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Modernity devoured: Re-viewing the Anthropocene with Oswald de Andrade's concept of anthropophagy

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Modernity devoured: Re-viewing the Anthropocene with Oswald de Andrade's concept of anthropophagy

*Roberto Robalinho**

Abstract

Certain images produced by nature as a result of ecological disasters and climate crisis challenge our classic representational paradigm based on the separation between nature and culture. At the same time, these contemporary images evoke the complex temporality of an apocalyptic future arriving sooner than expected and a colonial past that never seizes to violently consume natural resources. This paper proposes to revisit the Brazilian 1928 *Anthropophagic Manifesto*, one of Latin America's founding epistemologies according to Boaventura Souza Santos, as an aesthetic, philosophical and pragmatical proposal capable of providing tools to address our present crisis and these challenging images of the Anthropocene. How can a cannibalistic (indigenous) past lay the groundwork for creative invention and anti-colonial art? How can this transcultural use of indigenous philosophy help us find tools that not only frame these images of the Anthropocene, but above all, offer possibilities of surviving the 'end of the world'?

Keywords: Anthropophagic Manifesto · Anthropocene · indigenous epistemology · cultural cannabalism · climate change

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Introduction

Since the election of president Bolsonaro at the end of 2018 in Brazil, the Brazilian Amazon Forest has experienced an increase of forest fires and deforestation. Data from Brazilian research institute IMAZON indicates that an area of 10.781 km² of the Amazon biome was destroyed between August 2021 and July 2022. This is the biggest area destroyed in the last fifteen years considering the same period.[1] This reality converges with a series of bills endorsed by Bolsonaro's government in congress. Two of the most important bills affect indigenous communities in the Amazon, the 1991/2020 bill that aims to regulate and promote mining in indigenous land and the 490/2007 bill that is currently being analysed by the Supreme Court known as the "Temporal Mark". This bill determines that only land occupied by indigenous population in 1988, when the new constitution was signed, can be claimed and regulated as indigenous land. According to the Social Environmental Institute, despite indigenous territories also suffering from the increased destruction of the Amazon in some critical zones, they still constitute the most well-preserved territories in the forest.[2] This new threat against indigenous lands is, therefore, also a threat against the forest.

In 2019, during the driest season of the Brazilian Amazon, if you can call a rain forest 'dry' at all, there was a dramatic increase of forest fires, the biggest fires recorded since 2010.[3] Most of these fires were caused by cattle and soya farmers advancing and illegally occupying the forest. Arguably, also climate change played a part with harsh and unusually dry conditions. However, what really set the forest on fire was an economic model of capitalist exploitation of the forest – a fire, we could say, started a little more than 500 years ago when Europeans first arrived in Brazil. This destruction echoes the title of Oswald de Andrade's 1924 poetic manifesto – *Manifesto of Pau-Brazil Poetry* (Andrade 1986 [1924]). Ironically, it refers to brazilwood as not only being the first commodity to be extracted, but also the commodity that names the country. On another level, as if confirming a tragic prophecy, the word 'Brazil' also refers to the Portuguese word *brasa*, denoting the red colour of hot coal as if Brazil signifies an ongoing fire.

The fires of 2019 were not restricted to the forest; they also spread through a multitude of screens on media and social networks. From our homes, we could watch the forest burn. Dark clouds of smoke covering the sky, animals fleeing, infinite lines of flames and carcasses of charcoaled trees were some of the common themes. These images conveyed and condensed a paradoxical temporal impression, the accelerated move towards an apocalyptic future that has arrived sooner than expected and a long-lasting, slower process of colonial destruction, which has never ended. The past and the future collided dramatically with the present.

1 IMAZON has monitored the destruction of the Amazon since 2008 and because of the cloud regimes, the period of analysis begins in August of one year and ends in July of the following year. According to the institute, if we compare only the period within 2022, the area destroyed has grown 7% in comparison with 2021, reaching a total destruction of 6.528 km². Seen in September 2022 at https://imazon.org.br/imprensa/desmatamento-na-amazonia-chega-a-10-781-km%C2%B2-nos-ultimos-12-meses-maior-area-em-15-anos/.

2 An analysis of deforestation data in indigenous land is published by Social Environmental Institute homepage, https://www.socioambiental.org/pt-br/noticias-socioambientais/desmatamento-em-terras-indigenas-cresce-124-mas-segue-concentrado-em-areas-criticas

3 Data about the historical series of wildfires in the Amazon is published by the Brazilian National Institute of Space Research, data accessed on October 2021 at https://queimadas.dgi.inpe.br/queimadas/portal-static/estatisticas_estados/.

These images were symptomatic of an undesired and violent colonial past, visually haunting us through a complex process connecting the materiality of the destruction and the circulation and production of its images. This colonial ghost gained a certain corporality through images of ashes, bones, stranded animals, and tree skeletons that circulated across traditional media and more recent social media networks. An entangled network of different social actors, human and non-human, interacting with these images, revealed not only the symptomatic violence of the destruction, but the visible body of a suffering nature that gained a subjective value.

The objective of this paper is to juxtapose these images of destruction with Oswald de Andrade's 1928 *Anthropophagic Manifesto*. What happens when we look at these images through the looking glass of Oswald's[4] *Manifesto*? The intention is to consider the *Manifesto* not only as an ironic anti-colonial metaphor, but as a cosmopolitical proposition, a new world view[5] that works against a modern European epistemology; a proposition that the author's later essays suggest even more clearly. In this sense, Boaventura de Souza Santos, Portuguese sociologist and critical post-colonial thinker identifies the 1928 *Manifesto* as a foundational conceptual theory in the context of Latin America, participating in the counter-modern thought that he describes as *epistemologies of the South*. According to Santos, the *Manifesto* proposes a world that is politically, culturally and philosophically different from the European world, a world embodying what Cuba's prominent philosopher of independence José Martí[6] had described in his eponymous short essay as *Nuestra América* (Santos 2019). Santos is particularly inspired by how Martí proposes new forms of government in opposition to European tradition, because this new constitutional text, would be based on Latin American indigenous miscegenation and the experience of fighting colonial powers. Santos argues that *Nuestra América* targets "new emancipatory forces, that I name 'counter-hegemonic globalization'"[7] (Santos 2019, 541). What is new in Oswald's *Manifesto*, insists Santos, is that the idea of devouring the different and foreign other, incorporating this difference in the self, creates a new procedural identity, as it appears in constant mutation. As Brazilian literary critic, Silviano Santiago, has stated in his concept of "the space in-between" of Latin American Culture, echoing Oswald's *Anthropophagic Manifesto*,

> "The major contribution of Latin American to Western culture is to be found in its systematic destruction of the concepts of *unity* and *purity* […] Latin America establishes its place on the map of Western civilization by actively and destructively diverting the European norm and resignifying preestablished and immutable elements that were exported to the New World by the Europeans." (Santiago 2001, 30)

4 To differentiate Oswald de Andrade from the other important modernist author, Mario de Andrade, I shall refer to the author in the text by his first name, Oswald, as he is popularly called in Brazil.

5 The exact term used by Oswald de Andrade in later work is *Weltanschauung,* from the German *world vision*.

6 José Martí (1853-1895) was a Cuban poet and intellectual in charge of forging the Cuban Revolutionary Party in the wake of the Second War of Independence. Martí's writings not only denounce the asymmetries and imperialist relations between North America, Europe and Latin America, but they also defend the idea of a common Latin America identity based on shared colonial experience of violence and racial mixture. Cf. Aguilar 1998 and Martí 2005.

