

# ***Antropofagia*: An Early Arrière-Garde Manifestation in 1920s Brazil<sup>1</sup>**

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## **Abstract**

By re-evaluating the anthropophagic understanding of the cannibal's alterity, this paper proposes *Antropofagia* as driven by a collaborative cosmopolitanism. It shows how *Antropofagia* antagonised the *status quo* of the Brazilian academies, broaching its commitment to national issues on the ethno-racial structure and the cultural identity of a young Republic. *Antropofagia* anticipates Frampton's ideas on Western post-modern stances, undermining the Eurocentric narrative on the succession of, and difference between, modernism and post-modernism. As a sophisticated *Arrière-Garde* that not only tackled universal civilisation from without, but also from within, *Antropofagia* emancipated Brazilian cultural production in relation to that of the centre for it problematized, within a post-colonial reality, cultural and political burdens as heavy as those inherent to the local-global relation.

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## **Between the universal and the particular**

[1] According to Paul Ricœur, the following paradox must be addressed if a colonized nation wishes to undertake modernisation. This nation "has to root itself in the soil of its past, forge a national spirit and unfurl this spiritual and cultural revindication before the colonialist's personality."<sup>2</sup> Yet, modern civilisation cannot be joined unless "the pure and simple abandonment of a whole cultural past" takes place.<sup>3</sup> Ricœur's paradox was reawakened in the 1980s by Kenneth

<sup>1</sup> This article is a revised and extended version of the paper "*Antropofagia*: A Highly Critical Arrière-Garde Modernism in 1920s Brazil" presented at the international conference *Southern Modernisms: Critical Stances Through Regional Appropriations*, ESAP, Oporto, 19-21 February 2015.

<sup>2</sup> Paul Ricœur, "Universal Civilization and National Cultures", in idem, *History and Truth*, Evanston 1965, 271-284, here 277.

<sup>3</sup> Ricœur, "Universal Civilization and National Cultures", 277.

Frampton's *Towards a Critical Regionalism: Six Points for an Architecture of Resistance* in order to conceptualise the *Arrière-Garde*. Frampton's category represented the rebirth, within the arts of the centre from the 1950s onwards, of a critical, oppositional and liberating stance, which offered a solution to the paradox by "distan[cing] itself equally from the Enlightenment myth of progress and from a reactionary, universalistic impulse to return to the [...] preindustrial past".<sup>4</sup>

[2] Exemplified by post-World War II European buildings, Frampton's *Arrière-Garde* engenders a type of cultural practice that mitigates the polarity tackled by Ricœur for being deliberately analytical of, and equidistant from, the global and the local, the past and the present. Yet, if we move back to the years between the World Wars, and move away from the epicentre and towards the developing borders of the Western world, we realise that also *Antropofagia* offered a solution to Ricœur's following question: "how to become modern and to return to sources; how to revive an old, dormant civilization and take part in universal civilization".<sup>5</sup> This paper shows that Frampton's cultural hybridity is recognisable as early as the 1920s, in *Antropofagia*. It engages with the idea that Brazilian art and literary production were already generating, from the periphery, forms of *Critical Regionalism*, that is, they were producing expressions of resistance that both consciously drew on particularism without succumbing to the international hegemonic, romanticised and exoticist visions of the so-called rudimentary, and questioned the national modernising project. The Brazilian modernists were addressing the dilemma that was crucial about sixty years later, at the centre, for Frampton's analysis of post-modern culture by rejecting hierarchy and advocating diversity. Beyond counter-balancing those homogenising universalist forces that ruled the global relation to the local, as Frampton's *Arrière-garde* did, *Antropofagia* fought against local forms of universalism inherited by Brazil from its colonial condition.

[3] This paper will analyse *Antropofagia's* use of the *primitive* reference, re-interpret how it mirrored the ontology of the pre-colonial Tupi cannibal to evaluate the nature of its authors' international connections, and analyse the movement in relation to national issues surrounding the ethno-racial structure and the cultural identity of the young Brazilian Republic. This framework will generate an account of how *Antropofagia* responded to the cultural agenda springing from Paris and another of how it antagonised the *status quo* of the Brazilian cultural and ideological establishment. On the international front, I will maintain that *Antropofagia* approached the cannibalistic reference in a way that went beyond the formal hybridity generated at the centre. Whereas on the national one, I will argue that the movement challenged those views that articulated Brazil's post-colonial condition by entrenching the cultural question

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<sup>4</sup> Kenneth Frampton, "Towards a Critical Regionalism: Six Points for an Architecture of Resistance", in: *The Anti-Aesthetic - Essays on Postmodern Culture*, ed. Hal Foster, Seattle 1983, 16-30, here 20.

<sup>5</sup> Ricœur, "Universal Civilization and National Cultures", 277.

within racial stratification. It is my aim to show how an early form of Critical Regionalism produced, at the margins rather than at the core, forms of mediation between the modern project and local culture; to highlight that (by borrowing Ricœur's words) *Antropofagia* unfurled these mediations before the colonialist's personality enrooted in the socio-cultural structure of Brazil itself.

### The national and international anthropophagic agency

[4] It is undeniable that *Antropofagia* resulted from the restless stirrings brought about by the young intellectual Brazilian arena that in 1922 organised the São Paulo Modern Art Week. Equally, *Antropofagia* would not have set its path without the years that Tarsila do Amaral and Oswald de Andrade spent living between São Paulo and Paris. Indeed, *Antropofagia* surfaced from productive phases defined by migrations from Amaral's studio in the city of São Paulo to her apartment in Place Clichy, and from Paris to Amaral's and Andrade's marital property in the rural area of the State of São Paulo. *Antropofagia* was both a reaction to those national discourses of artistic and literary transition from academicism to modernism, and a consequence of the cubist and surrealist circles experienced by the couple in Paris in 1923 and 1925-1926. Although it has been stated that *Antropofagia* is "a movement that takes shape in São Paulo in 1928", what set the pace of this enquiry in the field of cultural hybridity was Amaral's painting of 1923, *A Negra* (Fig. 1).<sup>6</sup>

[5] This painting was one of the landmarks of the search for an inherently Brazilian aesthetic-literary language that on the local level reproached the white-Brazilian cultural elite's inability to supplant those internal hierarchies and dynamics inherited from Brazil's colonial era. On the global one, it allowed Brazilian culture to originally contribute to the spread of modernism, for it posited within the international playground a hybrid perspective on Primitivism that blended its national iconoclastic agency with Parisian formal languages. Thus, Andrade's notorious manifesto of 1928 was the apex of a trajectory initiated five years earlier. This is argued judging by Amaral's and Andrade's statements. Amaral advocated that *A Negra* was a predecessor of *Antropofagia*; that it was Andrade's inspirational source since 1923. In her words:

*the anthropophagic movement had its pre-anthropophagic phase, [...] in 1923, when I executed, in Paris, a quite discussed painting, "A Negra": a sit-down figure with two crossed trunks for legs, fifteen kilos breast hanging over her arm, enormous hanging lips, and a proportionately small head. "A Negra" was already announcing anthropophagy.<sup>7</sup>*

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<sup>6</sup> Paulo Herkenhoff, "Introduction", in: *XXIV Bienal de São Paulo*, vol. 1: *Núcleo Histórico: Antropofagia e Histórias de Canibalismo*, exh. cat., ed. Paulo Herkenhoff and Adriano Pedrosa, São Paulo 1998, 22-49, here 36.

