



Oswaldo Costa, Antropofagia, and the *Cannibal Critique* of Colonial Modernity

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ABSTRACT: Oswaldo Costa was a key member of the Brazilian modernist *Antropofagia* (Anthropophagy) movement of the late 1920s, yet he has been largely forgotten by critics and marginalized from national cultural history. Costa articulated —as no other member of the movement did, including his famous leader Oswald de Andrade— an *Antropofagia* intellectually engaged in what we call a *cannibal critique* of colonial modernity and Occidentalism. Costa's *Antropofagia* cannibalized the historical archive, reading against the grain of a triumphant Western imperial history. Throughout his contributions to the *Revista de Antropofagia*, he questioned Brazil's cultural allegiance to Europe, pointed out the existence of asynchronous temporalities within Brazil, and defied Eurocentric notions of civilization and progress that ideologically structure Brazilian nationalism in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. He also enacted an anthropophagous re-reading of Brazilian historiography against its celebration of colonialism and proposed the necessity of a cultural decolonization. This article analyzes Costa's principal contributions to *Antropofagia* and rescues his hitherto overlooked countercolonial thought from the oblivion of collective forgetting. Moreover, it examines Costa's significant view of Brazilian modernity as a *perfidious armistice* with other barbarous temporalities, and of the Westernization of Brazil as a deceptive appearance that hides ever-present colonial antagonisms.

KEYWORDS: Cannibalism; Brazil; Oswald-de-Andrade; *Revista-de-Antropofagia*; Occidentalism; counter-colonialism; Antônio-Vieira; José-de-Anchieta.

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RESUMEN: *Oswaldo Costa, Antropofagia, y la crítica canibal de la modernidad colonial.*- Oswaldo Costa fue un miembro fundamental del movimiento modernista Antropofagia de finales de la década de 1920. Pese al olvido crítico de su obra y a su exclusión de la historia cultural brasileña, Costa articuló —como acaso ningún otro miembro del movimiento, incluyendo a su famoso líder Oswald de Andrade— una Antropofagia-otra, intelectualmente trabada en lo que denominamos una *crítica canibal* de la modernidad colonial y del Occidentalismo. A diferencia de la mayoría de sus contemporáneos, Costa acometió la lectura digestiva y a contrapelo del archivo nacional y de la historia triunfal imperial y occidentalista sobre la que descansaba el imaginario nacional. En sus contribuciones a la *Revista de Antropofagia*, Costa cuestionó la pertenencia cultural de Brasil a Europa y a Occidente, señaló la existencia de temporalidades asincrónicas en el Brasil, y desafió las nociones eurocéntricas de civilización y progreso que informaron ideológicamente el nacionalismo brasileño de los siglos XIX y XX. Costa también adelantó una relectura antropofágica de la historiografía brasileña contra su celebración del colonialismo y propuso la necesidad de una descolonización cultural. Este artículo analiza las principales contribuciones de Costa a Antropofagia y rescata su —injustamente olvidado— pensamiento contra-colonial. Además, examina su concepción de la modernidad brasileña como un *armisticio pérfido* entre Occidente y otras temporalidades bárbaras y su visión de la occidentalización de Brasil como una apariencia engañosa que escondería antagonismos coloniales irresueltos.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Canibalismo; Brasil; Oswald-de-Andrade; *Revista-de-Antropofagia*; Occidentalismo; contra-colonialismo; Antônio-Vieira; José-de-Anchieta.

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The Brazilian modernist *Antropofagia* (Anthropophagy) movement—developed in the late 1920s by Oswald de Andrade (1890-1954) and others in the *Revista de Antropofagia* (1928-1929) and represented by Oswald’s iconic “Manifesto Antropófago” (1928)—is a central reference in Latin American cultural history. Early on, Antônio Cândido rightly indicated that “it is difficult to say what exactly Antropofagia is, since Oswald never formulated it, although he left enough elements to see some virtual principles beneath the aphorisms” we find in his famous manifesto (1970: 84–85).¹ Nonetheless, Antropofagia has been canonized as an *avant la lettre* Latin American cultural theory on consumption, and even as a postcolonial discourse.² A few of those often-enigmatic surrealist aphorisms usually suffice to allege that Antropofagia offered a syncretic model for cultural encounters similar to *transculturación*,³ that it anticipated contemporary debates on hybridity, or that it attempted a cultural decolonization and “proposed” the creative consumption of European cultural capital in order to produce a national culture beyond the anxieties of influence.

Antropofagia certainly redefined the *cannibal*, a colonial trope associated with Brazil since the sixteenth century, inverting the negative connotations of the colonial stereotype; it also attempted to offer, from a peripheral point of view, a symbolic and mostly literary answer to the questions posed by the asynchrony of Brazilian modernity,⁴ and, cultural consumption was indeed part of the wide and quite disparate semantic spectrum of Antropofagia.⁵ However, Antropofagia was not an academic effort, a theory of identity formation through consumption, or a social emancipation program.⁶ It was a heterogeneous and contradictory aesthetic venture by a collective and diverse modernist group. Besides Andrade, there were Tarsila do Amaral (1886-1973)—true initiator of the Antropofagia movement⁷—, Mario de Andrade (1893-1945), Raul Bopp (1898-1984), Antônio de Alcântara Machado (1901-1935), Augusto Frederico Schmidt (1906-1965), Menotti del Picchia (1892-1988), Benedito Geraldo Ferraz Gonçalves (1903-1979), Oswald Costa (1900-1967) and others, each with his own notion of Antropofagia.

This article examines the remarkable contribution of Oswald Costa, one of the most important leaders of the group and certainly the one who articulated—as no other member of the movement did, including Andrade—an Antropofagia intellectually engaged in what we will call a *cannibal critique* of colonial modernity and Occidentalism.⁸

OSWALDO COSTA, “THE GREAT FORGOTTEN ONE”

Despite the fact that Oswald Costa (1900-1967) was one of the most important and lucid contributors to the *Revista de Antropofagia*, today he remains practically forgotten. The major studies on the Latin American vanguards and Brazilian Modernism barely mention him. Costa is a blurry figure even for experts of the caliber of Antônio Cândido and Maria Eugênia Boaventura.⁹ Other important critics, including Vicky Unruh and Robert

Stam, even suppose—incorrectly—that Oswald Costa was one of Andrade’s pseudonyms.¹⁰

Oswaldo Costa (who on occasion signed his name Oswaldo, with a *v*) was born in Belém do Pará in 1900 and died May 12, 1967 in Rio de Janeiro.¹¹ In 1918 he arrived in Rio, where he studied law for a time, and began his career as a journalist writing for the *Correio da Manhã*. By the mid-1920s he took an interest in the São Paulo Modernists and in 1928 he became a founding member of the Antropofagia movement.

As is well known, the *Revista de Antropofagia* went through two distinct stages—cleverly referred to by the *antropófagos* as *dentições* (meaning “teething, cutting teeth”). Oswald Costa participated in the first *dentição* under the conservative directorship of Antônio de Alcântara Machado, but it was during the second *dentição* that he played a central role in the modernist radicalization of the publication. Andrade himself recognized Costa’s importance in a letter to Carlos Drummond de Andrade in March 1929, in which he refers to Costa as an “authentic *Cunhambebe*,” equating his leadership to that of Konyan Bebe, the famous cannibal chief of the sixteenth-century Tupinambá¹² (figure 1).



Konyan Bebe in André Thevet’s *Les vrais pourtraits et vies des hommes illustres grecz, latins et payens* (Paris, 1584).

Volume 3, livre VIII, f. 661 r. Courtesy of the Trustees of the Boston Public Library.

During the second phase, Costa published numerous texts, some under his own name and some under the pseudonym Tamandaré, and he initiated the irreverent column titled “Moquéim” (“The Grill”). Jayme Adour da Câmara (1898-1964), co-director of the second *dentição*, called him Antropofagia’s “best theoretician” (“seu maior teorizador”) (1957: 3), and Benedito Geraldo Ferraz (1903-1979), secretary of the *Revista*, claimed that the second *dentição* stayed afloat thanks to Costa, who was the true leader of the journal and whose “theoretical grilling” provided the intellectual basis for the “anthropophagic barbecue.”¹³ The prominence of this *Cunhambebe* theoretician is confirmed by his inclusion in the project of the “Biblioteca Antropofágica” (“Little Anthropophagic Library”), which was to include, among other texts: Mário de Andrade’s *Macunaima* (1928), Bopp’s *Cobra Norato* (1931), Andrade’s *Manifesto Antropófago* (1928), and a piece by Costa titled *Moquéms e pontas-de-flecha*, an anthology that would have brought together his contributions to the *Revista* (Bopp, 1956: 9; 1973: 36). The project of the “Little Anthropophagic Library” fell apart when the *Diário de São Paulo* shut the *Revista* down in August 1929 and the movement disbanded amidst interpersonal quarrels as well as the crisis that followed the 1929 stock market crash, the ruin of São Paulo’s coffee bourgeoisie, and the rise to power of Getúlio Vargas in 1930.

When Antropofagia dispersed, Costa abandoned the literary scene, went back to Rio de Janeiro, and devoted himself to journalism and politics. During the 1930s, he participated in several antifascist activities and left-wing politics; he supported the Comitê Antiguerrero do Rio de Janeiro (Rio Anti-War Committee) and he was a member of the Communist Party’s Central Committee, in charge of communications and propaganda.¹⁴

In 1934 Costa founded, along with Apparício Torelly (1895-1971) and fellow antropófago Anibal Machado (1894-1964), the short-lived *Jornal do Povo* (“Journal of the People”; October 1934).¹⁵ In November 1935, Costa—then a journalist for *A Manhã*—participated in a Communist insurrection against Getúlio Vargas known as the “Revolta vermelha” (the “Red Revolt”) or “A intentona” (“the Great Attempt”), for which he was arrested and accused of rebellion in mid-1936. The authorities considered him the “intellectual secretary” of the Party.¹⁶ On June 4, 1937, Costa was released while charges were brought up against him;¹⁷ he took advantage of his liberty and went into hiding. A few days later, the Tribunal de Segurança Nacional (National Security Tribunal) sentenced him in absentia to three years and four months in prison (June 28, 1937).¹⁸ The police were unable to find him. By then, he had given up his alias “Ramalho” and resumed his modernist anthropophagous pseudonym “Tamandaré.” Early in 1940, after escaping a police raid and seeking refuge in the Chilean Embassy, Costa turned himself in and was condemned to five years in prison, two of which he completed.¹⁹ In 1942 he was released and he joined the leftist journal *Diretrizes*.²⁰