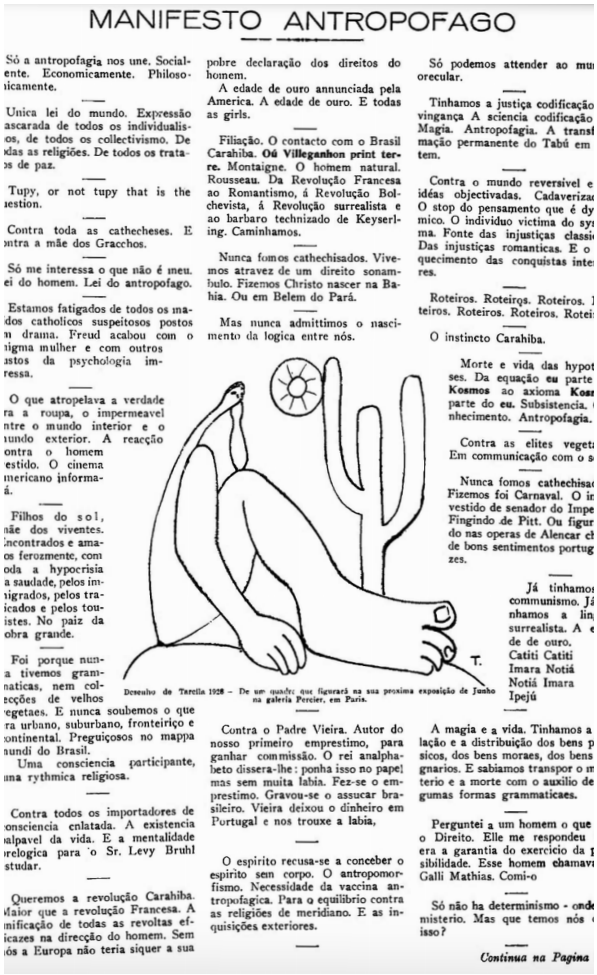
7 Freely translated from: "novas forças emancipadoras, que denomino 'globalização contra-hegemônica'" (Santos, 2019, 541).

Going along with Santiago's provocative perspective, the images that capture the aftermath of Amazon fires disrupt notions of *purity* and *unity* while they challenge a modern colonial gaze. These images, where a 'suffering' nature becomes visible through bodies and their remains devastated by fire, contests a visual regime that is based on a separation, a classification and a commodification of nature and bodies. Here, nature is not seen as an object to be captured, but as a suffering subject. What can these images teach us, in relation to a broader aesthetic regime connected to a contemporary ecological crisis, which some climate scientists and geologists have termed 'Anthropocene'?[8] If Boaventura de Souza Santos is right in that "we are facing modern problems for which there are no longer modern solutions" (2012, 46), how does the poetic *Manifesto* by Oswald de Andrade, based on an indigenous philosophy and an anti-modern epistemology, help frame these images and our urgent times?

Only anthropophagy unites us

Oswald de Andrade's *Anthropophagic Manifesto* is commonly considered the most radical gesture of Brazilian modernism (Bopp 2012 and Madureira 2005) or at least, the turning point of a modernist trajectory that begins in 1922 in São Paulo's *Modern Art Week* (*Semana de Arte Moderna*), combining a modernist aesthetic, inspired by the European avant-garde, with a nationalist cultural project (Ortiz 1995, 35). A brief contextualization of the Brazilian modernist movement is important to understand the conceptual rupture, which Oswald's proposal presented, as well as the reception of the *Manifesto* within the broader field of artistic production.

One of the key figures of the Brazilian modernist movement, Mario de Andrade, writer, ethnomusicologist and researcher of Brazilian folklore, highlights Anita Malfatti's art exhibition in São Paulo in 1917 as the modernist awakening in Brazil (Andrade 1942; Bopp 2012; Sneed 2013). In the years proceeding this moment, Malfatti studied at the Independent School of



MANIFESTO ANTROPOFAGO

Só a antropofagia nos une. Socialmente. Economicamente. Philosophicamente.

Unica lei do mundo. Expressão mascarada de todos os individualismos, de todos os collectivismo. De todas as religiões. De todos os tratados de paz.

Tupy, or not tupy that is the question.

Contra toda as catheches. E contra a mãe dos Gracchos.

Só me interessa o que não é meu. Lei do homem. Lei do antropofago.

Estamos fatigados de todos os maridos catholicos suspeitosos postos em drama. Freud acabou com o enigma mulher e com outros thabus da psychologia impressa.

O que atropelava a verdade era a roupa, o impermeavel entre o mundo interior e o mundo exterior. A reacção contra o homem vestido. O cinema americano informará.

Filhos do sol, mãe dos viventes. Encontrados e amados ferozmente, com toda a hypocrisia da saudade, pelos immigrados, pelos traficados e pelos touristes. No paiz da cobra grande.

Foi porque nunca tivemos grammaticas, nem colecções de velhos vegetaes. E nunca soubemos o que era urbano, suburbano, fronteiriço e continental. Preguiçosos no mappa mundi do Brasil.

Uma consciencia participante, uma rythmica religiosa.

Contra todos os importadores de consciencia enlatada. A existencia palpavel da vida. E a mentalidade prelogica para o Sr. Levy Bruhl estudar.

Queremos a revolução Carahiba. Maior que a revolução Francesa. A unificação de todas as revoltas eficazes na direcção do homem. Sem nós a Europa não teria siquer a sua pobre declaração dos direitos do homem.

A edade de ouro annunciada pela America. A edade de ouro. E todas as girls.

Filiação. O contacto com o Brasil Carahiba. **Où Villeganhon print terre.** Montaigne. O homem natural. Rousseau. Da Revolução Francesa ao Romantismo, á Revolução Bolchevista, á Revolução surrealista e ao barbaro technizado de Keyserling. Caminhamos.

Nunca fomos cathechisados. Vivemos atravez de um direito sonambulo. Fizemos Christo nascer na Bahia. Ou em Belem do Pará.

Mas nunca admittimos o nascimento da logica entre nós.

Desenho de Tarsila 1928 – De um quadro que figurará na sua proxima exposição de Junho na galeria Percier, em Paris.

Contra o Padre Vieira. Autor do nosso primeiro emprestimo, para ganhar commissão. O rei analphabeto dissera-lhe: ponha isso no papel mas sem muita labia. Fez-se o emprestimo. Gravou-se o assucar brasileiro. Vieira deixou o dinheiro em Portugal e nos trouxe a labia.

O espirito recusa-se a conceber o espirito sem corpo. O antropomorfismo. Necessidade da vaccina antropofagica. Para o equilibrio contra as religiões de meridiano. E as inquisições exteriores.

Só podemos attender ao mundo orecular.

Tinhamos a justiça codificação vingança A sciencia codificação Magia. Antropofagia. A transformação permanente do Tabú em totem.

Contra o mundo reversivel e idéas objectivadas. Cadaverizado O stop do pensamento que é dynamico. O individuo victima do systema. Fonte das injustiças classicas. Das injustiças romanticas. E o quecimento das conquistas interiores.

Roteiros. Roteiros. Roteiros. Roteiros. Roteiros. Roteiros.

O instincto Carahiba.

Morte e vida das hypoteses. Da equação **eu** parte do **Kosmos** ao axioma **Kosmos** parte do **eu.** Subsistencia. nhecimento. Antropofagia.

Contra as elites vegetais Em communicação com o s

Nunca fomos cathechisados Fizemos foi Carnaval. O indio vestido de senador do Imperio Fingindo de Pitt. Ou figurando nas operas de Alencar cheio de bons sentimentos portuguezes.

Já tinhamos communismo. Já nhamos a lin surrealista. A de de ouro. Catiti Catiti Imara Notiá Notiá Imara Ipejú

A magia e a vida. Tinhamos a lação e a distribuição dos bens physicos, dos bens moraes, dos bens gnarios. E sabiamos transpor o terio e a morte com o auxilio de gumas formas grammaticaes.

Perguntei a um homem o que o Direito. Elle me respondeu era a garantia do exercicio da sibilidade. Esse homem chamava Galli Mathias. Comi-o

Só não ha determinismo - onde misterio. Mas que temos nós isso?

Continua na Pagina

Fig. 1. Cover page detail of Oswald de Andrade's *Anthropophagic Manifesto* with Tarsila do Amaral's line drawing of the *Abaporu* (1928). Catalogue *Tarsila do Amaral: Projeto Cultural Artistas do Mercosul*, Fundação Finambrás, 1998, 46.

8 As detailed by Dipesh Chakrabarty in *The Climate of History* (2009), chemist and Nobel prize winner Paul J. Crutzen and Eugene F. Stoermer published in *Nature* in 2002 a short proposal where they emphasized how human activity had a central role in influencing the conditions of the geosphere making the term Anthropocene more appropriate to describe our current geological epoch. Although the term is not unanimously accepted in the field of geology, it has been adopted by scholars working across multiple disciplines as a provocative concept to frame our contemporary ecological crisis.

