

CULTURAL ANTHROPOPHAGY IN BRAZILIAN RECEPTIONS OF THE CLASSICS¹

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- **ABSTRACT:** This article tries to articulate the concepts of anthropophagy with its ramifications in Brazilian culture, especially through the ways by which some possible receptions of the ancient world are intermingled with the metaphors of cannibalism and/or anthropophagy. The analyses propose an overview of a line starting with Oswald de Andrade's "Cannibalist Manifesto" which passes through Haroldo de Campos' poem "Finismundo" and a production of the "Bacchae" by Teatro Oficina, and closes with an approximation between the notion of literary translation and anthropophagy.
- **KEYWORDS:** Anthropophagy. Classical receptions. Translation.

I

In this section I try to establish a relationship between Oswald de Andrade's *Manifesto Antropófago* (*Cannibalist Manifesto*, translated by Leslie Barry), published in 1928, one of the most important documents that helped establish Brazilian Modernist movement and two specific and unrelated works strongly influenced by it: Teatro Oficina's *Bacantes* (*Bacchae*), first staged in 1995, conceived and directed by Zé Celso Martinez Corrêa, and Haroldo de Campos' poem *Finismundo: a última viagem* (*Finismundo: the last voyage*) (1990, cited in

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the 1998 edition). I will focus on the specific ways in which the authors operate with classical tradition and the theme of *atopia* so that Greek material becomes a means of conflating the ancient and the contemporary time and, most conspicuously, space, creating special kinds of continuations between Ancient Greece and Brazil.

Andrade's text is a short manifesto built up of 51 aphorisms which develop on the processes of cannibalizing the other(s) in order to create a radically new Brazilian worldview. The fifth aphorism states that "I am only concerned with what is not mine. Law of Man. Law of the cannibal." (ANDRADE, 1991, p. 38), and one of the main concerns of the manifesto might be said to propose an anti-rationality that could cut off tradition in favor of a native Brazilian philosophy of the cannibal, drawing on the narratives of the European travellers who came to Brazil in the Colonial times and got in contact with indigenous tribes with their radically different customs and habits, among them anthropophagy. Andrade inverts the logic of colonial exploitation by placing the native indigenous worldview on top of a hierarchy of revolutions: "We want the Carib Revolution. Greater than the French Revolution. The unification of all productive revolts for the progress of humanity. Without us, Europe wouldn't even have its meager declaration of the rights of man." (p. 39), or "We already had Communism. We already had Surrealist language. The Golden Age." (p. 40).

An usually overlooked aspect of Andrade's manifesto is the rejection of the classic in the form of traditional history, science, religion and politics, symbolized by Christian God and male symbols such as Napoleon, Caesar, Goethe and Freud in favor of a new chronology and a "matriarchy" of indigenous descent: "Down with histories of Man that begin at Cape Finisterre. The undated world. Unrubrified. Without Napoleon. Without Caesar." (p. 41). "In the matriarchy of Pindorama" (p. 43) there should be no place for traditional women: "Down with every catechism. And down with the Gracchi's mother" (p. 39); "If God is the consciousness of the Uncreated Universe, Guaraci is the mother of the living. Jaci is the mother of plants." (p. 42). The rejection of Cornelia Gracchi and God in favor of two indigenous goddesses makes explicit that the kind of matriarchy proposed by Andrade is not the acculturate one, in which the mother can be valued in her society only insofar as she is a member of the élites, versed in literature, speaking like a man, famous only for being able to create her sons in spite of the absence of the father and occupying the male position (cf. FARRELL, 2001, p. 59-65). Although the mention of Cornelia and Caesar are the only references to the Ancient World in the Manifesto, it is telling that both are references to Roman historical characters and not to mythical characters of Greek origin. This opens the possibility of cannibalizing the Greek past through myth, theater and literature, as we will see in the two receptions presented later, by two very different continuations/revisions of Andrade's movement.

