Tristan Tzara and Mário de Andrade's Journeys from Ethnography to the Avant-Garde

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ABBREVIATIONS, NOTES, & BIBLIOGRAPHY

OC: Andrade de, Mário. *Mário de Andrade*: *Poesias Completas.* Zanotto Manfio. São Paulo: Itatiaia, 1987

OC t1: Tzara, Tristan. *Œuvres completes, tome 1, 1912-1924*, edited by Henri Béhar*,* Paris: Flammarion, 1975

OC t3: Tzara, Tristan. *Œuvres Complètes Tome 3 1934-1946*, edited by Henri Béhar Paris: Flammarion, 1979

OC t4: Tzara, Tristan. *Œuvres Complètes, tome 4, 1947-1963*, edited by Henri Béhar*,* Paris: Flammarion, 1980

OC t5: Tzara, Tristan. *Œuvres Complètes tome 5, 1924-1963*, edited by Henri Béhar Flammarion, 1982

OC t6: Tzara, Tristan. *Œuvres Complètes, tome 6, Le Secret de Villon*, edited by Henri Béhar, Paris: Flammarion, 1991

INTRODUCTION

The most attractive element of a comparison is not necessarily similarity. The act of comparing is, firstly, creative. When, on the one hand, many categories already exist archived and established, and when, on the other, categorization is being challenged, the act of comparing can lead to new considerations. Given the need to communicate transnationally, while taking into consideration sociopolitical and aesthetic/cultural specificities, comparing across different languages and geopolitical and social plateaus, enhances this demand.

The period in which Tristan Tzara and Mário de Andrade lived, from their births in 1896 and 1893 respectively, up to the beginning of the twentieth century, was undoubtedly one of turmoil and great change affecting humanity. Frequent changes in national borders, conflicts, two world wars, the Holocaust, independence movements, new technologies and disciplines, and modernity, were all bound to make their mark on poetry, art, and literature, which, in their turn, were vehicles for trying to make sense of it all.

Naturally, these events and processes did not have a homogenous influence; they did, however, have an influence on multiple ethnoscapes. Although the author of this term, Appadurai, uses it in reference to the contemporary, I am borrowing it because it seems appropriate for the times in which the two poets and writers—the subjects of this book—lived and worked. Appadurai calls the ethnoscape the landscape of the shifting world, of moving groups and individuals.[1]

Questions about what constitutes the intercultural, the local, the universal, the cosmopolitan, and the transnational seem to be more relevant now than ever. Of course, such questions have preoccupied humanity in earlier times too, but it seems that modernity and modernism during Mario de Andrade and Tristan Tzara's time prompted a more consistent exploration of these issues. It was a time that simultaneously promoted an admiration of

[1] Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at Large*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005, 33

systematic research into different cultures, as well as the propagation of chauvinism.

At first glance, a comparison of Tristan Tzara and Mário de Andrade might appear geographically and culturally unorthodox. Yet, a more in-depth look reveals much that the two authors have in common. Not only due to their backgrounds, but also the polyphonic ethnoscapes they subsumed into their work. This book uncovers that Tristan Tzara has much more to offer European poetry and prose than his title as the founder of Dadaism suggests and what Mário de Andrade, apart from being named the "Pope of Modernism" in Brazil, can offer beyond his country's borders. The two poets and writers were not only born at approximately the same time, but their work, as we shall see, underwent very similar development.

Fragments of Mário de Andrade's literature and poetry have previously been researched in English and primarily in Brazilian Portuguese publications in the context of the Latin American avant-garde and broader postcolonial discourse. Most often, as is discussed in Chapter Two, his work is seen as an impressive Brazilian example of work preoccupied with themes strictly of relevance to Brazil itself. However, research in English on an essential portion of his works is non-existent. On the other hand, Tristan Tzara's works are not as widely explored and analysed, perhaps due to their simultaneously hermetic and polysemic nature. Arguably, his best-known text is the *Sept Manifestes Dada* (1918), which has been translated into many languages. His work has generally been approached in parts, rather than as a whole; in fragmented chapters or articles about individual poems and only occasionally in complete poetry collections, along with Henri Béhar's edition of Tzara's complete works. Notable exceptions are Forcer's book (2006), which focuses on a large part of his poetry, and Hentea's enlightening recent biography (2014), which connects certain works by Tzara with the time in which he wrote them.

Another example is Buot's (2002) biography of Tzara, which is less thorough than Hentea's since it is based more on events in art history and on what Tzara's contemporaries wrote about him. Beitchman (1988) and Papachristos (1999) have both published insightful works on Tzara's theatre. In addition to Hentea's work, Sandqvist, in *Dada East: The Romanians of Cabaret Voltaire* (2006), associates Tristan Tzara and Marcel Ianco's shared Jewish and Romanian roots, emphasising the cultural activities of Yiddish speaking Eastern European Jewry with the creation of Dadaism. Another important work that addresses Tzara's

Jewish background, without referring to any particular work by him, is Heyd's *Tristan Tzara/Samuel Rosenstock, The Hidden/Overt Jewish Agenda* (2010).

This book seeks to explore the work of Tristan Tzara, Mário de Andrade, and their kindred effect in bringing into vogue narratives and composition styles of autochthonous populations and combating segregation. This latter position stands out among the dominant discourse of the *Antropofagia*, progression, nationalism, and neo-Indianism of many of his Brazilian colleagues. I wish to examine the way in which Tzara's work can be illuminated in relation to Mário's because he came from what is called the margins of Europe, yet ended up playing a primary role in shaping the European and international avant-garde.

