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SPECIAL EDITION

EMERGING VIEWS ON TRANSLATION HISTORY IN BRAZIL

GUEST EDITOR

JOHN MILTON

Humanitas
FFLCH/USP

6

ISSN 1415-6253



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EMERGING VIEWS
ON TRANSLATION HISTORY IN BRAZIL

*This publication forms part of a project on the historiography of translation organized by the Translation Workshop of the **ICLA** (International Comparative Literature Association) and had the support of **ABRAPT** (Brazilian Association of Translation Researchers).*



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<http://www.fflch.usp.br/humanitas>

ISSN 1415-6253



SPECIAL EDITION

**EMERGING VIEWS
ON TRANSLATION HISTORY IN BRAZIL**

Humanitas
FFLCH-USP

Crop • n. 6 • p. 1-286 • São Paulo • 2001

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Ficha catalográfica: Márcia Elisa Garcia de Grandi CRB 3608

Crop: revista da área de língua e literatura inglesa e norte-americana do Departamento de Letras Modernas/Faculdade de Filosofia, Letras e Ciências Humanas. Universidade de São Paulo.– n. 1 (1994) –.– São Paulo: Humanitas /FFLCH/USP, 1994 –

Anual

ISSN 1415-6253

1. Língua inglesa. 2. Literatura inglesa 3. Literatura de expressão inglesa
4. Crítica literária 5. Tradução I. Universidade de São Paulo. Faculdade de Filosofia, Letras e Ciências Humanas.

CDD 420
820

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*Emerging Views on
Translation History in Brazil*



Crop, 6
2001

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Introduction

*John Milton**

Emerging Views on Translation History in Brazil is based on papers presented in the Translation Section of the 7th Brazilian Translators Forum and the 1st Brazilian International Translators Forum, held in São Paulo in September 1998, which demonstrated the growing popularity of the area of historical translation studies in Brazil.

Emerging Views on Translation History in Brazil contains nine representative papers. Lia Wyler contributes two papers, one a panoramic view of the history translation in Brazil, which opens the volume, and the other focussing on translation for the theatre in Brazil. Tania Brandão's article on translations for the theatre in Brazil emphasizes that the theatre in Brazil was seldom considered high culture, and has almost been ignored by critics of so-called "serious" literature. This concept is summed up in her title: "Translations and ellipses : Notes on the 19th Century Brazilian Theatre", taken from a quotation by Machado de Assis: theatre translation in Brazil just the remainder, the leftovers, and is unworthy of serious consideration.

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Tupi scholar Eduardo Navarro develops the point made by Lia Wyler, that, until 1758, the language spoken by the great majority of the population in Brazil was Tupi, the Indian language spoken right along the coast of Brazil. The Portuguese colonization was one of mixing and miscegenation with the native Indians and learning their language. Navarro emphasizes the influence of Tupi on present day Brazilian Portuguese, especially in the lexicon but also on syntax and morphology. Even those who know no Portuguese and who have never visited Brazil will have heard of Ipanema beach and Tijuca National Park in Rio de Janeiro, and the Maracanã and Morumbí football stadiums in Rio and São Paulo respectively. All these names come from Tupi, as do about 50% of all place names in Brazil. Navarro also describes the difficulties Padre José Anchieta had in translating the Catechism into Portuguese, and the solutions he found, often having to adapt Christian ideas to Tupi concepts.

Probably the most important figure in publishing in Brazil in the 20th century was Monteiro Lobato. Adriana Vieira describes the technique of adaptation Lobato used in his translations of children's literature, concentrating on that of Peter Pan, which is retold orally by Dona Benta, with interruptions from the children and dolls at the Sítio do Picapau Amarelo (The Farm of the Yellow Woodpecker). Lobato, dissatisfied with the high style of the little literature for children which was available for him to read to his own children, began to write children's literature in Portuguese and translate and adapt foreign literature.

Lobato was also a great popularizer of the book, and in the publishing company he owned, Monteiro Lobato e Cia. and then that which he partly owned, Companhia Editora Nacional, he tried to spread the habit of reading to beyond the traditional frenchified

upper-middle class by making books more attractive, paying especially attention to covers and presentation, by making books more widely available, for example, in grocer's and chemist's, and by writing in a style which would be easy to read. The creation of a demand for books, particularly novels, amongst those who had no knowledge of foreign languages, would create a need for translations, which, as from the 1930s, were increasingly made from English.

Adriana Pagano's comparative study of publishers' collections in Argentina and Brazil stresses Lobato's role in developing the book market in Brazil. She also emphasizes the importance of collections in the catalogues of Argentine and Brazilian publishing houses. They would help to map the knowledge of the world for the reader, but, of course, at the same time, would shape the reader's vision of the world.

The Clube do Livro, the first ever Brazilian book club, the subject of my study, dates from the same period. It was founded in 1943, and became enormously popular, with a print run of up to 50,000, an enormous figure in Brazil, where the print run for a novel is seldom more than 3,000. My study examines many of the alterations that were made in the translated texts in order to make them "suitable" for the target readers, from the lower-middle classes, with limited education and no habit of buying books. The translated texts were homogenized into standardized Portuguese; stylistic niceties were cut; and the text was supported by a series of footnotes which explained difficult words and which gave advice on healthy eating and drinking. I also analyze the Clube do Livro prefaces, which demonstrate this strong element of paternalism and which show the belief of the editors that books were the worldwide panacea, able to bring peace, prosperity and enlightenment to the whole world.

MILTON, John. *Introduction*.

Irene Hirsch studies the history of the translations of the work of Herman Melville into Portuguese in Brazil. Following André Lefevere's concept of refraction, Hirsch analyzes the various refractions of Melville's works, especially *Moby-Dick*, into Portuguese in Brazil. She pays close attention to the visual elements in the portrayals of Captain Ahab, which have been dominated by Gregory Peck ever since John Houston's 1956 Hollywood film.

Maria Cristina Batalha's study is based on the Polysystem theories of Itamar Even-Zohar and relates Brazilian literature to other literatures, particularly that of France. The relationship has always been one-sided: France was, until the Second World War, a model of Brazilian society, whereas France has always seen Brazil through a lens of exoticism, exemplified by Blaise Cendrars' translations, which glamourize and exoticize Brazil. But translation is always enriching and translations from Portuguese introduce a number of terms into the French language such as *sertão* (backlands), *samba*, and *favela* (shanty). The Brazilian writer can never ignore this relationship with the dominant French culture, but does the Brazilian author always need to be in such a subaltern receiving position? She also looks at the concept of appropriation in Machado de Assis' translation of *The Raven*, and the need for Brazilian writers to assert their own identity to escape from the cultural domination of Paris.

The nine articles are complemented by three reviews of important books in the area: *Memes of Translation* by Andrew Chesterman; *Translation in a Postcolonial Context*, by Maria Tymoczko; and *Constructing Cultures. Essays on Literary Translation*, by Susan Bassnett and André Lefevere; and an interview with translation scholar Anthony Pym.

We can pinpoint a number of general themes which run through the various studies. Firstly, the dominance of France in

Brazilian literature and arts and culture in general up until the Second War. The literary relations between Brazil and France have been well-documented by scholars in Brazil, through little of this work has dealt with translation as such. Studies, mainly made from a Comparative Literature perspective, have examined the enormous influence of French culture and literature on Brazilian writers and the reception of Brazilian writers in France¹.

Secondly, the papers are very definitely located within a postcolonial translation context. Lia Wylter, Tânia Brandão and Maria Cristina Batalha emphasize the French domination of Brazilian letters. Brazil was a colony of Portugal until 1822, but the colonizer itself was dominated by French cultural mores. As

¹ For example, Perrone-Moisés, Leyla (org.). *Relações Culturais França-Brasil: Influências e Convergências (Cultural Relations Brazil-France: Influences and Convergences)*. São Paulo: Instituto de Estudos Avançados – USP, novembro de 1991. Coleção Documentos, série Estudos França-Brasil-1.

Nitrini, Sandra (org.). *Aquém e Além Mar: Relações Culturais: Brasil e França (Before and After the Sea: Cultural Relations: Brazil and France)*. São Paulo: Hucitec, 2000. Both of these collections look at specific influences, mostly of France on Brazil.

Rivas, Pierre. *Encontro entre Literaturas França-Brasil-Portugal (Meeting between Literatures: France-Brazil-Portugal)*, translation from the French coordinated by Durval Artico and Maria Letícia Guedes Alcoforado. São Paulo: Hucitec, 1995. This work catalogues the presence of Brazil in French literary magazines from 1880 to 1930.

Staut, Lea Mara Valezi. “A recepção da obra Machadiana na França: um estudo crítico-estilístico das traduções de quatro romances” (“The Reception of the Work of Machado de Assis in France: a Critical and Stylistic Analysis of Four Novels”). Ph. D. thesis . Universidade do Estado de São Paulo (UNESP), Assis, Faculdade de Ciências e Letras, 1991.

Staut, Lea Mara Valezi. “Machado de Assis e a Literatura Brasileira na França” (“Machado de Assis and Brazilian Literature in France”). (“Livre Docência” thesis) . Universidade do Estado de São Paulo (UNESP), Assis, Faculdade de Ciências e Letras, 1991.