Art in New York with Homer Boss. Her exhibition was the result of her New York portfolio and sparked negative reviews from conservative circles of São Paulo's art world. According to Sneed, "Paulista audiences, who had yet to be introduced to Impressionism, much less to Post-impressionism, Fauvism, Expressionism, or Cubism, were scandalized, and the exhibition was widely derided" (Sneed 2013, 31). Andrade and Oswald were some of the intellectuals who came to Malfatti's defence writing in local newspapers and magazines, expressing a modernist consciousness together with other artists such as Di Cavalcanti, Brecheret and Villa Lobos, an attitude which prompted São Paulo's *Modern Art Week* in 1922.

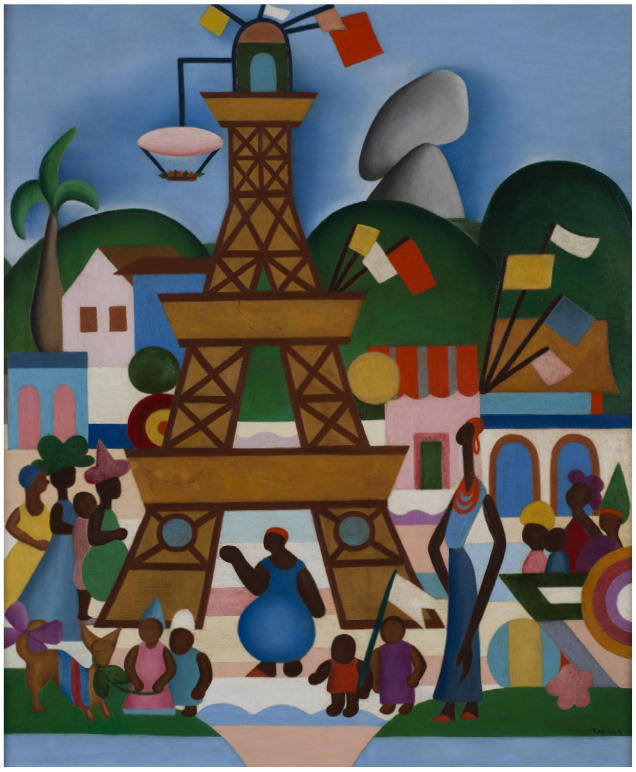


Fig. 2. Tarsila do Amaral. *Carnival in Madureira* (*Carnaval em Madureira*), 1924, oil on canvas, 29 15/16 x 25 in. (76 x 63 cm). Acervo da Fundação José e Paulina Nemirovsky, Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo. Catalogue *Tarsila do Amaral: Projeto Cultural Artistas do Mercosul*, Fundação Finambrás, 1998, 78.

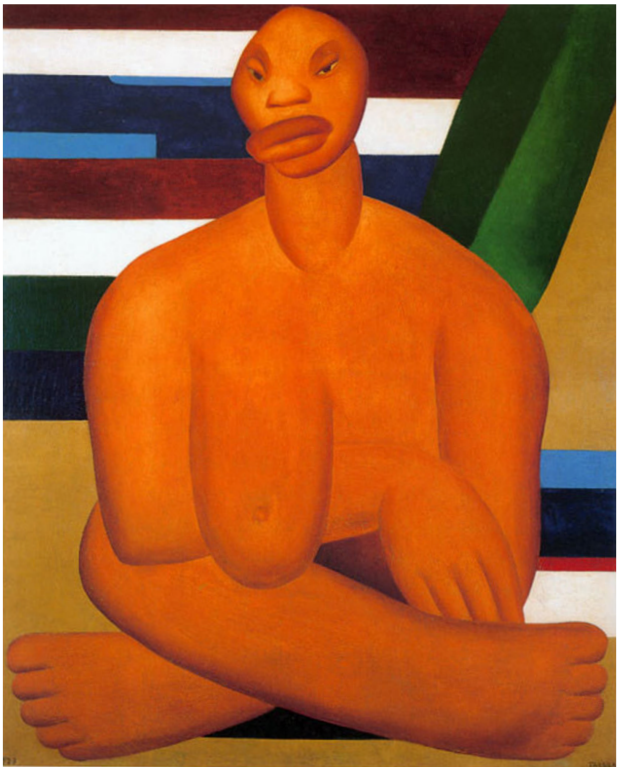


Fig. 3. Tarsila do Amaral. *A Negra*, 1923, oil on canvas, 39 3/8 x 32 in. (100 x 80 cm). Museo de Arte Contemporânea de Universidade de São Paulo. Catalogue *Tarsila do Amaral: Projeto Cultural Artistas do Mercosul*, Fundação Finambrás, 1998, 75.

If Malfatti's paintings can be considered the initial inspiration for the *Modern Art Week*, Tarsila do Amaral's anthropophagic series painted in 1928, before the publication of Oswald's *Manifesto*, can be interpreted as the first cultural production based on anthropophagic aesthetics. A line version of her painting *The Anthropophagus* that Oswald later baptized "Abaporu"[9], illustrates the cover of the initial issue of the *Revista de Antropofagia*, in which the *Manifesto* was first published (fig. 1). After the *Modern Art Week*, Amaral and Oswald had an affair and worked

9 According to Pérez-Oramas, to name Amaral's painting, Oswald and Bopp used a Tupi-Guarany dictionary published in 1640 by Jesuit Father Antonio Ruiz de Montoya, and combined the words *aba* (person) with *poru* (who eats), creating Abaporu – "the one who eats" (Pérez-Oramas 2018, 84).

closely together travelling to Paris at the end of 1922, where Amaral studied with Cubist painters and theoreticians such as André Lhôte, Fernand Léger, and Albert Gleizes (Sneed 2013, 32). The couple eventually married in 1926 and returned once again to Paris, where Amaral had two solo exhibitions in 1926 and 1928 (Sneed 2013, 34). During this period, before the *Anthropophagic Manifesto*, Oswald and Amaral worked on a more nationalist proposal known as the Brazilian Wood phase, in which "they explored their own land, with its vibrant ethnic mixture, colonial architecture, festivals, African rhythms, and natural beauty." (Damien 1999, 4). Amaral's painting and Oswald's poetry increasingly resonated with one another and their artistic positions further entangled until the *Anthropophagic Manifesto*, so that "[i]n Oswald's poetry one senses the visual imprint of Tarsila, just as the unmistakable poetic presence of Oswald is present in Tarsila's painting" (Schwartz 2009, 94). Tarsila's oil painting *Carnival in Madureira* (1924) (fig. 2) can serve as an example for the motivic ambivalences and clashing temporalities that marked the Brazilian Wood phase: A replica of the Eiffel Tower appears in Madureira, a neighborhood at the outskirts of Rio de Janeiro, in an almost rural setting populated with abstracted dark skinned figures wearing colourful clothes reminiscent of both, indigenous clothing as well as carnival customs. The tower thus does not strike merely as a symbol of European industrial progress and modern aspirations, but serves to underline an ironic encounter between oppositions that are creatively brought together to produce something new, neither European nor Brazilian, but a pictorially mediated transculturation that potentially overcomes coloniality. One of the main differences between the modernist practice of Tarsila and Oswald in comparison to that of European avant-gardes, such as Cubism or Furturism, is explicit in this painting: Tarsila and Oswald evoked the past as a disruptive force to construct a future yet to come, rather than imagining the present as in need of a radical break with on-going traditions.

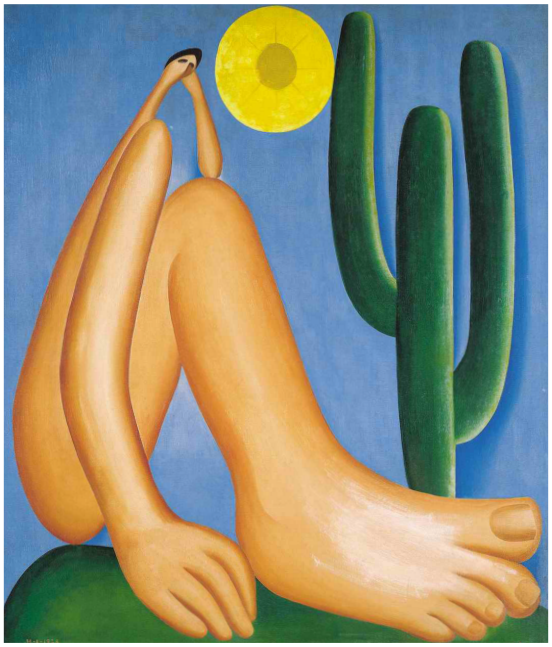


Fig. 4. Tarsila do Amaral. *Abaporu*, 1928, oil on canvas, 33 7/16 x 28 3/4 in. (85 x 73 cm). Collection MALBA, Museo de Arte Latinoamericano de Buenos Aires. Catalogue *Tarsila do Amaral: Projeto Cultural Artistas do Mercosul*, Fundação Finambrás, 1998, 111.

