



Lasar Segall (1891-1957), Retrato de Mário de Andrade (1927).  
(oil on canvas). Coleção MA, IEB.

# *Mário de Andrade and Brecheret: The Roots of Modernism*

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*For Marcos and Tatiana*

Mário de Andrade (1893-1945), the renowned polymath in Brazilian literature and culture, has an immensely rich trajectory as a journalist. Comprising articles, chronicles, essays, poems, short stories and novel excerpts, his journalistic production revolves around São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, in the wider press and in specialized periodicals; it does not spurn tabloids and branches out into occasional contributions to newspapers of other Brazilian cities. His journalistic production may be found in every journal of our Modernism; it takes up sections and columns, and also flourishes in newspaper series. His death on February 25, 1945, however, brought all this to an end. In the present essay – part of a longer one about the chronicles related to the creation of *Paulicea Desvairada* [Hallucinated City], in 1920-1921, I intend to focus on the strategies designed by those who aimed at celebrating the centenary of the Brazilian Independence, in 1922, endowing São Paulo Capital with a landmark of Modernism, the *Monumento às Bandeiras*, by sculptor Victor Brecheret. This goal is fostered by Mário de Andrade's journalistic texts, and they have been preserved in the archive as well as in the library that he organized.<sup>1</sup>

## **The beginnings in the documents of an archive**

Mário de Andrade's journalism started as early as 1915 when he was a student of the Conservatório Dramático e Musical [Drama and Music School] and where he was already teaching. In the writer's archive, two bulky albums of cuttings – in black leather and fabric-binding – classified in the series designated Features, taken from journals, preserve a small but meaningful part: critical reviews of literature and music, chronicles, short stories and poems, all written between 1915 and 1935. Opening this file in the first album there is a small article, “No Conservatório Dramático e Musical – Sociedade de Concertos Clássicos” [At the Drama and Music School –

Society of Classical Concerts], printed anonymously. The author, writing in black ink on the margin of the cutting, restores a timid initial “M” and points to the São Paulo newspaper *O Commercio*, of November 11, 1915; an isolated manifestation, it is followed subsequently, in July 1918, by the novice’s acting as a music reviewer and a chronicler at *A Gazeta*. The previous year Mário de Andrade had published under the *nom de plume* Mário Sobral, *Há uma gota de sangue em cada poema* [There is a blood drop in every poem], a pacifist and Christian-oriented book, where he sketched melodious verses and some innovating solutions. And that same 1917 he had been to Anita Malfatti’s modern painting exhibition, a turning point which consolidated in him the importance of the avant-garde movements in the arts in the twentieth century. Other cuttings, pasted in some chronological order on the album pages, reveal the gradual affirmation of a name and the opening of room for him in the 1918-1921 period. “Mário Moraes de Andrade”, “Mário de Moraes Andrade”, “Mário de Andrade” – or some such pen names as “Don José” – sign poems, chronicles, critical reviews and articles which come from black and white pages of large and small newspapers and often from colour printed pages, with *art deco* framings, or from magazines published in São Paulo, such as *Miscelânea*, *O Eco*, *A Cigarra*, *A Garoa*, and from Rio de Janeiro, such as *Ilustração Brasileira*. However, the texts taken from these magazines do not represent the writer’s full participation in them; in fact, a much larger number of his contributions can be found there during those years. This sampling, represented by the cuttings, confirms the pioneering research carried out by Mário da Silva Brito em 1955, in *História do modernismo brasileiro*, which places Mário de Andrade among the São Paulo *avant garde* writers, through the intense journalistic militancy starting in 1929 and intensifying in 1921, in favour of the Brazilian artistic renewal. Mário de Andrade – just like Menotti Del Picchia, Oswald de Andrade, Guilherme and Tácito de Almeida – undertakes the task of spreading the ideas that culminate in the *Semana de Arte Moderna* [Modern Art Week] in February 1922.

In the album, Mário de Andrade moves towards the São Paulo *avant garde* struggle can be traced in three chronicles in the series entitled “De São Paulo”, published between November 1920 and May 1921 in *Ilustração Brasileira*, a journal which is not a part of the author’s collection library.<sup>2</sup> The three of them focus on Brecheret; in the first one, in November 1920, the modernist, who in this case figures as a modern art researcher, knows how to bridge the art of the past in the same way that, in another series of the same year – ‘Religious art in Brazil’, published in the *Revista do Brasil*, when moving into the realm of the baroque, he embraced modernity. Absent from the black album, this first set of essay-type texts, written by one who will turn out to be an outstanding figure as a historian of our arts, stems from the research kindled by lectures given by architect Ricardo Severo in 1914-1915, at Sociedade de Cultura Artística. Such a hypothesis is founded on the separate text *A arte tradicional brasileira: a casa e o templo* [Traditional Brazilian Art: the house and the temple], with an autograph by the author,<sup>3</sup> and kept by the young journalist, who in June 1919, no doubt after much reading, had taken up the baroque of Minas Gerais. He had trodden churches, convents

and chapels; in the town of Mariana, he had assured Alphonsus de Guimaraens that he was getting ready to become a lecturer.<sup>4</sup> In November 1st, 1919, the *Cigarra* (the sixth issue, no. 123) had published “O Triunfo eucarístico de 1733 . . . (An extract from a lecture to be given at the Congregação da I[maculada] C[onceição] de Santa Efigênia)”, a paraphrase of a seventeenth century text which, repeated in January of the following year, introduces the four-article series in Paulo Prado’s and Monteiro Lobato’s journal. In these articles, the impressions of an imaginary traveller are mingled with a meticulous analysis, advancing that which in the 1940s the author would refer to as critical chronicles; in fact, they consist of an essay split into four parts – numbered 49, 50, 52 and 54 – of *Revista do Brasil*, issued in January, February, April and June 1920.