Brandão points out, French culture reached the Brazilian theatre in two ways, both directly from France and filtered through Portugal. Portugal was hardly keen on developing Brazilian culture, literacy and education. Wyler mentions that the first legal printing press in Brazil was only permitted in 1808. Law, Medicine and Engineering schools were only set up in Brazil as from 1827, and the oldest university in Brazil, the University of São Paulo, was only established in 1934. The oldest university in Argentina is that of Córdoba, 1613, and that in Lima, San Marcos, dates from 1551. Thus much of 20th century translation in Brazil can be looked at as postcolonial translation, the ex-colony asserting its sense of independence after Portuguese political, French cultural and English economic domination.

It may come as a surprise to learn that the Indian language Tupi was the most widely spoken language in Brazil up until the Marquis de Pombal ordered that Portuguese should be the language of education throughout Brazil in 1758. Indeed, the contact and translation between Portuguese, Spanish, Latin and Tupi is very much a hidden area: we have few accounts, and few studies have been made. And Translation Studies has yet to spawn a generation of scholars to study translation between Spanish and/or Portuguese and Indian languages.

In addition, translation scholars in Brazil have little contact with those in other South American countries. It is difficult to envisage a South American equivalent of the European Society for Translation Studies (EST), for example. Contact with other peripheral members of the world's community normally goes through the central countries. Here in Brazil academic contact with Peru, Ecuador, Colombia, and Chile, for example, is very limited. With Europe and North America there is much more contact. It is

thus very pleasing to see the emphasis Adriana Pagano gives to the parallels between translation in Brazil and Argentina. I am sure similar studies could be made which would include other South American countries.

A further area which *Emerging Views on Translation History in Brazil* looks at is the translation of mass literature. Tânia Brandão examines the translations of popular plays, and Adriana Pagano, Adriana Vieira, Irene Hirsch and myself all examine aspects of the development of the Brazilian book market as from the 1930s. Publishing strategies; the marketing of translations; condensations and adaptation; and the readers' reception of translations are all virtually unexplored areas in the sphere of translation studies.

A very important point is that, in publicizing some of the work being carried out in Brazil in historiographical translation studies, we hope that it will be possible to redress the balance to a certain extent, and show that translation research in Brazil is not dominated by the concepts of anthropophagy², deconstruction³ and poetic recreation⁴.

² See Vieira Ribeiro Pires, Else. "A Postmodern Translational Aesthetics in Brazil", in *Translation Studies: An Interdiscipline*, ed. Mary Snell-Hornby, Franz Pöchhacker and Klaus Kaindl. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1994, pp. 65-72. In this article Vieira quotes Augusto de Campos adaptation of the concept of anthropophagy to translation: "My way of loving them is translating them. Or devouring them, according to [Brazilian modernist] Oswald de Andrade's anthropophagic law". Thus cannibalism is seen as a metaphor for the predicament of the Brazilian postcolonial writer. It is impossible just to ignore influences from the metropolis, but these influences, rather than just being "digested", should be "regurgitated" to become available in a differentiated form. These ideas were taken up by Edwin Gentzler, in *Contemporary Translation Theories* (1993), London:Routledge, 1993, and Susan

MILTON, John. *Introduction*.

So *Emerging Views on Translation History in Brazil* is just a beginning. I hope that this volume can raise awareness and further interest in these almost virgin forests, or maybe jungles, of research.

Bassnett, in *Comparative Literature* (1993), Oxford, Blackwell, 1993, both of which reached a much wider readership than the original.

- ³ Rosemary Arrojo's work, especially:
Arrojo, Rosemary. "A que são fiéis tradutores e críticos de tradução? Paulo Vizioli e Nelson Ascher discutem John Donne" ("What are Translators and Critics of Translation Faithful to? Paulo Vizioli and Nelson Ascher discuss John Donne"), in *Tradução, Desconstrução e Psicanálise*. Rio de Janeiro: Imago, 1993, pp. 15-26.
Arrojo, Rosemary. "Laplanche Traduz o Pai da Psicanálise: As Principais Cenas de um Romance Familiar" ("Laplanche Translates the Father of Psychoanalysis: The Principal Scenes of a Family Romance"), in *Tradução, Desconstrução e Psicanálise*. Rio de Janeiro: Imago, 1993, pp. 35-50.
Arrojo, Rosemary. "Feminist "Orgasmic" Theories of Translation and their Contradictions", in *TradTerm*, FFLCH, Universidade de São Paulo, II, 1995, pp. 67-75.
- ⁴ Especially in the work of brothers Augusto and Haroldo de Campos, who continue to receive growing publicity outside Brazil. See, for example, the recent issue of *TTR*, which contains two articles on Haroldo:
Oseki-Depré, Inês. "Lecture finie du texte infini: *Galaxies* de Haroldo de Campos", pp.131-154, and "Salut Haroldo! Linéaments de synchronicités pour un mandala à l'écrivain", pp.155-166, in *TTR (Traduction, Terminologie, Redaction)*, Vol. XII, no. 1, 1^o semestre 1999, "Poésie, Cognition, Traduction I", dir.: Annie Brisset. Université McGill, Montréal: Association Canadienne de Traductologie.

Why and How to Write Translation Histories ?

*Lieven D'bulst **

When we reconsider the history of the place that has been given to historical elements within translational reflection in a larger sense, including “modern” as well as “early” types of conceptualizing translational phenomena, it can be seen that these matters have rarely become major topics of full research programmes. In spite of repeated attempts to impart a more solid basis to historical research (during the last 30 years or so), it can also be clearly seen that there is no point in comparing historical research with other types of translation research. James Holmes’ famous triadic model of descriptive translation studies (product-oriented, process-oriented, function-oriented) fits history both into product-oriented and function-oriented DTS, as an offshoot of both (Holmes 1998). Moreover, while theory is closely connected with description and application, history does not seem to benefit from theorizing nor does it lead to applications. It would lead us too far to compare the fate of translation history with that of historical research in adjacent disciplines.

—

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Still, since the extraordinary expansion of the discipline in academia has led to greater autonomy and thus to new possibilities of establishing priorities, it cannot be ignored that translation studies have recently returned to history. Why? One could think of several reasons to explain this return to history. Suffice is to list them here (see also D'hulst 1994).

- *History is a practical eye-opener for translation studies.*
- *Insight into history gives the scholar the intellectual flexibility which he or she needs when regularly adapting his or her ideas to new viewpoints.*
- *Insight in history prevents the scholar from blind adherence to one single theory.*
- *Insight into history is maybe the only way to understand the structure of the discipline, by showing the underlying relationships between divergent approaches and practices.*
- *Insight into history helps to develop a “culture of translation”*
- *Insight into history may inspire translators in search of problem-solving techniques.*

What does this amount to? One could easily think of a number of other reasons to explain the relative success of approaches that re-centre history; not at least, maybe, new research interests imported from young or emerging disciplines (postcolonial studies, gender studies, cognitive studies, etc.).

*
* *

Be it as it may, let us now turn towards historical research itself. To start with, how should one understand “history”? In fact, many different types and methods of historiography coexist more or less peacefully in most disciplines. The traditional definitions used by historians somewhat bluntly oppose “history” as the totality of scientific activities aiming at the discovery, inventory and analysis of historical facts, and “historiography” as the historical analysis of the writing of history. Practically speaking, this distinction is far from precise: there is always some kind of awareness of the way one writes history. Nevertheless, the concept of historiography has been promoted in several disciplines as an approach that is strongly and explicitly based on the levels of epistemology and methodology. Quite naturally, the urge was strong to understand how and why every period generated its own representations of past events, theories, ideologies, such an understanding supposing the establishment and use of specific methods.

The same does not hold for translation studies, however, a discipline which rarely, up to now, has been interested in its proper history, at least less than in the discovery and inventory and analysis of historical facts: and even these facts, the *res gestae*, have remained until recently, in comparison with other cultural practices, relatively unexplored themselves. One could say that both the ignorance of the past (and of a past that did *not* necessarily ignore its own past), and the small theoretical basis on which historical research was (and still is) carried out, are largely responsible for what one could call a “delay” in comparison with neighbouring disciplines, from which translation studies tried to break free (and never fully succeeded, nowadays claiming an official status of interdisciplinarity). Of course, this situation in itself, I mean, the apparently “poor” status of historiography is an interesting object

from a historical viewpoint, which in return could show also that in a larger, extended concept, historiography is a multi-layered discipline, in the sense that any step is encompassed by some larger one, which is still historical in nature: historiography is like one of those Russian puppets, containing smaller copies of itself: the practice of research is based on a theory and methodology of research, which is itself based on an epistemology of research.

To say what the concept means is something other than to say what exactly is to be expected from the discipline, in concrete terms, in the daily practice, so to speak. Many different *methods* of historiography are possible. But more basically, as far as the *object* is concerned, the number of possible categories of historical facts is almost overwhelming: anything in fact is a candidate, not everything is a relevant candidate *a priori* either. But the array still is larger than traditional historiography rooted in the history of ideas or comparative literature might let us think. To be short, let me refer to what good old classical rhetorics listed as the necessary items the orator had to take care of when preparing his discourse (it will remind the reader also of modern functional theories of translation, taking into account as many parameters as possible while studying translational communication).

What follows is a way of suggesting, somewhat sketchily, some possible areas of historical research, simply using the same list of items (but of course changing its scope).

Quis?