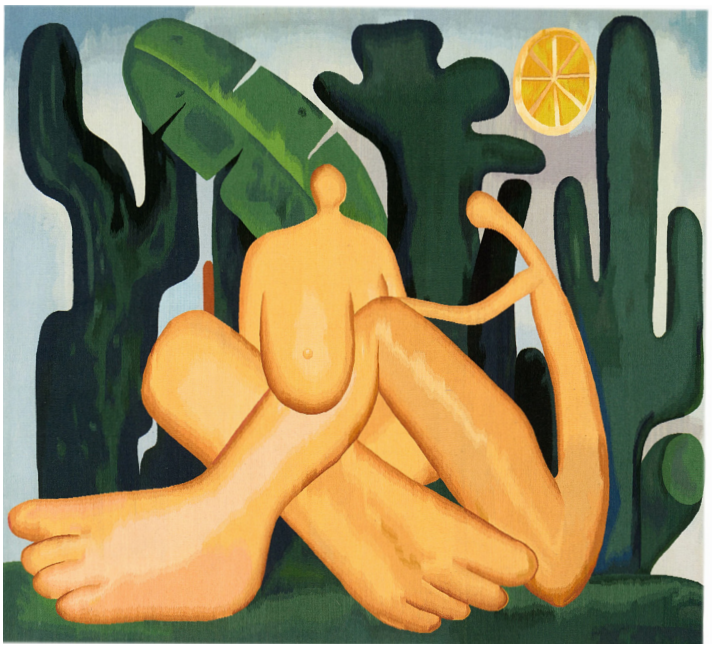


Fig. 5. Tarsila do Amaral. *Anthropophagy* (*Antropofagia*), 1929, oil on canvas, 49 5/8 x 55 15/16 in. (126 x 142 cm). Acervo da Fundação Jose e Paulina Nemirovsky, em comodato com a Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo. Catalogue *Tarsila do Amaral: Projeto Cultural Artistas do Mercosul*, Fundação Finambrás, 1998, 133.

The same can be said about Tarsila's anthropophagic series. Not only does it synthesize local motifs associated with Brazilian colours, nature, and ethnic miscegenation, it is also methodologically in line with the *Anthropophagic Manifesto*. If we draw a line from the painting *A Negra* (1923), which anticipates the *Abaporu* as portrait of a taunting matriarchal black woman, to *Antropofagia* (1929), where *A Negra* appears merged into the *Abaporu* as the result of a creative devouring, we see a shift from the nationalist concerns present in the Brazilian Wood phase to a radical cannibalistic gesture. As Luis Pérez-Oramas, curator of Tarsila's recent retrospective in the Museum of Modern Art New York, has observed in his analysis of Amaral's work:

> It so happens that *A Negra*, spreading out from its excessive frame among avant-gardes that where already seeing their power of friction fade, was a traumatic image; but it was also, as the embodiment of a historical tragedy and an emancipatory promise, the ground on which the utopian anthropophagic project could feed. *A Negra* was an implacable gift. The other paintings in the trio – *Abaporu*, a message and visual manifesto, and *Anthropophagy*, a synthesis potentially generating a new kind of humanity – were a speculative wager, a bet on a possible world that history, with its delayed skirmishes, would only confirm quite some time later (Pérez-Oramas 2018, 96).

It is in this context, and in an intense partnership with Amaral, that Oswald publishes the *Anthropophagic Manifesto* in the first issue of the *Revista de Antropofagia*, a magazine created by Oswald and the poet Raul Bopp published between May 1928 and August 1929. The anthropophagic concept was, to some extent, already present in Oswald's earlier *Manifesto of Pau-Brazil Poetry* published in the newspaper *Correio da Manhã* in 1924, and would also be revoked in his later works, particularly in the thesis *The crisis of the Messianic Civilization*[10] that he presented to compete for a chair at University of São Paulo's Department of Philosophy in 1950.

While this article is not focused on a critique of Oswald's work, it is important to understand the general critique of Brazilian modernism, which has been seen as constituting the melancholic avant-garde of a decadent colonial elite, invested in the configuration of a new national identity and institutional power. The participation of Andrade in the formulation of the Brazilian Institute of Historic and Artistic Heritage in 1937 in collaboration with the Vargas government is an example of this institutionalization. On the one hand, there is a certain failure of the radical aspirations of the Brazilian modernist movement to subvert the existent social order, modes of production, and class relations, given that it served as the basis for the country's conservative modernization as Antônio Candido (Candido 1975) and Robert Schwarz (Schwarz 1987) have both pointed out.[11] On the other hand, it is hard to deny the ground-breaking aesthetic power

10 Freely translated from: "A crise da civilização Messiânica" (Andrade, 1978).

11 Candido and Schwarz's critique of Oswald has been precisely summarized by sociologist Bruno Della Torre (2019). He highlights how they emphasized the contradictions present in Oswald's artistic proposal in relation to his literary work and political life.

that the modernist narrative enabled, which made it the dominant aesthetic reference for Brazilian artistic production, not only in literature, but also in music, visual arts and architecture at the time. Its greatest evidence is the construction of the new capital Brasília in 1960, an example of modernist architecture and urban planning spearheaded by Oscar Niemeyer and Lúcio Costa. This is clearly a general view. What is called 'Brazilian modernism' is conceptually as well as stylistically not homogenous. Rather, it entails many singularities and discontinuities, especially when regions outside São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro are considered.[12]

Given this background, it is important to also highlight how São Paulo's *Modern Art Week* became a historical mark of Brazilian modernism, while Oswald's *Anthropophagic Manifesto* remained neglected for a few decades. In 1942, on the 20th anniversary of the *Modern Art Week*, Andrade published an article entitled, "The Modernist Movement" in the newspaper *Estado de São Paulo*, in which he re-evaluated Brazilian modernism (Andrade 1942). Here, he considers that both Malfatti's exhibition in 1917 and the *Modern Art Week* in 1922 sparked the movement that had already moved on from these heroic years of aesthetic experimentation and innovation. Throughout the article, he does not mention Oswald's *Manifesto* or the anthropophagic concept, thus erasing its historical importance. It is only with the concrete poetry movement in the 1950's, led by poets such as Augusto dos Campos and Décio Pignatari, that Oswald's *Anthropophagic Manifesto* was explicitly revived.

At the end of the 1960s, in the context of the military dictatorship in Brazil, Anthropophagy became a central reference for two of the most important Brazilian experimental artists, Lygia Clark and Hélio Oiticica, who thoroughly debated Tarsila's and Oswald's approaches in a series of letters, when overcoming their own initial neo-concrete positions. They were drawn to the subjective transformative possibilities of Anthropophagy, especially the transformative relation between the work of art and the viewer/participant, and understood the anthropophagic concept as a modernist legacy to live up to. Consequently, Clark's interactive proposition of *Baba antropofágica* (*Anthropophagic Drool*, 1975) – in which participants 'spilled' coloured reeds of thread from their mouths on to a participant lying on the floor – and Oiticica's *Parangolés* (initiated in 1964 and developed throughout his whole career) – colourful cloak-like layers of different materials to be worn by moving participants – can be considered "the first systematic monograph on Tarsila's work" as Pérez-Oramas suggests (Pérez-Oramas 2018, 86), in that both artists radically explore and theoretically extend the anthropophagic position. Their socially and psychologically informed commitment to an artistic practice that privileges multi-sensory and participatory aspects also strongly informed the cultural-political movement across Brazil known as *Tropicalism*. It included many (diasporic) artists deliberately collaborating across genre boundaries of popular music, literature, theatre and cinema, while fostering concepts of mixture and appropriation by 'devouring' foreign influences and traditional practices alike.