<sup>7</sup> Unless otherwise indicated, translations are mine. "O movimento antropofágico teve a sua fase pre-anthropofágica, [...] em 1923, quando executei em Paris um quadro bastante discutido, a "Negra", figura sentada com dois robustos tóros de pernas cruzadas, uma arroba de seio pesando sobre o braço, lábios enormes, pendentes, cabeça

[6] For his part, Andrade would admit, in a May 1928 interview given to the *Journal do Estado de Minas Gerais*, only a few days after the publication of the *Manifesto Antropófago*, the agency of Amaral's oeuvre. As Andrade put it when questioned about the term central to his writing: "It was in Tarsila's barbaric paintings that I found this expression."<sup>8</sup>



1 Tarsila do Amaral, *A Negra*, 1923, oil on canvas, 100 x 81,3 cm. MAC-USP, Museu de Arte Contemporânea da Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo (© Courtesy of Tarsila do Amaral)

[7] According to Aracy do Amaral, *A Negra* would confer to Tarsila the status of "pioneer of a type of Brazilian art never executed before. For the first time, a black person was depicted in canvas with such power and emphasis."<sup>9</sup> For this author, it is in the exaggeration with which the black woman body is described on canvas, and in the formal innovation that this painting represented when contextualised within its contemporary Brazilian art production, that *A Negra* gave to the Afro-Brazilians a space of recognition never achieved before within the realm of high art. However, it is worth drawing further attention to the political content of *A Negra*, for this work is symptomatic of the relationship between the Brazilian ethno-racial order and the cultural hierarchy at the core of

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proporcionalmente pequena. A "Negra" já anunciava o antropofagismo." Tarsila do Amaral, quoted according to Nádia E. Gotlib, *Tarsila a Modernista*, São Paulo 2000, 82.

<sup>8</sup> "Foi na pintura bárbara de Tarsila que eu achei essa expressão." Oswald de Andrade, *Os Dentes do Dragão. Entrevistas*, ed. Maria Eugênia Boaventura, São Paulo 2009 (*Obras Completas de Oswald de Andrade, 2nd edition*), 61.

<sup>9</sup> "Pioneira de uma arte brasileira, ainda não realizada até então. Pela primeira vez apresentava-se um negro numa tela com tal destaque e força." Aracy A. Amaral, *Tarsila: Sua Obra e Seu Tempo*, São Paulo 2003, 120.

the distinction between the popular and the erudite made by the academicists. In this distinction popular stood for the *low* culture of the native, the black and the *mestiço*, and erudite stood for the *high* culture of the white Brazilian.

[8] On the national front, *A Negra* can be seen as part-and-parcel of the debate that in Brazil, between the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century, opposed the *whitening* theory and racial pessimism of the First Republic. One of the primary sources of Brazilian conceptualisations of race were the ideas of the Count of Gobineau, which arrived in Brazil during the Imperial phase and through king Pedro II, and reached the 20th century through intellectuals such as Graça Aranha and Sílvio Romero. *Whitening* understood *mestiçagem* to be the solution to the backwardness of the country through progressively diluting the native and Afro-Brazilian blood until the superiority of the white lineage would prevail. Executed after Amaral joined the *modernistas'* primitivist programme resulting from the 1922 São Paulo Modern Art Week and became a member of the *Grupo dos Cinco*, *A Negra* challenged the racist project with which a section of the national intelligentsia wished to propel the Brazilian Republic into its modernised future and away from the underdevelopment of the country's colonial past.<sup>10</sup> *A Negra* contributed to one of the *modernistas'* main tasks, which was to assert the popular through a programmatic emancipation of the cultural identity and practices of the native, the Afro-Brazilian and the mixed ethnic groups – emancipation with which the *modernistas* not only opposed the academic tenets but also shaped models of *Brazilianness*.<sup>11</sup>

[9] Far from being merely a depiction of the Afro-Brazilian through innovative ways of representation, *A Negra* goes beyond the Parisian ideal of Primitivism expressed by the image of a black woman as a constitutive part of Mother Earth.<sup>12</sup> It manipulates an icon of the structure of representation construed by the colonial-patriarchal order so to subvert the negative values historically attached to the *savage* within the Brazilian context. The dark female body does not stand

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<sup>10</sup> The *Grupo dos Cinco* (Group of the Five) was constituted, apart from Amaral and Andrade, by Paulo Menotti Del Picchia, Anita Malfatti, and Mário de Andrade.

<sup>11</sup> In Rio de Janeiro, the *modernistas* focussed on the ascendance of *Samba* from an undervalued and semi-clandestine type of music to a prestigious banner of Brazilian national identity. In São Paulo, Mário de Andrade and Oswald de Andrade developed a re-evaluation of the popular through a literary and theoretical understanding of the figure of the *Indio*. The recognition of black and native cultures in early 20th century Brazil is discussed in: Hermano Vianna, *O Mistério do Samba*, Rio de Janeiro 1995. An account on *Antropofagia* in the context of such recognition can be found in Maria Iñigo Clavo, "Turistas de Nosotros", in: idem, *(Des)Metaforisar la Alteridad: La Postcolonialidad en el Arte en Brasil durante el AI-5 (1968-1979)*, PhD thesis (unpublished), University of Madrid 2009, 69-100.

<sup>12</sup> On the contrary, Asbury states that the formal character of *A Negra* is not a regionalist representation of Brazil but a result of the artist's compliance with French masters' production and interest for the exotic. Michael Asbury, "Parisienses no Brasil, Brasileiros em Paris: Relatos de Viagem e Modernismos Nacionais", in: *Concinnitas Journal* 12 (2008), 40-49, here 48, <http://www.concinnitas.uerj.br/> (accessed 23 November 2013).

for the ultimate symbol of submission to the Portuguese master. Instead, it conveys a corporeality, which, in its paradoxically phallic vigour, expropriates the power of the white male coloniser in order to reproach the long-established colonial Brazilian forms of subjugation – such as those resulting from enslavement, catechization and erudition. This painting is not only a claim for aesthetic renovation by means of reproaching a white patriarchal society, but also points its finger to the structure of internal colonialism that ruled the white-Brazilian cultural and political elites' relationship with their black and native *other*.