The translator's intellectual biography (backgrounds in training, family, socio-economic, ideological and cultural profile), his/her translation concepts, explicit and implicit poetics, gender, etc. is breaking loose from the positivistic

and anecdotal tradition. An interesting method of describing the figure of the translator in terms of socio-cognitive processes is developed by Bourdieu's habitus theory applied to translating: D. Simeoni (1998) tries to connect the study of norms (texts and systems) with the habitus as "the main locus precipitating mental, bodily, social and cultural forces" (p. 33). In other words, to combine the study of norms with these cultural forces determining the translating skills, down to the level of stylistic variation. Not only the single translator, but also groups (or schools) of translators can be approached from the latter viewpoint as well: the Pléiade in France, German romantic translation, etc. (see e.g. J. Delisle ed. 1999). Of course, a similar approach is to be advocated for a historical study of translation scholars. To such type of questions adheres the contribution in this volume by Adriana Silene Vieira on Monteiro Lobato.

Quid?

What has been translated? And what not? In other terms: what have been the selection procedures used (and also according to what underlying criteria?) To answer such questions, the establishment is needed of bibliographies of translations, and eventually of what could have been translated, but was not. Which parameters will be used (generic, linguistic, temporal and how to periodize, etc.)? What is covered by such a bibliography: only printed material? Only in book form, etc.? This point is also commented upon at large by A. Pym (1998). Two contributions in this volume deal with theater translation.

What has been written on translation? Which genres or modes of translation thinking does a culture generate: prefaces,

criticism, treatises, historical work, theories, etc. How are these ranked? Even for cultures that have already been studied thoroughly from several angles, it has recently been possible to discover new and important material. There is for instance ample evidence that there were rather rich and complex efforts towards theorizing in France in the early 19th century: e.g. two Ph.D. studies, which have remained unknown up to now, showed there was a profound and quite refined interest in translation from several angles (and not only applied ones: see D'hulst 1997). By the way, this may help us to take past translation thinking more seriously (the current idea among contemporary scholars is that there has been so little valuable thinking for modern purposes that we may simply ignore it). Let us imagine what a disaster such a statement would imply for the viewpoint of an archeologist.

Ubi?

Where have translations been written, printed, published, distributed? And by whom (by specific editors, within specific series, etc.)? In the same centres of printing and publishing like original writing (for France: Paris, e.g.), or at the periphery (for instance: translations of religious texts and of children's literature were often produced in Tours, Avignon, also in Belgium in the late 19th century)? The contributions by Adriana Silvina Pagano and John Milton to this volume deal quite explicitly with these questions. By the way, translations are not always limited in their *distribution* to one linguistic or cultural community. In late 18th and early 19th century Europe, for example, France possessed, during the continental discovery of Shakespearean theatre, a mediating function:

both the selection of texts and the translation concepts and techniques were borrowed from French models of drama translation (Ducis, Letourneur). In many cases there was even more at stake: (1) at the time French translations were read and put on in Southern Europe (Italy, Portugal), and even in Eastern and Northern Europe (Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Poland, Russia), and (2) these translations were retranslated into the vernaculars (see D. Delabastita & L. D'hulst eds. 1993). Another question: where did the translators live and work? For some scholars (A. Pym, e.g.), this question may point to the existence of an intermediate geographical space between national cultures, in which translators happen to function more intensively. For example, translation from German in 19th century France was for a large part concentrated in the Alsace region (capital Strasbourg), but also outside the limits of France, in the southern part of Belgium (Liège, Namur, to Brussels).

Where do translation scholars/students work? We know how, from the 16th century on, grammars and models for language learning (e.g. the Jesuit type known under the name of *Ratio studiorum*), spread in Europe, but also over the colonies in South-America and Asia, and probably helped to establish basic concepts of translation in these cultures. We all know how in the 17th century translation thinking spread from France to neighbouring countries. By the same token, one may see how the discipline is organized nowadays taking into consideration geo-cultural features: where did such and such research traditions first appear: descriptive translation studies in the Low Countries and Israel, Skopos theory in Germany, empirical research in Northern Europe, postcolonial studies

in the Americas, etc. One may also interpret the question from a more abstract viewpoint: in which educational and research structures are translation studies embedded: in universities (and in which departments of the university: Comparative Literature, language departments, which ones: English? French? German? Spanish? Portuguese), in training institutes? And what is the effect of all these parameters on the auto- and hetero-image of the discipline?

Quibus auxiliis?

With whose help/support did translators carry out their job? This question may refer to patronage and other control mechanisms on translators, including censorship (cf. A. Lefevere 1992), and even to the large surrounding contexts: social and political beliefs. A large amount of research has recently been done on power relations in translation (esp. in the framework of postcolonial translation studies). The contribution by Irene Hirsch follows this path.

Much less studied are the effects of the same type of relations on the thinking about translation, scholarship included. This seems a much more tricky matter, since researchers tend to believe (and make believe) that they are, so to speak, working in an free, unbound sphere, which seems to be the best condition to formulate objective claims about truth, or at least about scientific validity.

Cur?

Why do translations occur? Why do translations behave the way they do (types of relationships with their source-texts,

stylistic features, etc.). Of course, these questions also touch upon the complex issues of interpretation in general terms, and seem truly to be the ultimate questions of translation research. Should they be dismissed, though, for being utopian? I, for one, believe in the heuristic value of hypothetical explanatory statements (in terms of translation laws, for instance, or causal laws, such as developed by A. Chesterman 1998): they should not be taken at face-value, as finalized statements, but as statements that have the function of showing how things could be understood, and therefore point to possible directions for further research. In a similar way, the first contribution by Lia Wyler tries to hypothetically answer a set of basic questions.

Quomodo?

How were translations processed, granted we are able to reconstruct the process *a posteriori*, i.e. starting from the final result? Another question: how do translational norms change in time and space? An interesting position to study their evolution from is that taken by G. Toury (1995: 54, 62-63).

What about the making of translation theories or of other forms of conceptualization? What are their discursive properties: the nature and structure of arguments, axioms, definitions, etc.? Very few studies have tried to answer this question (one recent example deals with the evolution of the concept of equivalence: cf. S. Halverson 1997).

Quando?

Very generally: when in history does translation take place? According to systems theory, almost always, since cultures

are (almost) never in non-contact, and since contacts generally imply (as has been demonstrated by the history of grammars, and in this volume by Eduardo de Almeida Navarro) forms of translation (bilingual lists of terms to start with, etc.). Translations may vary in frequency and purpose (e.g. new and norm-breaking behaviour during cultural turns, in young or defective systems). Bibliographies may help to unveil patterns of frequency for shorter or longer periods, with refined distributional criteria (genres, authors, etc.). The question also concerns periodization: how can translations be structured along temporal parameters: into epochs, centuries, generations, or via content parameters (internal ones: “belles infidèles”, i.e. more or less 40 years, 1620-1660; or borrowed from other disciplines: romantic, postmodern, etc.). The same questions can be made about translation reflection: when and where did it emerge, spread, decline, under which circumstances, etc.?

Cui bono?

What is the effect of translation, its function, its use in society? Comparative literature has collected a enormous amount of information on the reception and use of translation, though not always underpinned by a clear vision of what these concepts mean: “influence” is often very close to naive causality, etc. Systems theory has provided alternatives, as is shown in this volume by Maria Cristina Batalha.

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This list of questions does not constitute a research programme, neither does it want to be exhaustive; it wants to *show* what can/should be covered by a historiography of translation and translation studies. In practice, there are very few examples of in-depth research projects capable of coping with many (or even several) of these questions applied to translation practice and/or translation reflection of the past (not to say modern translation research as such). The current case – eventually regretful, but that is inevitably the way many will have also to proceed in the future – is the case of the scholar working alone or within a small group, and trying to get some answers for a small number of specific questions from a corpus that is very often still unexplored.

Still, historiography should keep its ambition; simply speaking, it should aim at the best possible reconstruction of the past “wie es eigentlich gewesen ist” [how it really was], taking into account the largest possible number of parameters. I am hopeful that this goal remains within our reach. And this volume not only is an important step forward; it shows evidence that we are working in the right direction...

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Translating Brazil

*Lia Wylers**

***Abstract:** This brief outline of translation history in Brazil is part of a larger study, where the production of translations is examined in its social, political and economic context. The article emphasizes the different uses given to translation in Brazil, as compared to those registered in major European countries, how they evolved throughout time, and what major effects they have had on Brazilian language and literature.*

1. Introduction

Translation Studies have recently experienced an expansion unknown in previous centuries, both in scope and depth. Whereas formerly scholars concentrated mostly on the transparency or opacity of translations, now researchers in Europe, North-America, Israel and other parts of the world are also devoting some attention to questions such as who did what translation, how, where, for whom, with what effect. This change of focus is beginning to privilege translators in

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countries outside Europe, whose translation histories have not yet been written.

The notion that foreign texts were translated by medieval monks, then by aristocrats and finally by an emerging middle-class, for a growing printing trade, presupposes Christian countries, ruled by the nobility, where the Industrial Revolution made reading accessible to ever wider sectors of the population. These conditions and categories may have applied at one time or another to many European countries, but if the field of inquiry is expanded to include Europe's Others, i.e., Eastern European, African, Asian and American countries, possible similarities are outweighed by the many differences encountered, especially with respect to the uses given to translations and their effect.

A brief outline of the history of translation in Brazil may be useful to highlight some of the differences referred to above.

2. Translation for conquest and trade

Brazil is a South-American country of 180 million inhabitants with an *official* illiteracy rate of 25% (1996). A locally translated book remained a rare object in Brazil until 1930, though the last ten years have registered an average of 2.94 translations per day (Cat.Bras.Publ., 1987).