A poet, playwright, novel writer and philosopher, Andrade was among the most important cultural figures of the first half of the 20th century. The Anthropophagic Movement was very important in Brazilian art in general, and shaped the most important trends of modernism, influencing painting, music, literature, theater and architecture in very deep ways. The musical movement of Tropicália, for instance, was greatly indebted to it, and the poetic avant-garde movements fostered the development of poetic movement known as Concretism in the 1950's, created by the brothers Haroldo and Augusto de Campos. One of the main ideological tenets of the Anthropophagists was its anti-civilization bias: "Those who think that we are only against the abuses of civilization are wrong: what we are against is civilization itself" (ANDRADE, 1929 apud NODARI, 2015, p. 3).

Alexandre Nodari, in a 2015 essay, advocates for anthropophagy as a means of resisting the impossible urgent wave of destructive political and ecologic catastrophes we are experiencing right now. I would like to quote him in full:

Devouring the other, transforming him into a "totem", is different from "being" the other; it is being "like" the other, "almost" the other, *in the way* of the other – simultaneously close and distant: "identity otherwise", in the magnificent formula by Eduardo Viveiros de Castro. Usually, we tend to focus on the *states* resulting from the eating, i.e., we tend to follow the way of the principle of identity (the principle of non-contradiction), be it by affirming that *we are what we eat*, be it postulating the contrary, that *we incorporate narcissistically what we ingest*, so that we ignore the *act* of devouring that condenses the reciprocity of both transformations: when we eat, we become what we eat, *just as* what we eat is becoming us. The same thing happens with the usual conception of metaphor (of comparison, of *as if*), in which we reduce the difference of the approximated terms to an identity. (...) Therefore, the act of eating and the act of metaphorizing ignore the principle of non-contradiction, for they always involve that reciprocity (...). Thus the anthropophagic devouring constitutes the passage, to use Haroldo de Campos's (1997: 25) words again, from the "ontologic, 'substantialist'", to the "modal, i.e., simultaneously differentiated and dialogic – ubiquitous, unubiquited and ubiquitous [*ubicado, desubicado e ubiquo* – in which only the last term is not a typical Haroldian neologism]". The *como outro* [ambiguous in Portuguese: "as if the other/I eat the other"] – the cannibal consumption – thus forms a texture, an *inter-esse* [Latin inter-esse, "to be among/between", but also Portuguese "interesse", just like in English "interest"], implicating the world in the subject – and the subject in the world. In this way, the Anthropophagus/Cannibal is the one who weaves a "texteriority" [*texterioridade*], who establishes an immanent relationship of interweaving with otherness." (NODARI, 2015, p. 14).

What we want to develop here is a model of analysis of certain kinds of classical receptions in Brazil that operate within this cannibalistic worldview, inhabiting this world of *inter-esse*, beyond the principle of non-contradiction, in which the new text is not a transposition of Ancient themes, topoi or particular texts to a new place, from Greece to Brazil, but that operate fully in the realm of placelessness, of *atopia*, “ubiquited, unubiquited and ubiquitous”, in Haroldo de Campos’ words, or forming what Brazilian critic and artist Beatriz Azevedo calls *savage palimpsests* (the title of her 2016 book on the Manifesto). This will become clearer with the brief analysis of the two works.

Also, Azevedo’s book opens with a preface by Eduardo Viveiros de Castro in which, by recalling Augusto de Campos’ opinion that Andrade’s Anthropophagy is the only original Brazilian philosophy and the most radical of the artistic movements we produced, the famous anthropologist counters the usual simplifications of anthropophagy as just imitation, mimetic importing or outrageous consumerism (AZEVEDO, 2016, p. 12-13). For him and for Azevedo, Andrade goes far beyond a mere modernism, promoting a kind of anti-modernism, even a post-modernism (p. 14).

This takes us to the analysis of Haroldo de Campos’ ideas on post-utopic poetry and his proposition of a new voyage to Odysseus in his poem *Finismundo: a última viagem* (1990). One of the leading figures in 20th century Brazilian poetry, literary criticism and translation, and strongly influenced by Mallarmé, Pound, Cummings, Joyce, among others, his proposal of concrete poetry was also clearly a development of the anthropophagic movement. Later, during the 1960s and 70s, Campos proposed a way of surpassing the limitations of the avant-garde movements, *utopian* in the way they broke free from the past in order to aim to the future, and establishing a poetry of the present, a *post-utopian* time in which the past could be reused without abandoning Pound’s “make-it-new” poetics and by fully embracing the cannibalistic principles of simultaneously absorbing, rejecting, transforming previous material (PEREIRA, 2007, p. 18).