Attesting to the on-going importance of Anthropophagy for the Brazilian artistic production

12 To quote a few artists outside the Rio-São Paulo circuit, Oswald Goeldi in Belém (1895–1961), Cícero Dias in Recife (1907-2003) and Iberê Camargo in Porto Alegre (1914–1991).

overall, the "Historical Nucleus" part of the 24th Bienal de São Paulo curated by Paulo Herkenhoff was subtitled *Anthropophagy and Histories of Cannibalisms* in 1998, fifty years after the publication of the *Manifesto*. According to art critic-cum-curator Lisette Lagnado, Herkenhoff's curatorial approach was also ground-breaking in contemporary historical exhibitions by probing how visitors relate to the exhibited artwork through a series of interventions:

> A shrewd advertising campaign had billboards printed with figures of Van Gogh and Tarsila do Amaral as spokespersons, beckoning visitors to 'view historical and contemporary dialogues between Brazil and the world', posing blunt questions such as 'Are we all cannibals?' or making categorical statements, for example 'Only anthropophagy unites us.' (Lagnado 2015, 9)

However, as the focus of this article is not to dwell on the cultural legacy of Anthropophagy or providing another art historical and literary studies based critical analysis of Tarsila's and Oswald's work and their on-going relevance for contemporary practices, this historical contextualization shall suffice to set the stage for a more philosophical, pictorial and decolonial theories inspired reflection on the *Anthropophagic Manifesto* in the context of the Anthropocene. This means taking Oswald's anthropophagic proposition seriously, not as a metaphor or an allegory, but as the poetic philosophy that he defined it to be. As a starting point, two immediate aspects of the anthropophagic concept are important since they relate to our current state of emergency. First, how Oswald proposes a future utopia with an ideal pre-colonial temporality and second, how this indigenous episteme is associated with an anti-colonial stance, working against the modern (European) philosophical tradition. To some extent, reflecting on these aspects offers an escape route to our present inspired by ideas that lie outside the colonial modern project.

Image of the Anthropocene

The drama surrounding the Brazilian Amazon fires in 2019 began with a report by the National Institute for Space Research (INPE) that indicated a considerable and dangerous increase in forest fires that year. The report was based on the observation of satellite images that monitor the Brazilian Amazon Forest. The government immediately contested the data from the INPE and initiated a dispute over the forest vigilance and monitoring technologies.[13] From a visual and media studies perspective as well as from a philosophical point of view, the controversy can be described as a dispute over what is and is not 'visible' in the Amazon and entails a dispute over the apparatus, which produces data and images, in-/forming a particular visuality of the forest. In keeping with Antonio Agamben, the apparatus does not only denote the technical device that generates an image, but also how this image mediates power relations and the production of subjectivity.[14] The multiplicity of images of the fire, circulating in media and social networks, thus co-constituted the image of the forest and substantially fuelled

13 The disputes over the extension of the fire between president Bolsonaro and the INPE can be seen in a Reuters article on the Amazon fires of 2019, https://www.reuters.com/article/us-brazil-environment-fires-idUSKCN2572WB

14 For a discussion and actualization on the concept of the apparatus see Agamben 2009, 1–24.

what can be called a dispute over the visible. Taking part in even larger networks of images related with the effects of climate change, the images from Brazil participate in an *economy of image* that is governed by powerful agents. The affiliated agency is aptly described by French philosopher and image theoretician Jean-Marie Mondzain: "those who are the masters of the visible are the masters of the world organising and controlling the gaze" (Mondzain 2002, 3). This means that fighting climate change, is not only about producing scientific evidence, but also about managing a visual regime that determines how we see and understand the causes and effects of the climate crisis.

Fig. 6. Photogaph of the aftermath of Amazon fires. Photograph by Araquém Alcantara, part of the essay "By fire and sword" [A ferro e fogo], Brazil, August 2019. Copyright Araquém Alcantara. https://midianinja.org/araquemalcantara/a-ferro-e-fogo/.

In the specific case of the destruction of the Amazon, there is, no doubt, a connection with socio-political economic practices that are rooted in a colonial history. As some scholars have argued, instead of the term Anthropocene, a more correct term for our current geo-social historic era would be Plantationocene, for it names not only a geological time, but also the social historical agents responsible for the extractive economical model that has led to our contemporary ecological crisis (Haraway *et al*. 2016, 557). The plantation system is a technologically organized ecology based on the alienation of local biodiversity and knowledge favouring the efficiency of mono-cropping. It is also based on the exploitation of racialized bodies and subjectivities. The visual cultural theorist, Nicholas Mirzoeff, defines the plantation system as the first visual regime that serves the power of the colonial state and is embedded in modern ways of seeing (Mirzoeff 2011, 8). He identifies two sides of the visual regime, one supported by visual technologies related to the control of territory and populations such as cartography, anthropometry, and botany among many others; the other, supported by a particularly sensible aesthetic, which sustains racialized socio-ecological divisions and hierarchies. It is produced across diverse media, for example, playing out in books, journals, prints and paintings, but also through architecture such as the Big House (*Casa-Grande*), the master's house that oversees the quarters of the slaves. Mirzoeff argues that an anti-colonial struggle is also an aesthetic battle. To fight a colonial power sustained by the complexes of visuality that he defines as instrumental to the plantation system, a counter-visuality must be produced. The latter needs to disorganize how power distributes a sensible order by establishing new aesthetic and sensible arrangements: "It is the dissensus with visuality, meaning a dispute over what is visible as an element of a situation, over which visible elements belong to what is common, over the capacity of subjects to designate this common and argue for it" (Mirzoeff 2011, 24).

In the case of the Amazon fires, media representation plays an important role in contesting an official, hegemonic narrative that denies the man-made destruction of the forest. However, the actual disruptive power does not emerge from this critical framing of the fires, but rather from the images themselves and how they configure a corporality that claims an agency and subjectivity for nature. Indigenous activists in Brazil such as Davi Kopenawa[15] insist that the preservation of the forests and indigenous lands depends on white men seeing the invisible side of the forest, the beings and spirits that inhabit everything – animal, vegetal and mineral life. In the book *The Falling Sky* written with anthropologist Bruce Albert, Kopenawa says that his main objective is to make white men see with his eyes,

> In our very old language, what the white people call 'nature' is *urihi a*, the forest-land, but also its image, which can only be seen by the shamans and which we call *Urihinari*, the spirit of the forest. It is thanks to this image that the trees are alive." (Kopenawa and Albert 2013, 389)

In the Yanomami shaman's cosmopolitical proposal, the spirits need to be cared for, which means weaving a series of complex political relations with the many beings that inhabit the forest. The first step to weave this net of relations is to be able to see and give visibility to the invisible elements of the forest. Making what is invisible visible is also a form of producing a counter-visuality, adding to an aesthetic battle that is fought through visuality.

Oswald's thesis, *The crisis of the messianic philosophy*[16] (1978, 77), commences by defending anthropophagy as a *Weltanschauung*, in the sense of a world vision that is very different from how a Eurocentric view perceived the act of cannibalism in the Americas. Oswald is, to some extent, in consonance with Kopenawa, when highlighting the importance of seeing the world and how the world is seen. It matters what is seen, and how it is seen, since seeing defines not only who sees, but most importantly, the world that is seen. There is a metaphysics in seeing that, in Oswald's case, points to a transformative world by the act of devouring: "The metaphysical operation that connects to the anthropophagic ritual is that of transforming tabu in totem"[17] (Oswald 1978, 77). To see with the eyes of a shaman or through the looking glass of Oswald's Anthropophagy, is to understand the transformative nature of the world, so different from the mono-cropping world forged by the plantationocene, and, as the indigenous activist argues, a strategy to hold the *falling sky* in the ecological crisis.