[10] Visual language here undermines the historically inscribed cultural prejudices that assumed the natural inferiority of the native and the black. As a bold statement against the tenets of academic expression, *A Negra* precedes the one made by Andrade in his *Pau-Brasil Poetry* manifesto (1924):

*[...] the academic side. Misfortune of the first white brought over, politically dominating the wild wilderness. [...] We can't help being erudite. [...] Country of anonymous ills, of anonymous doctors. The Empire was like that. We made everything erudite. We forgot ingenuity.*<sup>13</sup>

[11] It is a slap not only against those Brazilian intellectuals in favour of *mestiçagem* as a way of lightening the shameful colour of the majority of the Brazilian population, but also against those who, instead, stigmatised inter-ethnic unions between white Brazilians or the fresh wave of white European immigrants and – as Oliveira Vianna classified them – the *Homo Americanus* (i.e.: the Indios) and the *Homo Afer* (i.e.: Afro-Brazilians).<sup>14</sup> *A Negra* is a constitutive element of those intellectual stirrings against the eugenic national ideology that claimed that *mestiçagem* was a racial, moral and social degeneration. It is paradigmatic of the Brazilian avant-garde preoccupation with a national socio-cultural reality that was a

*puzzle of an ethnic type and [that] presented itself as a vast mixture of ethnicities, populations and languages in an equally vast territory, which horizon lines connected with both the migratory flux, and the transformation of forms of colonial [...] dependences into the ones typical of imperialism.*<sup>15</sup>

[12] On the international front, *A Negra* is symptomatic of Andrade's and Amaral's liaison with the European *other*. Judging by Leclercq's, Belting's and

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<sup>13</sup> Oswald de Andrade, "Manifesto of Pau-Brasil Poetry" [1924], translated by Stella M. de Sá Rego, in: *Latin American Literary Review* 14 (1986), n. 27: *Brazilian Literature*, 184-187, here 184.

<sup>14</sup> See: Luiz de Castro Faria, *Oliveira Vianna, de Saquarema à Alameda São Boaventura, 41 – Niterói, o Autor, os Livros, a Obra*, Coleção Antropologia da Política, Rio de Janeiro 2002.

<sup>15</sup> "[...] quebra-cabeça de tipo étnico e [que] apresentava-se como uma vasta mistura de etnias, populações e línguas em território também muito vasto, cujas linhas de horizonte conectavam-se aos fluxos de migrantes e à passagem das formas de dependência coloniais [...], à formas de dependência típicas do imperialismo." Giuseppe Cocco, *Mundo-Braz: O Devir-Mundo do Brasil e o Devir-Brasil do Mundo*, São Paulo 2009, 243.

Subirats' studies on primitivist appropriations in Paris during the years surrounding Amaral's and Andrade's seasons spent together in the French capital, it becomes clear that the couple did not comply with their European contemporaries' mentality and trends. *A Negra* adopted the latest Parisian formal and stylistic fashions, however, its subject is not approached, as in France, as exotica from far-away and underdeveloped corners of the world; instead it constitutes a critical statement about the Brazilian national reality, which although hybrid on the anthropological level was characterised by a drastic hegemonic-subaltern inner relationship, both in political and cultural terms.<sup>16</sup> This stance is also evident in the way in which the Brazilians borrowed the term *cannibalism* to refer to the "way of thinking, a world vision" expressed by the cannibalistic practice within the Tupi *socius*.<sup>17</sup> Instead of reiterating the European fascination with ancient cultures and a fetishist attachment to the visual qualities of tribal artefacts, Amaral and Andrade set their own parameters of appreciation of the cannibal, an appreciation that both mirrored and investigated the cannibal's epistemology. As Andrade himself stated, "the Indian did not devour [the enemy] for greed, but as a symbolic and magic act in which resided all his comprehension of life and man."<sup>18</sup>

[13] *Antropofagia* neither expropriated the Brazilian native of its habitat and resemblance nor handled it as a subject to be explored and deconstructed aesthetically. The voice speaking in the *Manifesto Antropófago* advocates that "[t]he only things that interest me are those that are not mine". It thus reveals how the anthropophagic interest in the cannibal relied on the Tupi *self/ other* relationship, which implied an inherent receptiveness for the *other*.<sup>19</sup> *Antropofagia* was far from nurturing a "Primitivism of the external form", a quest within the instinctual realm and formal simplicity of *primitive* cultures.<sup>20</sup> Instead, it approached pre-colonial Tupi cannibalism from a cosmological and ontological perspective to set the foundations of an inherently Brazilian and post-colonial cultural anthropophagy.

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<sup>16</sup> See Sophie Leclercq, "The Surrealist Appropriation of 'Indigenous' Art", in: *Arts & Sociétés* (November 2006), <http://www.artsetsocietes.org/f/f-leclercq.html> (accessed 17 October 2011); Hans Belting, "World Art and Global Art: A New Challenge to Art History", in: *The AICA Symposium on Global Art*, Salzburg 2011, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uLvFavurQBE> (accessed 16 March 2015); Eduardo Subirats, "Del Surrealismo a la Antropofagia", in: *Brasil: de la antropofagia a Brasilia, 1920-1950*, Valencia 2000, 20-31.

<sup>17</sup> "Um modo de pensar, uma visão do mundo." Oswald de Andrade, "A Crise da Filosofia Messiânica" [1950], in: Oswald de Andrade and Benedito Nunes, *A Utopia Antropofágica*, 4th ed., São Paulo 2011 (*Obras Completas de Oswald de Andrade*), 101-146, here 101.

<sup>18</sup> "O índio não devorava [o inimigo] por gula e sim num ato simbólico e mágico onde está e reside toda a sua compreensão da vida e do homem." Oswald de Andrade, "Informe sobre o Modernismo" [1945], in: idem, *Estética e Política*, ed. Maria Eugênia Boaventura, São Paulo 1990 (*Obras Completas de Oswald de Andrade*, 2nd edition), 99-105, here 104.

<sup>19</sup> See: Dawn Ades, "Oswald de Andrade, 'Anthropophagite Manifesto' [1928]", in: idem, *Art in Latin America - the Modern Era, 1820-1980*, London 1989, 312-313, here 312.

<sup>20</sup> Robert Goldwater, *Primitivism in Modern Art*, New York 1967, 255.