“Religious art in Brasil” is similar to the “De São Paulo” chronicles as regards the plethora of scholarship and some eagerness to draw the attention to a fresh modernist stance – flamboyant in the use of the Portuguese spoken in Brazil and in his valuing of our nationality. In this sense, besides defending the neocolonial Project, advocating less affected constructions and some adjustments to the climate, all this grounded in Severo’s lesson about our architecture, the series also criticizes the mixture of styles, an inconvenience which would give the Hallucinated City the looks of a European city. The columnist shows his interest in Gaudi’s projects and those of other contemporary European artists; at the same time he rejects the tacit imitation of the German secessionist geometry or the Italian Futurism. Later, perhaps wishing to republish, Andrade crosses out parts of the texts in his copies of the journal editions.<sup>5</sup> And on a side note of the first article he comments:

It is absolutely inconceivable how late and slow my intellect grew. This horrid lecture was written in 1918 ou 1919. I was already 26 or 25 years old. But what I see here is pedantic, heavy high-school writing, uncultured, but read with some dim sparkle of the original critical spirit, at the age of sixteen and the attendant pimples. (Kronbauer 15)

A dim sparkle for the merciless critic of himself, but a meaningful stage in the path of a modernist who, in February 1921, in the second chronicle “De São Paulo”, published in number 6 of *Ilustração Brasileira*, reiterates the ideas he had expressed in “A arte religiosa no Brasil” and his support of the campaign for the neocolonial style launched by Ricardo Severo.

### **Sculptor Brecheret in *Papel e Tinta* magazine**

Graphically very well devised, *Papel e Tinta* came to life in May 1920 and lasted until 1921. In São Paulo, it assembles writers and plastic artists, eager for contemporaneity, fraternizes with *Revista do Brasil* and also considers itself a periodical from Rio de Janeiro, the then Brazilian capital. *Papel e Tinta* is managed by Sociedade

Editora Non Ducor, Duco, or rather, friends who organize meetings and, together, write, illustrate, select paintings to be reproduced, and dig for advertisers. It acknowledges no editorial body and counts on Menotti Del Picchia for being its main ‘lever’. In literature, it relies on Del Picchia, Oswald de Andrade, Mário de Andrade, Guilherme de Almeida, who are modernized themselves, despite their style, undercut by strong marks of the past. Acclaimed names such as Gonzaga Duque, Cláudio de Souza and João do Norte (Gustavo Barroso) win readers. The magazine, which prints academic paintings and expands into *art nouveau*, *deco art*, chooses Becheret’s sculpture as its modernist “banner”. He is entrusted with the creation of the magazine’s logo. In 1920, the magazine reasserts the ideals of transformation in the constant presence of pictures of the works of *Eva*’s sculptor. Such images coexist with illustrations by Paim, which ennoble the pages though they do not overshadow the *art nouveau* element.

In number 2 issue, of June 1920, an article signed by Ivan, “Victor Brecheret”, in the Arts section, analyses sculptures; some pages further show *Eva*, *Ave Maria* and *Dorso*; no mention is made to *Monumento às Bandeiras*. Ivan claims state pension, or rather, a span of time in Paris to improve his skills and adds Brecheret to the “round of innovators”– Mestrovic, Bourdelle, Carl Millès and others. For Mário da Silva Brito (94),<sup>6</sup> the pseudonym conceals Oswald de Andrade. I, for one, think it has its origin in Mário de Andrade. This hypothesis of authorship is supported by the style, by the epigraph collected in Friar Luís de Sousa, by the sound knowledge of Art History, by the name Michelangelo being brazilianized to Miguel Anjo [Michael Angel] and, most importantly, by the religious sense that it conveys.

While the newspaper writer has selected the epigraph from Friar Luís de Sousa – “Nature has never been a miser in creating great talents, but many a time, the world lacks people to understand them”, in an allusion to the hostile reception given to Brecheret’s art – the São Paulo poet offers, along with another excerpt by the great Portuguese fifteenth-century writer, a poem of his own making, “Inspiração”, which counts as an invocation of his ‘muse’ in *Hallucinated City*, a landmark in Brazilian Modernism, in 1922. The epigraph “Where even in the power of summer there were gales and cold spells of freezing winter” sanctions the oscillations/contradictions of the São Paulo weather as a metaphor for the paradoxes and contradictions of this microcosmic city, which are transfigured in the poem written between 1920 and 1921:

São Paulo! The emotion of my life ...  
 All my affections are original blossoms...  
 Harlequin-like! ... losenge-patterned garment ... grey and gold ...  
 Light and haze ... oven and tepid winter ... (v. 1-4)  
 . . .  
 São Paulo! The emotion of my life ...  
 A gallicism howling in the deserts of America! (For Mário da Silva Brito 94, v. 8-9)<sup>7</sup>

In Modernism, Friar Luís de Souza’s presence corresponds to a prizing of the past as a “lesson to muse on, not to reproduce”, according to the “Prefácio Interessantíssimo” [A Very Interesting Preface] to *Hallucinated City* – a manifesto-like preface.