Oswaldo Costa devoted most of his life to journalism as a writer and collaborator on numerous publications, including *Diário de Bahia*, *Correio da Manhã*, *Correio*

Paulistano, *Folha de São Paulo* (Rio Edition), the *Revista de Antropofagia*, *Jornal do Povo*, *A Manhã*, and the aforementioned journal *Diretrizes* (of which he was promoted to director in 1945). In 1956, he founded the newspaper *O Semanário*, which reached a national distribution of 60,000 copies, one of the largest publications of the period in Brazil (Nelson Werneck Sodré, 1966: 409; Leonardo de Brito, 2007: 38, 39; 2011: 1-15). (figure 2) *O Semanário* was shut down by the military dictatorship on April 1, 1964. Costa was subjected (along with his wife Leonor) to a military investigation and the government suspended his political rights. On May 12, 1967, Costa died of a heart attack on the street.²¹ A few months later the canonization of Antropofagia would begin, as would Costa’s fall into oblivion.²²

“A ‘DESCIDA’ ANTROPOFAGA”/ THE ANTHROPOPHAGIC DESCENT

Oswaldo Costa’s “A ‘Descida’ Antropofaga” appeared in the first issue of the *Revista de Antropofagia*, along with Andrade’s “Manifesto” (1928: 8) and could be



O Semanário (Letras e Artes) (Volume 1, Issue 3). Picture of Oswaldo Costa (left) with Jayme Adour da Câmara (right). February 1957. Courtesy of the Biblioteca Nacional do Brasil.

called, without exaggeration, the *other anthropophagic manifesto*.²³ In it, Costa questions Brazil's cultural allegiance to Europe, reads Brazilian historiography against its celebration of colonialism, and proposes the necessity of an anthropophagous cultural decolonization. (figure 3)

Costa begins his manifesto by rendering unfamiliar the meaning of "descida."²⁴ Always written in quotation marks in the text, "descida" is a word that ostensibly means "descent," or a plummeting downward motion, but here also refers specifically to the swooping in of a cultural force. He states: "Now the 'descent' is a different one. [...] Four centuries ago, a 'descent' into slavery. Today a 'descent' toward liberation." ("A 'descida' agora é outra. [...] Ha quatro séculos, a 'descida' para a escravidão. Hoje, a 'descida' para libertação").

"Descida" operates in two semantic directions here: the first *descida* of four centuries ago corresponds to the colonization that compelled the Indians to leave their supposedly nomadic life or their villages, quit cannibalism, and assimilate into the colony (*descer-se para as aldeias*); that is, the relocation and reduction of the Brazilian indigenous population into colonial settlements, missions and towns

from the sixteenth century through well into the nineteenth. The expeditions to bring "savages" into towns and missions and eventually into forced labor were called *descimentos de índios* because most of the time Indians were brought downriver, "descending" from the inland. Those "tamed" Indians were themselves known as *índios descidos*. But Costa's manifesto declares that today's *descida* is a different one; it is not the one that brought submission and slavery, but rather "the 'descent' toward liberation." That is, the cannibals descending (as a bird of prey *desce sobre a presa*), swooping down over civilization, not to be subsumed by it, but rather to overcome it, to devour it, to cancel the Western condition of Brazil and begin anew.

Costa's "descida" entails a new beginning. Hence, the text humorously affirms that after the Great Flood, Anthropofagia was the most serious movement to happen in the world: "God turned off everything, to start all over again. He was intelligent, [...] but he had a weakness: he spared Noah. The Anthropophagic movement—the most serious thing since the Great Flood—is coming to eat Noah. **NOAH SHOULD BE EATEN**" (1928: 8, emphasis and capital letters in the original).²⁵ According to Costa, this postdiluvian renewal requires an anthropophagic gaze—a *cannibal critique*—over Brazil's supposed belonging to the West, as well as a digestive re-reading of national historiography. For Costa, Anthropofagia must emphasize countercolonial resistance over colonial triumph, obstinate alterity over conversion, and the Anthropophagic "descida" over the civilizing one.

Costa sets his sights on the conception of Brazilian culture as European, questioning its Occidental(ist) colonial modernity:

The "PORTUGUESE" that still exist among us will smile through their golden teeth, laughing their civilized laugh at those [of us] who react against Culture from within. What rubbish! What we have is not European culture, but rather the experience of it. The experience of four centuries. A painful one [...]. With Roman Law, the Grand Canal of Venice, [Kant's] synthetic a priori judgments, Tobias, Nabuco and Ruy. What we do is react against the civilization that invented the catalogue, the examination of conscience, and the crime of deflowering. **WE ARE JAPY ASSU**. (1928: 8; capital letters in the original).²⁶

The text makes explicit the cultural discontent later referred to by Roberto Schwarz's famous essay "Nacional por subtração" ("National by Elimination"): "We Brazilians and other Latin Americans constantly experience the artificial, inauthentic and imitative nature of our cultural life"; that is, we have a "sense of the contradiction between our national reality and the ideological prestige of the countries we see as our models" (2006: 29, 30).²⁷ For Costa, the Brazilian experience of belonging to the West corresponds to four centuries of intense and painful colonialism as well as to a series of juridical, aesthetic and philosophical burdens. In his reasoning, Roman Law—something of a fetish in legal studies in Brazil, much like the Kantian thought recited indiscriminately in de-

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A "Descida" Antropofaga

A "descida" agora é outra.
O Autor

Ha quatro séculos, a "descida" para a escravidão. Hoje, a "descida" para libertação. O Dilúvio, foi o movimento mais serio que se fez no mundo. Deus apagou tudo, para começa de novo. Foi intelligente, pratico e natural. Mas teve uma fraqueza: deixou Noé.

O movimento antropofago. — que é o mais serio depois do Dilúvio — vem para com Noé. **NOÉ DEVE SER COMIDO.**

Penso que não se deve confundir volta ao estado natural (o que se quer) com volta ao estado primitivo (o que não interessa). O que se quer é simplicidade e não um novo código de simplicidade. Naturalidade, não manuses de bom tom. Contra a beleza canonica, a beleza natural — feia, bruta, agreste, barbara, illogica. Instincto contra o verniz. O selvagem sem as missangas da catheese. O selvagem comendo a catheese.

Os **PEROS** que ainda existem entre nós não de sorrir por seus dentes de ouro o sorriso civilizado de que, reagindo contra a cultura, estamos dentro da cultura. Que besteira. O que temos não é cultura europea: é experiencia della. Experiencia de quatro séculos. Dolorosa e pão. Com Direito Romano, canal de Veneza, julgamento synthetico a priori, Tobias, Nabuco e Ruy. O que fazemos é reagir contra a civilização que inventou o catalogo, o exame de consciencia e o crime de defloramento. **SOMOS JAPY ASSU!**

"Ce venerable vieillard Japi Ouassou fut merveilleusement attentif, comme tous les autres Indiens là présents aux discours susdits à qui il repliqua ce qui s'ensuit. Je m'isions extremement de vous voir et me manquerai à tout ce ie vous ay promis. Mais ie me estonne comme il se peut faire que vous autres **PAY** ne vouliez pas de femmes. Estes vous descendus du Ciel? Estes nays de Pere et Mere? Quay done! n'estes pas mortels comme nous? Dou vient que non seulement vous ne prenez pas de femmes ainsi que les autres Français que ont trafiqué avec nous depuis quelque quarante et tant d'années; mais encore que vous les empechez maintenant de se servir de nos filles: ce que nous estimons à grand honneur et grandheur, pouvans en avoir des enfans".

(Claude #Abbeville—"Historie de la Mission des Pères Capucins en l'Isle de Maragnan et terres circonvoisines.")

Contra o servilismo colonial, o tapace inebriada, "gente de grande resolução e valor e totalmente impaciente de sujeição" (Vieira), o heroismo sem no-ta de Comendador dos caraybas, "que se oppuzeram a que Diogo de Lepe desembarcasse, investindo contra as caraybas e reduzindo o numero de seus tripulantes" (**Santa Rosa** — "Historia do Rio Amazonas").

Ninguem se illuda. A paz do homem americano com a civilização europea é paz nheengahiba. Está no Lisboa: "aquella apparatusa paz dos nheengahibas não passava de uma verdadeira impostura, continuando os barbaros no seu antigo theor da vida selvagem, dados á antropofagia como dantes, e baldos inteiramente da luz do evangelho."

Como se vê, factimo ser antropofago. Basta eliminar a impostura.

Poram estas as consequencias dos versos ruim-zinhos que Anchieta escreveu na arca de Itanhaen: **Ordemações do Reno, grammatica e ceia de Da Vinci na sala de jantar. E não houve ainda quem commete.** Anchieta!

Portugal vestiu o selvagem. Cumpre despi-lo. Para que elle tome um banho daquella "innocencia contente" que perdeu e que o movimento antropofago agora lhe restitue. O homem, (falo o homem europeu, cruz credo!) andava buscando o homem fóra do homem. E de lanterna na mão: philosophia.

Nós queremos o homem sem a duvida, sem sequer a presumpção da existencia da duvida: nú, natural, antropofago.

Quatro séculos de carne de vacca! Que horror!

(a) OSWALDO COSTA.

VISITA DE SÃO THOMÉ'

Quando a Bahia não se chamava Bahia, muito antes de Pedro Alvares Cabral, São Thomé foi lá um dia.

Não sei se foi por acaso ou para vêr. Mas viu.

Viu e protestou contra as coisas que viu.

Fez um discurso cheio de conselhos que os índios escutaram de boccas abertas:

Que era preciso adorar a Deus, fugir do demônio, não ter mais que uma mulher. Conselhos bons.

Emquanto falava, fazia nascer da terra a planta da mandioca e a bananeira que ainda hoje dá bananas de São Thomé.

Então os índios gostaram.

Quando São Thomé, cansado, sentiu que devia acabar, acabou com estas palavras:

—E não comam nunca mais carne de gente!

Então os índios não gostaram. Avançaram. Quizeram comer o santo.

Felizmente São Thomé corria mais do que que elles.

Chegou na beira da praia, deu um passo de meia legua e foi parar numa ilha onde não tinha selvagens.

(Quem me ensinou isto foi Frei Vicente do Salvador...)

ALVARO MOREIRA.

NOTA INSISTENTE

Neste rabinho do seu primeiro numero a "Revista de Antropofagia" faz questão de repetir o que ficou dito lá no principio:

— Ella está acima de quaesquer grupos ou tendencias;

— Ella accetta todos os manifestos mas não bota manifesto;

— Ella accetta todas as criticas mas não faz critica;

— Ella é antropofaga como o avestruz é comilão;

— Ella nada tem que ver com os pontos de vista de que por acaso seja vehiculo.