Unlike many countries on the European continent, Brazil did not evolve from a tribe to a conglomerate of tribes, from a conglomerate of tribes to a nation, with all the cultural implications that such an evolution results in. At one point in time, April 1500, the various tribes that occupied the territory now known as Brazil began to be

dominated and were united into one single colony by Portugal. Their various cultures were slowly exterminated or superseded by a single French dominated culture, that of Portugal.

The indigenous populations of the 16th century are estimated by scholars at 9-10 million, and it has been established that they spoke 103 different unwritten languages belonging to three different linguistic branches – Tupi, Macro-gê and Arawak – and at least two *linguae francae*, Abanhenga and Cariri (Houaiss, 1988).

The European discoverers spoke Portuguese, a language that at the time neither had an official grammar nor was taught in schools. The first Portuguese grammar appeared in 1540, and education became public in Portugal, even though if deficient and fragmentary, in 1759. The Portuguese elite spoke Spanish, French, Portuguese and/or Latin, and the people, though at least partially bilingual, were thoroughly illiterate. Printing activities were incipient and burdened by a triple censorship exercised by the Crown, the Roman Catholic Holy Office and the Roman Catholic local bishop, a condition which drastically restricted the publication of books (Saraiva, 1976).

The Portuguese colonial project for Brazil was to establish profitable lumber and farming posts, manned by enslaved Indians, but also included turning the Indians into tame, Christian, Portuguese-speaking subjects. The “rebellious” nature of the natives, however, forced the colonizers, as early as 1504, to import more docile African slaves, an action which had among other consequences the addition of two other *linguae francae* – Yoruba and Bantu – to the Brazilian Babel.

In parallel, the Portuguese claim to the newly discovered land was simultaneously challenged by the English, French, Dutch and

Spanish crowns, who encouraged piracy and/or the setting up of trading posts along the Brazilian coast, which extended for more than 7,000km, which the Portuguese had no means of patrolling.

So the arrival of Europeans in *Terrae Brasiliae* produced a clash of 110 languages and cultures that could only be resolved by much interpreting and language learning. And, as all parties involved either spoke unwritten languages or could not write the languages they spoke, written translation had no ground to prosper. Besides the prevailing illiteracy, it had against its development the prohibitions on opening local universities and printing shops, travelling and trading by land, and trading with unauthorized foreigners, and another 400 activities. All these setbacks made oral translation not only the possible form, but the adopted form of translation for the next three centuries.

So, until the end of the 18th century, interpreters were in constant demand for exploratory expeditions inland, and for administrative, military, judiciary and religious services; Europeans and natives alike were hired by commercial and maritime courts of justice. But despite this high demand, the first “Sworn Translator and Interpreter of the Nation”, Eugenio Gildmester, was appointed and granted the right to charge one thousand and one hundred *réis* for half a page of translation, only in 1808. Fifty years later (1851), however, Brazilian sworn translators were subordinated to the Commercial Tribunal (a situation which is still in effect for sworn translators) and had their profession and fees regulated by imperial law.

3. Translation for teaching and evangelization

The task of taming the natives and turning them into loyal Portuguese-speaking subjects fell to the Jesuits, who arrived in Brazil in 1554 and brought about an unexpected linguistic revolution. To

solve their communication problem they prepared a grammatical version (in the beginning hand-copied, then printed in Coimbra in 1595) of the *lingua franca* most widely spoken by coastal tribes. The new language was so rapidly and efficiently taught throughout the colony that it became more widespread than Portuguese. For 300 years, Tupi, and not Portuguese, was spoken by natives and Europeans alike, for all purposes and on all occasions, in spite of official efforts to stifle it. Even students who were being prepared to continue their studies in Europe, spoke Tupi in private, Portuguese at school on Sundays and other civil and religious holidays, and Latin at school on all other days (Leite, 1938).

The Jesuits were expelled from Brazil in 1759, and their schools and libraries dismantled. But Tupi continued to flourish, as illustrated by Guimarães Rosa's successful attempt to register in prose its current use in the interior of the state of Minas Gerais, and also by the large number of Tupi words assimilated into the Brazilian Portuguese, numerous place names throughout the country and by an important historical fact. In 1823 the members of Brazil's first Constituent Assembly finally chose Portuguese as their country's language, though early discussions included the adoption of either Tupi or French (Rodrigues, 1985)

So multilingualism¹ and translation were inseparable abilities taught at Jesuit schools from the early days of colonization. Translation exercises in prose, verse and drama were a fundamental aid to multilingualism in schools where the the curriculum included

¹ Multilingualism is understood as (a) symmetrical: the individual has equal knowledge of both languages; and (b) asymmetrical: (1) receptive or passive: the individual understands a second language but does not speak it; (2) non-receptive: the individual speaks a second language but understands it poorly; 3) the

Portuguese, Latin, Tupi, and French. Indeed, Tupi was taught instead of Greek in Jesuit schools. Children were encouraged to read books in Latin, French, Italian and English, though they went on speaking Tupi to each other and to their mothers and servants at home (Moraes, 1969).

Translations produced locally, though printed in Portugal in the 16th century, seem to corroborate this inseparability. There was a Tupi catechism, a *Suma da Doutrina Cristã* (*A Summary of Christian Doctrine*), by Padre Azpilcueta Navarro, S.J., dated 1556 – and probably Brazil’s first translation; and a bilingual grammar, *Arte da Gramática da língua mais usada na costa brasileira* (*The Art of the Grammar of the Most Commonly Used Language Along the Coast of Brazil*), by Padre José de Anchieta, S.J., dated 1595. Anchieta also wrote eleven religious plays and poems, in Latin, Portuguese, Spanish and Tupi, which are mentioned by Brazilian Jesuit researchers and literary historiographers².

This early introduction of theatrical plays for the purposes of evangelization probably contributed to the great popularity enjoyed by the art as from the second half of the 16th century. Chroniclers and voyagers who were in Brazil during the colonial period report that every festivity, both civil and religious, included the presentation of at least one French, Italian or Spanish play, either translated or in the original language.

individual reads and maybe writes a second language but does not understand it when spoken; (4) technical: the individual’s knowledge of a second language is restricted to his or her technical field of especialisation.

² See “The Translation of the First Texts to Tupi, the Classical Indian Language in Brazil” by Eduardo de Almeida Navarro, in this volume.

As regards prose, five books on morals and religion, credited to Brazilian translators, and published in Portugal, circulated in the colony during the 17th century (Moraes, 1979). There were also a few translations of Gongora's and Quevedo's verses made by Gregório de Matos, a colonial judge and an important Brazilian Baroque poet. These were exceptions to the prevailing themes, and there has been much controversy as to whether they were translations or plagiarisms.

4. Translation for the transfer of technology

Not much seems to have happened with regard to translation practices until the end of the 18th century, when a Franciscan friar, José Mariano da Conceição Veloso, initiated a movement inspired by European encyclopaedism. His objective was to make available in Brazil the new scientific and technical discoveries current in Europe. Veloso's project was approved by the Portuguese Crown and no expense was spared to set up in Lisbon a state-of-the-art printing shop, the *Tipografia Calcográfica, Tipoplástica e Literária do Arco do Cego*.

To translate his books, Veloso recruited young Brazilians, just out of francophile Coimbra and other European universities, who were proficient in Portuguese, Latin, French, English and German, and happened to be in Lisbon trying to get a government commission (Moraes, 1979). For payment they received room and board and the promise to have their other qualifications brought to the attention of the Crown.

The shop translated and published some 86 works in two years, a record *per se*, covering agriculture, agro-industry, botany, metallurgy, cheese making, chemistry, dying, engraving, history, language, mathematics, medicine, mining, navigation, natural science, painting, pottery and textiles.

Six further translations were released by other publishers during the 18th century on religion and morals, naturally enough, but also on science, the arts, philosophy, and biography. Notable among them is a feminist translation of Fénelon's *Aventures de Télémaque* by Teresa Margarida da Silva Orta to which she added her own ideas (and in consequence was imprisoned by the Crown). It was published in Portugal in 1753 and twice reprinted.

Friar Veloso's shop was short-lived (1799-1801) but the idea behind it continued to bear fruit. Upon the transfer of the Portuguese Crown to Brazil, in 1808, the bans on printing shops, universities, inland communication and foreign trade were lifted and the colony had its first legal printing house.

Impressão Régia, a government-owned company, was granted the monopoly both to print government documents and text books. The latter, locally translated from French, English and German, were needed for the new medical and law schools, and the recently founded military and scientific institutions.

Translators were recruited from the Portuguese émigrés and the local élite who also held teaching and administrative posts in the government. The shop's first translation was Pope's *Essay on Criticism*, carried out by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Marquis of Aguiar. *Impressão Régia* also printed author's editions and reprinted a number of French novels translated in Portugal, which were the fashion of the day.

Whether these translators were paid or how they were paid is still obscure, but there is documentary proof that many books were dedicated do H.R.H. the Prince Regent. The fact that they were

translated by civil servants may indicate that they were not paid for their work, and were content just to attract the Crown's attention to their other qualifications, as happened in Lisbon.

The prices charged by *Impressão Régia*, however, were very steep, so that as soon as the Napoleonic Wars were over, booksellers, particularly the French, who had dominated the Brazilian book market since 1808, turned once again to smuggling and importing their stock from Europe.