With Ivan, the manifestations of religiosity, carefully arranged in the text, can be approached to the lines of “Religião”, which in *Hallucinated City*, exclaim: “God! In Thou I believe! In Thy Scripture I believe!//Not that I could explain it myself, / for I received it from the hands of those who experienced the illuminations!”and condemn the hypocrisy of Catholic religious practice. In the 1920 article, Brecheret is announced as follows: “. . . for a couple of months back from Italy, where he went to learn the catechism of art,” and in the sequence, the analysis of one of his works, *Cabeça de Cristo* [Christ’s Head], done within the scope of the religious imaginary in Art History, culminates in an act of faith:

In that pensive stillness, in those preternatural lips, in the mouth rictus, in the ancient tresses, the artist succeeded in capturing with consummate skill the tragedies, the hopes, the divine sacrifice – a whole calvary of horrific immolations. Brecheret’s Christ is indeed God!

One may retort that Oswald de Andrade was also a Catholic. Religion, however, till that time, in 1920, had had no place in his writing – Differently, Mário de Andrade, in expressing his lyrical self in his book *There is a blood drop in each poem* and in the small articles in the Ecclesiastes column of *Miscelanea* magazine, in 1917; or in “Conto de Natal” [Christmas Story], of 1918, which was released in 1926, in *Primeiro Andar* [First Floor], stresses his Catholicism, guided by the notion of Charitas. And in “Prefácio Interessantíssimo” to *Hallucinated City* he states: “Those who cannot pray should not read / ‘Religion’.”

A diligent reader of Art History and Aesthetics, of which his library provides good evidence, Mário de Andrade, seeking support in the primitiveness professed by the European *avant garde* art movements, closes his considerations about Brecheret’s “*Monumento às bandeiras*”: “It is not a mirror; it is a living source of creation, astonishing in the coherence with which he merges the eloquent stylization of the symbol with the healthy innocence of the primitive people.”

As to the garish Michelangelo, translated into Miguel Anjo [Michael Angel], it is worth remembering Oswald de Andrade’s Christian name, brazilianized to Oswaldo in the “De São Paulo” chronicle of March 1921, and the names of Johan Sebastian Bach, Jean Epstein and Émile Bayard entered as João Sebastião, João e Emílio, respectively, in “Prefácio Interessantíssimo”.

Finally, to unveil Mário de Andrade, under the pseudonym of Ivan, suffice it to say that he was the very author of the commended piece in *Papel e Tinta*, as we may infer from his 1942 “The Modernist movement” lecture. In this sound balance of the achievements and the pitfalls of the renewal that was carried out, lies the acknowledgement of Brecheret’s art as the “trigger” that had brought “*Pauliceia desvairada/Hallucinated City* to light.” The testimony restores (or stages) this story: the poet had succeeded the hard way, financially speaking, in having Brecheret change into bronze the *Cabeça de Cristo* [Christ’s Head], the plaster version of which had thrilled him. A euphoric

modernist, when he presented it to his family, he was disappointed with the reception and, indignantly he could at last put pen to paper and write the modern poems which he had meant to write about his city and find the title for the book – *Hallucinated City*.

After I published such cogitations in 2004, in the issue of the chronicles *De São Paulo* chronicles, which I had organized, I expanded them in 2012, the first version of the present research in *Revista da USP*.<sup>8</sup> Later on, my colleague Tatiana Longo Figueiredo found out and sent me the document supporting such chronicles: the “Mário de Andrade” filing card, where the author enters all the titles he had published in *Klaxon* and *Papel e Tinta* magazines, but does not mention pseudonyms and signatures, besides sketches and poems.<sup>9</sup> Thus, by linking “Brecheret and pianists” to number 2 of *Papel e Tinta*, he becomes himself both as Ivan and the Mário Raul who in “Três personalidades diversíssimas” [Three very diverse personalities] is busy with recitals.<sup>10</sup>

In *Papel e Tinta*, the journalist does multiply himself. He comes to readers through his chronicles, sketches, plastic arts, cinema, literature and music reviews; he is Ivan, Mário Raul, Pedro de Alencar, Antonio Cabral, Sacy Pererê,<sup>11</sup> Mário de Andrade, Moraes Andrade and a nameless author, the uthorship noticeable either through the style or in autobiographical mentioning. The burden of the transition affects especially the chronicles and articles, in which advanced ideas, usage of Brazilian Portuguese, and neologisms merge into “belle époque” constructions or into clearly Parnassian over-refinement.

Indeed, Brecheret is useful to the promotion of the modernists considering the impact the presentness of his art had caused on them. Menotti Del Picchia, who, in *Correio Paulistano*, of January 15, 1920, had informed about that sculptor, who had been working all by himself in Palácio das Indústrias – still being built – in July 1920, focuses on him, especially in *Papel e Tinta*. In the third issue of the magazine, in the Arts section, the miniature model photographed confirms the descriptive memorial “O Monumento”, signed by Victor Brecheret, but, in fact, written by Del Picchia. The sculptor’s macaronic Portuguese required some stealthy working, and it was identified by Mário da Silva Brito, in *História do modernismo brasileiro* (106).

At that moment, the São Paulo scholars, who praised the invigorating force shown by Brecheret and had charged him with the task of devising some interpretation of the expeditions undertaken by the “trailblazers”, insist in the press so that the model could become stone and bronze, for the celebrations of our Independence. The motif, acclaimed in by Olavo Bilac’s poem “O Caçador de Esmeraldas” [The Emerald Hunter], reappears at Museu do Ipiranga in 1920. It is the object of a lecture by the institution diretor, Afonso de Taunay, who entrusts Luigi Brizzolara, a renowned academic artist, with making two statues of the trailblazers and an allegory of the Tietê river. At this very moment, the modernists, striving to produce genuinely national art, talk to Victor Brecheret and participate in the creation of the *Monumento às bandeiras*, a modest project, but a revolutionary one in terms of Brazil. In *Papel e Tinta*, the descriptive memorial does not hesitate to involve Taunay, an ally in the correlation of forces.

