially Marinetti's Futurism. In the same manner that the vanguards were causing an uproar in Europe, the Modernist movement caused an uproar in Brazil. This is the most peculiar aspect of Brazil's national emancipation in arts: that it looked at its interior without ignoring what came from the outside.

Antonio Candido defines this balance as a dialectic between the local and the cosmopolitan, the particular and the universal. He explains that Brazilian literature has consisted in a progressive integration of the local (which he presents as the substance of expression) with the models inherited from the European tradition (which he presents as the form of expression).

Our literature has consisted in a continuing overcoming of obstacles, among which the feeling of inferiority that a new, tropical and highly miscegenational country develops when compared to old countries of a stabilized ethnical composition and with a civilization elaborated in quite different geographical conditions. (2008: 118)

He then explains that Brazilian literature has always been defined by the close contact with Portugal, even when the original influence came from France or England. Castro Alves, for instance, was immensely influenced by Victor Hugo in the same manner that Barreto investigated Tolstoy in order to compose his novels. As it is impossible for colonized nations to create new epistemologies from scratch, modernism also imported the best aspects of the European vanguards to revolutionize cultural expression in Brazil. The difference is that they did this consciously and critically.

The modernists proposed the elevation of the national. In the investigation, they would create a new form of expression that contained the European heritage and that was also a literature capable of expressing the actual Brazilian society. Candido presents a very interesting curiosity regarding the matter of idealization:

There is a fundamental ambiguity in our culture: that we are *latinos*, of European cultural heritage, but ethnically miscegenational, located in the tropics, influenced by primitive, Indigenous and African cultures. This ambiguity has always given a tone of embarrassment to particularistic statements, an issue generally solved by idealization. In this manner, the Indian was described as a possessor of European virtues and customs, miscegenation was ignored and the landscape was deprived of its extravagance. (2008: 127)

The modernists' biggest rupture is with the concealment of these Brazilian characteristics. In their books, pictures and sculptures Brazilian deficiencies, real or unreal, become their superiority. Individuals are depicted in their completeness and stereotypes like lazy or obscene are not removed from their characters. The mulatto is incorporated as a subject of study and of inspiration. The natural landscape appears dangerous and full of obstacles, in a faithful representation of the country.

Oswald de Andrade, the author of the anthropophagic manifesto, was a writer who participated effectively in the Week of Modern Arts and whose modernist investigation continued in the years following the event. His works synthesize the central idea in the formation of a hybrid culture.

The central idea of the anthropophagic manifesto is to take the positive aspects of the European culture and transform them into Brazilian through "a critical swallowing". As this paper has already presented, the native anthropophagic tribes would eat the defeated enemy in order to gain his strength. This is the same idea in Andrade's manifest. What comes from outside should not be denied, but could not be imitated either. His proposition is that Brazilian artists should try to perform a constructive

subversion of the recent artistic innovations that arrived from Europe, transforming them into something Brazilian, recognizable and with which the people would identify themselves.

This could only be achieved if the Brazilian self was depicted in its completion. Macunaíma, “a hero without a character”, represents this issue very well. By absorbing the indigenous part of the Brazilian people, Oswald de Andrade triumphs over the idea of a critical swallowing in the opening lines of the manifest:

Only anthropophagy unites us. Socially. Economically. Philosophically.

The unique law of the world. Masked expression of all individualisms, of all collectivisms. Of all religions. Of all peace treaties.

Tupy, or not tupy, that is the question. (Teles, 504)

The whole text transmits an idea of amalgamation that defends the national without refusing what comes from the outside. Although genuine epistemologies cannot exist in a highly changed and hybrid nation, Brazilian literature had actually been built upon an indiscriminate copy of European models. Good literature was the one composed following the exact metric and rhyme proposed by European writers and the characters could only become heroes if they followed the European ideals and morality.

That is why the anthropophagic manifesto was “against all importers of canned consciousness”. It desired the “Carahiba revolution. Bigger than the French Revolution. The unification of all effective revolts toward human” because without the indians “Europe would not even have its poor declaration of human rights”. (Teles, 505)

Their main scope was to deny the copy, the imitation simply to look European. This understanding is what overcomes Brazil’s version of the colonial complex of inferiority because, from the moment they understood that they were not minor when compared to more developed countries, copy became unnecessary.

But we never admitted the birth of logic among us. Against Father Vieira. The author of our first loan, for a fee. The illiterate king had told him: put this on paper, but be not too crafty. So the loan was made. Brazilian sugar was taxed. Vieira left the money in Portugal and brought us glibness. (Teles, 506)

In the anthropophagic manifest, Andrade realized that artists were capable of creating a national art of their own. It was required to adopt the European model, but using it in a critical way. The Brazilian adaptation for Hamlet’s famous verse illustrates the point extremely well.

By making a critical adaptation of “To be or not to be. That is the question”, Oswald the Andrade is eating Shakespeare. The colonial subject denies submission to its conquerors and incorporates the *tupinambá* warrior, who is now re-empowered to the point of eating the foreign to acquire his strength, his positive characteristics. We should remember that the original *tupinambá* anthropophagy was, after all, a choice. Hans Staden was not eaten because he could not contribute to the evolution of that community. If Shakespeare was metaphorically eaten, it is because he was respected by Brazilian intellectuals and his contributions to literature should be incorporated to the new literature that was emerging in Brazil.