## The Jungle-Paris radical connection

[14] Although much has been written on the ways in which *Antropofagia* drew on cannibalism and on how it stood for an understanding of relations of *otherness*, very little art historical effort has been spent on reading the anthropophagic approach to the Tupi's alterity beyond the metabolic metaphor. The movement has certainly been interpreted as a cultural practice model able to produce a hybrid Brazilian avant-garde that did not mimic the European one, but that, instead, re-signified it through a symbolically cannibalistic appropriation. This reading was expressed from several perspectives in the essays of the 24th São Paulo Biennial (1998).<sup>21</sup> The general argument traversing the essays focussing on 1920s *Antropofagia* is that the symbolic use which the movement made of the act of man-eating stood for a "radical devouring of existing literary, philosophical or artistic [European] models", or that the anthropophagous "transform[ed] the act of devouring the discourse of the *other* into a means of expressing one's own".<sup>22</sup> Although the resulting conceptualisation of *Antropofagia* here claims that "cannibalism is not a diet", there remains a strong attachment to the metaphorical potential of eating, digesting, absorbing what is good, excreting the waste.<sup>23</sup> Moreover, by stressing that to *ingest* and process the foundations of the *other's* culture is a means to validate that of the *self*, such conceptualisation entails that the very condition for the expression of the Brazilian anthropophagic *self* is the European *other*.

[15] The bibliography surrounding the 24th São Paulo Biennial indeed explored the theme of *Antropofagia* and expanded on its potential meanings. However, there is a strand of the Andradean thought that has been overlooked. This strand corresponds to the idea that, with regard to the European reference, *Antropofagia* was not a form of legitimation in opposition to a valuable *otherness* whose power, or even assumed superiority was confirmed by the very need to *devour* it; by the

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<sup>21</sup> One of this Biennial's curatorial project's main references are the writings of Haroldo de Campos on *Antropofagia*, as Herkenhoff states in his introduction to volume 1 of the *24th São Paulo Biennial, Anthropophagy and Histories of Cannibalism* (1998). Though Herkenhoff does not quote Campos, the following Campos statement represents the vital linkage between Herkenhoff's project and Campos' writings on *Antropofagia*: "the Oswaldian 'Anthropophagy' [...] is a thought of critical and selective devouring of the universal cultural legacy [...] according with the impudent point of view of the 'bad savage', devourer of the white, anthropophagous" ("A 'Antropofagia' oswaldiana [...] é o pensamento da devoração crítica e seletiva do legado cultural universal [...] segundo o ponto de vista desabusado do 'mau selvagem', devorador de brancos, antropófago"). Haroldo de Campos, "Da Razão Antropofágica: Diálogo e Diferença na Cultura Brasileira" [1980], in: idem, *Metalinguagem e Outras Metas*, São Paulo 1992, 231-256, here 231.

<sup>22</sup> Mari Carmen Ramírez, "Regressive Utopias? (Avant-Garde Radicalism in Siqueiros and Oswald)", in: *XXIV Bienal de São Paulo*, vol. 1: *Núcleo Histórico*, exh. cat., ed. Paulo Herkenhoff and Adriano Pedrosa, São Paulo, 1998, 318-335, here 331; Ana Maria Belluzzo, "Trans-positions", in: *XXIV Bienal de São Paulo*, vol. 1: *Núcleo Histórico*, 76-85, here 77.

<sup>23</sup> Paulo Herkenhoff, "Introduction", in: *XXIV Bienal de São Paulo*, vol. 1: *Núcleo Histórico*, 22-49, here 36.

fact that the *self's* construction relied on *feeding* on it. Indeed, Andrade's thought saw in *Antropofagia* a non-hierarchical rationale between the *self* and the *other*.

[16] One of the strengths of the anthropophagic programme, with regard to the definition of an independent Brazilian movement within the international arena, lies in its embodiment of the cannibal's "auto-determination for the other" that puts the domain in which negotiation occurs – rather than the definition of identity – at the core of the self/ other-relationship.<sup>24</sup> In other words, the anthropophagous impetus puts the *self* and the *other* on the same plateau, or, as Andrade stated, *Antropofagia* "opposes, in its harmonic and communal sense, the cannibalism that comes to be the anthropophagy for gluttony and also the anthropophagy for hunger".<sup>25</sup> Accordingly, the anthropophagous does not find a means of expression through the *other*, but reproduces the cultural dynamic with which the Tupi cannibal allows the *self* and the *other* to merge; to produce culture from the identitarian space in which they converge.<sup>26</sup> These dynamics and space, which are at the very epistemological root of Amerindian cannibalism, deny a separate domain between the *self* and the *other* and constitute what Viveiros de Castro calls the cannibal's *radical alterity*.<sup>27</sup> To identify the ways in which they surfaced within the anthropophagic programme broadens the understanding, according to post-colonial theories, of Andrade's and Amaral's liaison with the European *other*.

[17] *A Negra* and the anthropophagic thought were by-products of Amaral's and Andrade's personal experience of such alterity. The introductory note to Andrade's *Pau-Brazil Poetry* testifies to the experience of an exchange of points of view that occurs in a shared identitarian domain and that does not seem to entail that *Antropofagia* is "the potential of individuals to legitimise themselves in relation or opposition to hegemonic *otherness*".<sup>28</sup> Through this note it becomes apparent that "hybridisation is not an abstract project, but is a practice" with which Andrade, "in a trip to Paris, from the height of an atelier overlooking Place

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<sup>24</sup> See: Eduardo Viveiros de Castro, *A Inconstância da Alma Selvagem e Outros Ensaios de Antropologia*, São Paulo 2002.

<sup>25</sup> "Contrapõe-se, em seu sentido harmônico e comunal, ao canibalismo que vem a ser a antropofagia por gula e também a antropofagia por fome." Andrade, "A Crise da Filosofia Messiânica" [1950], 101.

<sup>26</sup> This communal identitarian space is part of the cosmology and ontology of Amerindian societies which anthropologist Eduardo Viveiro de Castro studied and theorised under the umbrella of *Amerindian Perspectivism*. For Viveiros de Castro, Amerindian Perspectivism entails a stance which cannot conceive (as is the case from the Eurocentric point of view) of a discontinuity between the *self* and the *other*. Humans see themselves as animals, or as spirits, and vice-versa, as much as humans see themselves from the perspective of other humans. For an Amerindian society, not only do all the species-specific differences appear as modalities of the human, but all the cultural-specific differences coming from external cultural backgrounds and epistemologies do also appear as modalities of the Amerindian society itself.

<sup>27</sup> See: Viveiros de Castro, *A Inconstância da Alma Selvagem e Outros Ensaios de Antropologia*.

<sup>28</sup> Ramírez, "Regressive Utopias? (Avant-Garde Radicalism in Siqueiros and Oswald)", 331.