In the rear end, we place the Amphora which will hold water from the Tietê river, celebrated by the glory of the “monsoon” expeditions. It was Mr. Afonso de Taunay who gave us the suggestion for this topic:

‘To the national pattern which conjures up the glory of the “Trailblazing Expeditions” the presence of the Amphora with the Tietê waters shall bring the most powerful and most poetic note.’

Therefore, the journalist/editor and spokesman of the modernist ideals plays the double role of the analyst and the virtual creator by attributing to Brecheret the recognition of Taunay as a matrix for the creation of a part of the *Monumento*.

### **Modernism and an eclectic magazine**

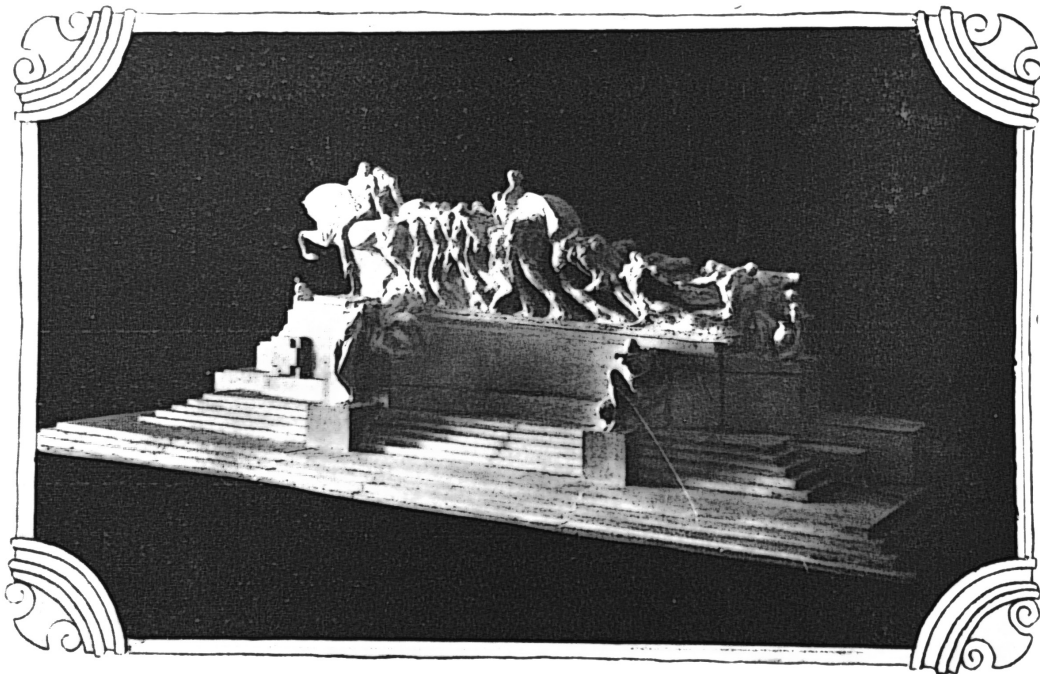
*Ilustração Brasileira* (with *ll* and *z*), the monthly magazine from Rio de Janeiro, with subscribers living beyond the Rio-São Paulo axis spreads the São Paulo modernist movement. Owned by the Sociedade Anônima O Malho, it makes a comeback in September 1920, its eighth year, after a break in February 1915, caused by World War I; it is limited to an urban Brazil and disregards social contradictions; its Secretary Director is Álvaro Moreira, who, in the sphere of Modernism, will make the Teatro de Brinquedo in 1927. An examination of the pages of that periodical neatly printed in coated paper detects in 1920 and 1921 a variety of sections, plentiful use of photographs, exquisite illustrations, many advertisements – some of them full-page ones, such as those of the children’s magazine *O Tico-Tico* and La Reina cigarettes – nicotine-free – trumpeted by a plump female beauty. In the twentieth century, progress is restricted to people at the beach, women wearing bathing caps and discreet swimming suits, girls in cotton dresses, fond of target practice; aviator Edu Chaves’ feat, the Ford and Studebaker automobiles, or similarly amenable events. Pedro II, the deposed emperor, King Albert from Belgium, queens and generals photographed – all this warrants the news; studio portraits of very elegant young ladies and ladies as well, of well-bred children guarantee a place for *Ilustração Brasileira* in the slice of society which it is addressed to; they spread the lustre of high society parties and give the “voyeur” reader a chance. As an art and culture monthly magazine, it is eclectic and timidly dates with the new century. In literature, it blends Parnassians and Symbolists. In the two years which I focus on, it is Álvaro Moreira, among the Rio de Janeiro writers that figures there, the one who takes risks with changes. As far as music and plastic arts are concerned, a Gallet’score coexists with pictures of Italian and German opera divas, full-page paintings by academic artists such as Lucilio de Albuquerque, Rodolfo Amoedo or Navarro da Costa, interspersed with the *art nouveau* of the magnificent drawings by Chin; in May 1921, a drawing by Di Cavalcanti is displayed. The space for the reproduction of a work by Rego Monteiro is minute.