It should be noted at this point that all attempts at producing paper in Brazil before 1888 proved non-competitive (as compared to Europe) due to the scarcity of qualified workers and the high cost of imported equipment and raw materials. In addition, the advent of the rotary press around the 1830s put an end to the alternative of using the idle time of newspaper printing presses to print books at a lower cost. Faster steamboats brought cheaper and better made French books, newspapers and magazines to the Brazilian public within fifteen days of their release in France. And in certain periods (1815-36; 1844-60) as a result of international agreements, imported paper and pulp were taxed at 60% more than imported books.

As a result, major Brazilian authors such as Machado de Assis and José de Alencar had their works printed in Lisbon, Paris and London. Seizing the opportunity, French publishers also opened an equally profitable sideline of exporting translations to Brazil. In Paris, Bossange et Aillaud, for example, hired a Brazilian translator, Caetano Lopes de Moura, who reputedly earned 20 francs for 30 thousand words in 1838 (Hallewell, 1985: 161).

5. Translation for entertainment

Translation found expression in several forms other than that of the book, which prospered enormously in Brazil during the 19th century: the press and the theatre. A considerable number of newspapers were founded in Rio de Janeiro, as well as in other provinces of the colony, and as domestic communications were deficient and news agencies non-existent, editors had to resort to translated news, articles and serial novels to fill up the pages of their newspapers. Some newspapers even hired “translators”, although anyone who was bilingual might be given the job as it was assumed that anyone who could speak a foreign language could translate it, particularly with the dominance of the grammar-translation method of language teaching in all Western countries. This was the argument used by the government news organ, the *Diário Oficial*, for instance, when it cut two positions for translators and instead hired two multilingual journalists.

At the foot of the first page, newspapers published segments of translated serial novels, or French *feuilletons*, just after their publication in Paris and with the same aim. *Feuilletons* helped to sell newspapers, but they also provided translators with the newly discovered pleasure of translating novels which would be widely read. Before the advent of this new medium, novels were translated to be read among friends.

The theatre was another format in which translation became very important as from 1808, the beginning of a period of theatre building all over Brazil. Due to the small size of the population, however, just a few performances were given, so this soon raised a serious problem as the number of writers was equally small and insufficient to continually supply new plays. To try to solve the problem, both visiting and local companies began to commission translations and adaptations of French, Italian and Spanish plays or to

do them themselves. This practice became more frequent after the country's independence in 1822, when plays by Portuguese dramatists were considered politically undesirable.

Feuilletons and plays were translated by every aspiring writer in the country, from the Emperors to government employees and politicians and to bohemian printers and actors. Advertisements published in newspapers of the time show that there were also books translated and printed by public subscription, which we may assume also paid for the translator's work.

Though most translators earned their money from various other jobs, they became so active as dramatists that by 1917 they had founded an efficient and exclusive copyright association for their own protection: the Brazilian Society of Dramatists (SBAT – Sociedade Brasileira de Autores Teatrais).

While translated *feuilletons* and plays prospered, locally translated books, and even Brazilian originals, had to wait until the first quarter of the 20th century to be printed in Brazil.

6. Translation for nation building

Three circumstances helped to tip the scales in favour of local printing: World War I, which made importing books from Europe a very risky venture; Brazilian paper production which finally began to increase – a pre-requisite for competitive book printing; and the growing wave of nationalism then entering a more practical phase (Hobsbawm 1991).

Many publishing houses opened, closed and changed hands while attempting to substitute the importation of translated and original

books. Some even managed to become solid concerns by 1930, when the book industry received a strong boost from Getúlio Vargas's nationalist government (1930-1945).

One such concern was Editora Globo, whose development can be considered paradigmatic for Brazilian publishing houses in the first half of our century. It opened in 1883 as a store for office supplies in Porto Alegre, Rio Grande do Sul, the southernmost state in Brazil. By 1922 it had published two highly successful text books, pirated translations from French, Italian and Spanish sources, and launched a magazine to publicize the ideas of local intellectuals and politicians who soon were to acquire nationwide fame. Fifteen years later Globo had become a leading publisher of reference books and translations: from Nobel Prize winners and classics to detective and adventure novels.

Globo's prosperity reflected favourably on working conditions for their translators, who resided or took up residence in Porto Alegre. They were given permanent work, a comfortable in-house office, payment by production and freedom to establish their own schedule. Additional benefits included a reference library, a typewriter and a chance to sub-edit other's translations.

Like José Olympio, an important publishing house in Rio de Janeiro, Globo also commissioned translations from both upcoming and well-established writers like poet Carlos Drummond de Andrade, novelist Rachel de Queiroz, publisher, translator and writer of children books Monteiro Lobato, literary critic Agripino Grieco, and novelist Lucio Cardoso, reflecting a preoccupation with quality and the consolidation of Brazilian Portuguese.

The volume of translated works published between 1930 and 1947 was so high that for two years the literary supplement of the

country's largest newspaper, *Diário de Notícias* (*Daily News*), carried a column to comment on them. For publishers translations were a means to circumvent the severe restrictions and censorship imposed by the Vargas dictatorship and at the same time acquaint Brazilian readers with new literary currents and cultures where political problems were freely discussed.

From 1936 to 1948, the number of Brazilian publishing houses grew by 91%, and the backbone of their growth were text books and/or translated novels. But following Vargas's fall, in 1946, changes in economic policies resulted in the number of publishing houses falling by 50%. However, the industry was saved from complete ruin by the initiative of foreign publishers to buy up or associate with their Brazilian counterparts.

The opportunity was taken up by the United States to dislodge France from the prominent position it had maintained for over a century in the Brazilian ideas market. A survey conducted by USIS in 1987 shows that the United States government financed the translation and publication of 9,849 American works between 1960 and 1987, a rate which has not stopped growing since, and by 1995 had reached 2.94 translations a day (Baltar, 1987).

The American example was followed by other governments. France, Italy and Germany began to finance translations, assuring a slow and varied flow of translated works other than American, comparable to the situation which had been enjoyed by European countries for centuries.

One of the consequences of expansion of the translation market promoted by the United States government, as from the sixties, was the opening of undergraduate courses in translation all over Brazil,

which nowadays total over 30. Despite their number, they continue to be insufficient to cope with the fast growing needs of new mass media like commercial and cable TV and the ever-growing importation of text books and manuals.

7. Conclusions

From this brief outline it is apparent that the initial development of translation in Brazil privileged oral translation, or interpreting, while ascribing to written translation the role of a mere teaching aid, as the seven books translated in the first 300 years of Brazilian history demonstrate.

And as before the invention of batteries and recording machines, oral translation was an individual, self-contained, process, no doubt it contributed significantly to the accumulation of knowledge about the inhabitants and the riches of the land, but not to the formation of a national literature.

Even the Jesuits' effort to normatize and to give written expression to a native *lingua franca* yielded, as far as we know, only eleven religious plays in four languages. For neither literature nor the translation of old manuscripts was their main concern, but rather the civilization of the "savages", a task so enormous that they abandoned it 30 years later to concentrate only on saving their souls (Tobias, 1986).

It is very difficult to evaluate the "real" contribution of translation to Brazilian literature until the 19th century, because adverse conditions for printing (prohibition), writing (triple censorship), reading (high book prices, high illiteracy rates) prevented the production and distribution of books. It is true that there are accounts of illegally hand-copied and printed books being confiscated and shops dismantled

(Moraes, 1979), but this has only began to receive the attention of scholars in the 1920s.

As from the beginning of the 19th century, however, translated French drama and *feuilletons* exerted such a radical impact on literature, and on culture as a whole, that, even while it was taking place, many intellectuals were calling it “the French influenza”, or epidemic. (The extent of this epidemic has been thoroughly discussed in *Cultures Croisées*) (Carelli, 1993). Machado de Assis, for one, expressed his deep concern for the paths that remained open to Brazilian literature under this impact.

Today his concern seems totally justified, for even if we consider the episodic attempts at producing a Brazilian theatre, this genre has remained predominantly a translated genre, where situations and dialogues have been adapted to suit a public captivated by the French sitcoms, commercial TV, and now by cable TV.

The translated French *feuilletons* were replaced in the 20th century by translated American best-sellers, which have been so thoroughly assimilated by the public that Brazilian literature may now produce the strangeness commonly produced in Europe, for instance, by foreign literature.

But while the existence of highbrow literature is threatened by American bestsellers, another translated model has provided an outlet for Brazilian creativity. A direct offspring of French *feuilletons*, the soap opera, became, in the late 20th, *the* Brazilian popular literature. One of the reasons for its success is that it neither depends on printing nor on literacy but on TV, which reaches every corner of the country and every segment of society.

The transfer of scientific and technological information initiated by Friar Veloso in the late 18th century did not produce the intended effects, because the translations printed by Arco do Cego in Portugal, never reached Brazil (Moraes, 1979). Unaided by the Crown, however, another 86 translations appeared in Brazil, showing that besides religion and philosophy, poetry, music, drama, chemistry and medicine attracted the interest of colonials.

Another official initiative occurred when the Crown founded schools and ordered translations to be made for the newly founded school and scientific institutions from 1810 on. Though more successful than Veloso's, this new effort was also short-lived. Paper importation restrictions and production policies once again sent the decisions on what books to translate and print back to Portugal, France and England, despite the fact that Brazil became independent from Portugal in 1822.

The desired transfer began to take place in the 20th century, after World War I, and predominantly from the United States. Together with American bestsellers, this transfer had an even more overpowering impact than that exerted by France during the four centuries of Portuguese colonization. Though it is early to evaluate all its effects on Brazilian culture, one can hypothesize that the entry of the United States into the Brazilian cultural market occurred too suddenly and in too short a period for a country where there were not enough translators to cope with the change

The newness of the information which was being transferred and the newness of the English language made them privilege literal translation, and frequently mimic English structures, especially where English prepositions are concerned, to the point that it has visibly affected the production of texts in Portuguese.