Clichy – the belly button of the world – [...], discovered, overwhelmed, his own country".<sup>29</sup> Years later, showing no concern for the issue of cultural dependence, Andrade would state that "if there is something that I brought from my trips to Europe between the two [world] wars, it was Brazil itself".<sup>30</sup> The atelier was Amaral's, who in the French capital was discovering her Brazilianness through a fusional alterity, where the self is not confrontational, and the other is neither inferior nor superior; it is simply a prolific double. She was simultaneously Brazilian and the other, both in her brushstrokes and soul, as prove letters sent to her family from Paris in 1923. In her words: "I am feeling more and more Brazilian: I want to be the painter of my land. [...] I do not think that this Brazilian tendency is seen with bad eyes here;" "Paris is the free space in which the foreign can expand him/ herself within the creations of national temperaments."<sup>31</sup> Amaral's identity here functions as a centripetal force in which particularist and universalist perspectives are blurred through subjectivity.

[18] Seen through the identitarian process in which its authors interacted with the European modernist scene, the anthropophagic construct became a dynamic of cultural generation "where the incorporation of the other depended on a coming out oneself – the exterior was in an unceasing process of internalisation; the interior was nothing but an outward movement."<sup>32</sup> I shall analyse the ways in which Brazilians going back and forth to Paris and Parisians visiting Brazil worked and interacted to explore further this mindset.

[19] The *Caravana Modernista* of 1924, which brought Amaral, Andrade and the Swiss-born poet and adventurer Blaise Cendrars together in a long journey across the variegated cultural, architectural and folkloristic landscape of Brazil, can be understood as the anthropophagic effacement of the hierarchical boundary between the *self* and the *other*; the New World and the Old World; the particular traits of Brazilian aesthetic-literary production and the universal nature of the European one.<sup>33</sup> This is because, during this journey, the process through which

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<sup>29</sup> "A hibridização não é projeto abstracto, mas uma prática", Cocco, *Mundo-Braz*, 241; "Numa viagem à Paris, do alto de um atelier da Place Clichy – umbigo do mundo – [...] descobriu, deslumbrado, a sua própria terra." Paulo Prado [1924], quoted in Cocco, *Mundo-Braz*, 241.

<sup>30</sup> "Se alguma coisa eu trouxe mesmo das minhas viagens à Europa dentre as duas guerras, foi o Brasil mesmo." Oswald de Andrade, *Ponta de Lança*, São Paulo 2004 (*Obras Completas de Oswald de Andrade*, 2nd edition), 165-166.

<sup>31</sup> "Sinto-me ainda mais brasileira: quero ser a pintora da minha terra", quoted according to Amaral, *Tarsila: Sua Obra e Seu Tempo*, 101; "Paris é o espaço livre em que o estrangeiro se expande nas suas criações de ídolos nacionais", quoted according to Gotlib, *Tarsila a Modernista*, 70.

<sup>32</sup> "Onde a incorporação do outro dependia de um sair de si – o exterior estava em um processo incessante de interiorização; o interior não era mais que movimento para fora." Cocco, *Mundo-Braz*, 241.

<sup>33</sup> The *Caravana Modernista* was composed also by René Thiollier, Olívia Guedes Penteado, Paulo Prado, Gofredo Silva Telles and, occasionally, by Mário de Andrade. See: Aracy A. Amaral, *Blaise Cendrars no Brasil e os Modernistas*, São Paulo 1970.

culture was absorbed and exchanged was a by-product of the micro-politics of coexistence and friendship. The Brazilians gave Cendrars the chance to measure the extent to which he could turn the extraneous yet alluring dimension of the exotic into the familiar; his quasi-ethnographical connoisseurship of Brazil, acquired through joined perceptions, provided him with a tool for the processing of his European writings about the *other*. Cendrars experienced the progressive refinement – filtered by the observations of intimate insiders – of his understanding of Europeanised aspects of life in Rio de Janeiro, of the Brazilian folkloristic and archetypal expressed by the carnival, the lifestyle of the plantation fields, and of colonial art juxtaposed with regional aesthetics. For their part, through Cendrars' outlook, the Brazilians travelled towards the following truth: the *modernistas'* fostering of the local and the popular – already shown in *A Negra* and in Andrade's *Em Prol de Uma Pintura Nacional* (1915) if taken further – would consolidate their place within the playground of the international avant-garde.<sup>34</sup> Fostered by their interaction with Cendrars, Amaral and Andrade "were confronted with the national past and, most importantly [...], with the primitive as a manifestation of the 1700s *Mineiro* baroque".<sup>35</sup>

[20] On the one hand, the couple worked in favour of the Brazilian integration into the universal by allowing the historically national, autochthonous, and vernacular to merge with the European reference. On the other hand, and by underscoring Cendrars' social and psychological experience of Brazil through the Brazilians with whom he shared intellectual affinities, a new perspective surfaces that contends that of Aracy Amaral, who states that "the resourceful influence received by Cendrars did not come from the Brazilians but from Brazil".<sup>36</sup> My emphasis on the importance of this situation of cross-cultural encounters adds to that of Campos, whose opinion on Andrade's and Cendrars' writings during the Brazilian trip is that "the Swiss poet [...] had knowledge of Oswald's unpublished production [...] and was contaminated by it or its spirit".<sup>37</sup> Campos holds that

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<sup>34</sup> Vianna explains that the *modernistas'* interest in the popular was crucial to them already before their encounter with Cendrars in Paris, and in this respect discusses Andrade's text of 1915. He also deals with the rejection of Cendrars's authoritative influence on Amaral's and Andrade's oeuvre. See: Vianna, *O Mistério do Samba*, Rio de Janeiro 1995. Also Brito denies to Cendrars' such influence on *Antropofagia*, stating that "the modernistas do not have masters in Brasil, either because they are dead, or, even alive, they are practically inexistent" ("os modernistas não têm mestres no Brasil, ou porquê estão mortos ou porquê, mesmo vivos, são como praticamente inexistentes"). Mário da Silva Brito, *História do Modernismo Brasileiro*, Rio de Janeiro 1974, 137.

<sup>35</sup> "Deparam[-se] com o passado histórico nacional e com – o que é mais importante [...] – o primitivo enquanto manifestação do barroco setecentista mineiro." Santiago Silvano, "A Permanência do Discurso da Tradição no Modernismo", in: idem, *Nas Malhas da Letra: Ensaios*, Rio de Janeiro 2002, 108-144, here 121.

<sup>36</sup> "A influência-manancial recebida por Cendrars não seria dos brasileiros e sim do Brasil." Amaral, *Blaise Cendrars no Brasil e os Modernistas*, 90.

<sup>37</sup> See Saulo Gouveia: *The Triumph of Brazilian Modernism: the Metanarrative of Emancipation and Counter Narratives*, Chapel Hill 2013, 234.