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15 Kopenawa is a Yanomami shaman and was an important political actor in the fight for the delimitation of Yanomami land in the 1990s. The Yanomami are an indigenous group that occupies a territory on the borders between Brazil and Venezuela in the Amazon Forest. The Yanomami lived almost isolated until in the mid-1970s, when the construction of highways brought an intense population of gold prospectors into their territories. The Yanomami indigenous territory was only recognized by the Brazilian government in the 1990's, holding back temporarily the invasion of the territory by gold prospectors. However, the threat of a new wave of gold mining has been intensified in the last years. On the contrary, the problem is very urgent, see for example: https://www.tagesschau.de/ausland/amerika/brasilien-illegale-goldgraeber-einsatz-101.html

16 Freely translated from: "A crise da civilização messiânica" (Andrade 1978, 77)

17 Freely translated from "A operação metafísica que se liga ao rito antropofágico é a da transformação do tabu em totem" (Andrade 1978, 77)

The *Aboporu* drawing that illustrates the *Manifesto* should thus be reconsidered by scrutinizing the invisibles, it evokes. The non-binary figure with a disproportional body, a huge foot and little head is far away from European representations of the Tupinambá depicted as cannibals in early modern prints by the Flemish engraver Theodor De Bry (1528–1598) or the (in-)famous oil portraits of South American indigenous people by Dutch painter Albert Eckhout (c.1610–1665). However, it closely resonates with the kind of abstract figuration sculpted by Constantin Brâncuși, when Tarsila visited Paris and seems to short-circuit great historical distance with an intimate familiarity. Arguably, this is caused by 'devouring' the old and the new, the foreign and the local. It is both at the same time, the result of a historical modernist worldview as well as a utopic figure, incomplete in its form and simplicity of the lines, anticipating a revolution yet to come. Here, the modernity of the avant-garde meets the matriarch and mythical world of Oswald's imagined and resurrected Tupinambás.

One invisible piece that emerges from looking at the series of images from the Amazon fires, is the hidden temporalities of the Anthropocene, I argue. As mentioned in the introduction, the images result in the impression of a collision of times in the present: an ongoing destructive colonial past with an apocalyptical future. This is not far off from the German philosopher Walter Benjamin's influential conception of history, as a moment, a flash, where "an image is that wherein what has been come together in a flash with the now to form a constellation" (Benjamin 1999, 462). This means that something in the now – a body, an image – erupts revealing an uneasiness, singularities – a discomfort – in a territory that had ignored or made this symptom invisible up until then. A body that is a virtuality (invisible) and can only emerge through a series of actors and agencies.

Tree ghosts are all that is left

A couple of months after the fires in Brazil in the 2019 summer, it was Australia's turn to catch fire with an intensity and an expansion that had been unseen before. The dimensions – spatial and temporal – of the destruction caused by Australian bush fires were impressive. According to the "Monash Climate Change Communication Research Hub" report on the fires, "by the end of January 11 million hectares of bush, forests and parks had burnt nationally" (Burgess *et al*. 2020, 5). Although many scientists had warned persistently that a "big" fire was bound to come, it felt as if it came sooner than expected – just like in the case of the Amazonian fire.

One of the dramatic aspects found in the Australia case was how the intensity of fires created their own weather systems that generated thunderstorms, which sparked new fires.[18] The fires were feeding themselves new fires like an unruly beast. Contrary to the fires in the Amazon, the Australian bush fires were produced by natural causes and their intensity was attributed to climate change – which, in the end, has been caused by a *longue durée* of human activity on the planet.

18 The phenomenon is known by scientist as *pyrocumulonimbus*, "fire-induced and smoke-infused thunderstorms" (Peterson *et al*. 2021, 1).

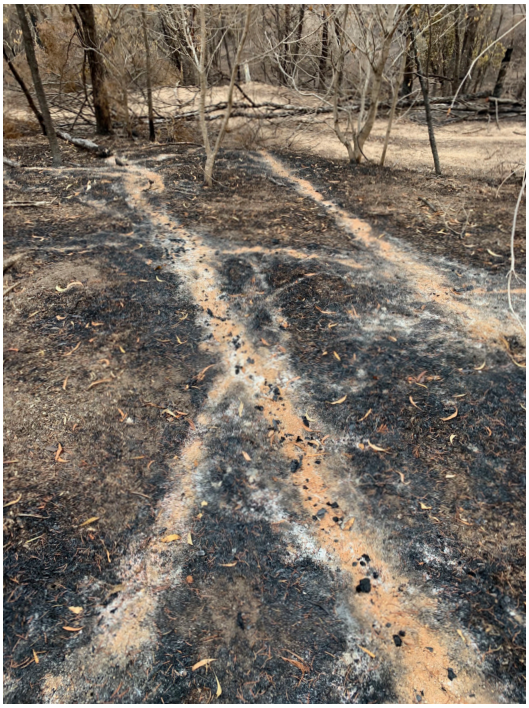

Fig. 7. Photo of tree ghost in South New Wales. Photograph by Gavin Butler, Australia, January 2020. Copyright *Vice* Magazine. https://www.vice.com/en/article/pkepdn/tree-ghosts-remain-burnt-out-australia-bushfires

Narratives, where images played an important role, framed the fires as the experience of an apocalypse. "Apocalypse comes to Kangoroo island," "The Banality of apocalypse: escaping the Australian fire," and "Apocalyptical photos from the frontline of the Australian's bush fires" are some of the headlines that immediately appear in a Google search on the Australian fires; the list could be much longer.[19] Media reports also referred to the fires as "The Black Summer," because of the dark smoke that covered the sky for many days.

Again, nature seen through these images gained a body, or the images of destruction produced a body. Even more than that, these bodies gained a soul. On 15 January 2020, *Vice* magazine published a report on the aftermath of the fires in Australia and the headlines read, "Tree Ghosts are all that remains in parts of burnt out Australia" (Butler 2020). The journalist, Gavin Butler, describes his visit to New South Wales only ten days after the fires. The story follows a similar media narrative in relation to the fires describing the impact of the devastated landscape. This is until he sees something new, a completely different mark on the ground, as he recalls, "not quite trees but the outlines of trees, stark white silhouettes printed like x-rays onto the bone-dry soil" (Butler 2020). When he asked his guide what the strange marks were, the answer was also striking, "Tree Ghosts" to what he added, "Aren't they magnificent?". According to Gavin Butler, the marks were caused by the extreme temperatures of the fires. It was as if the white man had to burn down trees to their core to see the souls that aboriginal populations have talked about for centuries. However, more than giving agency and subjectivity to nature, the marks mediated by photography provide these trees with a body, a missing one that once encapsulated the now exposed ghost. A terrifying ghost, since it is also the annunciation of our apocalypse.

The 'tree ghost' is the image that survived the end of the world. Or, thinking in Walter Benjamin's terms, it is the flash, the intermittent body – simultaneously absent and present – that configures a constellation. The remains of the trees configure a ghost in the present, marking the destruction of something that was physically there, which simultaneously brings to the present a projection of an apocalyptical future and a symptomatic colonial past that never ends.

19 See: https://www.bbc.com/news/world-australia-51102658#; https://theintercept.com/2020/01/01/banality-apocalypse-australian-fire/; https://www.vice.com/en/article/akwdp5/photos-frontline-of-australian-bushfires (all accessed 7 March 2022).

These photographs – x-rays of the trees' souls – are the expression of the moment in the extreme heat of the fire when the temporal collision occurred. French philosopher, Roland Barthes, in his classic essay about the nature of the photographic image defines what he considers the *punctum*, the decisive milliseconds it takes for the photographer, his eyes and fingers on the apparatus to freeze a scene in the world that can become an iconic image (Barthes 1981, 27). Here, the *punctum* is made not by the photographer, but by nature, the tree, the extreme dry conditions and the intense fire. Maybe, what later is photographed by a man, is an image made by nature, an image-nature, that disarranges our senses by calling our attention to the ghost that used to live inside the trees.

These bodies, remains of what-was-a-tree and is now a ghost, is where the past and the future meet dramatically. Postcolonial scholar Dipesh Chakrabarty in *The Climate of History* (2009) also talks about a collision of temporalities, one between natural and human history that challenges the modern idea of a linear, historical progress towards a better future. A spectacular collision between geopolitics and geophysics, producing an encounter with even more distant temporalities, since it takes us back to pre-modern and pre-colonial times, to a time ruled by unpredictable and cataclysmic nature. So, maybe, there is a necessity to go beyond modernity, as Santos (2012) proposes, or even back before modernity to find analytical tools capable of dealing with climate change and providing strategies of survival for the future to come – this accelerated disaster so well described in the reports of the fires in the Amazon and in Australia.