These are some of the striking differences that I have found between the development of translation in major European countries, which should make local researchers think carefully about which factors and parameters should be included in a Brazilian translation history.

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The Translation of the First Texts to Tupi, the Classical Indian Language in Brazil

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***Abstract:** This article describes the influence of Tupi Indian language on the formation of the Brazilian culture, especially on Brazilian Portuguese, Brazilian literature and the geographical names of Brazil. It also shows how the first texts in Tupi were produced, how these texts dealt with cultural diversity, allowing the Indian culture to be absorbed into the European culture, and the semantic displacements which took place.*

1. Introduction

When the Portuguese settlers arrived in Brazil, in around 1500, hundreds, or possibly thousands, of Indian languages were spoken in Brazil. Nevertheless, right along the coastline of Brazil, just one language was spoken, and as the colonization of Brazil began on the coast, it was this Indian language that the Portuguese learnt in order to colonize Brazil, which had a Indian higher population at the time than the population of Portugal, a million inhabitants. This language spoken along the Brazilian coastline in the 16th

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century was called the *Língua Brasileira*, and in the 19th century *Tupi*. It is now known as *Ancient Tupi* or *Tupinambá*.

Ancient Tupi was thus a fundamental part of the formation of the Brazilian culture as it was learnt by the Portuguese in order to dominate the newly discovered land. It is the classical Indian language of Brazil, a central part of the spiritual and cultural development of Brazil and occupies a similar position to Quechua in Peru and Bolivia, Nahuatl in Mexico and Guarani in Paraguay, which have all been vital for the development of modern states.

In few American countries was an Indian language so widespread as Ancient Tupi was in Brazil. For a number of centuries it was the language of the majority of the members of the colonial administration, the Indians, Africans and Europeans, and played an important role in unifying Brazil. It gave thousands of terms to Brazilian Portuguese, naming thousands of places (after Portuguese it is the language which has produced most geographical names in Brazil); it was important for the literatures of the Colonial, Romantic and Modernist periods; and has been a central feature of affirmations of a Brazilian cultural identity.

As it was spoken in the catechism and by the backwoodsmen, it was an instrument of the spiritual and territorial conquests of our history, and knowledge of Tupi, however superficial it may have been, has been part of our national culture (Lemos Barbosa, 1956)¹.

Brazil would be a bilingual country today, as Paraguay is, where Guarani is spoken alongside Spanish by just about all the

¹ “Falada na catequese e nas bandeiras, instrumento das conquistas espirituais e territoriais da nossa história, o seu conhecimento, sequer superficial, faz parte da cultura nacional”.

population, even in the cities, if the teaching of Tupi had not been forbidden by the Portuguese government in 1758, through the powerful Minister of King Dom José of Portugal, the Marquis de Pombal, who decreed Portuguese as the national language of Brazil, thus weakening the power of the Catholic Church, especially that of the Jesuits, whom he expelled from Brazil in 1759.

The first grammarian of Tupi was Father José de Anchieta, who arrived in Brazil in 1553 and died in Brazil in 1597. He was the author of *Arte de Gramática da Língua mais Usada na Costa do Brasil* (*The Art of the Grammar of the Most Commonly Used Language Along the Coast of Brazil*). He arrived in Brazil with the fleet of Duarte da Costa, the second Governor General, and spent his first years in São Paulo de Piratininga, today, São Paulo, the largest city in Brazil, where he learnt Tupi and made a rough version of its grammar in 1555, though the final version was only published near the end of his life.

Tupi was spoken right along the Brazilian coastline, from the Amazon Basin to around the 27th parallel south, with a number of variants of dialect. Thus the grammar was made of a language which had a considerable geographical extension. The high costs of printing a grammar at a time when the press was still at a primitive stage, would only be justified if the language described was spoken by a large enough number of people, and the publication of a grammar would help to convert a considerable number of souls.

Tupi is thus the most important non-European influence on Brazilian Portuguese. According to Lemos Barbosa (1956) there are nearly ten thousand words which come from Tupi in Brazilian Portuguese. The influence has mainly been lexical, but can also be seen in syntax and phonology.

Tupi has mostly supplied terms in the semantic areas of flora and fauna, fish, hunting and food. It was almost impossible for the colonizer to dominate the new territory without learning the native language in which animals, plants, cultivated foods, and hunting and fishing instruments were named.

In order to know the Brazilian fauna we must become familiar with the vocabulary of Ancient Tupi: names like *jaguara* (the name of the well-known car *Jaguar* comes from Tupi), *jacaré* (alligator), *tatu* (anteater), *piranha*, *cotia* (agouti), *perereca* (toad), *mocó* (guinea pig), *burigui* (sand fly), *guará* (ibis), *piripiri* (vulturine parrot) are common. The same goes for the flora: *caju* (cashew), *indaiá* (a type of palm), *pindoba* (pindova palm), *gravatá* (bromelia), *taquara* (type of small bamboo), are just a few of the thousands of names of plants in Brazil.

There are numerous expressions which include Tupi terms: everyday examples are *ficar com nhenben nhen* (to create difficulties, problems); *ficar jururu* (to be sad); *ir para a cucuia* (to be finished, used up); *chorar as pitangas* (to complain, moan), which all come from the colonial period, when Tupi was spoken by the majority of Brazilians.

In the Brazilian cuisine, a large number of terms have been taken from Tupi: *pipoca* (popcorn), *pirão* (fish mush), *pururuca* (hominy) and *mandioca* (manioc).

In the same way that Arabic is necessary in order to further one's knowledge of Castillian Spanish or the Portuguese of Portugal, which both received thousands of terms from Arabic, a basic knowledge of Ancient Tupi is necessary in order to fully understand the Portuguese of Brazil.

Many people believe that the influence of Tupi can be found not just in the lexicon but also but also in the syntax of Brazilian Portuguese. For example, in placing the indirect personal pronoun *me* before the verb in Brazilian Portuguese as in *me dá um livro* (Give me a book) instead of *dá-me um livro*, as is spoken in Portugal. Brazilian Portuguese here copies the position of the first and second person personal pronouns in Tupi. It is also possible that Tupi has influenced the phonology of Brazilian Portuguese, as in the number of nasalized syllables occurring in Brazil that is greater than in Portugal.

When attempting to impose new patterns of spatial organization on Brazil, the Portuguese came across Indian societies that had been established in Brazil for many thousands of years, and the lands they “discovered” already had Indian names. The majority of Indian names are from Tupi, which was spoken by all Indian groups such as the Tupinambá, the Temiminó, the Tupinikin, the Tamoio, the Potiguar and the Tupi, which lived in the coastal areas.

Why are there so many Tupi place names in Brazil? As already mentioned, one hypothesis is that Tupi was spoken in the 16th century right along the Brazilian coast, and as the Indians were nomads, when the Portuguese colonization advanced, they began to move into the interior of Brazil and thus brought Tupi names to new areas. However, this point is contested by Sampaio (1987), who says that the majority of the place names were the result of “civilization”, coming from missions and backwoodsmen, and not from the Indians themselves.

2. The grammarian missionaries and their importance for the knowledge of the languages of America

The publication of Father José de Anchieta's *Arte de Gramática da Língua mais Usada na Costa do Brasil* in 1595 in Portugal was not an

isolated fact but part of a much wider context as the 16th and 17th centuries can be called “The Period of the Grammars”. Until then, little importance had been given to the study and grammars of languages, and in the Middle Ages when the scholastic theologian and not the polyglot philologist provided the model for the cultivated man.

At the same time as the scholars were studying ancient texts and drinking at the sources of Western culture, the new European nation states were appearing. Now language becomes a “companion of the Empire” as the Spanish humanist Nebrija said.

The discovery of new continents in the 16th century resulted in the Europeans making contact with the most varied cultural and linguistic realities, from the cultivated and refined Chinese society of the Ming dynasty to the Indian societies of South America, and the discovery of non-European languages of peoples who inhabited previously unknown regions and continents.

So, almost at the same time as the first grammars of French, Spanish, Portuguese were written, grammars of Amerindian, Asiatic and African languages were also published, which, decades previously, had been completely unknown to the Europeans. The first western grammars of Japanese, Vietnamese, Arabic, Geez (Ethiopia), Tamil, Guarani, Tupi, Nahuatl, Aymara (Bolivia and Peru), Quechua and many others date from this period. Certain grammars of Amerindian languages were even published before the first grammars of English, the first being that of Bullokar, in 1586, while *Arte en Lengua de Michoacan (The Art of the Language of Michoacan)*, by Frei Maturino Gilberti, had been published 28 years previously, in 1558.

If the grammaticalization of native languages and the renewal of grammars of the ancient languages were very much part of the Renaissance, the grammaticalization of American, Asiatic and African languages was the result of missionary activity, part of the Counter Reformation, which refused to accept the basic theories of the Renaissance. It was also at this time that religion in the West began to sever its links with philosophy and politics, contrary to what took place in the Islamic world.

The missionaries were thus the first grammarians of the American, African and Asiatic languages. For Inácio de Loyola, learning the languages of the peoples to be evangelized was the first obligation of a Jesuit missionary. In countries like Japan, India, Vietnam, Mexico, Peru and Paraguay, these missionaries produced monumental philological works, the first grammars of languages which are spoken today by millions of people.