Cendrars read Andrade's notes for his *Pau-Brazil Poetry* and was influenced by them.

[21] Amaral's and Andrade's creative ventures during their European seasons and the hospitality offered in Brazil to a list of foreign artists, authors and intellectuals – in which the name of Cendrars is one of many – also suggests an exchange between equals. Among these collaborations and mutual influences it is worth highlighting Amaral's direct involvement in the making of Cendrars' *Feuilles de Route*, which Cendrars dedicated to his Brazilian "modernist friends".<sup>38</sup> Further, and by taking into consideration the planning of one of Cendrars' ballets similar to his *The Creation of the World* – which although never executed was a collaborative project that included Andrade's plot, Amaral's costume design and Heitor Villa-Lobos' music –, it can be said that Brazilians in Paris subdued the hegemonic traits of early 20th century modernism.<sup>39</sup> The contribution of these Brazilians to modernism resulted from alliances, fraternisations and reciprocal favours. According to Asbury:

*Carlos Augusto Machado Calil saw strong similarities between Pau-Brasil [...] and Feuilles de Route, [...], both published by Au Sans Pareil (Cendrars' publishing house), and Oswald dedicated his publication "to Blaise Cendrars, for the discovery of Brazil" [...]. Besides, Tarsila illustrated a collection of Cendrars' poems, Feuilles de Route. Given that Cendrars had already collaborated with Sonia Delaunay [...] in the previous decade in Prose du Transsiberien et de la petite Jehanne de France, it was quite natural that Tarsila's collaboration with the poet was seen as the continuation of a long lineage, representing [...] an important contribution to the wider history of modern art.*<sup>40</sup>

[22] Thanks to the couple, Cendrars participated in the exhibition/ conference *Tendências da Estética Contemporânea*, and Benjamin Péret in the conference *L'Esprit Moderne: du Symbolisme au Realisme*, both in São Paulo. Hospitality and networking support were also offered to Hermann Keyserling, Josephine Baker and Le Corbusier (1929).<sup>41</sup> Indeed Amaral's and Andrade's socio-cultural fabric

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<sup>38</sup> "Amigos modernistas", see: Thaís Chang Waldman, "Espaços de Paulo Prado: Tradição e Modernismo", in: *Arteologia* 1 (2011), (dossier thématique *Brésil, Questions sur le Modernisme*), 1-18, here 9.

<sup>39</sup> Aracy Amaral discusses this project in her books *Tarsila: Sua Obra e Seu Tempo* and *Blaise Cendrars no Brasil e os Modernistas*.

<sup>40</sup> "Carlos Augusto Machado Calil viu fortes semelhanças entre Pau-Brasil [...] e Feuilles de Route [...], ambas publicadas por Au Sans Pareil (editor de Blaise Cendrars), e Oswald dedicou sua publicação a Blaise Cendrars, pela descoberta do Brasil [...]. Além disso, Tarsila ilustrou a coleção de poemas de Cendrars, *Feuilles de Route*. Como Cendrars já houvesse colaborado com Sonia Delaunay [...], na década anterior em *Prose du Transsiberien et de la petite Jehanne de France*, era bem natural que a colaboração de Tarsila com o poeta fosse reconhecida como algo que seguisse uma grande linhagem, representando, dessa maneira, importante contribuição dentro de uma história mais ampla da arte moderna." Asbury, "Parisienses no Brasil, Brasileiros em Paris", 47.

<sup>41</sup> Le Corbusier was introduced to Brazilian coffee baron, industrialist and literary modernist Paulo Prado as a consequence of the connection between Amaral, Andrade and

seems to have been woven in ways that were unpreoccupied with issues of cultural subalternity of the Brazilian periphery to the centre. To cannibalise the European here is far more related to the symbolic act of communion with the *other* than to the *devouring* of a valuable enemy. Yet, as the above analysis of *A Negra* entailed, *Antropofagia* retained the combativeness of cannibalism's literal dimension, releasing it by means of attacking the local arena rather than the global one.

### Devouring the academies

[23] The anthropophagic conflictual stance was mainly directed towards the local aesthetic-literary environment. By arguing so, I offer a perspective which differs from those that consider European modernism to be the yardstick against which *Antropofagia* was measuring itself. This type of discourse has been expressed by Sandführ, who, from the viewpoint of European critique, advocates that the movement was symptomatic of Brazilian culture in the 1920s, which was "not judged by what it was, but what it precisely was not in relation to the original, namely to the European".<sup>42</sup> More specifically, according to Sandführ,

*in his anthropophagic manifesto, Andrade aggressively challenges the authority of the centre by undertaking a radical reevaluation of the opposition between the civilized there and the wild here whereby the appreciation of the wild here is to be upgraded. A positive valuation of anthropophagy is implicit in this concept and therefore stands in contrast to the rejection of anthropophagic Primitivism in the so-called civilized world. [...] The Movimento Antropófago searched for an alternative in order to stand up to an intellectual colonization.*<sup>43</sup>

[24] For Sandführ, Amaral's and Andrade's eulogy of *the wild here* is a transgression of European ideas on the primitive practice and a confrontational response to issues of Brazilian aesthetic-literary subordination to Europe, and above all, to Paris. Similarly, from the Brazilian corner, Schwartz states that the anthropophagic movement wanted to "assimilate the qualities of the foreign enemy, to merge them to the national ones. In this way, a dialectic cultural synthesis was produced that attempted to solve questions of cultural dependency – traditionally formed through the dichotomy national/ cosmopolitan."<sup>44</sup>

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Cendrars. Prado sponsored both Cendrars' and Le Corbusier's trips to Brazil, having them at his own residence. He introduced the architect to his brother and mayor of Rio de Janeiro, Antônio Prado Júnior, who commissioned projects for the renewal of Rio. Both Cendrars and Le Corbusier were invited and paid to give a series of lectures in Brazil, which fostered intense and productive exchanges.

<sup>42</sup> Thomas Sandführ, "'Só a Antropofagia Nos Une': Assimilation and Difference in the Character of the Anthropophag", in: *Entre Pindorama*, eds. Elke aus dem Moore and Giorgio Ronna, Nuremberg 2005, 41-70, here 43.

<sup>43</sup> Sandführ, "Só a Antropofagia Nos Une", 43.