## In Rio, with Mário and Brecheret

In September 1921, the relaunched issue of *Ilustração Brasileira* displays the picture of the miniature model of Brecheret's *Monumento às bandeiras*, which had been released in *Papel e Tinta* in July 1920, but was now in blue toning bath.<sup>12</sup> A descriptive memorial text in a new version and no signature, serves as its caption:

The central group, rhythmically driven so as to imply a trailblazing expedition moving on. The São Paulo members, led by Paes Leme, Antônio Pires, Borba Gato, move toward the mysterious back lands...<sup>13</sup>



Papel e Tinta – Monumento das Bandeiras 1

The inclusion of this feature mirrors in the Federal Capital the spreading of the 1920 campaign into *Correio Paulistano*, *Papel e Tinta*, *Revista do Brasil*, under Picchia's, Oswald de Andrade's, Di Cavalcanti's, and Lobato's pen; it even won the conservative Raul Polilo, as Mário da Silva Brito reports.<sup>14</sup>

The *Hallucinated City* avant-garde writers view *Monumento às bandeiras* both as a representation of the heroic trailblazing expeditions of the past and a synonym for a city and a state committed to modernity, ready to proclaim this syntony all over the country on the occasion of the Independence centenary. They want the miniature model to be made so as as to convey the message of a renewal in a public monument as was

the case in Europe. They are anxious to defy in this way the dominant conservatism in São Paulo society, which had officially validated the bronze-making of the *Monumento à Independência*, signed by Ettore Ximenes, the winner of the competition which in 1919 had lured only academic sculptors. In 1919, though they do not evoke it, our modernists had undoubtedly been to the exhibition of Impressionist artists paintings and Bourdelle, Rodin and Henri Laurens sculptures, which Paulo Prado, Freitas Vale and the French consul had organized in the lobby of Teatro Municipal (Camargos 107).

The author of *Hallucinated City* must, therefore, acclaim Brecheret's merit: he does not give up hope of seeing the *Monumento às bandeiras* challenging, in the city, Ximenes' work; it is crucial to secure some financing with the bourgeoisie. As the correspondent chronicler signing as "Mário de Andrade", he starts, as it is known, in November 1920, the "De São Paulo" series, which is published until May 1921, in *Ilustração Brasileira*. The long articles blend ironical report with analysis; they report and discuss History; they decode "purposes" – to extol the modern city, to urge a renewal in arts and literature. Irreverently and gracefully facts about the city and their explicit commitment are filtered in their impressions, and they make their commitment explicit.

In November 1920, the first "De São Paulo" is in its no. 3, eighth year, of *Ilustração Brasileira*, adorned with a vignette and an enhanced "B" in "belle époque", setting the decorative standard of the series. This is boldly done, without any fear of defining the city as "hermaphrodite". The events prove a large number of sensations and impressions in an attempt to convey through the listing – a prevailing resource – the urban dynamism which enthral the chronicler. These are texts by one who, although he is enamored of the city, does not ignore the cultural problems and who, along the series, will sharpen his criticism, yet without seeking the social contradictions, as does the poet of *Hallucinated City*, at that moment absorbed in the writing of his 1922 book. For the time being, the chronicler has found the semantic intensity of the adjective "hallucinated", in capturing the plurality of sensations, in the synesthesias. In *Ilustração*, he expresses his fascination for the twentieth century, with the metropolis which he belongs in, a "modernolatry" full of pride for São Paulo, free from worries about human suffering in modern cities, a main motif in Verhaeren and the German Expressionism, readings which, running in parallel, rouse the poet's awareness. The first "De São Paulo" blends an affectionate and lyrical contemplation with an analysis which feeds on Brecheret's memorial:

The whole São Paulo is excited about the approaching centenary celebrations.

Monuments spring up here and there, a flowering of heroic gestures; promenades have the ground painted with wide green towels, and gardens harmonize in engaging patterned sets of poetry and perfume. São Paulo is gracefully arrayed. São Paulo wants to be beautiful and appreciated. At last, the city has been inspired with a wish to please – and it really should be so.

The city of Amador Bueno is aggressive and mysterious; just like its heroes; its hidden beauties; seldom can a foreigner raise the heavy cloak of secret behind which it hides itself. With a traditional pride it has always guarded

itself – rudely, mediocally – like some Italian churches which under a weird and awkward appearance, conceal the austere sweetness of a Cimabue, of a Piero della Francesca or the rainbows of the Byzantine mosaics. Yet it is curious, vibrant, unique; and for its inveterate dweller, who loves and beholds, it offers such unprecedented suggestions as Mallarmé’s lines. It is said to be aloof ... It is said to be melancholy and dark ... But at this moment, when I am writing, November advances outside, hallucinated with perfume and flowers of many hues. I know of forsaken parks where the violin of the winds performs the saraband to which rose gardens respond with a wild dancing... I know of wonderful, unique things, which Pauliceia shows no one but me, her incorrigible lover and one who admires her hermaphrodite character... I will try to unveil her look, her gestures, so that she can be contemplated and understood. I might not be very successful. I start fantasizing that my land is like Olavo’s stars ... hard to understand...