3. The literature of catechism, the first literature in Amerindian languages

The Counter Reformation in the 16th century, which produced structural changes in the Catholic Church, in order to confront the Protestant threat in Europe and which was affecting the newly-discovered lands, banned the translation of the Bible into living European languages and into Amerindian, African and Asiatic languages.

Martin Luther, who translated the Bible into German, believed that the Scriptures should be accessible to ordinary people, and this principle, associated with that of the free interpretation of the Bible, led to the fragmentation of Protestantism into different branches and subdivisions. This did not take place with Catholicism, which has kept a formal unity right until today.

Thus the Council of Trent, which finished in 1564, confirmed the text of the Bible known as the *Vulgata* as the official Church text for the Latin ritual. Translating the Bible to living languages would be an enormous heresy, an indication of Lutherism and a sin which could be severely punished.

However, in Renaissance Europe, Latin could be read by a large number of people as the majority of European languages derive from Latin or are strongly influenced by it. But how could the people from overseas, the distant peoples of Africa, Asia and America, receive the Christian doctrine if the Latin culture and Latin itself were unknown and incomprehensible to them, if Latin had no relation with the languages which were spoken there? Likewise, in Europe, many people had no access to the Latin text of the Bible due to the high illiteracy rates in medieval Europe. How could the doctrines of Catholicism be brought to these people?

The Council of Trent, which was sensitive to the requirements of the new times, which had seen the expansion of the geographical, cultural and linguistic limits of the world and the emergence of cultures as diverse as those of the Indians and the Incas, allowed a corpus of doctrines in living languages which contained the fundamental truths of the Christian faith, prayers, the instructions on sacraments and the most important extracts of the gospels to be compiled. It was called the Roman Catechism.

The Catechism could actually be translated into any languages in the world and was the basis of education throughout the Catholic world after the Council of Trent. Admittance to the sacraments of the Eucharist and Penitence should be preceded by an initiation into the Catholic doctrine summarised in the texts of the Catechism.

In linguistic terms, the importance of the Christian doctrines and the Roman Catechism is in the fact that they are, in many cases, the first texts which were translated into American, Asiatic and African languages. These translations were often made in the 16th century and are the oldest literature we have of many of the world's languages.

Three kinds of works were published by the religious orders in Latin America: lists of vocabulary, grammars and, most importantly, catechisms. Such catechismal literature in Latin American, included:

- The Roman Catechism (containing the Christian doctrine), which translated into Indian languages, included;
- Sermons and homilies
- Primers followed by prayers, for the teaching of Indian languages to children together with the teaching of religion (e.g, the *Cartilla para los niños en lengua Tarasca (The Primer for Children in the Tarasco Language)*, by Frei Maturino Gilberti, México, 1559)
- Confessionals
- Prayers for saints
- Daily spiritual exercises
- Christian psalmodies and religious songs
- A Translation of the Epistles and the Gospels
- A Translation of Papal bulls to Indian languages
- A biography of pious Indians
- Parish manuals (Missals)
- The biographies of saints
- Works on the life of Jesus Christ
- A manual of the sacraments
- Didactic plays (autos) and religious poems

However, the missionaries did not always have to deal with languages which had a purely oral tradition. In the 16th century Europeans also found complex societies which had written forms and which already had age-old written literature. This was the case of the Chinese, the Japanese and the Indians, who also had religious books which were as old as or older than the Bible, as in the case of Rg Veda and Tao Te King. In this case, the requirements of the linguistic study by the missionaries was much more than the mere production of catechismal texts. The work of the Jesuit priest Matteo Ricci illustrates the situation which missionaries in Asia faced. He arrived in Macau in 1582 and produced non-catechismal literature in Chinese, with the explicit aim of attracting the attention of China to his culture, and by doing so, would attempt to guide readers into taking an interest in God.

4. Anchieta's *Brasilico Catechism*

The first religious texts in Ancient Tupi were written soon after 1548, the year in which the first Jesuits arrived in Brazil. But it was only after 1553, with the arrival of José de Anchieta, that all the Roman Catechism was translated into Tupi.

Born in 1534 in the Canary Isles, Anchieta went to Portugal in 1548 to study at the famous Renaissance school, the *Colégio das Artes*, one of the so-called “colleges of three languages”, Latin, Greek and Hebrew. At this time, such colleges were spreading all over Europe, forming the intellectual elite of the Renaissance. Anchieta lived in Coimbra during one of its most hectic periods, also one of the richest of intellectual life in Portugal. His gained most of his humanistic education at the *Colégio das Artes* before he entered the Company of Jesus in 1551 and before *Colégio* was handed over to the Company of Jesus in 1555.

Anchieta came to Brazil to teach Latin in the settlement of São Paulo. There he learnt and mastered Tupi, the reason why the Indians called him *nbe'engyáara* (*he who dominated the language, the lord of speech*).

Anchieta remained in São Paulo from 1554 (the year of its foundation) until 1562. In these eight years he translated the Roman Catechism to Tupi, but this text was only published in 1621, after his death, and was altered and enlarged by another Jesuit, Antônio de Araújo, who gave it the title *Catecismo na Língua Brasileira*.

4.1. Semantic Dislocations

According to Alfredo Bosi (1992),

The project of transposing the Catholic message to the speech of the Indians required a great effort in order to penetrate the imaginary of the Other, and this was the task of the first apostle (i.e., Anchieta). In the passage from one symbolic sphere to another, Anchieta found obstacles which at times could not be solved. How could the Tupis be told about the word *sin* if they had no such notion, at least according to what was registered throughout the Middle Ages in Europe. Anchieta, in this and other extreme cases, preferred to graft Portuguese vocabulary on to the trunk of the native language; and he does the same, and with good reasons, with the word *mass*, and the invocation to *Our Lady*²:

² “O projeto de transpor para a fala do índio a mensagem católica demandava um esforço de penetrar no imaginário do outro, e este foi o empenho do primeiro apóstolo (i.e., Anchieta). Na passagem de uma esfera simbólica para a outra, Anchieta encontrou óbices por vezes incontornáveis. Como dizer aos tupis, por exemplo, a palavra pecado, se eles careciam até mesmo da sua noção, ao menos no registro que esta assumira ao longo da Idade Média européia? Anchieta, neste e em outros casos extremos, prefere enxertar o vocábulo português no tronco do idioma nativo; o mesmo faz, e com mais fortes razões, com a palavra missa e com a invocação a Nossa Senhora.”

*Ejorí, Santa Maria,
xe anama rausubá!
Vem, Santa Maria,
Para se compadecer de minha família*

*(Ejorí, Santa Maria,
xe anama rausubá!
Come, Santa Maria,
To take pity on my family)*

Anchieta translated The Lord's Prayer as follows:

Oré r-ub, ybak-y-pe t-ekó-ar,

Nosso Pai, o que está no céu,

Our Father, who art in Heaven

I moeté-pyr-amo nde r-era t'ó-íkó.

Como o que é honrado teu nome esteja.

Hallowed be thy name

T'ó-ur nde Reino!

Que venha teu Reino!

Thy kingdom come!

T'ó-nhe-monhang nde r-emi-motara

Que se faça tua vontade

Thine will be done!

yby-pe

na terra,

On earth,

Ybak-y-pe i nhe-monhanga íabé!

Como o fazer-se dela no céu!

As it is in Heaven!

Oré r-emi-'u, 'ara-îabi'õ-ndûara,

Nossa comida, a que é de cada dia

Our food of every day

E-î-me'eng kori orébe.

Dá hoje para nós.

Give us today

Nde nhyrõ oré angaîpaba r-esé orébe,

Perdoa tu nossos pecados a nós,

Forgive us our sins,

Oré r-erekó-memûã-sara supé

Como aos que nos tratam mal

As those who treat us badly

Oré nhyrõ îabé.

Nós perdoamos.

We forgive.

Oré mo'ar-ukar ume) îepé tentação pupé,

Não nos deixes tu fazer cair em tentação,

Lead us not into temptation,

Oré pysyrõ-te îepé mba'e-aíba suí.

Mas livra-nos tu das coisas más.

But deliver us from bad things .

It can be seen that the terms *Reino* (kingdom) and *tentação* (temptation) were not translated into Tupi, and Anchieta used the Portuguese terms. According to Bosi (op. cit.), “such cases are atypical. He most often looks for some corresponding element in the two languages with unequal results”³. Let us now look at some

³ “tais casos são atípicos. O mais comum é a busca de alguma homologia entre as duas línguas com resultados de valor desigual”.

of the ways in which terms which designated important concepts of the Christian religion were translated:

God – The term used by Anchieta in the Indian language to designate the Christian God was **Tupã**, the name of a cosmic force identified with the thunder, which was a destructive power. **Tupã beraba**, *the brilliance of Tupã*, was the lightning which destroyed the forest. How can it be identified with the God of the Gospels? How would the Indians have accepted such a transplant of concepts? According to Helène Clastres (1978), the religion of the Indians along the coastline of Brazil and that of the Guaranis contained the idea of the end of the world and of all order of things. In addition, they believed in an earthly paradise, *the Land with nothing bad* (*Yby Marã-e'ymã*), which had a definite location and where they would find their dead ancestors. It was thus easy for the missionaries to identify Tupã with the Christian god as the former was a destructive god (the thunder). It was only after all order was destroyed that a supernatural order would be established, where man would be free from all bad things. This was an idea which the missionaries assimilated to that of the Christian paradise. As a symbol of destruction, thunder can thus be identified with God.