A "Revista de Antropofagia" não tem orientação ou pensamento de especie alguma: só tem estomago.

A de A. M.
R. B.

Oswaldo Costa's "A 'Descida' Antropofaga" in the first issue of the *Revista de Antropofagia* (1928: 8).

partments of philosophy— exemplifies both the awkwardness of Brazil’s inscription in the West and the intellectual complicity with colonialism among those who consider themselves European and “who still exist among us.”²⁸ In “A ‘Descida’ Antropófaga” Costa extends this critique to the Modernists themselves and he mocks the Europeanism of none other than Anita Malfatti (1889–1964), icon of the first generation of Brazilian Modernists.²⁹ He alludes to one or perhaps two of Malfatti’s paintings in which the painter appears to retract from the Modernist radicalism of 1922: *Canaletto (Veneza)* (Salon d’Automne, Grand Palais, Paris, 1924) and *Canal grande de Veneza* (ca. 1927).³⁰ Likewise, in a later text titled “Revisão necessária” (“A Much Needed Correction”), Costa will refer to this particular mode of complicity as “*mentalidade reinol*,” a phrase that cleverly uses the colonial term for the Portuguese born in the Old World who resided in Brazil (i.e. the Portuguese from the *Reino* or Kingdom as opposed to those born in the colonies). *Mentalidade reinol* derisively evokes a colonial mindset, an identification with the rulers and oppressors. Costa states: “the problem with our writers is that they study Brazil from a fallacious point of view, the false culture and false morality of the West. The *reinol* mentality, from which they have not freed themselves” (1929a: 1).³¹ In his “Moquém II: Hors de œuvre,” Costa will again voice his irritation with the conservatism and Occidentalism of the Modernist revolution, declaring:

It focused on the fortuitous, on the decorative, it limited itself to a mere revolution of the aesthetic—truly a horrible thing— when its mission was to generate the new Brazilian thought in Brazil. [...] After it, we continued to be slaves to the West, slaves to Catholicism, slaves to a rotted out European culture. [...] And our history continued to be written with [the assistance of] the missionaries’ tall tales [...]. We did not create a new [way of] thinking. The old imported thinking persisted. Eaten away by the beetle that is the West. The big mistake of the Modernists was precisely this. A preoccupation that was exclusively aesthetic. [...] A false art. A fallacious history. [...] They did not understand the crusades, the wars, the economic struggles [...]. They accepted a bunch of idiotic formulas as truth: that this is civilization and that is progress (Tamandaré, 1929c: 5).³²

Modernism, as seen by Costa (here using his pseudonym), did not just respond to ontological Eurocentrism; it bent to its will, submitting to the history of the victors and the “idiotic formulas” of civilization and progress. Costa disrupts those dichotomous concepts and the “fallacious” historiography that supports them.³³

In “A ‘Descida’ Antropófaga,” the phrase “WE ARE JAPY ASSU” (ironic and emphatic in all capital letters) reiterates Costa’s complaint against cultural servility. Japy Assu is a cacique who welcomed the colonizers and openly collaborated with them.³⁴ In 1612, in Junipará, Maranhão, Japy Assu greeted the French Capuchin missionaries, promised to convert to Christianity, and offered his women to the friars, who shocked the cacique by turn-

ing down the gift. Quoting in French from Claude d’Abbeville (1963 [1614]), Costa cites Japy Assu’s famous speech expressing his surprise at the friars’ lack of sexual appetite.³⁵ With this colonial scene of the Indian offering women to a dispassionate colonizer, Costa mocks both Brazilian cultural servility and the *unconsummated* triumph of civilization. Against the colonial obsequiousness that *to be JAPY ASSU* represents, Costa puts forth a different response to the colonizer: a cannibal resistance (i.e. *to be Tupi*, so to speak).

Costa’s *cannibal critique* of Brazilian modernity is enacted by historic examples of defiance to colonialism and also by his perfidious anthropophagic quotation from the colonial archive:

Against colonial servility, the tacape [of the] Inheiguára, “people of great determination and courage, and utterly averse to servitude” (Vieira), [and] the rosette-less heroism of the Caraíbas “who fought the landing of Diogo de Lepe, charging against his vessels and reducing the number of his crew” (Santa Rosa - *História do Rio Amazonas*). Let no one be fooled. *Peace between the American man and European civilization is a Nheengahiba peace treaty* (1928: 8; emphasis mine).³⁶

The proposal to resist, to act against (*reagir contra*) civilization and the Westernization of Brazil could easily be confused with the celebrated formulation “national by subtraction”—the elimination of the foreign—coined by the aforementioned Schwarz, who viewed quite skeptically these purgative responses to both the anxieties of foreign influence and to the angst produced by a sense of the peripheral “underdeveloped” condition of national culture. Yet Costa does not exclude. Instead, he incorporates and resignifies, as in the case of the citation in *French* of d’Abbeville on the servility of Japy Assu. Costa’s response to the *colonial condition* is *cannibal resistance*, represented on the one hand by the *tacape* (an indigenous weapon) and on the other by the deceitful *Nheengahiba* peace treaty (as I will explain below). The challenge to colonialism that Costa proposes is not purgative; it is defined instead by the notion of *devoração* or anthropophagic citation. Thus, Costa ventures a digestive decolonizing thought to defy the Eurocentric notions of civilization and progress that ideologically structure Brazilian nationalism in the ninetieth and twentieth centuries.

“AGAINST COLONIAL SERVILITY, THE TACAPE OF THE INHEIGUÁRA”

When Costa says, “Against colonial servility, the *tacape* [of the] *Inheiguára*,” he symbolically invokes indigenous countercolonial struggles, thereby reformulating Antropofagia as a kind of resistance to and incorporation of the West. The *tacape* was an indigenous weapon, an oar-shaped piece of wood used in war and in the sacrifice of prisoners.³⁷ As evidenced by its presence in the iconographic images and ethnographic travelogues of the era, the *tacape* was indelibly associated with the imaginary of cannibalism among the indigenous of Brazil. It shows up

in the wood engravings included in Hans Staden's 1557 *Warhaftige Historia*, an iconic tale of the capture of Europeans by cannibals (figure 4).

Against colonial servility, Costa takes up the *tacape*—metonymic sign of the cannibal—and then goes on to anthropophagously cite the Jesuit Antônio Vieira (1608-1697), who between 1653 and 1661 preached among the Indians in the territories that today comprise the states of Maranhão and Amazonas and initiated the spiritual conquest in the lowlands of the Tocantins River. Costa “faithfully” transcribes a letter Vieira wrote to the King, dated February 11, 1660, in which the priest mentions the courage of the indomitable Inheiguáras: “‘people of great determination and courage, and utterly averse to subjugation’ (Vieira).” Vieira was not praising the Inheiguáras as Costa’s quote would suggest; in context, the Jesuit was stating the difficulty of the campaign against them that Father Manuel Nunes had led for eight months in 1658, along with 450 allied Indians and 45 Portuguese soldiers. Vieira states that, “the rebel” Inheiguáras (rebellados), were “hunted, tracked down, surrounded, forced into submission, and most were taken [as slaves]” (“buscados, achados, cercados, rendidos, e tomados quasi todos”; Vieira, 1854 [1660], 1: 79). Costa cites Vieira against Vieira;

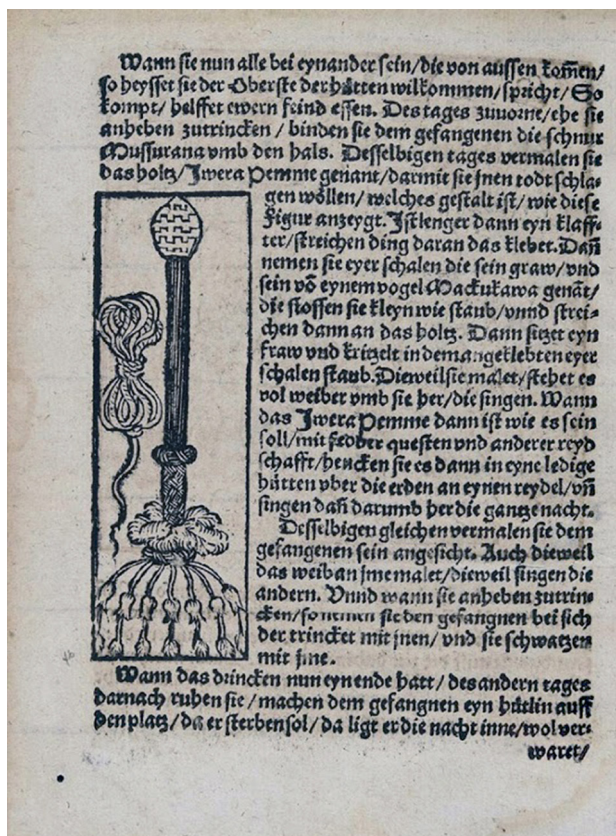
he alludes not to the victory over the savages but to the resistance and valor of the rebels. He reads against the grain of a triumphant Western imperial history and reopens the defeat of the “hunted, tracked down, surrounded” and enslaved Inheiguáras. In contrast to his contemporaries’ nationalist homages to European culture and colonization, Costa’s Antropofagia cannibalizes the historical archive. I do not mean to suggest that Costa was carrying out a Benjaminian reading of history *avant la lettre*, but that he did advance a critique—a *cannibal critique*—of the historical and symbolic colonialism of the national archive.³⁸

Costa also devours the *História do Rio Amazonas* (1926) (History of the Amazon River) of the historian and geographer Henrique Américo Santa Rosa. Santa Rosa, an engineer by training and, like Costa, from the northern state of Pará, became one of the first historians of the Amazonia to approach the region from the point of view of the geopolitics of the Brazilian State. The early twentieth-century academic trend of geopolitics studied physical and human geography to directly inform the state’s civilizing and modernizing policies as well as the expansion of territorial domain.³⁹ Santa Rosa is the historian-geographer of what Raymundo Moraes in his introduction to the *História* calls the “Far West brasileiro” (Santa Rosa, 1926: iii). Santa Rosa’s geohistory outlines the geographical space as well as the unfinished epic process of “civilization and progress” of the Amazonian region (i.e. its colonization), which began in the sixteenth century and which the modern nation-state was supposed to complete in the twentieth. As we know, both projects, sixteenth century colonialism and the internal neocolonialism of the twentieth, were faced with the “indigenous problem.” In Santa Rosa’s treatise, the indigenous—generally referred to as dispersed “tribes,” “hordes” (hordas), “hostile bands” (hostes bravias), and “savages” (selvagens) (1926: 72-75, 96)—are presented as just another challenge to the civilizing process, along with other happenstances of a difficult but promising geography.