The basis of Oswald's *Anthropophagic Manifesto* is also temporal displacement, as he proposes a collision of times in the present, where an ideal pre-colonial temporality collides with a utopic future that would come from the re-emergence of anti-modern indigenous philosophy. Oswald also insists in proposing a new time, no longer linear and messianic as the Western Christian tradition (and this long before a postcolonial epistemological critique). It is within this displacement of times that I see a conceptual relation between Oswald's anthropophagic proposition and images from ecological disasters in the context of the discussion of the Anthropocene.

Tupi or not Tupi?

Oswald's inspiration for the 1928 *Manifesto* was the Tupinambá who lived throughout the extension of the Brazilian coast and practised ritual cannibalism. However, at the time of the *Manifesto*, the Tupinambá were extinct as was ritual cannibalism. The author had access only to a series of fragmented colonial reports from the past, such as Michel de Montaigne's essay *Of Cannibals* (1580) and the early German travel account related with Brazil by Hans Staden *The Adventures of Hans Staden* (1557). By bringing Tupinambá practices to the foreground, Oswald is recovering a pre-colonial past, or more precisely, he is unravelling in the present an unwanted past and subjectivity, that of an indigenous knowledge. It had been depreciated for centuries and visual accounts had played no small part in it, as the trope of cannibalism – a colonial metaphor for barbarism – depicted in de Bry's accounts demonstrate among many

others. As Carlos A. Jáuregui argues in his seminal work *Canibalia*, the invention of the monstrous figure of the cannibal was not based on careful scientific observation, but was part of an epistemological view and construction of the unknown other and space, which Europeans constructed during the colonization of the Americas (Jáuregui 2005, 70). The flip-side image of the cannibal is that of the noble savage, another colonial imaginary constructed by the Eurocentric view. In this context, the Tumpinambá as described by Oswald, although still exoticized, look very different from how they were earlier rendered in colonial European imaginary. Far from both attributes, monstrous and noble, they are narrated as a violent presence that refuses to subscribe to the norms of the day, but serve as agents of transformation and renovation.

This process of making the buried body of a Tupinambá emerge, even if it is only a symbolic and virtual emergence, has a historic-aesthetic effect. Following Benedito Nunes' analysis, Oswald's anthropophagic proposal implies "[…] an understanding of history absorbed by a pre-history, in relation to the past, and directed towards a transitory, in relation to a future"[20] (Nunes 1978, xl). This means that Oswald's Tupinambá, who erupts in the present as an image and reimagined imaginary, operates similar to Benjamin's figure of the Angelus Novus. As a body that flashes in the present over its own ruins, fragments and survival, pointing to a future, however utopic this future may be. Paraphrasing Brazilian historian Luiz Antônio Simas, who sees the Afrobrazilian entity of Exu as a kind of Benjaminian Angelus Novus[21] – "Oswald's Tupinambá killed a bird yesterday with an arrow he shot today." Applying Antonio Negri's interpretation of Benjamin's Angelus Novus to Oswald's Tupinambá, we could say that the Tupinambá "is not a theology of the past, but an ontology of the present" (Negri 2016, 42), to which we should add, an ontology that claims the presence in the present of other ontologies, massacred by colonialism and capitalism.

Oswald is part of the ambivalent context of Brazilian modernism where progress and destruction constitute the same landscape. Brazilian modernism can be seen as a complex web of social, political and cultural actors, who collaborate in the first half of the 20th century in order to overcome the country's colonial past. However, the modernist movement is in part financed and constituted by the heirs of the coffee plantation system, which maintains a destructive colonial mode of production (Sneed 2013, 32; Madureira 2005, 110; Schwarz 2002, 22). The immense coffee fields feed an economy that continues to produce ends of the world, like the end of the Tupinambá world. While many modernist works glorify technological progress, others reveal its destructive nature by melancholically describing a world that is disappearing. A book like *Macunaíma, a hero with no character* published in 1928, considered by Oswald to be the first anthropophagic novel, makes the plural and nomadic identity of Brazil its central

20 Freely translated from: "(…) levou-o a uma compreensão da História absorvida na pré-história, pelo que diz respeito ao passado, e dirigida a uma transitória, pelo que diz respeito ao futuro." (Nunes 1978, xl)

21 Simas is a "historian of the streets and crossroads" as he defines himself, his works inspired by Afrobrazilian practices from where he conceives a series of provocative theoretical tools. In a song for the entity Exu, he identifies a figure similar to Benjamin's Angelus Novus, as an entity that incorporates a temporal displacement, lived in the present by referring to an ancestry, as the verse say: "Exu killed the bird yesterday with the rock he threw today" [Exu matou o pássaro ontem com a pedra que atirou hoje] (Simas and Rufino 2018, 47).

theme. However, it is also a book about loss, about how the "deep virgin forest"[22] does not exist anymore, as the last sentences of the book say "there is no more"[23]. In addition, the main character disappears in the emptiness of a forest that "there is no more" (Andrade 1993, 135). Isn't *Macunaíma* an image of an end of a world or at least the remains of a ghostly existence hiding in the rubble of the forest?

It is important to say that the "with no character" in the title of the novel is not in the sense of an absence of value, but above all, the absence of an identity as an essence, which is a more complex understanding of the common view of the novel as a praise to the myth of Brazilian racial mixture. The novel is closer to an anthropophagic perspective, valuing a nomadic identity that is in constant transformation. The main character, the hero Macunaíma, is born black in an indigenous tribe and becomes white after bathing in a magic fountain. He is also in a constant physical displacement, moving from the forest to the city, and from the city back to the forest – his racial identity, like the world he inhabits, is in a constant cyclical movement.

The *Anthropophagic Manifesto* was also published in 1928 and in the first line, Oswald proposes that "[o]nly anthropophagy unites us. Socially, economically and philosophically"[24] (Andrade 1928, 65). But what does Oswald mean when he says 'anthropophagy'? Does Oswald share the same nomadic drive that is present in *Macunaíma*?

Theses on Anthropophagy

A common Western-Christian interpretation of the cannibalistic ritual among Amerindians is that eating the enemy would be a form of possessing their strength and qualities. The *Anthropophagic Manifesto* and the artistic production derived from the idea of anthropophagy are often interpreted as a process of how by devouring foreign influences, Brazilian art would become better and more authentic. However, as the *Manifesto* insists, "I am only interested in that which is not my own. Law of man. Law of the anthropophagist"[25] (Andrade 1928, 65). It is not only about consuming the other, but it is also about an open process where the other defines who we are. More than capturing the enemy's strength, it is about composing with him in a form of constant transformation. More than a politics of elimination and possession of the other, it is a politics of difference.

In this sense, anthropophagy, unlike the common view, is not an identitarian process of formation of a national character. Like *Macunaíma*, the anthropophagist is without character, open to devour any other so s/he can vomit this otherness transformed into the world. This means that the other is a virtual potency and oneself is always incomplete, always searching for another to define who one can be.

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22 Freely translated from: "fundo do mato-virgem". The novel opens with the sentence "[No fundo do mato- virgem nasceu Macunaíma]" (Andrade 1993, 9)

23 Freely translated from the Portuguese colloquial expression "Tem mais não" (Andrade 1993, 135).

24 Freely translated from: "Só a antropofagia nos une. Socialmente. Economicamente. Filosóficamente" (Andrade 1978, 65).

25 Freely translated from: "Só me interessa o que não é meu. Lei do homem. Lei do antropófago" (Andrade 1978, 65).

Oswald brings to the foreground for the first time and in an innovative way Tupinambá practices as a counter-hegemonic movement, recovering in the present a subjectivity that, if not completely forgotten, was certainly unwanted. As his later works will reveal, Oswald's intention is to establish the basis of a political revolution towards a matriarchal society that is in essence anti-modern and anti-capitalist. By inscribing the Tupinambá dissident subjectivity in the Brazilian social cultural context, Oswald proposes an image of a constellation, brushing against the grain of history the particularities and potencies that persist of a body that was destined to disappear. The purpose of unravelling this body, is not to expose its apocalyptic past that is the apocalyptic future of White Men expressed in the violent colonial extractive economy, but rather, the revolutionary future of a utopic matriarchy. As Sterzi's analysis of the *Manifesto* highlights,

> The present is a decisive time in which an image of the past and an image of the future meet […]. In the Anthropophagic Manifesto, it is frequent the appeals for an interruption of history so that a new – or true, history, fully coincident with experience – can begin. […] For Oswald, to have access to disappeared matriarchic structures, to promote the prospective image of a community to come – it would be necessary to reinvent history as a science through a 'social palaeontology', or, even better, through an 'erratic science of remains"[26] (Sterzi 2011, 443).