Paradise – As just seen, the Indians along the Brazilian coast believed in the notion of a paradise which had both a definite time and place. It was called **Yby-Marã-e'ymã**, *the Land with nothing bad*, where they would find their ancestors and where they would dance and drink with them for ever. This idea seemed to be pagan to the missionaries, and this is the reason why the Christian paradise was not called by this name but rather **Tupã rorypaba** (*the place of the happiness of Tupã*).

Angel – In order to designate the angels, Anchieta created the term **karai-bebé**, which means *sanctity which flies*. **Karaíba** was the name of an Indian prophet who travelled from village to village to announce the Land with nothing bad, the Indian paradise. He was highly respected and lived in isolation fasting and keeping silent for long periods. *Karaíba* also designated all that was sacred for the Indians, their religious objects, and everything that was linked to their rituals.

Sin – The Indians along the coast of Brazil did not share our concept of sin. Anchieta used the Tupi term **tekó-aíba**, **tekó-poxy** or **tekó-angaipaba**, which meant the *bad life*, or the *bad culture of a people*. **Tekó-poxy** was opposed to **tekó-katu** (good culture), which was the Christian life, Christian virtue. Anchieta directly attacked traditional elements of the Indian culture such as anthropophagy and communication with the dead, in addition to the practices of witch doctors and trances, which he believed to be diabolical. In his didactic religious play, the auto *Na Aldeia de Guaraparim* (*In the Village of Guaraparim*), he placed in the mouth of the Devil a series of practices which he saw as diabolical:

*Moraseia é i katu
Ieguaka, iemopiranga
Samongy, tetymanguanga,
Iemoúina, petymbu,
Karaí-monhamonbanga...
Iemoyrô, morapiti,
io'u, tapuia rara,
aguasá, moropotara,
manhana, syguaraiy:
naipotari abá seiara.*

*A dança é que é boa,
adornar-se, tingir-se de vermelbo,
untar as penas, tingir-se de urucu as pernas,
tingir-se de preto, fumar,
ficar fazendo feitiçaria,
enfurecer-se, matar gente,
comer um ao outro, apanhar tapuias,
mancebia, desejo sensual,
espiar, prostituir-se.
Não quero que o homem deixe (tais coisas).*

*The dance is good,
You adorn yourself, you paint yourself red,
You daub the feathers, you dye your legs with urucu,
You paint yourself black, smoke,
You carry out spells,
You grow furious and kill people,
You eat each other, you catch enemy Indians,
You take concubines, give yourselves to sensual desire,
You spy, prostitute yourselves.
I don't want anyone to stop (doing such things)*

In other words, in order to become Christians, the Indians must stop being Indians.

The Devil – The Indians were deeply religious, with all their social lives based around religion. The primitive Indians along the Brazilian coast believed that there existed malignant entities which inhabited the forests and the beaches: *Anbanga, Juruparim, Mbaetatá,*

Curupira, etc. Anchieta chose the term *Anhanga* to designate the biblical term.

Inferno – The Christian inferno was a strange idea for the Indians, who had no conception of a state of eternal suffering. Anchieta called this in Tupi Anhanga **ratá**, the fire of Anhanga. The malignant spirit, who lived in the forests, thus moved to the depths of the earth and kept alight the fire where sinners would be eternally punished.

Soul – In order to designate this term, Anchieta used the Tupi term **'anga**, which also designated *shadow*. It is not known whether this term was used by the Indians in this sense as the essence of their religion was the communication with the souls of the dead.

Church – The term **Tupã-oka**, house of Tupã, was used to designate the Christian temple.

Purity – This term was very abstract to be translated into Tupi, a language which expressed concrete things with few abstractions and thus had problems to express a mythical way of thinking. This concept was designated by the term **moro-potar-e'yma**, *not to desire people sensually*, which is hardly the same thing as *purity*.

Miracle – Another concept which did not exist among the Indians along the coast of Brazil. Mythical thinking is impregnated with the supernatural and is full of miracles and prodigies. The logic of mythical thought is not the same as that of literate societies, and there was no term to designate *miracle*. Anchieta translated it as “*to make easy that which is difficult*”.

4.2. Indian culture in the Tupi catechism

When transposing the Christian message to the Indian language, Anchieta made adaptations which forced him to distance himself from Catholic orthodoxy and put Indian elements into Catholicism. A good example of this is the way in which doctrinaire messages which originated in the Indian culture are inserted in the *Catecismo Brasílico*. Here are some examples:

4.2.1. The legend of Sumé and Saint Tomé

In the 16th and 17th centuries the legend spread among whites that the apostle Saint Tomé had come to evangelize America. Sumé, “great witch doctor and caraíba Indian”, is the father of the brothers Tamendonare and Ariconte, who, among other things, were responsible for the flood, which the primitive Indians of the Brazilian coast believed had destroyed the whole of humanity in the past. Sumé is the civilizing hero to whom the Tupis attribute their knowledge of agriculture and their social organization. At another time he taught men the arts of civilization: certain footprints printed in rocks show the Tupis the visible proof of his presence. Near the bay of Rio de Janeiro, there was a long five foot wide stone on which there were some marks of a stick and human footprints. These were thought to have belonged to the great Caraíba, who gave them knowledge, the use of fire and information on planting root crops. The similarity between the names of *Sumé* and *Tomé*, the faith in the Scriptures which affirmed that the word of the apostles would spread throughout the world were all that was necessary for the legend to gain strength. “Thanks to this, the Indian world was seen to be coherent: it was possible to attribute those parts of the truth which could be identified in certain places in the Indian discourse to the sermons of the apostles”⁴. (Clastres, op. cit.)

⁴ “Graças a isso, a percepção do mundo índio se tornará coerente: será possível atribuir à pregação do apóstolo as parcelas de verdade que se crê identificar cá e lá no discurso indígena”.

In Araújo's 1621 catechism, probably based on an older text of Anchieta, we can find the following on São Tomé:

“Kó santo supé byá our kó xe yby supá rimba'e i 'éu. Anbe serã iasepiak iaby i py-pora 'iaba. Ké suí i asab-i Índia tapyitinga retame.

Dizem, sobre este santo, que veio para visitar esta minha terra. O que se diz é que se vêem as marcas de seus pés. Daqui passou para a Índia, terra dos hindus”.

They say, about this saint, that he came to visit my country. What is said is that the marks of his feet can be found. From here he went to India, the land of the Hindus.

The catechism produced for the Indians thus included texts which did not appear in catechisms in other languages, let alone in the *Catechismus Romanum*. What is found is a hybrid text: it is not part of the Indian culture, as they spoke of *Sumé* and not *São Tomé*, nor is it part of orthodox Catholic culture, which didn't contain this legend.

4.2.2. Aspects of the affective and sexual lives of the Indians

Anchieta's Catechism also shows us important data on the sexual life of the Indians in terms of the marriage sacrament or the Sixth Commandment, that of chastity. Of all the commandments which the Catechism mentions, the text on the Sixth Commandment, which reflects the strong sexual repression of the Catholic Counter Reformation, is the longest of all. Anchieta teaches the marriage sacrament according to the medieval form of teaching by questions and answers:

“-*S-ygyrõpe kunhã o mena reséne?*

-*Sygyrone, amoaté kunhã resé sekopotare’yma.*

Terá a mulher ciúmes de seu marido?

Terá ciúmes, para ele não querer viver com outra mulher.”

“Will the woman be jealous of her husband?

Yes, so he will not want to live with another woman.”

But Anchieta did not ask men the same question: he did not say that they should be jealous of their wives so that they do not want other men. This is a clear reference to the polygamy of the coastal Indians. In this warrior society, the man found himself totally involved in the practice and the maintenance of warfare, and the woman would look after the crops, harvest, prepare and cook food, make drinks (the ingredients of religious ceremonies), obtain water, firewood and keep the fire alight, take care of the male companion and children and transport the hammocks and food that were required on long journeys (even those whose aim was war). As a result, the man needed the woman to “look after him” both when he was present as when he was absent.

The work may well have been too hard for just one wife, and so the husband would look for other companions; the wife herself would often take the initiative to look for these concubines to help her in the daily tasks. The chroniclers of the period say that wives were not jealous of their husbands and that they even asked their husbands to have more wives to help them. It is for this reason that Anchieta states in his catechism that the wife should be jealous of

her husband. Such a statement would be unthinkable in a European catechism, where the idea of jealousy is negative: a desire to possess the beloved. Among the Brazilian Indians jealousy was seen as positive, an element which would preserve the monogamous marriage.

5. Conclusions

Anchieta's *Catecismo Brasileiro*, one of the first texts translated in Brazil, is an archaeology of the cultural formation of Brazil, the meeting of the European and Indian worlds.

Anchieta did not see the Indian as the *Other*, but rather as the *Same*. The Indian's culture needed to be destroyed so that he could be turned into a Christian. In 16th century anthropology there was no concept of cultural relativism.

According to Bosi (op. cit.),

The new representation of the sacred which was produced in this way was neither Christian theology nor Tupi belief but rather a third symbolical sphere, a kind of parallel mythology was made possible by the colonial situation⁵.

Translated from the Portuguese by John Milton

⁵ "A nova representação do sagrado assim produzida já não era nem a teologia cristã nem a crença tupi, mas uma terceira esfera simbólica, uma espécie de mitologia paralela que só a situação colonial tornara possível."

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