An educated chronicler, the author makes reference to the old Italian art as if he had actually been in Italy; yet he did not even risk going beyond Santos, Itanhaém, the historic towns of Minas Gerais state and few other places in São Paulo countryside. This strain of the one who travels around his reading makes the “testimony” full of life.<sup>15</sup> Both a penumbra lover, who plays with Parnassianism, and a modernist who practises loose sentences, who thrills to the flavour of ellipses and musically approaches the poetics of *Hallucinated City*, built in the “Prefácio Interessantíssimo” at the end of 1921, the impressionist report starts from the outer space of the gardens and parks to introduce the anthropomorphized city, the Pauliceia. In it, the monument might celebrate the glory of the trailblazing expeditions, thus reinvigorating the artists Chagas, “Aleijadinho”, Master Valentim – leading figures in the Brazilian sculpture field, and join the master hands of such art in the European modernity – “Bourdelle, Lembruck, Carl Millès and Mestrovic”.

The informing mode is the forming mode. Brecheret’s Project does not undergo technical description; the chronicler does not photograph for his readers the exact distribution of the mass; he seeks the conception and, through the impressions which the miniature model unleashes in him, he does not spare adjectives to unfold, narrator that he is, the images that the composition arouses in him, and with simplicity blending it with the contribution of the critic.

Moreover, it is interesting to think that the São Paulo dweller who acclaims the “epopee” outlines, but does not deepen the contradictions of the trailblazing and monsoon expeditions; incidentally, Bilac, in the first part of the “O Caçador de Esmeraldas” recalls the Indian villages razed by the European conqueror. Commenting on the Victory, an allegory in the monumental group, the chronicle draws to a close:

And above the whole hover the mighty wings of glory, which knows neither fashion nor transience, but is eternal; for while there is one Brazilian in the backlands of this country, it will not forget these daring people who in the

green and black of the forests once undertook the enterprise of marking with an indisputable blood trail our vast inner boundaries.

In November 1920, Mário de Andrade, the chronicler, still had not attained the bitter and modern irony with which he would, as a poet, shape the overpowering lines of “Tietê”, in 1922, on the idealization of the trailblazer; lines which view Brecheret’s monument as a closure of the past and a sign of the present in the Brazilian metropolis of the twentieth century. Meanwhile, the chronicle mode is content to practise sarcasm targeting the academical sculptor and the monument which would irremediably represent the Independence in São Paulo capital: “The illustrious Mr. Ximenes, who came from afar, will disgrace the Ipiranga hill with his colossal Sèvres china centerpiece”

### **Brecheret in the São Paulo letters**

It is in December 1920 – issue number 4, year 8 of the magazine – that the “De São Paulo Chronicles”, defined as “letters to *Ilustração Brasileira*”, reveal their clear purpose of persuading, of publicizing the Modernist movement. As an epistolary form of narration of the events, they had approached the public just like Coelho Neto’s “reminders” in the past, or the Letters to Crispim, by Helios (Del Picchia’s pseudonym), since the beginning of October that year of 1920, in *Correio Paulistano*, centered on personalities of the modernist milieu<sup>16</sup>. An active correspondence, though, neither does it distinguish an interlocutor nor expects a direct reply. Written with a collective, anonymous addressee in mind, it aims, with such expedient – like Saint Paul’s epistles – at associating each reader of the magazine to one type of audience, an ideal community fragmented in an enlarged space – “this extremely wide Brazil” –, in its wish to stretch the reach of the message.

So it happens that the December chronicle, by reporting the Pauliceia’s cultural effervescence, opposes the contribution of those who are for a renewal to the response provoked in the provincial milieu; and it highlights Brecheret’s monument:

Now it is Mr. Taunay who shows up at the bookstores with his studies about the city’s early days, written in genuine Portuguese (the rococo-oriented ones hiccup); now it is Brecheret, in his turn, who displays the project for the “Monumento aos Bandeirantes”; the people’s national anthem (the Canovas-oriented stomp) is sung; now it is Di Cavalcanti who shows his *marionettes*, and, like a new Rops or Lautrec – ironic and brutal – he watches the day by day of those who live ... at night (the past-oriented yell)

There is a lot to tell in this short and ordinary story of Modernism, prepared at the eleventh hour for the Brazilian readers. It is thus that the third chronicle, in March of the following year, in *Ilustração Brasileira* (year 8, issue no. 7), refers back to a key date:

January 9, 1921, when the movement was publicly launched in São Paulo. The journalist covers a the Trianon banquet at the launching of a de luxe edition of *As máscaras* [The masks], poetic prose by Menotti Del Picchia, with *art nouveau* illustrations by Paim. In this particular venue the poet's bronze portrait – *Máscara* –, signed by Brecheret, hovers as an expressive counterpoise. The tongue-in-cheek and sarcastic irreverence, a harsh social chronicle, coexists with a defence of the artistic renewal when Mário de Andrade calls to mind Oswald de Andrade's salutation to the poet then being honoured, announcing our Modernism. Known as "Manifesto do Trianon" [Trianon Manifesto], his speech sounds thrilling "not just the *avant garde* listeners".

The journalist subtly identifies the forces which are confronted there. He highlights this opposition by quickly alluding to Brecheret's work – its tacit value – and by dodging a long analysis of Del Picchia's work. He keeps from defining *As máscaras* as a modern book as well as dealing with the elasticity of the ideals which sustain the on-the-spot publicity carried out by Helios. Del Picchia relies on the acceptance of a placid public because he moves in a danger-free zone – the pathetic regionalism of *Juca Mulato*, the Parnassian versification and a *belle époque* motif, with Pierrot, Columbine and Harlequin, which do not trespass the Commedia dell'Arte stamp. By resorting to his strategies as a modernist, Mário de Andrade goes on to praise his fellow poet; he is fond of alliterations:

. . . And I said beautiful things too, in a musical prosing of rare brilliance. To my mind the *Moisés* artist handles prose much better than verse . . . . His sentences surface in an undulating melody; His closings of them spread long, slow, languid like small waves of January tired ties ... And a stunning rhythm, always diverse, always original ... It is in his prose that Menotti has sung his best verses – those which his poetics still has not allowed him to sing, secluded as it is in the prison house of alexandrine rules.