Costa’s quote pertains to a fragment in which Santa Rosa recounts how the Maranhão Indians fiercely battled the Spanish conquistador Diego de Lepe (1460-1515) upon his arrival in Brazil in 1500, killing eleven of his men. Costa appropriates and resignifies Santa Rosa’s account of the event and deploys it against the neocolonialist geopolitics of the *História do Rio Amazonas* by invoking subaltern courage:

Against colonial servility, [...] the rosette-less heroism of the Caraíba ‘who fought the landing of Diogo de Lepe, charging against his vessels and reducing the number of his crew’ (Santa Rosa - *Historia do Rio Amazonas*).⁴⁰

The rosette here refers to the Legion of Honor medalion. Costa zooms in on the resistance of the Caraíbas, and on their unrecognized valor, their courage that was never awarded a *Légion d’honneur* medal; that is, Costa



Tacape (a.k.a. *iwera pemme*) in Hans Staden's *Warhaftige Historia und beschreibung eyner Landtschafft der Wilden, Nacketen, Grimmigen Menschfresser Leuthen in der Newenwelt America gelegen* (1557). Courtesy of the Acervo da Fundacao Biblioteca Nacional do Brasil.

simultaneously points out the anonymous indigenous heroism and its relegation to the dustbin of History.

For Costa, Brazil is not conceptualized as a residue of bygone colonialism, but rather as a contentious space of past and present colonial violence and exploitation; and certainly also a place where political, social, and cultural defiance have always been taking place—despite the tradition of national historiography to obliterate it. Costa chews up and de-authorizes the Occidentalism that informed both the sixteenth-century Jesuit and the twentieth-century geographer. In his rendering, countercolonial rebelliousness stands out as a fundamental element of national history. The textual incorporation of Vieira and Santa Rosa amounts, then, to a countercolonial *cannibal critique* of the national archive that accentuates oppositionality and resistance against the nation's ontological subordination to a supposedly victorious Western modernity. Costa's antagonistic reading of history, figuratively represented by the cannibal trope, corresponds to what we can call a *digestive mode* of thinking and reading defined not by subtraction but by critical incorporation; an example of what Walter Mignolo aptly calls *border thinking*, a “double critique” and an epistemic rupture, “in which the imaginary of the modern world system cracks” (2000: 23, 67-70). Costa's critique of colonial modernity implies a reading/thinking from two traditions, and at the same time from neither of them: from modernity and against it, both consuming and contesting neocolonial historiography from within the pages of a modernist periodical, all the while savoring the erased resistance of the Caraïbas of the sixteenth century.

Other texts by Oswaldo Costa provide grist to the same countercolonial-modernist mill. In “Moquém I: Aperitivo”—in the fourth issue of the second *dentição* of the *Revista*—Costa inaugurates his column “Moquém” (“The Grill”) by *roasting* the recently published *Retrato do Brasil: ensaio sobre a tristeza brasileira* (1928). The author, Paulo Prado (1869-1943), was a member of São Paulo's coffee aristocracy and a patron of Modernism since 1922. After Costa's derisive negative review, Prado stopped speaking to him and also to Oswald de Andrade, whom he blamed (Aracy Amaral, 2003: 302). *Retrato do Brasil* is, Costa claims, dismal (“ruim”) and Prado is a “pious” and “romantic” artist who believes in “the eternity of art” and in “proper Portuguese customs” and who is scandalized by the sexual practices of the Indians. Costa harshly criticizes Prado for basing his arguments in nineteenth century positivist historiography, particularly that of João Capistrano de Abreu (1853-1927). He categorizes the latter as an “archivist” who pretended to be a historian of the colonial period with no attempt to critique the Conquest nor any understanding of the processes of resistance and rebellion that are part of “our Homeric struggle for liberation” (“nossa luta homérica de liberação”). According to Costa, Prado leans on the “crutches of European morality” (“muletas da moral européa”), blaming gold and lust for Brazilians' “infantile excesses” (“excessos infantis”). Even more damaging is the charge that he cites colonial chronicles “as rigorous truths” (“como rigorosas

verdades”) with “astonishing naiveté” (“ingenuidade pasmosa”), never questioning them (1929b: 4). The review skewers Prado's Westernist historiography and—in line with “A ‘Descida’...” —poses instead an *anthropophagic history* that cites the archive against the archive and the history of resistance vis-à-vis the Eurocentric historiography of the colonial “saga.”

THE NHEENGAHIBA PEACE TREATY

In “A ‘Descida’...” Oswaldo Costa anticipates the potential objection that he writes from the very culture he censures: “The ‘PORTUGUESE’ that still exist among us will smile through their golden teeth, laughing their civilized laugh at those [of us] who react against Culture from within. What rubbish!” (1928: 8). Costa—whose discourse is certainly articulated from a conflicting *locus of enunciation*—distinguishes between *belonging* to Western culture and the *peripheral experience* of Westernization: he says that in Brazil one does not have “European culture, but rather the experience of it” (“experiencia della”). Pointing out the colonial violence of Brazilian Modernity, this experience for Costa is a painful one.⁴¹

The difference between *having* and *experiencing* Western modernity from the periphery underscores both the ever-present issue of colonialism and the existence of asynchronous temporalities within Brazil. In this sense, Costa is entering into the cultural critique of colonial Modernity *vis-à-vis* the occluded peripheral projects of defiant alternative modernities—just as Enrique Dussel will later do with his notion of *transmodernity* [1999]. In other words, Costa fractures the alleged equivalence between the West and modernity and de-centers the colonial reason of Brazilian modernity. The European (or Europeanized) America is the appearance of a colonial triumph behind which lies a “savage eating the Catechism” (“o selvagem comendo a catechese”), a cannibal who, far from being assimilated, resists by eating:

Let no one be fooled. Peace between the American man and European civilization is a Nheengahiba peace treaty. It can be read in [João Francisco] Lisbôa: “that ostentatious peace with the Nheengahiba was nothing but a true imposture, [under which] the barbarians continue with their habitual savage lifestyle and customs, as devoted to cannibalism as they were before [the treaty], and utterly oblivious to the Gospel's light.” [...] As one can see, it is very easy to be a cannibal. One just has to do away with the imposture (1928: 8).⁴²

“Let no one be fooled,” Costa chides, for “peace between the American man and European civilization is a Nheengahiba peace treaty”; that is to say, America's belonging to the West is deceptive. As evidence, Costa presents a fragment of the 1853 biography “The Life of Father Antônio Vieira in Brasil” (“Vida do padre Antônio Vieira no Brasil” 1853) by the Brazilian historian João Francisco Lisbôa (1812-1863). Lisbôa recounts the rebellion of the colonists against the Society of Jesus that re-

sulted in the expulsion of the Jesuits from Maranhão in 1661. By 1659, he says, the colonists were complaining about the “futility of the results obtained by the missions” in their negotiations to appease the Indians (“nullidade dos resultados colhidos pelas missões”), giving the example of the “ostentatious peace with the Nheengahiba” (1901 [1853], 469). That peace treaty, known as the “Acordo do rio Mapuá” (“Agreement of the Mapuá River” 1659), was negotiated by Vieira to pacify the Nheengahibas of the Island of Marajó (between the Tocantins and Pará Rivers). The Nheengahibas and other indigenous groups had allied with the Dutch against the Portuguese. The Jesuit managed to get the Nheengahibas, until then rebellious and “unconquerable,” to agree “to be vassals to the King of Portugal and to maintain a perpetual and inviolable peace,” to live in the settlements, and to not ally with the Dutch against the Portuguese (Vieira, 1: 81-91).⁴³ In “De antropofagia,” another text from the second *denúncia*, Costa refers to this achievement as “Father Antônio Vieira’s diplomatic scam” (“malandragem diplomática do padre Antônio Vieira”) (1929d: 9).

In “A ‘Descida’...” Costa calls attention to the failure of this treaty by citing Lisbôa, for whom that peace turned out to be as “ostentatious” (“apparatososa”) as it was inane: a “true imposture” because the cannibals continued to be cannibals. That the cultural inscription, the “peace” between the American man and European civilization, would be “Nheengahiba” means that the colonial conflict persists below the surface and that the civilizing triumph is neither complete nor definitive. Costa celebrates the continuity of the barbarianism that persists below the deceptiveness of the treaty. The *paz nheengahiba* of Latin American colonial modernity is perfidious: it hides a conflict, an obstinate barbarian remainder, an alter-modernity so to speak. As Silviano Santiago would eloquently explain, “Latin America places itself on the map of Western civilization thanks to a vigorous and destructive deviation from the norm, which transforms those given and immutable elements that Europeans exported to the New World” (1978: 18).⁴⁴ According to Costa, our belonging to the West is conflictive and perfidious; our cloak of Euro-Western modernity hides a cannibal; clearly, Costa’s distinction between *being* and *appearance* (imposture) is essentialist and modern. Culture is both Nheengahiba rebelliousness and the servility of Japy Assu —resistance and assimilation, *Tupi and not Tupi*.

VERSES IN THE SAND

One of the most suggestive paragraphs of Costa’s “A ‘Descida’...” reiterates the *topoi* of the fragility and imposture of the colonial project:

These were the consequences of the sorry verses that [Father] Anchieta wrote in the sand [on the beach] of Ithanhaen: Ordinances of the Kingdom, grammar, and Da Vinci’s Supper in the dining room. And there was nobody yet to eat Anchieta! (Costa, 1928: 8).⁴⁵

The paragraph mentions the poetic work of José de Anchieta (1534-1597) and elliptically alludes to the peace treaty with the Tamoio-Tupinambá that would become known as the 1563 Armistice of Iperoig, drawn up a century before the treaty Vieira negotiated with the Nheengahiba.