The poem is actually a very sophisticated reception of the *Odyssey* that departs from Dante proposing a new voyage for Odysseus after returning to Ithaca, reimagines Homeric themes such as the voyage of the hero, nostalgia, the constant yearning for travelling and, finally, in its second part, operates a transfiguration of the hero in a form of urban Joyce’s *Ulysses*-meets-Homer’s *Odyssey* with the multiple hero lost in a presentified-nowhere-city in which the past is seen only through postcards and the etymological-poetic relationship between *lucifer*-phosphoros (in Portuguese the word *fósforo*’s most common meaning is “match – the one used to start a fire”) and semaphores carrying with them both light and the old meanings of *sema*- and its past in the present. The poem is very pungent in its images of the seemingly eternal wanderlust of Odysseus travelling across time, but, especially for us, across space, in a representation of the possibilities of conflating – as in

Azevedo's *savage palimpsests* – Homer, Dante, Joyce, Ancient Greek myth and literature and the poetic of post-modernity and post-utopia in a Brazilian context.

The subtitle to the poem, after the formation with the Latin word *finis* (recalling the boundaries of the world in the *Cape Finisterre* mentioned by Oswald de Andrade in his *Manifesto*) and the Portuguese word *mun-do* (world, from the Latin *mundus*) is “a última viagem”, “the last voyage”. Odysseus is not mentioned in the title, for he is probably not really important for the concept of post-utopia developed by Haroldo in this poem. What seems to matter is the desolation of the loss of roots, of place, the never-coming-home of literature transcending time in a spatial palimpsest where Ancient Aegean geography can become a nowhere city with traffic lights and postcards. Post-utopia, which, for da Silva (2016, p. 116) can reverberate in Campos in terms such as non-utopia, a-topia and dys-topia, is actually a multitude of dys-topias, a radical poetic of presentness. And, since that interests us particularly here, post-utopia and atopia become symbols of a Brazilian anthropophagic way of receiving the classics.

Let us see some passages in Portuguese and in Andrea Koukklanakis' translation²:

Último
Odisseu multi-
ardiloso — no extremo
Avernotenso limite —re-
propõe a viagem.

Ultimate
Odysseus multi-
artful — in the extreme
Avernal limit — re-
proposes the voyage.
(...)

Périplo?
Não há . Vigiam-te os semáforos.
Teu fogo prometéico se resume
à cabeça de um fósforo —Lúcifer
portátil e/ou
ninharia flamífera.

² Koukklanakis' translation if part of a collective birthday gift to Gregory Nagy published in the website of the Center for Hellenic Studies. There is also a publication in the Brazilian journal *Texto Poético* (KOUKLANAKIS, 2013).

Capitula
(cabeça fria)
tua húbris. Nem sinal
de sereias.
Penúltima — é o máximo a que aspira
tua penúria de última
Tule. Um postal do Éden
com isso te contentas.

Açuladas sirenes
cortam teu coração cotidiano.

Periplus?
There is none. You are watched by traffic lights.
Your promethean fire is summed
by the strike of a fosforus match — Lucifer
portable and/or
flammable trifles.
Capitulate
(cool head)
your hubris. Not a sign
of sirens.
Penultimate — is the most to which you aspire
in your penury of the last
Tulle. A post card from Eden
suffices to satisfy you.

Loud sirens
tear at your quotidian heart. (CAMPOS, 1998, p. 55-59; trans.
Kouklanakis).

The second work to be analyzed here is Teatro Oficina's (company started in 1958 and led by Zé Celso Martinez Corrêa) *Bacantes* (based on Euripides' *Bacchae*). The play, already in its sixth version, premiered in 1995 in the new theater building designed by Lina Bo Bardi and built in 1990³ (in the first production, Caetano Veloso was in the audience and was stripped naked by the chorus of Maenads and Satyrs). The current version runs for almost six hours, with three acts and two

³ Elected by The Observer as the number 1 in the top ten list of best theatres in the world. The Greek theater at Epidaurus is listed second: <https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2015/dec/11/the-10-best-theatres-architecture-epidaurus-radio-city-music-hall>

intervals with over 70 people working, most of them naked (even the camera man and camera girl who film the entire play – edited live and broadcast online – are naked). The play is based on Euripides' text, mostly recoverable from the sequence of five episodes, although a lot of insertions make it Euripides meets anthropophagy and Brazilian carnival. With live musicians and most actors singing throughout the play, Zé Celso usually advertises the play as a tragi-comedy-orgy (an actual orgy with Dionysus, the chorus and randomly selected members of the audience usually takes place in the third act).