The values espoused and the contradictions apprehended are unmistakable. The chronicler kindles several fires: he stresses the grotesque of the party, he shoulders the marginality of one who renews, who extols Oswald de Andrade, without summarizing, though, the content of the manifesto. As for language, boldness, irreverence, telegraphic sentences go hand in hand with over-refined terms and a high-sounding elegance in sentence-building, all this typical of transitional times.

By closing the chronicle with the metaphor "green tear" he ratifies his awareness of the disarray; at the same time – in the figures of Pierrot and Harlequin – a furtive opposition can be traced – *art nouveau* penumbra atmosphere and modernism or the dialectics of the old and the new going hand in hand. In the "vertical audacity" we may place Oswald de Andrade and the *Hallucinated City* poems, which are born under the sign of Harlequin. The chronicle comes to its closing lines:

As I lagged behind, in the now bare area, I noticed that on the sensual lips of Helios' bronze mask lingered a green tear, shed by eyes half open... And I



sensed that still for a long time the wordsmith will sprinkle a touch of Pierrot-like melancholy on the vertical audacity of the Harlequins.

The green tear, on which the chronicler's frustration is projected, carries the sense of corrosion, verdigris; it is a metaphor for decay, as in "O rebanho" [The herd], a bitter satire on the politicians in the 1922 book:

And the hopes of seeing everything salvaged!  
Two thousand reforms, three projects ...  
Dark futures emigrate ...  
And green, green, green!...  
Ah! my hallucinations" (Andrade 1922, lines 13-17)

Or in "Os gatos" [The cats], in his more mature poetry, as well as in "A costela do Grã-Cão" [The Great Dog's Rib], of 1933, a blend of eroticism and scatology:

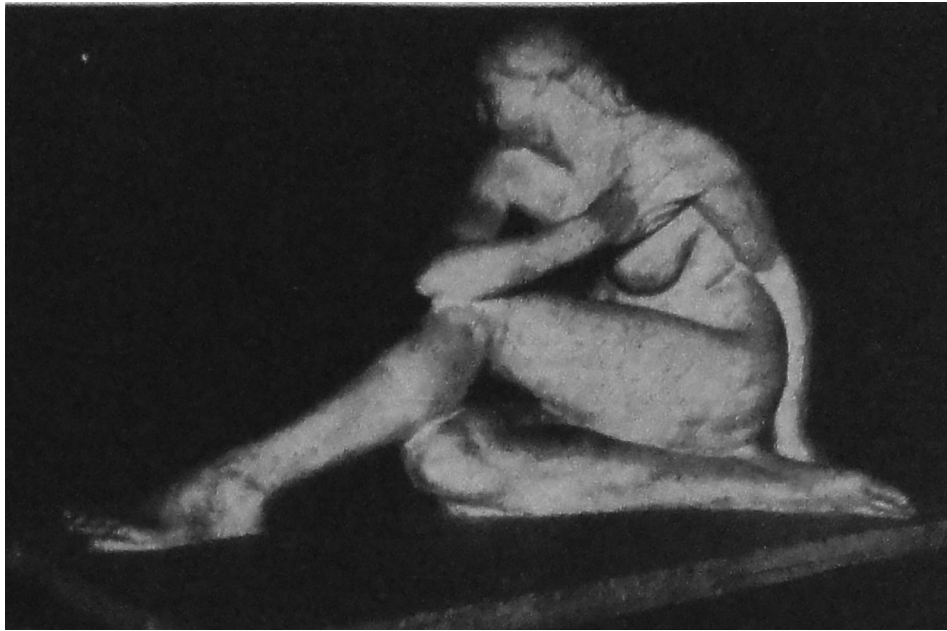
Enfolded by the torrents we go  
Where bodies float, where the dead float,  
Where thousands of putrefied cats slip along ...  
Off houses untruths fall  
And along the torrents we go  
With the sheer innocence of the earth phenomena,  
Voluptuously dead,  
We, cognizant of nothing but that  
Life is horrendous by wishing to be, by raising its tails  
Behind the night, in society with the millions of green cats. (Andrade, *Poesias completas*, lines 27-36)

In the grim and surrealist *avant garde* tone of the furtive "green tear", lies the skepticism of a chronicler who does not intend to disturb adjustments in times of publicity of the emerging movement.