In 1563 Jesuit missionaries Anchieta and Manoel da Nóbrega (1517-1570) wandered into hostile indigenous territory to pacify the Tamoio cannibals who—in confederation with several other tribes and allied with the French—were threatening to expel the Portuguese from São Vicente. The Indians received Anchieta and Nóbrega, but although interested in a possible agreement, they were prepared to continue the war. From June 21 to September 14, 1563, Anchieta had to stay in Iperoig (Ubatuba) as a hostage of the Tamoio-Tupinambás, while Nóbrega returned to São Vicente with the chief Cunhambebe (son of the aforementioned Cunhambebe) to come to an agreement on the terms of the armistice (Hemming, 2007: 197-204). During his captivity, Anchieta “wrote in the sand” the verses that Costa calls “ruimzinhos” (“sorry” or awful verses): *De Beata Virgine Dei Matre Maria* (1663). According to Juan Eusebio Nieremberg, Anchieta wanted to “occupy his imagination” and distance himself from the fear of being eaten by cannibals or seduced by their naked women (1889: 552); another form of being devoured. Lacking paper, Anchieta supposedly wrote his 5,902 verses to the Virgin in the sand and then memorized them to save them from the elements. This episode in Anchieta’s life is surely a hagiographic legend; one that made it into the colonial-national imagination as we can see in a well-known painting (1901) by Benedito Calixto de Jesus (1853-1927), famous for his nationalistic historical landscapes and scenes that idealized colonization (figure 5). In Calixto’s painting, Anchieta appears on a dreamy beach filled with stanzas written in the sand, immersed in the completion or correction of a verse, as a crowd of curious seagulls surround him and two indigenous men look on from a distance. It is unlikely that the Jesuit would have



O poema de Anchieta, 1901 (Oil on canvas 68x96 cm.). Benedito Calixto de Jesus (1853-1927) Colégio São Luis, São Paulo. Courtesy of the Museu de Arte Sacra dos Jesuítas.

written the poem in the sand and then rewritten it from memory. The verses were more likely composed after his liberation as payment on a promise to the Virgin. In the dedication of his poetic work, Anchieta explains the diplomatic-colonial circumstances of its composition: “Here you have them, Holy Mother, the verses that I once promised you, when, surrounded by ferocious enemies, my presence tamed the brave Tamoios and, defenseless, I negotiated the peace.”⁷⁴⁶

Costa makes fun of Anchieta’s “versos ruimzinhos” and he thus tacitly mocks the Iperoig Armistice to which those verses allude, i.e. the treaty that makes the founding of Rio de Janeiro (1565) possible and ultimately paves the way for the Portuguese colonization and Westernization of Brazil. Costa fractures the colonial-nationalistic pathos that became a common place in Brazilian history and that Calixto’s painting exalts. *Rumzinhos* is the emphatic diminutive of *ruim*, meaning bad, so Costa is stating that the glorious verses to the Virgin are awful; the informal suffix gives the word an even more derisive tint that is lost in translation. So the verses do not even reach the bar for simply *bad* poetry, and yet they unleash a series of fateful consequences that Costa enumerates through metonymic references to the establishment of the political-judicial, cultural, and religious order of colonial Brazil: “Ordinances of the Kingdom, grammar, and Da Vinci’s Supper in the dining room.” In other words, following Anchieta’s verses came the imposition of Portuguese sovereignty and legislative codes (*Ordenações do Reino*), metropolitan disciplinary norms over language (*gramática*), and Catholicism—alluded to in the image of a copy of *The Last Supper* hanging in the family dining room.

This last image in the series, a local reproduction of the mural *L’Última Cena* (1495-1498), announces Modernism’s preoccupation with the question of the supposed inferiority of the copy. There are several famous examples of Brazilian bourgeois families commissioning important painters such as José Maria dos Reis Júnior (1903-1985) to create these reproductions for their dining rooms (figure 6); middle class or low-income families hung less expensive lithographs. In any case, what does it mean to hang, in an ordinary Brazilian dining room, a copy of an image of another dining room that is sacred and classic, the reproduction of an original work of art contemporary to the “Discovery” of the “New World”? On the one hand, it is a sign of the spiritual conquest of the Americas. On the other, the original universal Supper is consumed in the vernacular supper, such that the sign of the triumph of Christianity at the same time points to its subjugation to the “savage eating the Catechism.” Although probably unknown to Costa, an eloquent example of such decentering local consumption of the universal can be found in the work of painter Lídia Baís (1900-1985), contemporaneous to the Antropofagia movement: in her *Última ceia de Jesus Cristo* (“Last Supper of Jesus Christ”; ca. 1929), she inserts her own self-portrait next to the figure of Jesus Christ (figure 7).

Costa associates the Catholic *anthropo-theophagy* with the daily meal and both forms of literal consumption with the complex vicissitudes of symbolic consumption. *Peripheral Occidentalism* is always paradoxical. Let us recall that *The Last Supper* represents both the institution of the Eucharist (which is the invitation to repeat in its plenitude an “original” cannibal supper)



José Maria dos Reis Júnior’s reproduction of the mural *L’Última Cena* in the family dining room of the Casa José Maria dos Reis, today’s MADA – Museu de Arte Decorativa, Uberaba, Minas Gerais. Courtesy of Valdo Resende.



Última ceia de Jesus Cristo, ca 1928-1929 (Oil on canvas 135x45 cm.). Lídia Bais (1900-1985). Morada dos Baís, Campo Grande, Mato Grosso do Sul. Courtesy of Morada dos Baís Museum and the Museu de Arte Contemporânea de Mato Grosso do Sul.

and the announcement of Judas's betrayal (which is indeed the central theme of Da Vinci's mural). The reproduction of Da Vinci's painting in a Brazilian dining room is in and of itself a sign of cultural perfidy and of the tense *space in-between* in which—as Silviano Santiago would say—the hierarchy between the original and the copy is destabilized by anthropophagic appropriation.

“FOUR CENTURIES OF BEEF. THE HORROR!”

Costa's “A ‘Descida’ Antropófaga” ends with the surrealist phrase “Four centuries of beef. The Horror!” (“Quatro séculos de carne de vacca! Que horror!”). While the quotidian phrase “que horror” might be translated as an idiomatic expression of surprise or disbelief, by invoking the phrase ironically in reference to an economic and dietary staple of the nation, the phrase also comes across as literal.⁴⁷ Notably, the author uses the expression *carne de vaca* instead of the more common *carne de boi*. “Carne de vacca” carries a negative connotation, as *vaca* (literally *cow*, the adult female of cattle) is cheaper and considered of inferior quality. Furthermore, in Portuguese *vaca* is a familiar trope for a person or thing that is continuously exploited (milked), and the word is also commonly deployed as a misogynist slur (i.e., slut, loose woman). So the literal evocation of “cow meat” here refers derisively to the meat from bovines—which not incidentally is one of the largest sectors of the Brazilian export economy. Hence the phrase functions as what Fernando Coronil would call a “complex metaphorical construct”: beef is a commodity steeped in colonial and neocolonial history and also a trope, signified by the productive relations of cap-

italism on the periphery; the phrase “carne de vacca” evokes a critical stance toward this context.⁴⁸ The abjection provoked by the beef seems to be a symptom of modern discontent with Brazilian colonial modernity.

In Brazil, the introduction of cattle and the consumption of beef coincides with the beginning of Portuguese colonization: in the mid-1530s, the first heads of cattle were imported from the archipelago of Cabo Verde to São Vicente to meet the needs of the nascent sugar economy (Mariante and Cavalcante, 2000: 50-52). Colonialism Westernizes, reduces, and replaces cannibals with beef eaters. Cows are signs of progress.

At the moment when Costa writes, the cattle industry is one of the major economic forces driving neocolonial development in Brazil. The widespread process of agricultural modernization that began in the 1890s had transformed the Brazilian economy. With the emergence of the refrigeration industry in Brazil in the 1910s, beef exports surged and Brazil was on its way to becoming the top beef exporter in the world.⁴⁹ At the beginning of the twentieth century, Brazil had nearly 23 million heads of cattle and only 17 million inhabitants. Modernization in those early decades spurred the growth of both figures. By 1920, there were just over 34 million cows as the population reached 30.5 million (IBGE, 2000: 221; 1990: 320). Brazilian modernism commonly expresses an exaggerated enthusiasm for industrial development within a still predominantly agricultural economy. We can actually appreciate some of this odd asynchronic modernist zest *vis-à-vis* agrarian capitalist development in the inadvertently literary words of Brazilian veterinarian Fernand Ruffier who—in his 1917 lecture at the Conferência Nacional Pecunária [National Conference on Livestock Farming]—grasps for poetic eloquence to describe

the significance of these millions of modernizing cows and promising exports:

30 million cattle are a stupendous thing, an endless reservoir, a colossal richness, a... one lacks the words to describe, to communicate the image that leaves our minds dumbstruck, [the image] of this formidable herd, of those 60 million threatening horns, of those 120 million [fine] quarters of beef anxious to be frozen and sent off to the famished over there in old and poor Europe.⁵⁰

Historically the industry fueled internal colonization and a continuous expansion into western lands—and continues to do so today. Costa's particular tropological selection (beef, or more precisely, "Four centuries of beef") thus points as much toward the history of classical sixteenth-century colonialism as it does toward the neocolonial peripheral modernization of Brazil at the beginning of the twentieth century. The modernist writer distances himself from the cattle-driven images of progress that leave Ruffier both ecstatic and speechless; Costa brings up beef as a poetic means to de-familiarize such modernity, revealing the coloniality of what we eat, so to speak. The "four centuries of beef" (and the horror) are four centuries of "'descida' para a escravidão" ("descent' into slavery"); four centuries of domination, colonialism, and negation of the barbarous cannibal; four centuries of *not Tupi*.

Costa seems to revisit here the modern melancholy that makes the indigenous into a sort of symbolic object of what Freud called the "discontents" of civilization (in his 1930 *Das Unbehagen in der Kultur; Civilization and Its Discontents*). The cannibal expressed Costa's desire for a time before—or, rather, alternative to—beef, civilization, and clothing: "Portugal dressed the savage. It is imperative to undress him so that he can bathe in the 'happy innocence' that he lost and that the anthropophagic movement now restores for him" (Costa, 1928:8).⁵¹ Nevertheless, the anthropophagic utopia is neither retrograde nor melancholic. Costa—modern and Modernist—expressly rejects Primitivism and Romantic longing:

I think that a return to the natural state (what we desire) should not be confused with a return to a primitive state (which we do not care about). What we want is bare simplicity and not just a new code of simplicity. Naturalness, not manuals on good taste. Against canonical beauty, natural beauty—ugly, brute, savage, barbarian, illogical. Instinct against varnish. The savage without the glass beads of the catechism. The savage eating the Catechism (1928: 8).⁵²

The anthropophagic utopia appeals to notions of simplicity, the worthwhile decodification of culture and art, and the decolonization of thought: "the savage eating the Catechism." Costa is not interested in the impossible "return" to a primitive state. His utopia is, thus, that of the future: it corresponds to the imagination of an other-modernity of Brazilian culture that, faced with "Western Civilization," resists by eating.