But although the play is one of the finest renderings of Euripides' play today, what interests me here is the proposal that the space depicted is not Greece *or* Brazil: it is "Greece-Brazil" (Zé Celso's spelling), "the Greece of all Brazils", and the city is sometimes referred to as "TebaSP", Thebes+São Paulo, since Oficina is located in São Paulo, the most economically developed city in Brazil and one of the most conservative cities in the country, governed for more than 20 years already by the same center-right-wing party, involved in countless corruption scandals, a city full of social inequality and with a middle- and upper-class generally drowned in prejudice against the rest of the country. Also, Zé Celso calls himself a shaman (explicitly praising and identifying with one of the most important indigenous Yanomami leaders in Brazil, Davi Kopenawa, who was the subject of a very impressive book written by the French anthropologist Bruce Albert in which he narrates in detail his shamanic initiation and his political activism: *A queda do céu*, [*The falling sky*], 2015[2013]). References to African-Brazilian religions such as Candomblé abound in the play, and the mixture of the mythic past and the contemporary struggles and miscegenation are the basis of the play. Musically, aesthetically, theatrically the play is at the same time deeply Brazilian and genuinely Greek.

In a recent interview, after recalling that his *Bacchae* was created during a mescaline trip, Zé Celso boldly states that:

[...] in the European reading, the play means nothing. *Bacantes* came to be born here, in the tropics, and I was sure it had to be this way. I could have stayed in Europe [where he was exiled by the military dictatorship], but I wanted to come back to Brazil because it was only here that it would be possible to stage *Bacantes*, here in the Brazilian culture, with a "z" and a "y" [in Brazil we spell it with an "s" and an "i"], because it had nothing to do with patriotism and flags, which I despise. I am for the crowned anarchy, and not for anarchism. By the way, I am against every -ism. (MARTINEZ, 2017, n.p.).

The company, which also maintains an institution called "Anthropophagic university", is clearly the most complete and fully developed stage of the Brazilian anthropophagic worldview existing today. These experiences allow us to propose

that instead of Greece *or* Brazil, we have a “matriarchy of Pindorama” capable of becoming the classics through exporting the anthropophagic axis.

The three points analyzed so far were aimed at showing how the reception of the past was used to propose a deterritorialization of antiquity and of tradition in an anthropophagic way: neither fully rejecting nor endorsing the ancient material, the new is created out of the violation of the principle of non-contradiction: new and old at the same time, eater and eaten becoming one, but, especially, distant space being consumed and conflated as an atopic savage palimpsest.

II

At this point, the study of classical receptions in Brazil and in Latin America in general has to deal with the unstable political and social panorama of the early 21st century. The world sees the rise of new and old fascisms and suddenly many people start to proclaim their yearning for the restoration of Military Regimes while the number of critically poor people increases fast everywhere.

In this panorama, some voices call for a different way of thinking politically, such as Eduardo Viveiros de Castro, who in a recent talk urged us to reconsider our perspectives and regard minorities just as if we were all indigenous, form the Latin *indigena*, and not “indians”, the equivocated cognate which resulted from the famous historical mistake of the Europeans in the 16th century. He defends radically anarchic ontologies and politics based on his proposition of Amerindian perspectivism, such as he defends in the preface to *The Falling Sky* by Davi Kopenawa. Kopenawa, a shaman of the tribe of the Yanomami, co-wrote the book with Bruce Albert. This very beautiful and poignant book is one of the most dramatic documents of our downfall as a civilization: with the whole problem surrounding the new age of the anthropocene, fascism and intolerance will soon be a very small problem for us, since we’re all doomed, sooner or later (of course, the poorer will go sooner).