“Tupy or not tupy. That is the question” represents the search for a national identity passing through the English language. To do so we encounter a classic quotation transformed into a pun. The fact that it is written in English and not in Portuguese (neither in Tupi-Guarani) reinforces the idea of a decolonization of the mind. Andrade is critically adopting the language of Brazil’s economic conqueror to fight coloniality.

What the author was proposing in the anthropophagic manifesto was an irreverent approach to European art, without inferiority complex, in the metaphor of swallowing the foreign. It was, in a manner, a copy – but it was a regenerating type (Schwarz).

I asked a man what Law was. He answered it was the assurance of the exercise of possibility. That man was called Galli Matias. I ate him. (Teles, 504)

It is relevant to reinforce that cultural anthropophagy does not rely on a copy, but on a sort of translation in the search for reconciliation. This reconciliation is not just a reconciling of Brazil with its colonial praxis. More importantly, it is a reconciliation with their very selves. When Brazilian exaggerated characteristics are no longer hidden, there is no need to wear the European mask anymore.

The manifesto acknowledges that Brazil was “never catechized. We made Carnival instead. The Indian dressed up as a senator of the Empire. Pretending to be Pitt. Or featuring in Alencar’s operas as possessors of good Portuguese feelings”. (Teles, 507)

The original anthropophagic rituals in the *tupinambá* tribes illustrate how the Indians only ate the enemies they respected, who could provide the tribe with strength and wisdom. Therefore, such a return to anthropophagy in order to shape Brazil’s postcolonial culture illustrates the respect the modernist artists had for European art, recognizing its importance in their liberating process. The manifesto closes as follows:

The struggle between what one might call Uncreated and Creature – illustrated by the permanent contradiction of human and his Taboo. The quotidian love and the capitalist *modus vivendi*. Anthropophagy. Absorption of the sacred enemy. To transform him into a totem. The human adventure. The earthly finality. However, only pure elites managed to realize carnal anthropophagy, which carries in itself the highest meaning of life and avoids all the diseases identified by Freud, the diseases of catechism. What happens is not a sublimation of sexual instinct. It is the thermometric scale of anthropophagic instinct. Once carnal, it turns elective and creates friendship. If affective, love. If speculative, science. It deviates, it transfers itself. We reach vilification. Low anthropophagy agglomerated into the sins of catechism – envy, usury, calumny, murder. Plague of the so-called cultured and Christianized peoples, it is against this that we are acting. Anthropophagous.

Against Anchieta singing the eleven thousand virgins of heaven, in Iracema’s land – the patriarch João Ramalho, founder of São Paulo. Our independence was not proclaimed yet. Typical phrase of Don John VI: – Son, put the crown on thy head before some adventurer does it! Our expelled dynasty. It is necessary to expel the Braganza spirit, Maria da Fonte’s rule and snuff. Against the clothed and oppressive social reality, recorded by Freud – reality without complexes, without madness, without prostitutions, and without the penitentiaries of the matriarchy of Pindorama. (Teles, 510)

Oswald de Andrade’s proposal somehow agrees with Bhabha’s theory of a culture *in-between*. It translates Said’s idea of a *decolonization of the mind* in a Latin American country, where the term postcolonial is hardly accepted. It is also very close to Fanon’s concept of *national liberation*, which overcomes the *complex of inferiority* built in the minds of black Africans.

This paper aimed at placing Brazil in the field of postcolonial studies, trying to interpret it by using the same theories used to interpret the conditions of Asia, Africa and Latin America after colonization ended.

This continental country holds a very special position inside the global and Latin American perspective. This is why this work proposed a postcolonial interpretation between the theses of postcolonialism and postcoloniality. Brazil’s independence hardly made it reach a postcolonial status, being stagnated in a social and economic model that dated back at least three hundred years. That is why the moment where the rest of Latin America is studying their steps towards postcoloniality, Brazil should be studied as moving towards postcolonialism and postcoloniality.

Cultural anthropophagy was helping the country overcome both Portuguese colonialism, that shaped a self-inflicting identity, as well as British and French coloniality, which shaped the arts to an empty model that did not pay attention to the real national selves.

After the anthropophagic call for a critical swallowing, Brazil became home to incredible cultural movements that have respected Brazil's idiosyncrasies. The *Cinema Novo* (in the field of cinema) and the *Tropicalia* (in music) have helped show the world the essence of Brazil: a miscegenational country, formed by transcultural relations.

I end this paper with a final quote from the anthropophagic manifesto: "Before the Portuguese had discovered Brazil, Brazil had discovered happiness". This happiness is what characterizes Brazilian people, who finally achieved a manner to express themselves. *Samba* and *Bossa Nova* also represent moments of cultural anthropophagy.

In his "*Brazilian People: The Formation and Meaning of Brazil*" Darcy Ribeiro wrote that

In spite of all, we are a province of the Western civilization. A new Rome, a matrix of the neolatin civilization. It is better than others because it was washed in African and indian blood. From this day onwards, these people's role, less than to absorb European characteristics, shall be to teach the world how to live more happily. (242)

The happiness for which the Brazilian nation is famous could only be manifested after an internal acknowledgement that the feeling existed within Brazil and within Brazilian people. Only someone who accepts himself can be truly happy. Anthropophagy brings this self-awareness to Brazilian arts. Then, as in the original ceremonies of the 16th century, it resulted in a huge celebration of the land, of the people and of the need to become stronger by assimilating European values through a symbolic ingestion.

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