"WESTERNIZED BRAZIL"

Oswaldo Costa's Antropofagia is not just an "effort to outsmart rhetorically the dialectic of dependency," as Neil Larsen has said of Andrade's work. Costa represents a singular case among the intellectuals of the Antropofagia group. He—not Andrade—restates the problem of the *coloniality* of Latin American Western modernity and its Nheengahiba "peace" with *other* (or barbarous) *temporalities*. Of course, we are talking about the relatively poetic and polysemic declarations of a Modernist manifesto. In Costa's Antropofagia, there is more interpretive insight than systematic theory.⁵³ But even so, of all the participants of Antropofagia, Costa is the one who insists most emphatically on a countercolonial rereading of history. In "A Much Needed Correction" ("Revisão necessária")—a text included in the first issue of the second *dentição* of the *Revista*—Costa insists on the necessity of revising the history of Brazil. He reproaches Brazilian historiography for relying on isolated incidents and anecdotes and for being submitted to the Eurocentric cultural and religious values and mindset of the ruler ("mentalidade Reinol"). He calls for the appropriation and re-signification of the history of the victors: a "historical critique" ("crítica histórica") that transcends the narrative told "from the point of view, a false one, [...] of the West" (1929a: 1). "Westernized Brazil" is, he argues, "a case of historical pseudomorphosis (see Spengler). Only Anthropophagy can solve it. How? By eating it."⁵⁴ Costa cites Oswald Spengler's notion of *historical pseudomorphosis*, a term Spengler borrows from mineralogy, where it refers to the formation of certain crystals beneath the external form of others. A pseudomorph is a false form, a misleading exteriority (Julia Jackson *et al.*, 2005: 523). Spengler discusses *historical pseudomorphosis* in the chapter on "Problems of the Arabian Culture" in *The Decline of the West* (Vol. II). He uses the concept to explain cultural transformation and the corresponding subsistence and resistance of a culture dominated by another:

By the term "historical pseudomorphosis" I propose to designate those cases in which an older alien Culture lies so massively over the land that a young Culture, born in this land, cannot get its breath and fails not only to achieve pure and specific expression-forms, but even to develop fully its own self-consciousness. All that wells up from the depths of the young soul is cast in the old moulds, young feelings stiffen in senile works, and instead of rearing itself up in its own creative power, it can only hate the distant power with a hate that grows to be monstrous (Spengler, 1928 [1923]:189, Translated by Atkinson).

Costa's Spengler appears almost as a countercolonial critic of European imperialism; surely this is not the same Spengler who laments the decline of the West. For Costa, *historical pseudomorphosis*—à la Spengler—has to do with one of his central preoccupations: the Eurocentric formation of Brazilian culture; or, amounting to the same thing, the "deformity" of national culture when it is con-

ceived of as an epiphenomenon or defective copy of Europe. Cannibalism, Costa argues, responds to the colonial dilemma of *historical pseudomorphosis*: “How? By eating.” In other words, faced with the “discontent” of the false, teratological form of the “artificial” and “inauthentic,” Costa proposes *deglutição* (“swallowing”) to finish off the problem, dissolving the difference between what is one’s own and what is foreign.⁵⁵

Costa finds in cannibalism—precisely the trope that is inseparable from the *othering* of America and the axis of colonialism’s discursive machine—an Other modernity: cannibal modernity. Thus it is in Oswald Costa—and not so much in Oswald de Andrade—that we can catch sight of a decolonizing thought within Antropofagia, a cultural “emancipation” through consumption. I do not believe that Costa’s Antropofagia puts forth a “triumphalist interpretation of our backwardness” (“interpretação triunfalista de nosso atraso”), as Schwarz says of Andrade’s Modernism of the 1920s. In Costa, we find, rather, a utopian cannibal critique of colonial modernity articulated from the asynchronous and anomalous national experience of said modernity.

Costa’s Antropofagia is certainly culturalist, advanced from within the lettered city; nevertheless, it represents—through its insistent counter-colonialism—a contrast with many of his contemporaries’ rhetorical answers to the dialectics of neocolonial cultural dependency. Furthermore, Costa poses a serious challenge to the frivolity and political vacuity of several articulations of Antropofagia today, when it becomes a corporate slogan, triumphantly declaring the supposed cannibal identity of a globalized Brazil without acknowledging the excluded, the *Sem Terra* (the Landless), the Brazil of unbelievable favelas—the Brazil in which colonialism persists.⁵⁶ If Antropofagia has become a sort of a jack of all trades, it is because with its canonization as a quasi-postmodern theory of consumption it has been emptied of politics, ignoring actual countercolonial formulations such as Oswald Costa’s, in which the political imagination of a transmodern utopia comes to the fore.

Costa represents an alternative voice that has been unfairly ignored by critics of Brazilian Modernism and marginalized from national cultural history. Not only did Costa cleverly address the still unresolved conflict of being part of Western colonial modernity, he delved into the conflicting experience of peripheral Occidentalism. Costa also advanced, as no other antropofagista did, a decolonizing thought that dared to challenge the Eurocentric monologue and the colonial (and certainly, as he put it, “idiotic”) formulas that still define the modern myths of civilization and progress.

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For Joshua Lund and David Solodkow, Cannibals.

Translated by Juliet Lynd

NOTES

- 1 “É difícil dizer no que consiste exatamente a Antropofagia, que Oswald nunca formulou, embora tenha deixado elementos suficientes para vermos embaixo dos aforismos alguns princípios virtuais, que a integram numa linha constante [...]: a descrição do choque de culturas”. All translations are ours unless otherwise noted.
- 2 Antropofagia has been associated with emancipatory reinscription and postcolonial “mimicry” (*à la* Homi Bhabha), and it is often referred to as an anti-colonial proposal or an attempt at decolonization and cultural emancipation from colonialism and Eurocentrism (see for example Rodríguez-Núñez, 2003: 1095-1109; Giuseppe Cocco, 2008: 57-74; Else Vieira, 1999: 95-113). Eduardo Viveiros de Castro maintains that Antropofagia is “the most original meta-cultural theory ever produced in Latin America to the present day and the only anti-colonial contribution that we have produced” (Viveiros de Castro, 2008: 25). In Lúcia Sá’s estimation, “Andrade transformed Tupi ritualistic cannibalism into a statement of postcolonial cultural appropriation” (2004: xx). Likewise, Lesley Wylie notes that for Antropofagia, cannibalism is a process much like the recycling, criolization and parody of imperial tropes “to produce the founding fictions of the postcolonial nation,” and she argues that these strategies “resemble techniques in postcolonial writing outside the Americas. Bhabha for instance” (2009: 16, 17). Roberto Fernández-Retamar corrects his 1971 essay *Caliban* to include Andrade in his list of the Calibans of his intellectual genealogy: “in 1971 I was not yet aware of his work [...]. When I began to familiarize myself with the work of this Brazilian, I incorporated him into my own writing” (“en 1971 yo desconocía aún su obra [...]. Cuando empecé a familiarizarme con la faena

- del brasileño, lo incorporé en mis páginas” (2000: 140). Andrade’s “Manifesto Antropófago” even appears alongside work by Aimé Césaire and Frantz Fanon in the *Postcolonialism* reader edited by Diana Brydon (2002: 409-417). Maria Luisa Nunes uses the same criteria in “Whole: Literary Strategies of Decolonization in the Works of Jean Rhys, Frank Fanon and Oswald de Andrade” (1985: 28-33).
- 3 As I have argued elsewhere, “The majority of critics have placed Antropofagia in the paradigm of synthesis and they compare it—although not always explicitly—to what Fernando Ortiz called *transculturation* (1940). [...] Both Antropofagia and transculturation served as model metaphors of integration between the national vernacular culture, modernizing impulses, and “external” influences (as in Angel Rama’s *ars combinatorio*); both tropes have functioned as discursive tools of identification and cultural self-perception within modernity; and both defined the role of the intellectual as a modernizing cultural agent or mediator (*antropófago*, transculturador, cultural translator, etc.)” (Jáuregui, 2008: 429). Haroldo de Campos, for example, maintains that with Antropofagia one thinks the national dialogically as “transculturation; better yet, a ‘transvaloration’” (“transculturação; melhor ainda, uma ‘transvaloração’” (1981: 11; 1987: 45-53). For Augusto de Campos, Antropofagia constitutes “the only original Brazilian philosophy and, in some ways, the most radical of the literary movements we have produced” (“a única filosofia original brasileira e, sob alguns aspectos, o mais radical dos movimentos literários que produzimos”) (1978: 124). Silviano Santiago sees in Antropofagia a kind of deauthorization of the hierarchical distinction between the “original” and the copy and between the center and the periphery (1978: 20, 26). Eloisa Barbosa and Lia Whyler argue that Antropofagia is a Latin American theory of translation (1998: 326-332).
 - 4 The modernist task, as Andrade put it in an earlier manifesto, was to synchronize the outdated clock (“Acertar o relógio”) of national culture (literature and the arts) without surrendering Brazilian cultural specificity (“Manifesto de Poesia Pau Brasil” [“Manifesto of Brazilwood Poetry”] 1924). For Antropofagia the synchronizing mechanism was cultural cannibalism, as the cannibal represented both incorporation of the foreign but also the affirmative resistance of local difference.
 - 5 Cultural consumption was not “proposed” in Andrade’s “Manifesto” though: it was elaborated elsewhere. For example, in an interview on May 18, 1928, contemporaneous to the “Manifesto,” Andrade notes: “We should assimilate all of the stillborn aesthetic tendencies of Europe, assimilate them, elaborate on them, in our subconscious, and produce a new thing, our thing” (“Devíamos assimilar todas as natimortas tendencias estéticas de Europa, assimilá-las, elaborá-las, em nosso subconsciente, e produzirmos coisa nova, coisa nossa”: 1990d: 44). In the second issue of the *Revista* he is quoted in an editorial note: “Antropofagia is the beginning of the intellectual and moral nationalization of our tribe” (“Antropofagia é o principio da nacionalização intelectual e moral de nossa tribo” (*RA* 2nd: 4).
 - 6 Given anthropophagy’s specific cultural practices (within the agenda of an aesthetic revolution promoted by a cosmopolitan bourgeoisie) and its disconnect from any social movement or actual decolonization effort (particularly the labor movement and indigenous resistance), the characterization of this movement as postcolonial seems unsubstantiated (Jáuregui, 2008; 2012: 24-26).
 - 7 The frequent identification of Antropofagia with one single author, Oswald de Andrade, relegates other collaborators to a secondary position. This includes Tarsila de Amaral, whose painting *Abaporu* (1928) could be considered the first anthropophagous manifesto in visual form. This painting inspired Andrade and other modernists to found the Antropofagia movement. According to Aracy Amaral, Tarsila gave *Abaporu* to Andrade for his birthday (January 11, 1928) (2003: 279). The title, *abaporu*, is a combination of the Tupi words *aba* (man) and *poru* (he eats) to produce man-eater. *Abaporu* imposes the presence of a voluminous naked body with a tiny head against a blue background, next to a cactus. It was from this image of a sensual nude cannibal with a small head assuming the pose of Auguste Rodin’s *Le Penseur* (*The Thinker* 1882), that Andrade’s idea emerges to recuperate the colonial image of Brazil as a Canibalia. Tarsila would return to this pictorial motif in her illustration of the “Manifesto Antropófago” (1928) and in an oil painting she did in 1929 titled *Antropofagia* (Jáuregui, 2008: 410, 411).
 - 8 The term *Occidentalism* refers to both a general field and a heterogeneous storyline of the dominant discourses of the modern/colonial world system. This discursive field produces not only the invention of barbaric peripheries (Africa, America, etc.), but also of the West itself as a privileged space-time construction. Occidentalism accounts for the configuration of Europe and later of the United States as geopolitical hegemonic entities; according to this discursive field, the history of the rest of the world must be synchronized to the history of the West. Furthermore, Occidentalism selectively claims the civilizing mission for the West, brandishes the signifier of race as a key to classify humanity, and opposes civilization to a humanity that is archaic, pre-rational, and degenerate (Mignolo, 2000).
 - 9 Telê Porto Ancona Lopez kindly consulted Antônio Cândido about Costa on my behalf (July 2000). Cândido, who knew Costa, remembers him as somewhat short and chubby, vehement, and always talking about politics: “I don’t know what happened to him. One of his daughters was a librarian in the School of Economics at USP [Universidade de São Paulo] [...] his other daughter was a famous stage actress whom everyone has since forgotten. An injustice has been committed with Costa, the great forgotten one” (“no sé que pasó con él. Una de sus hijas fue bibliotecóloga de la facultad de economía de la USP... la otra, una actriz de teatro famosa que ya todo el mundo olvidó. Se ha cometido una injusticia con Costa, el gran olvidado”). Cândido himself has contributed to the collective forgetting of Costa, leaving him out of his histories of Brazilian literature and his analyses of Modernism. I have been unable to locate Costa’s daughters. Maria Eugênia Boaventura, expert in the *Revista* and in Anthropophagic Modernism says: “I don’t know much about Oswald Costa either. Just that he was friends with Oswald and connected to the Communist Party after 1930” (“Não sei muita coisa também sobre Oswald Costa. Apenas que foi amigo de Oswald e ligado ao Partido Comunista depois de 1930”) (personal communication; 2004).
 - 10 See Unruh (1994: 272-273, notes 11 and 13 of Chapter 3) and Stam (1992: 249).
 - 11 Information on Oswald Costa’s life is surprisingly scarce. This brief biographical summary of some of the information I have collected since 1999 does not pretend to be complete or to support a textual hermeneutics; it simply offers a minimal sketch of an unjustly forgotten *antropofagista*.
 - 12 Referring to the first *dentição* of the *Revista de Antropofagia*, Oswald de Andrade stated: “There was no renovation, there was orthodoxy. Alcântara did not understand the meaning of the movement. He thought it was just a prank and for months he published amusing futilities. Evidently I was wrong to have him invited to direct the *Revista*.” This situation had changed by the second *dentição*: “Now things are quite different”—Oswald writes to Drummond—“Raul Bopp and Oswald Costa, reliable and authentic *Cunhambebes*, are running [the *Revista*]” (“não houve transformação e sim ortodoxia. O Alcântara não entendeu o sentido do movimento. Pensou que era troça e publicou durante meses inutilidades amenas. Evidentemente errei em tê-lo convidado para dirigir a revista. Agora a coisa é outra. Estão à frente Raul Bopp e Oswald Costa, cunhambebes autênticos e leais”; Drummond de Andrade, 1986: 101).
 - 13 The full quote reads: “Short, dark, clean-shaven, the editorial writer for the *Correio Paulistano* [i.e. Costa], did not linger on deliberations; he was very objective and when he spoke in the editorial committee he settled any question that was on the table for discussion. It was he who articulated the [editorial] decisions and formulated a serious critique [in the *Revista*], as if it were a well-established publication [...]. Oswald Costa is the one who laid the foundation of the anthropophagic barbecue in