In this context, coming back to discussing our roots in Caliban (via Morus, Shakespeare, Montaigne, Retamar) or in the Carib/Caraíba and cannibals (via Brazilian modernism and Oswald de Andrade) could represent an antidote to the global economical, political and ideological crisis we are facing. In the specific case of Brazil, anthropophagy was never more alive. We are witnessing the rebirth of anthropophagy in the arts, in literature, in music, in the theater, in philosophy and in the social sciences. Viveiros de Castro’s notion of Amerindian perspectivism is used as an ingredient in the creative areas alongside Andrade’s anthropophagy. There is a very strong recuperation of that modern urge for the cannibalism in the wake of *concretismo* and *tropicalismo*, just as exposed above in my brief analysis of Zé Celso’s *Bacantes* (which is mirrored in structure and mise-en-scène in his other play *Macumba Antropófaga* [Cannibal Witchery – a very impossible-to-translate

kind of witchery, related to the Afro-Brazilian religions] currently being restaged also in a 6-hour performance of complete dionysiac rebellion, but whose theme is mostly Oswald de Andrade and contemporary Brazil) but also in the effervescent scenery of contemporary literature, mostly written by young women, black writers, pop musicians, not as exclusive categories (black poets Edmilson de Almeida Pereira, Ricardo Aleixo and Marcelo Ariel, female writers such as Veronica Stigger, Conceição Evaristo and Adelaide Ivánova, singer-composers such as Céu and Beatriz Azevedo, all of them bear witness to the new melting pot of Brazilian culture, whose main points of contact are issues of gender and race, politics, and, most important of all, an aesthetic recovery of Andradian anthropophagy.

Academic studies on the Tropicália movement (e.g. VELOSO, 2012; CARLI; BROCCETTO, 2017) usually present it as the most complete Brazilian realization of the anthropophagic legacy, and the movement was never actually dead (its metamorphoses in the 1990's include the likes of Chico Science and Mamonas Assassinas, and Céu's most recent record is called "Tropix", a mixture of Tropicália and contemporary atopic Brazilian music). Gilberto Gil, Caetano Veloso and Tom Zé are still alive and productive and bands like Boogarins sound like a perfect and competent continuation of Os Mutantes (just like Tame Impala, for example). The political climate is also interesting for its many points of contact with the late 1960's, when Tropicália flourished right after the 1968 AI-5 (Institutional Act 5) – the shutting down of the congress and recrudescence of the regime by the USA-backed military coup of 1964⁴.

This being said, we should consider for a moment the situation of education in general and of the University in particular, in order to put Classics in Brazil in perspective. Education was a priority in the first mandate of Lula, from 2003 onwards. The previous situation of Brazilian public universities was chaotic, to the point of almost being privatized. Lula's administration invested in new universities, new courses, new positions for professors in most areas, and that also reflected in the quality of education in general, improving the formation of teachers, increasing the number of children in schools and fighting illiteracy (as part of a socialist program for the improvement of the lives of the less privileged, which started with a serious campaign for eradicating hunger and extreme poverty). One of the very curious by-products of this agenda was the hiring of many university professors (not only in the humanities, of course), including many Classics professors. The older generation of professors reminiscent of the time when Latin was taught in regular schools (until the 1960's) was slowly retiring and a young generation of new classics scholars and professors took their place and helped create new Classics courses and programs. This new generation happened to be mostly politically progressive (if not mostly

⁴ See e.g. the huge collection of essays organized by Ruffinelli & Rocha, 2011, for many other examples and important analyses.

leftist) and in a few decades (the 1990's generation was already very open and young) the field was very different from what Brazilian society generally thinks about classicists.

This is very evident in the new wave of translations of the classics that are finally coming to the general public in good, accessible literary translations made mostly by university classics professors, filling a huge gap left by the old out of print bookish translations of the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century (usually in prose or too old-fashioned). Some of them have been appointed as finalists or winners in major book prizes. This trend also shows a remarkable bond with the tradition established by Haroldo de Campos and his fellows' poetical movements, which established a new *paideuma* for contemporary/avant-garde poetry that reincluded the classics in the Brazilian canon in a new fashion, removing the dust of ancient poetry and drama (Trajano Vieira, JAA Torrano, João Angelo Oliva Neto, Tereza Virginia Ribeiro Barbosa and Guilherme Flores are only a few examples of very successful translators of the classics that transcended their specific fields and definitely entered the Brazilian cultural milieu).