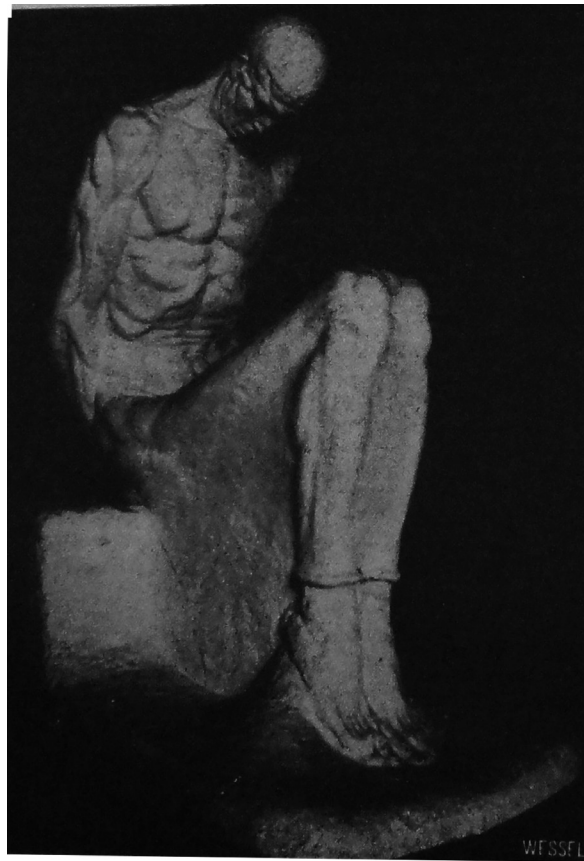
## Notes

- 1 The archive, library and the collection of plastic arts comprise Mário de Andrades's collection, at the Instituto de Estudos Brasileiros [Institute of Brazilian Studies] heritage at the University of São Paulo, since 1968; the three parts have been indexed and are open to consultation.
- 2 A series retrieved in the album by its author and in the collection of the Yan de Almeida Prado library periodical – at IEB-USP collection.
- 3 The publication, kept by Mário de Andrade in his shelves, belongs to the Sociedade de Cultura Artística, in 1916; he was a co-founding partner of this São Paulo-based entity, in 1911.
- 4 Refer to note no. 27, by *Mário de Andrade/Manuel Bandeira: Cartas a Alphonsus de Guimaraens Filho* [...], edition organized by the latter. São Paulo: Duas Cidades, 1974, p.29. The organizer transcribes an excerpt of the letter of July 15, 1919, where his father tells him about the young poet's plans, who had visited him in Mariana.

- 5 The next text, which comes from adding the amendments to the printed matter, is presented by Claudete Kronbauer in “Mário de Andrade: Um Texto de juventude” [A Youth Text], in the critical edition produced in 1993.
- 6 It is interesting to think that the pseudonym Ivan may have derived from the Christian name of the great modernist sculptor Mestrovic, with whom Brecheret was compared.
- 7 ANDRADE, Mário de. “Inspiração”. In: *Paulicéia Desvairada*; in *Poesias completas*, v. 1. Edition of text selected, annotated and added to with documents, prepared by Tatiana Longo Figueiredo and Telê Ancona Lopez. Rio de Janeiro: Nova Fronteira (in print).
- 8 ANCONA LOPEZ, Telê. “Mário de Andrade cronista do modernismo [Mário de Andrade: a chronicler of Modernism]: 1920-1921”. In: ANDRADE, Mário de. *De São Paulo*. Edition organized by Telê Ancona Lopez. São Paulo: Senac, 2004 and Mário de Andrade and Brecheret in early Modernism. *Revista da USP*, no. 94, File “90 anos da Semana de Arte Moderna” [90 Years of the Modern Art Week]. São Paulo, June-July 2012, p. 29-38. My first public approach to the *De São Paulo* series was with the article “Preludes to Modernism in Brazil”. Translated by Peter James Harris. *ABEI Journal: The Brazilian Journal of Irish Studies*, no. 4. São Paulo, June 2012, p. 169-179.
- 9 In the magazines mentioned, the signature varies— Mário de Andrade, M. de A., Mário Raul — as well the pseudonyms. The filing card still includes the poems “Nature” and “Paysage”, translated by Sérgio Milliet and published in the magazine *Het Overzicht*, no. 20 (Amsterdam, January 1924, p. 130-131); they can be found in vol.2 of *Poesias completas* by Mário de Andrade.
- 10 Tatiana Longo dos Santos, a postdoctorate scholarship student at IEB-USP, found the information in the course of her research, in which she surveys and analyses the presence of Brazilian literature in the *Fichário Analítico* of Mário de Andrade, a sort of encyclopedia organized by the author for his own use. Refer to card 2300, folio 3739 of the manuscript. There is a transcript of the filing card in her report to FAPESP (São Paulo, September 2012).
- 11 The unveiling of Antonio Cabral pseudonym is connected to the mentioning of Barra Funda in the text, and that of Sacy Pererê is in Mário de Andrade’s handwriting, in his collection of *Papel e Tinta*.
- 12 Page not mentioned, as the magazine’s pages are not numbered.
- 13 In *Papel e Tinta*, in the Grupo Central description the following entry is made: “The monumental group, which is the monument’s ‘dorsal column’, was rhythmically driven (moved) so as to suggest an ‘entrance’. The large processional mass, led by the ‘Geniuses’ — Paes Leme, Antônio Pires, Borba Gato, advances towards the remote and unknown backlands.”
- 14 BRITO, Mário da Silva, op. cit. The historian tracked in São Paulo newspapers of 1920-1921 all the titles which, for him, could show the development of the modernist struggle.
- 15 In the 1930s, at the *Curso de Filosofia e História da Arte* [Philosophy Course and Art History], Mário de Andrade, to no detriment to the analyses he develops, lends his description of the monuments he visited in books this impressionist hue. He writes, for instance, like someone who had really visited the Canterbury church, which he never did.
- 16 The “Letters to Crispim”, amounting to 12 letters, in the *Correio Paulistano*, cover the period of October 4 to December 21, 1920. (Refer to BARREIRINHAS, Yoshie Sakiyama, org. *O jornalismo de Menotti Del Picchia: 1920-22*. Research: fac-simile of the texts. Setor de Arquivos [Archives Sector], IEB-USP.



BRECHERET. *Eva*. Coleção MA, IEB.



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