- the theoretical ‘grills’ he began publishing. [...] And ‘The Grill’ [the regular column] became famous thanks to the acrid theorizing of Osvaldo Costa” (“Baixo, moreno, muito escanhoado, o editorialista do *Correio Paulistano* [i.e., Costa], não se demorava em considerações; era muito objetivo e quando falava liquidava qualquer questão que estava na mesa de discussões do comitê da redação. Era ele quem expressava as resoluções e fazia uma crítica séria, como si se tratasse de uma publicação muito orientada [...]. Osvaldo Costa é que dera a base ao asado antropofágico, nos “moquéns” teorizadores, que começaram a publicar. [...] E “moquém” celebrou-se através da teorização acre de Osvaldo Costa”; Geraldo Ferraz, 1983: 52, 53).
- 14 Geraldo Ferraz recalls that Costa “was in the [Communist] Party, participated in the Party. He was persecuted, fleeing, and, I don’t know why, he ended up in Rio de Janeiro. [...] He has since passed away” (“Esteve no Partido, participou do Partido. Andou sendo perseguido, fugindo e, não sei por que, foi parar no Rio de Janeiro. [...] Ele já faleceu”; in Boaventura, 1985: 209). See also Figueiredo de Castro (2002: 359, 381) and Soares dos Santos (2009: 410).
 - 15 The *Jornal do Povo* closed when Torelly was kidnapped and threatened by Marine officers. This post-anthropophagous adventure in journalism is reminiscent of a similar undertaking by Oswald de Andrade and Patrícia Galvão (1910-1962), who together founded and edited the also short-lived *O Homem do Povo* (1931).
 - 16 *Correio da Manhã*, 14 August 1936: 8; *Gazeta de notícias*, 16 July 1936: 12; 15 August 1936: 7; *Correio da Manhã*, 25 November 1936: 3, 5; 16 December 1936: 7; 24 February 1937: 3; 20 March 1937: 7.
 - 17 *A Batalha*, 25 June 1937: 2; *Correio da Manhã*, 8 June 1937: 12.
 - 18 *Correio da Manhã*, 29 July 1937: 3; *Gazeta de Notícias* 29 August 1937: 3. Costa appealed the sentence by proxy, but it was upheld in January 1938 (*A Batalha*, 15 January 1938: 2; *Gazeta de Notícias*, 15 January 1938: 3).
 - 19 *A Noite*, 23 April 1940: 1, 3; *Correio da Manhã*, 23 April 1940: 3; *Diário da noite*, 23 April 1940: 3, 6; *Diário de notícias*, 23 April 1940: 1; 26 April 1940: 3. When Costa turned himself in, he publically renounced his party affiliation: “Infinitely disillusioned, I hereby end my revolutionary activity” (“Termino aqui a minha ação revolucionária com um infinito desencanto”) (*Diário da noite* 23 April 1940: 3). Costa had been ratted out by one of his comrades.
 - 20 *A Manhã*, 8 January 1942: 13; *Diretrizes*, 2 April 1942: 5.
 - 21 *Jornal do Brasil*, 13 May 1967: 16; *Diário de notícias*, 17 May 1967, 2nd section: 3.
 - 22 The renewed interest in Andrade and his subsequent canonization was largely thanks to the premier of his play *O rei da vela* (1937), directed by José Celso Martinez Corrêa (September 1967).
 - 23 Andrade’s “Manifesto” is also an anti-rationalist and paradoxical text that offers poetic digressions and surreal imagery over propositions (Jáuregui, 2008: 429, 430; 2012: 22-28; see also Madureira: 2011: 13-33).
 - 24 In a characteristic surrealist move, Costa produces a *defamiliarization* or *ostranenie* of the signifier “Descida.” As Victor Shklovsky indicated, the technique of art is to make familiar objects “strange” or “unfamiliar,” increasing the difficulty and length of perception, making them anew, as if we were seeing them for the first time (1988 [1917]: 15-30).
 - 25 “Deus apagou tudo, para começar de novo. Foi inteligente, [...]. Mas teve uma fraqueza: deixou Noé. O movimento antropófago—que é o mais serio depois do Dilúvio—vem para comer Noé. **NOÉ DEVE SER COMIDO**” (Costa, 1928: 8).
 - 26 “Os PEROS que ainda existem entre nós hão de sorrir por seus dentes de ouro o sorriso civilizado de que, reagindo contra a cultura, estamos dentro da cultura. Que besteira. O que temos não é cultura européa: e experiencia dela. Experiencia de quatro séculos. Dolorosa e páo. Com Direito Romano, canal de Veneza, julgamento synthetico a priori, Tobias, Nabuco e Ruy. O que fazemos é reagir contra a civilização que inventou o catalogo, o exame de consciencia e o crime de defloramento. SOMOS JAPY ASSU.” We translate *PEROS* (literaly Peters) as “PORTUGUESE.” Costa is referring more precisely to those Brazilians who consider themselves Portuguese or European.
 - 27 “[B]rasileiros e latino-americanos fazemos constantemente a *experiência* do caráter postiço, inautêntico, imitado da vida cultural que levamos [...], sentimento da contradição entre a realidade nacional e o prestígio ideológico dos países que nos servem de modelo.”
 - 28 Note Costa’s mockery of jurists like Joaquim Nabuco, Tobias Barreto and Ruy Barbosa as well as of the Kantian *a priori synthetic judgment*.
 - 29 In 1917 several young writers had defended Malfatti’s work against the conservative attacks of critic Bento Monteiro Lobato (1882-1948). This debate fostered a certain group spirit among the young Modernists and encouraged the desire for cultural synchrony with European Modernity that would later come to fruition in the 1922 *Semana de Arte Moderna*.
 - 30 In “A ‘Descida’ Antropófaga,” Costa refers to these paintings probably without having seen them and having heard about them only second hand (from Mario de Andrade). In September 1928 Malfatti returned to São Paulo, where she showed both paintings in her solo exhibition in February 1929.
 - 31 “[O] mal dos nossos escritores é estudar o Brasil do ponto de vista falso, da falsa cultura e da falsa moral do ocidente. A mentalidade reinol, de que não se libertaram.”
 - 32 “[F]icou no acidental, no acessório, limitou-se a uma simples revolução estética—cosa horrível—quando sua função era criar no Brasil o pensamento novo brasileiro. [...] Continuamos, ainda depois, escravos do Ocidente, escravos do catolicismo, escravos da cultura européa caindo de pôdre. [...] A nossa historia continuo a ser escrita com as patranhas dos padres [...]. Pensamento novo não creamos. Continuou o pensamento velho de importação. Comido pela broca do Ocidente. O grande erro dos modernistas foi esse. A preocupação estética exclusiva. [...] Eles não compreenderam que todo era preciso vir abaixo. A falsa arte. A falsa [h]istoria. [...] Não compreenderam as cruzadas, as guerras, as lutas econômicas. [...] Aceitaram uma porção de fórmulas idiotas: que isto é civilização; e aquilo é progresso.”
 - 33 On the contrary, Oswald de Andrade usually embraced those formulas (the myth of *progress*, in particular) in the 1920s as well as in his later essays on Anthropofagia written in the 1940s and 1950s.
 - 34 As I have discussed elsewhere, Romantic Indianism exalted the postcolonial Indian collaborator (i.e. José de Alencar’s Indian protagonists Iracema or Peri), while the Modernist Neo-Indianism symbolically identified with the defiant Indian (Jáuregui, 2008: 415).
 - 35 The speech is documented by the Capuchin missionary Claude d’Abbeville in his *Histoire de la mission des pères capucins en l’isle de Maragnan et terres circonvoisins*: “This venerable old man Japi-açu was marvelously attentive to the aforementioned speech, as were all of the other Indians present, and he responded thus: ‘I am extremely pleased to see you and I will never go back on my word. I’m so surprised, however, that you Fathers do not desire women. Have you descended from Heaven? Are you born to a man and a woman? What? Are you not mortal like us? From whence do you come that not only do you not take women like the other Frenchmen who have done business with us for the last forty-some years; but you also now impede your friends from helping themselves to our daughters, which for us would be a great honor, for they could have children?’ (“Ce venerable vieillard Japi Ouassou fut merveilleusement attentif, comme tous les autres Indiens lá presens aux discours susdicts á quoi il replique ce qui s’ensuit. [...] Je m’esionis extremement de vous voir et me manqueray á tout ce ievous ay promis. Mais ie me estonne comme il se peut faire que vous autres PAY ne vouliez pas de femmes. Estes vous descendus du Ciel? Estes nays de Pere et Mere? Quay donc! n’estes pas mortels comme nous? D’ou vient que non seulement vous ne prenez pas de femmes ainsi que les autres François que ont trafiqué avec nous depuis quelque quarante et tant d’années; mais encore que vous