The Campos' movements also tightened the bonds between some translators of the classics and contemporary poetry, generating a consistent panorama of the reuses of the classics in Brazilian poetry. Again Guilherme Flores should be cited for his consistent poetical work (especially "Tróiaides - a remix for the new millenium", a multimedia project consisting of collages of Sophocles, Euripides and Seneca, available online in Portuguese and English at <https://www.troiades.com.br/>).

From this point on, I will allow myself to a very personal exposition of the motives and ways of my own perspective and contribution to this wide field of Brazilian translation/classical reception/literary culture. Having been a translator and a researcher on literary translation and classical receptions since at least 2007, my work slowly traced the steps of previous generations of literary translators such as 19th-century poet-translator Odorico Mendes (who, according to according to Haroldo de Campos, is the patriarch of Brazilian translation) and 20th-century physician-poet-translator Carlos Alberto Nunes, as well as, of course, Haroldo de Campos. In some occasions since 2007, I worked together with students in small workshops to form literary translators in group translations of Lucretius, Ovid, Milton and, when we came to Catullus, we decided to translate Catullus 64 (Attis) in what we called Brazilian choliambics, in order to recite the lines and perhaps dance and sing them just as I saw Philippe Brunet's group Démococos do in France in 2012 (and later in Brasilia at the Brazilian Society for Classical Studies Meeting – SBEC, and in Curitiba in a recital we organized in 2013). His approach was pretty much what we tried to do in our translations: use the same ancient rhythms in translation without sounding cheesy or conservative or bookish. What we wanted was to recreate ancient poetry in an agreeable form that

could reach out to most people, not only to classicists (who are not always keen on popularizations or perversions of the sacrality of the texts). Guilherme Flores joined me and my four students of advanced Latin and we translated the poem as a group, in class. We composed two melodies for it (one based on Brunet's melody for the poem and the other was composed by our student Acácio Stocco). We shyly danced and sung the translation on some occasions, in academic conferences. The group decided to call itself Pecora Loca – two separate words in Catullus' poem, an expression that doesn't mean anything but sounded funny for us. The group started to gather more frequently to stage some parts of translated ancient plays and composed more melodies for other translations. We incorporated the Lakota drum and rattle used in peyote/ahayuasca rituals, Greek lyres, violins, Arabic drums and finger cymbals, an Irish bodhran, bass, Brazilian samba guitars with a medieval tuning, and we just bought some aulos made by a Russian guy and have absolutely no idea how to play.

After struggling to identify what we did and after noticing we didn't have enough acting training and skills, we found out we were a band when we visited an occupied high school in 2016 to talk to the politically self-organized teenage students about poetry and music and had a hard time talking to them before we decided to unleash the beast in our drums and improvise Catullus 8 as a Brazilian carnival-meets heavy metal tune. Only then they looked at us, amazed, and started dancing and tapping their knees with their hands, smiling. We then started to play gigs at a local bar, bought microphones and gear and learned how to perform to general audiences, with a repertoire that spans from Homer, Horace, Anacreon, Sapho, Lucretius, Provençal poetry, Norse lines from the *Edda*, Irish traditional folk songs, North-American prison songs, to Bonnie Tyler's "Total Eclipse of the Heart" and Michael Jackson's "Billy Jean". All of them in translation, our translations. With a wide variety of styles and musical arrangements ranging from Ramones and punk rock in general to Brazilian popular music of the 1970's (Roberto Carlos, Chico Buarque, Belchior), Brazilian axé/funk and indie-hipster electronic arrangements, the general approach of the group is to think of ancient poetry as beautiful material for new songs with irreverence (in both meanings) as a general guiding principle. Composed of eight musicians, none of them professional, some of them not really musicians at all, we have fun and we experience the fun the audiences seem to have.