<sup>44</sup> "Assimilar as qualidades do inimigo estrangeiro, para fundí-las às nacionais. Produz-se assim uma síntese dialética que procura resolver as questões de dependência cultural, formadas tradicionalmente através do binômio nacional/ cosmopolita." Jorge Schwartz,

[25] In my view, Sandführ's and Schwartz's arguments focus on *Antropofagia* as a search for alternatives to standing up to European cultural colonisation. In their search for the emancipative potential of *Antropofagia*, they understand the movement as the beginning, on behalf of Brazilian artists and intellectuals, of a conscious search for freedom in relation to the authority of the centre; an authority first manifested during colonial times, and that remained unquestioned by the Brazilian aesthetic-literary canon up to the anthropophagic effort. Their claim is certainly valid, however, the anthropophagic disentanglement from the hegemonic-subaltern rationale surfaces when one considers, as has been done here, the social, intellectual and subjective stance that Amaral and Andrade took whilst they partook in the international modernist network. An aspect that remains underdeveloped in these authors' view, and that I would like to expand on, is that there was another form of supremacy against which *Antropofagia* wanted to act: the one of the local aesthetic-literary establishment. In relation to this particular point, *Antropofagia* was the definitive battle within a row of attacks on behalf of the young *modernistas* against academia begun in the mid-1910s. The landmark of such war has been attributed to Anita Malfatti's first major Brazilian exhibition (1917), which took place in São Paulo upon her return from art studies in Europe and the USA.<sup>45</sup>

[26] The diatribe was still vitriolic shortly before the Modern Art Week of February 1922, a fact that underscores that it was harder for the Brazilian modernists to conquer a place at home than to gain credibility within the Parisian cosmopolitan environment. In September 1921, Monteiro Lobato, who was an authoritative exponent of Brazil's aesthetic-literary establishment and an internationally distinguished author, refused to publish *Paulicéia Desvairada*, the book in which Mário de Andrade announced the directives of Brazil's literary modernism.<sup>46</sup> Lobato's hostility is a typical example of what the Brazilian academies thought of the young local avant-garde abroad. The foreign experience, he claimed,

*instead of refining the nationalism of vocations, [...] makes them Francophile, because for the sake of national imbecility, France is still the world. The State*

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*Vanguardas Latino-Americanas: Polêmicas, Manifestos e Textos Críticos*, São Paulo 1995, 135.

<sup>45</sup> The academic reply to Malfatti's initiative harshly stated that "modernism [...] was merely a movement that caricaturised colour and form without committing to rendering a comic idea, aiming only at 'bewildering and fooling the spectator'". ("Modernismo [...] era apenas um movimento caricatural da cor e da forma, sem o compromisso de ressaltar uma idéia cômica mas visando, unicamente, 'desnortear e aparvalhar o espectador'"). Angêla Ancora da Luz, "Arte Moderna do Século XX", in: *História da Arte no Brasil - Textos de Síntese*, eds. [Myriam Andrade Ribeiro de Oliveira](#), Sônia [Gomes Pereira](#) and Angêla Ancora da [Luz](#), Rio de Janeiro 2010, 65-81, here 79.

<sup>46</sup> Monteiro Lobato also ran a publishing house. By 1922 his literary career was sufficiently outstanding for him to run for chair no. 11 of The Brazilian Academy of Literature, following the death of Pedro Lessa. Moreover, in the same year, the American Isaac Goldberg dedicated a chapter of his book *Brazilian Literature* to Lobato's oeuvre.

*takes the youngster, pulls him/ her out of the native land to throw him/ her into the Quartier Latin, with the tips of his/ her roots broken.*<sup>47</sup>

This bears witness to the xenophobic nationalism with which the dominant strand of Brazil's cultural elite was trying to outline the idea and the image of the *modernista* artistic-literary production.

[27] Paradoxically to this anti-Europeanism, Lobato's regionalism heavily relied on colonial exoticism. This was apparent in his descriptions of mixed-ethnicity people such as the *Caboclo*, which claimed that this minority was deprived of will and aesthetic sense, ugly and grotesque; the "priest of the 'Great Law of the Minimum Effort', the one who lives with what nature gives him, without wasting energy to achieve any goal in life".<sup>48</sup> Further, Lobato's character *Jeca Tatú* was not elevated to a valuable symbol of popular culture; seen through the Eurocentric eye and the lenses of the Brazilian *sanitarista* racial agenda, it was merely treated as a despicable token of indolence resulting from a lower genetic nature – worsened by the lack of hygiene and health. Judging by Lobato's endeavours, the academies were unwilling to realise that, as opposed to *Antropofagia*, they were depicting the native, the Afro-Brazilian and the popular as uncivilised and backwards due to the untied knot with which the white Brazilian elite was still fastened to the country's colonial past – and therefore inexorably bounded to that French matrix it so vehemently abhorred.

[28] With its valorisation of the fundamental value system of the native and its emancipation of popular culture, *Antropofagia* antagonised the academies' xenophobic approach to the European *other* and their lack of self-criticism towards the fact that academic depictions of Brazil heavily relied on those Eurocentric structures of socio-cultural discrimination inherited from colonialism. If Andrade advocated: "down with all the importers of canned conscience", this was because *canned conscience* was no longer a prerogative of the European settled in the Brazilian colony, as it had already been transformed into Brazil's white elite mentality.<sup>49</sup> By deprecating the *importers* rather than the *exporters*, *Antropofagia* was shifting the blame away from the Europeans, and therefore was attacking the segments of Brazil's ideological heritage brought from Europe but nevertheless turned into Brazilianness within the post-colony. Hence, Andrade's statement must be interpreted as a key insight into the movement's intention to supplant academia and its parroting of the European canon.

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<sup>47</sup> "Ao invés de apurar o nacionalismo das vocações, [...] afrancesa-as, porque, para a imbecilidade nacional, o mundo é ainda a França. Pega o Estado no rapaz, arranca-o da terra natal e dá com ele no Quartier Latin, com o peão da raiz arreventado;" quoted according to Márcia Camargos, "Uma República nos Moldes Franceses", in: *Revista USP* 59 (2003), 134-143, here 139.

<sup>48</sup> "Sacerdote da Grande Lei do Menor Esforço, aquele que vive do que a natureza lhe dá, sem gastar energia para alcançar qualquer objetivo na vida." José Monteiro Lobato, "Urupês", in: *Jornal o Estado de São Paulo* (23 December 1914), 27.

<sup>49</sup> See: Ades, "Oswald de Andrade, 'Anthropophagite Manifesto' [1928]", 312.

[29] As an attack on "a burdensome colonial baggage, [...] patriarchal society [and ...] intellectual rhetoric that mimicked the metropolis and succumbed to foreign ways", *Antropofagia* implied an inward critique.<sup>50</sup> Anthropophagic modernism addressed national issues originating from the predominance of the European parcel of Brazilian culture; therefore, it envisioned and tackled the reproduction of the colonial system of domination and power within post-colonial realities and their geo-cultural identities.<sup>51</sup> The anthropophagic ethos advocated: "Down with antagonistic sublimations. Brought into caravels. But them who came were not crusaders. They were fugitives from a civilisation that we are now devouring."<sup>52</sup> The European is here addressed by focussing on retroactive facts regarding the colonial phase of Brazil. It was republican Brazil's inheritance, the one brought in the caravels a few centuries earlier, the element to be questioned. What Andrade's post-colonial Brazil needed to devour were the traces of its own colonial past.