- les empechez maintenant de se servir de nos filles: ce que nous estimions a grand honneur et grandeur, pouvans en avoir des enfant?"; Claude d'Abbeville, "Histoire de la Mission des Pères Capucins en l'Isle de Maragnan et terres circonvoicines"; quoted in Costa, 1928: 8).
- 36 "Contra o servilismo colonial, o tacape inheiguára, 'gente de grande resolução e valor e totalmente impaciente de sujeição' (Vieira), o heroísmo sem roseta de Comendador dos carahybas, 'que se opuseram a que Diogo de Lepe desembarcasse, investindo contra as caravelas e reduzindo o numero de seus tripulantes' (Santa Rosa - 'Historia do Rio Amazonas'). Ninguém se illuda. *A paz do homem americano com a civilização européia é a paz nheengahiba.*"
- 37 This weapon is also known as *iwera pemme*.
- 38 By referring to Costa's challenge to the national archive, I am not implying or assuming the existence of a constant, static, already present repository; I am pointing out a hegemonic series of narratives and images that, according to Costa, support and reenact colonialism and the false distinction between civilization and barbarism, obscuring countercolonial resistance. In other words, Costa quotes / reads / devours hegemonic historical texts within the fractures of their colonial teleology. Certainly, by re-reading classics of Brazilian history, such as father Vieira's letters, Costa does not move into alternative forms of non-hegemonic epistemic systems or—as Diana Taylor calls them—*repertoires* of embodied knowledge. Costa's is a cannibal reader, but one who nonetheless sits at the table of the *Lettered City*.
- 39 According to Cardoso Moraes: "In Pará the works of Friedrich Ratzel (1844-1904) circulated along with those of older authors such as Friedrich Humboldt (1769-1859) and Carl Ritter (1779-1859), who at the time were considered pioneers of German geopolitics, later taken up by Karl Haushofer (1869-1946). It is worth noting that both geography and political science as practiced at the time in Germany and Switzerland turned toward a reading of the State as a fundamental political agent in the definition of space, territory, and the natural resources of the nation. In other words, it is possible to affirm that Geopolitics was consolidated, in the first decades of the twentieth century, as a study in strategy, manipulation, and action of the so-called Nation States" ("Circulava no Pará, os trabalhos de Friedrich Ratzel (1844-1904) e autores mais antigos como Friedrich Humboldt (1769-1859) e Carl Ritter (1779-1859), nomes então apontados como os pioneiros nos da geopolítica alemã, que mais tarde seria retomada por Karl Haushofer (1869-1946). Importante notar que tanto a geografia como a ciência política que se praticava então na Alemanha e na Suécia voltavam-se para a leitura do Estado como agente político fundamental na definição do espaço, do território e dos recursos naturais de uma nação. Em outras palavras, é possível afirmar que a geopolítica se consolidou, nas primeiras décadas do século XX, como o estudo da estratégia, da manipulação, da ação dos chamados Estados Nacionais" (Cardoso Moraes, 2011: 1).
- 40 Costa quotes this text from Santa Rosa's *Historia do Rio Amazonas* (1926: 75).
- 41 As indicated elsewhere, "territorial devastation, slavery, genocide, plundering, and exploitation name just some of the most immediate and notorious consequences of colonial expansion. Social and class relations were shaped by what Sergio Bagú called the 'omnipresent violence' of the colonial reality" (Moraña, Dussel and Jáuregui 2008: 2).
- 42 "Ninguém se illuda. A paz do homem americano com a civilização européia é paz nheengahiba. Está no Lisbôa: 'aquella aparatosa paz dos nheengahibas não passava de uma verdadeira impostura, continuando os bárbaros no seu antigo theor de vida selvagem, dados á antropofagia como dantes, e baldos inteiramente da luz do evangelho.'[...] Como se vê, facilimo ser antropophago. Basta eliminar a impostura."
- 43 In a letter dated February 11, 1660, the "pacifying" Jesuit wrote to the King, referencing the treaty: "By this means, the Crown and your Majesty's estates prospered, because those who consider the success of this enterprise, with their eyes not only on heaven but also on earth, are certain that on this day the conquest of the Maranhão Region was completed, because with the Nheengahibas as enemies, Pará would fall to any foreign nation that would unite with them; and with the Nheengahibas as vassals and as friends, Pará is safe, and impenetrable to any alien power" ("por este meio accresceram a coroa e estados de vossa magestade, porque os que consideram a felicidade desta empreza, não só com os olhos no céu, senão também na terra, tem por certo que neste dia se acabou de conquistar o Estado do Maranhão, porque com os nheengaibas por inimigos seria o Pará de qualquer nação estrangeira que se confederasse com elles; e com os nheengaibas por vassallos e por amigos, fica o Pará seguro, e impenetrável a todo o poder estranho"; A. Vieira 1854-1855 [1660]: 1: 90).
- 44 "A América Latina institui seu lugar no mapa da civilização ocidental graças ao movimento de desvio da norma, ativo e destruidor, que transfigura os elementos feitos e imutáveis que os europeus exportavam para o Novo Mundo."
- 45 "Foram estas as consequências dos versos ruimzinhos que Anchieta escreveu na areia de Ithanhaen: Ordenações do Reino, gramática e ceia de Da Vinci na sala de jantar. E não houve ainda quem comesse Anchieta!"
- 46 The original in Latin: "En tibi quae vovi, Mater Sanctissima, quondam / Carmina, cum saevo cingerer hoste latius. / Dum mea Tamuyas praesentia mitigat hostes, / Tractoque tranquillum pacis inermis opus" (1997 [ca. 1563]: 22).
- 47 By the turn of the twentieth century, beef was a common source of protein for the urban middle classes and the elites, but for the popular classes, beef, or at least fresh beef, remained an expensive luxury.
- 48 I have borrowed from Coronil's remarkable analysis of the use of commodities as material metaphors in Fernando Ortiz's *Contrapunteo*.
- 49 "National frozen- and chilled-beef exports increased dramatically, from a negligible 1.5 tonnes in 1914 to over 65,000 tonnes by 1917. [...] B]y 1919 the industry was firmly established and would become a significant economic sector over the following decades" (Robert Wilcox 2013: 76). Brazil soon becomes one of the major beef suppliers within the international division of labor. For a detailed historical account of this economic transformation and the emergence and modernization of the beef industry in Brazil see Joana Medrado Nascimento (2013).
- 50 "30.000.000 de bois são uma coisa estupenda, um reservatório inesgotável, uma riqueza colossal, um... faltam palavras para objetivar, para traduzir a evocação na mente estupefata, deste formidável rebanho, deste 60.000.000 de chifres ameaçadores, destes 120.000.000 de quartos de bois impacientes de serem congelados e enviados aos famintos de lá, longe, na velha e pobre Europa" (in Medrado Nascimento 2013: 13, 14).
- 51 "Portugal vestiu o selvagem. Cumpre despil-o para que ele tome um banho daquela 'inocencia contente' que perdeu e que o movimento antropophago agora lhe restitui." Oswald de Andrade's poem "Portuguese Error" similarly declares that the Portuguese clothed the Indian because they arrived on rainy day, and that if it had been sunny out that day, the reverse would have happened (Andrade, 1978: 177).
- 52 "Penso que não se deve confundir volta ao estado natural (o que se quer) com volta ao estado primitivo (o que não interessa). O que se quer é simplicidade e não um novo código de simplicidade. Naturalidade, não manuaes de bom tom. Contra a beleza canônica, a beleza natural - feia, bruta, agreste, bárbara, ilógica. Instincto contra o verniz. O selvagem sem as missangas da catechese. O selvagem comendo a catechese."
- 53 Costa swore off "pure reason" ("a razão pura") and "rationalist preconceptions" ("preconceito racionalista"), and he affirmed that the West had "reached the limits of reason" ("chegou aos limites da razão") (1929d: 9).
- 54 "Brasil ocidentalizado é, por tanto, um caso de pseudomorfose histórica (Consulte-se Spengler). Só a antropofagia consegue resolvê-lo. Como: comendo-o" (Costa, 1929a: 1).

- 55 I am not talking about an ontological difference, but rather a difference ultimately constituted by coloniality.
- 56 For example, the *XXIV Bienal de São Paulo* (1998) commemorated Antropofagia with an ostentatious exposition, choosing cannibalism as its historical nucleus and Andrade's famous anthropophagic "proposal" as its conceptual axis. Thanks to a notable simplification of this Modernist cultural metaphor, the Biennial articulated an eclectic postmodern collage that celebrated the supposed cannibal identity of a globalized Brazil (Jáuregui 2008: 548-551).

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