This experience was described along the general lines of our guiding principles on translation and reception via performance in a book Guilherme Flores and I co-authored that came out in 2017: "Algo infiel: corpo performance tradução" ("Something unfaithful/Somewhat unfaithful: body performance translation") discusses a variety of subjects, from literary translation of the classics to recent popular music, philosophy, gender studies and is a serious manifesto about our position as scholars, professors and researchers on the Classics, on Translation Studies, on Classical Reception Studies and on Literature in general.

This appeared as a response to many anxieties and a general fear that our academic fields in the humanities are sometimes too hermetic, closed or even irrelevant to society, despite the fact that this does not make them less important or necessary. With many politicians and general intelligentsia influencing the general population to think that Brazilian universities are a terrible nest of Marxist-communist ideologues and a law in course of implementation called “Escola sem partido” (“Schools without [political] parties”) threatening the autonomy of educational and scholarly curricula – it will be against the law to teach “any kind of ideology”... – and growing complaints about the waste of public money on universities that only teach useless things, the classics are bound to be among the first things to be crossed out of the curricula before universities are privatized and turned into professional schools for the general needs of society.

Thus our defense of song and poetry via translation and performance is a kind of a tropicalist-barbarian manifesto in favor of our position in society. In favor of the possibility of considering ancient material as beautiful without being dusty pieces of high-brow old-fashioned “Art”.

Thus we inscribe ourselves consciously in at least two major trends in Brazilian Classical Receptions: via *Plautus vortit barbare*⁵ we position ourselves as classicists producing self-conscious translations of Greek and Latin poetry in a very “faithful” way, not subversive, using the same rhythms and metrical patterns, therefore, in a “reverent” kind of translation but at the same time calling the attention to its Brazilian character, with the typical irreverence of contemporary artists spoiling/contaminating the material with our Brazilianness. We assume the position of the barbarian just as Plautus did when translating, only to say that when we translate these poems into a barbarian language, they don’t cease to *be* those ancient poems, but being the same and otherwise at the same time. We could say that Zé Celso’s *Bacantes* does something similar. Second, we inscribe ourselves in the tradition of Brazilian literary translation as creation and recreation of the originals, in the way Haroldo de Campos did in order to reopen the canon to accommodate the old in the new forms, via Pound and avant-garde movements (cf. e.g. VIEIRA, 2013). In both senses, what is at stake is a kind of anthropophagy as a political device: as a means of ensuring permanence of tradition through the reorganization of this tradition, through the subversion of the classical ideals of beauty and respect for the unattainable essence of European art forms and as a means of fighting conservative political agendas that try to appropriate the classical as civilizational tools accessible only to the highly educated white European male. Of course, this

⁵ By the use of Plautus’ expression typically found in some of his prologues meaning “Plautus translated the Greek play into the barbarian language” we mirror his complex and somewhat ironic use of the expression *barbare*. Cf. fuller discussion in Gonçalves, 2015 and Flores & Gonçalves, 2017.

had to be done from the inside: by three university classics professors and five students, from undergrads to PhD candidates.

Our work is accessible online in a Youtube channel, a website (www.pecoraloca.com) and in our Facebook page. The next step is to enter a studio and record our songs, keep translating and performing in parallel with our activities as professional classicists. Since the beginning of the group, our courses at the university all involve singing and dancing, and students seem more and more enthusiastic about ancient poetry, wanting to translate and recite and sing themselves. If this could create more interest in the classics, we feel we are doing the right thing.

GONÇALVES, R. T. Antropofagia cultural em recepções brasileiras dos clássicos. **Itinerários**, Araraquara, n. 45, p. 19-33, jul./dez. 2017.

■ **RESUMO:** *Este artigo procura estabelecer uma articulação entre os conceitos de antropofagia e suas ramificações na cultura brasileira, especialmente a partir dos modos como algumas possibilidades de recepções da antiguidade são perpassadas pela metáfora do canibalismo ou da antropofagia. A análise passeia superficialmente pelo “Manifesto Antropófago” de Oswald de Andrade, pelo poema “Finismundo” de Haroldo de Campos, pela montagem das Bacantes do Teatro Oficina e encerra com uma discussão sobre tradução e antropofagia.*

■ **PALAVRAS-CHAVE:** *Antropofagia. Recepção dos clássicos. Tradução.*

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