[30] *Antropofagia* wanted to ravage – as in the case of cannibalism in its physical and aggressive sense – the European in the Brazilian, not the European in Europe. By doing so, it fought the nationalistic rhetoric of the First Republic that I have exemplified through Lobato's writings. Post-colonial Brazilian culture could not have joined modernism by drawing on the ideology of *difference*. The modality under which the Brazilian avant-garde could function as aesthetic-literary moderniser was based on the *multiplicity* that the cannibal's alterity entailed. As a result, the anthropophagous works

*against the 'internal colonialism' that treats the indigenous [and the Afro-Brazilian] as obstacles to the equalization of nationality. [...] The anthropophagic anti-colonialism implies overcoming any manoeuvre which aims to explaining Brazilian impasses just by thinking of exogenous determinants; and does not comply with any alliance of a national type.*<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> Benedito Nunes, "Anthropophagic Utopia, Barbarian Metaphysics", in: Mari Carmen Ramírez et al., eds., *Inverted Utopias – Avant-Garde Art in Latin America*, New Haven 2004, 57-61, here 57.

<sup>51</sup> Here I am referring to the system of domination conceptualised under the term *coloniality* by Anibal Quijano. This system was historically constructed on the grounds of race discrimination, serfdom and unwaged work, and forced the colonised to learn the rules and discourse of the coloniser. Coloniality therefore is generated by the colonisation of cognitive perspectives, modes of producing and attributing meaning, material existence, the imaginary and the sphere of intersubjective relations within the *socius* and its unceasing activity even after the colony has finally achieved its political and economic independence. See: Anibal Quijano, "Coloniality of Power, Eurocentrism and Latin America", in: *Nepentla: Views From the South* 1 (3) (2000), 533-580, <http://www.unc.edu/~aescobar/wan/wanquijano.pdf> (accessed 12 October 2014).

<sup>52</sup> See: Ades, "Oswald de Andrade, 'Anthropophagite Manifesto' [1928]", 312.

<sup>53</sup> "Contra o 'colonialismo interno' que trata os povos indigenas como obstaculos à padronização da nacionalidade. [...] O anticolonialismo antropófago implica superar qualquer manobra que vise a explicar os impasses brasileiros apenas por determinantes exogenas; e não se compromete com nenhuma aliança de tipo nacional." Cocco, *Mundo-*

[31] Antropofagia's anti-colonialist connotations were dealing less with colonialism as the determinant of the cultural world-order running between centre and periphery, and more with colonialism as the blue-print that defined cultural asymmetries in Brazil. From this perspective, it can be argued that rather than being anti-colonialist, *Antropofagia* was an early battle on the field of *coloniality*; or, in anthropophagic material terms, that it was the cannibalization of the legacy of European colonialism present in the Brazilian socio-cultural and aesthetic-literary domains.

### Anthropophagic foresight

[32] *Antropofagia* represents a form of Critical Regionalism for standing, under its own terms, at the crossroads between the roots of a particular place and the impact of universal civilisation. It engendered a take on the *primitive* equidistant from the periphery and the centre, for it neither was a stylistic appropriation of the primitive, nor stood for an idealised return to a preindustrial past.

[33] By narrowing the anthropophagic relationship to the European *other* down to the Amerindian *radical alterity*, I have tackled the Brazilian new approach to international networks and intellectual migrations. Indeed *Antropofagia* propelled the core values of an ancient local society into Brazil's modernising reality, as much as it transformed those values in a formula with which it was possible to hybridise consciously the arts of the centre, and thus question European modernisms' claim for a universal value. *Antropofagia* managed to be a form of collaborative cosmopolitanism within the global aesthetic-literary cluster that emerged in the early 20th century for thinking, like the cannibal in the anthropophagic act, about seeing the self like the other; "a point of view that represents the best corner from which to see oneself."<sup>54</sup> It joined international trends in ways that, although not confrontational, antagonised the hegemonic traits of European modernism and the modern emancipative project by inscribing the ideological voice of Brazil's autochthonous people into the colonial discourse.

[34] The anthropophagic critical awareness resulted from the extent to which the movement fought the tenets of Brazil's white European ethno-racial politics and cultural classification, rejecting the latter's colonialism-engendered categorisation of the natives', Afro-Brazilians' and mixed-ethnicities' cultural practices as "less advanced, primitive, or, at the very best, exotically interesting at a safe distance".<sup>55</sup> This confirms *Antropofagia*'s anticipation of Frampton's Arrière-Garde – although the latter seems mainly preoccupied with universal civilisation from outside (i.e. neo-colonialism), whereas the former went a step beyond Frampton's conceptualisation by shifting the attention to universal civilisation from within (i.e. coloniality). *Antropofagia* emancipated Brazilian cultural production for it tackled, in the early 20th century, issues regarding post-modernity and post-

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*Braz*, 237.

<sup>54</sup> "Um ponto de vista que representa o ângulo melhor de visão de si mesmo", in: Viveiros de Castro, *A Inconstância da Alma Selvagem e Outros Ensaios de Antropologia*, 281.

<sup>55</sup> Frampton, "Towards a Critical Regionalism", 22.

colonialism only later addressed from the centre. Thus it can be either understood as "post-modern *avant la lettre*"<sup>56</sup> within the debate of alternative modernisms, or as a weapon with which it is possible – as Shohat and Stam advocated – to undermine Eurocentric art history's narrativisation of a neat and orderly linear succession of modernism and post-modernism.<sup>57</sup> As a sophisticated formulation of a category only decades later developed at the Western core, *Antropofagia* problematized, within a post-colonial reality, cultural and political burdens as heavy as those inherent to the local-global relation.

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<sup>56</sup> "*Avant la lettre pós-moderna*". Here I am borrowing Asbury's term, who, instead, sees the anthropophagic post-modern traits in its strategy of appropriation of foreign culture. Asbury, "Parisienses no Brasil, Brasileiros em Paris", 49.

<sup>57</sup> Shohat and Stam use the notion of *Antropofagia* as a critical tool in order to question the narrative of Western art history. See: Ella Shohat and Robert Stam, "Narrativizing Visual Culture. Towards a Polycentric Aesthetics", in: *The Visual Culture Reader*, ed. Nicholas Mirzoeff, New York 1998, 27-49.