It is important to "stay with the trouble" as Haraway (2016, 4) would say, and read the *Anthropophagic Manifesto* beyond the irony it also presents. When the *Manifesto* says "Tupi or not to Tupi", what does it mean to be Tupi for Oswald (who was not of Tupi heritage, particularly) in addition to our contemporary experience living in the Anthropocene? First, it is a clear opposition to a modern subjectivity, as Segovia states in relation to the original proposition centred on the modern idea of being, "[...] it replaces the self-centred logic of the colonial imaginary with an unthinkable (for the modern cogito) alter-oriented counter-logic; as, by virtues of what I have explained, 'Tu-pi, to be a Tupi requires, inevitably, the intervention of a possible Other" (Segovia 2021, 65). Second, and most important, if we look again at Kopenawa's provocation in *The Falling Sky*, "to be Tupi" means establishing a sacred relation to the land. As is the case when Aílton Krenak, indigenous activist and scholar, defines his people as "a community who cannot conceive themselves without this connection, without a profound communion with the land"[27] (2019, 24).

This means that it is the person who belongs to the land and not the other way around. As Oswald proposes in his thesis, to eliminate what is our "own" by being with the other, is also an

26 Freely translated from: "o presente é um tempo decisivo na qual uma imagem do passado e uma imagem do futuro se encontram [...] No manifesto Antropofágico, é frequente os apelos para uma interrupção da história para que uma nova – ou verdadeira, história integralmente coincidente com a experiência – possa começar. [...] Para Oswald, ter acesso a estruturas matriarcais desaparecidas, para promover uma imagem prospectiva de uma comunidade por vir – seria necessário reinventar a história como ciência através de uma "paleontologia social" ou, ainda melhor, através de uma "ciência errática dos restos" (Sterzi, 2011, 443).

27 Freely translated from: "[…] como uma humanidade que não consegue se conceber sem essa conexão, sem essa profunda comunhão com a terra" (Krenak 2019, 24).

elimination of the idea of 'ownership.' Anthropophagy is epistemologically against the modern National State, thought as monolithic, singular and culturally homogenous. At the same time, nature is composed of a series of ontologies, of the many beings that produce what we call nature, as the bodies and subjects that appear in the photographs of the burnt forest in Brazil and in Australia. Oswald ends his essay entitled *My Testament* (*Meu Testamento*) marking not only a relation to the land, but the urgency of this relation – "From this land, in this land, for this land. And it is time"[28] (Andrade 1978, 29).

How does an anthropophagic proposal help us frame climate change that seems to accelerate towards an apocalypse? The idea of an end of the world is not uncommon in Amerindian cosmology, as it is clear in Kopenawa's book. Danowski and Castro in their book *The Ends of the World* (2017) describe how different indigenous groups imagine a constant cycle of destruction of the world. However, the main difference is that in indigenous cosmologies, contrary to our modern conception, it is impossible to imagine a world without humans, since the human, life, and the world are interconnected. Many of these cosmologies talk of a time of chaos where everything was human and undifferentiated until this amalgam starts a process of differentiation into the many different bodies that compose the many worlds contained in nature. The process is described as a chaotic transformation until it reaches a certain stabilization that is the world we live in, a world of controlled transformation,

> "[…] this world is conceived in some Amerindian cosmologies as the epoch that began when pre-cosmological beings suspended their ceaseless becoming-other (erratic metamorphoses, anatomic plasticity, 'unorganized' corporeality) in favour of greater ontological univocality. Putting an end to the 'time of transformations' – a common expression among Amazonian cultures – those unstable primordial anthropomorphs took on the forms and bodily dispositions of those animals, plants, rivers, mountains, etc. that they would come to be" (Danowski and Castro 2017, 66)

It is common in these narratives to see the image of how this humanity differentiates by dressing with different skins that will determine its position in the world as jaguar, monkeys, trees and even, humans. This thus means that everything – animals, minerals and vegetables – has been human before and retains a human virtuality. What keeps the apocalypse away, the sky from falling on our heads, is this process of differentiation. Oswald's anthropophagy is also a cosmopolitical proposal and practice that values transformation, alterity and differentiation, since it is based on the idea of the undetermined self that is defined by how it relates to others. Without difference, there is no anthropophagy.

28 Freely translated from: "Desta terra, nesta terra, para esta terra. E já é tempo" (Andrade 1978, 29).

Conclusion

Sterzi, in a recent essay, defines Oswald's anthropophagic proposal as a *war machine*[29] against any possibility of being captured from the National State. In its transformative nature, the anthropophagic war machine departs from creating alliances with others and from never seeking a limited stability (Sterzi 2021, 9). Contrary to a simple opposition to the coloniser, it is more of a composition that denies the disciplinary functions of the coloniser's power apparatus and modernity's series of separations, the more dramatic being, the one that alienates the human from nature. Sterzi also classifies Oswald's anthropophagy as an original Brazilian thought, "More than a strictly or restrictively literary or artistic theory, what we have, from the beginning, is a true and innovative political ontology: that is, a theory of being, which is no longer conceived by what belongs to it, but by what it can absorb and transform"[30] (Sterzi 2021, 9).

In consonance with the idea of anthropophagy as a *war machine*, this paper has broken boundaries by creating alliances with the *Anthropophagic Manifesto*, Amerindian perspectivism and the Anthropocene. Would juxtaposing the fires in the Amazonian Forest with the Australian "Tree Ghosts" and Oswald de Andrade not be an anthropophagic gesture? As would be to highlight how a modernist aesthetic proposition echoes in a present context of climate urgency, especially when we think of a trajectory from Amaral's anthropophagic series and neo-concretism represented by Lygia Clark and Hélio Oiticica transformative subjective works.[31] We are used to looking at Brazilian modernism and anthropophagy from their cultural productions and results. It is very common to use anthropophagy as a paradigm to think about Brazilian artistic and cultural production – bossa nova, tropicalism, concrete poetry – now and then, as a new aesthetic movement that seems to produce art from devouring foreign influences together with local practices. However, what if we also look radically at Oswald's proposition as a philosophy, an anti-colonial episteme and a pragmatic proposition to survive the end of the world?

29 Deleuze and Guattari discuss the concept of war machine in *Thousand Plateaus* inspired by a nomadic form of life that inhabits the outskirts and outside of the National State, maintaining a certain deterritorialization that never becomes within the State and is always open to compose with an otherness, "He bears witness, above all, to other relations with women, with animals, because he sees all things in relations of *becoming*, rather than implementing binary distributions between 'states': a veritable becoming-animal of the warrior, a becoming-woman, which lies outside dualities of terms as well as correspondences between relations. In every respect, the war machine is another species, another nature, another origin than the State apparatus." (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 352).

30 Freely translated from: "Mais do que uma teoria estrita e restritamente literária ou artística, o que temos ali, desde o início, é uma verdadeira e inovadora ontologia política: ou seja, uma teoria do ser, que não é mais concebido a partir do que lhe seria supostamente próprio, mas, sim, a partir daquilo que ele consegue absorver e transformar." (Sterzi, 2021, 9).

31 Here, I am reminded of Lygia Clark's *Walking* (1963) and Hélio Oiticia's *Parangolés (Wearable)* (1964). In *Walking*, each participant is invited to cut a path in a moebius strip of paper, every new cut creates a new path, and every participant transforms the work into a new possibility.

In Krenak's book on strategies to postpone the end of the world, he tells an anecdote from 2018, before the new Brazilian government took office, when he was asked how the indigenous groups of Brazil would deal with the latest attacks on their lands, to which he answered: "The Indians have been resisting for 500 years, I am worried about how the white people are going to escape this time"[32] (Krenak 2019, 15). Philosophically, poetically and pragmatically, Oswald de Andrade was prospectively thinking of an escape route from his colonial reality and, as if listening to Krenak's warnings, proposed an indigenous thought as a possible future. What he could not have imagined at his time, is how his past imagined future could be also a possible future to our present.

32 Freely translated from: "Tem quinhentos anos que os índios estão resistindo, eu estou preocupado é com os brancos, como que vão fazer para escapar dessa." (Krenak 2019, 15).

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