By pairing Tristan Tzara with Mário de Andrade, I will attempt to show that what is considered the periphery and the centre of modernism is problematic and therefore open to criticism and change. Due to their rather complex identities, and the variety of interests and influences that are set aside when placing them in the canon, a whole range of elements in their work has been neglected. As Huyssen argues, "despite the celebrated internationalism of the modern, the very structures of academic disciplines, their compartmentalization in university departments of national literatures, and their inherent unequal power relations still prevent us from acknowledging what one might call modernity at large, that is, the cross-national cultural forms that emerge from the negotiation of the modern with the indigenous, the colonial and the postcolonial in the 'non-Western' world".[2]

Many times I have considered the question: could these two poets have met? They could have, but Mário never left Latin America and Tzara never went to the Americas. Besides this, in Mário's personal archive there are copies of articles about Dada publications featuring some works by Tzara as well as various periodicals and articles about Tzara and many of his colleagues. Mário also referred to Tzara's poetry in his *A Escrava que não é Isaura* (1922). No evidence has been found so far about any further knowledge of the latter about the activities of the former. It could have been possible if some of the Brazilian Modernistas who spent time in Paris had been friendly with Tzara, or he with them. We know from Màrio's rich archive of letters and the historical record that he and Tzara

[2] Andreas Huyssen, "Geographies of Modernism in a Globalizing World", *New German Critique* 34, no. 1, 2007, 19

had friends and acquaintances in common. These were prominent figures like Blaise Cendrars and Benjamin Péret, who spent time in Brazil with Mário and were in touch with Tzara, and Yvan Goll, whose communications with Mário were only in the form of letters.

My comparison of Mário de Andrade and Tristan Tzara focuses on the influence that oral language traditions, folk tales, their socio-political environment, and their cultural roots had on them. Folk tales, folklore, and legends are used here to address oral traditions surviving over time, which we mainly see through the traces in both writers' works. Influences from anthropological and ethnological studies are approached here to explore how Tristan Tzara and Mário de Andrade combined a variety of local expressions from their own cultures, as well as those of others, presenting us ultimately with a collection of work with universal codes of narrative. By universal, I mean here a complex web of narratives traversing multiple cultures, rather than a single unified mode of narrative. The present research aims to shed light on the phenomenon by which even those from different time periods or countries use a common "language" to explore shared existential questions through oral and written narratives. While Tristan Tzara's origin is located in ancient Judaic roots and the Balkans and Mário de Andrade's in that of the "New World" of the Americas, they were both searching for a place in which to be rooted. One was a result of the Diaspora, while the other was of the opposite—the concentration of different peoples in a land, along with the autochthonous inhabitants, as a consequence of colonisation. We can, then, consider Mário de Andrade and Tristan Tzara as two enlighteners of their time, searching not necessarily for an authentic narrative, but rather for variations, alterations, and alternatives; resisting the estrangement created by the dichotomies between oral and written language, high and low culture, and the centre and periphery.

At first glance, the association of folklore, mythology, and ethnology with what are considered to be modernist works, appears to be extraneous to the values of modernism and its avant-gardes and their attempt to break free from tradition. Nevertheless, the majority of the early modernist artists, writers, and philosophers looked for references elsewhere to create something new, and to cultures other than that of bourgeois Western Europe, for which reason they made use of folk culture and ancient myths from within Europe and beyond. There are numerous instances of this search in all the artforms of the time: James Joyce's *Ulysses* (1922) in narrative; in painting the multiple versions of André Masson's *Pasiphaë* (1937); and on the stage the settings of Sergei Diaghilev for the Ballet

Russe with compositions by Satie, Schoenberg, and Stravinsky. Hence, I consider the prose and poetry of both Mário de Andrade and Tristan Tzara to be part of modernism, aesthetically as well as philosophically. The modernism I have in mind here shares Habermas's idea of the "modern", retaining a secret connection to the classical,[3] and, at the same time, Pegrum's view that the modernist avant-garde includes the "postmodern".[4]

On the one hand, the Brazilian writer, also influenced by European poets and writers, was one of the pioneers of *Modernismo* in Brazil, organizing a large part of the "Semana de Arte Moderna" in the Municipal Theatre of São Paulo in 1922, the event that marked the rise of modernism in Brazil.[5] Mário's public reading from his poetry collection *Paulicéia Desvairada* in the "Semana" marks his own first modernist work. A celebrated element in Brazilian modernism, the *Manifesto Antropofágico*, was composed by Oswald de Andrade in 1928 and published in the *Revista da Antropofagia* the same year. The magazine continued to be published until February 1929. However, by that time, many writers, among them Mário de Andrade, had stopped publishing texts in it because of disagreements with Oswald. As a result, Mário soon distanced himself from the "Cannibalist Movement" to carve out his own creative path. Apart from his personal rupture with Oswald, Mário, like many critics after him, saw that the Manifesto was not the ultimate definition of Brazilian culture and played dangerously with Romanticized and nearly-nationalistic ideas. The *Manifesto Antropofágico* drew its inspiration from the first European descriptions of the indigenous Tupi people of the land that became known as Brazil and their ritualistic cannibalism. Oswald wrote it during a journey in Europe under the influence of avant-garde movements such as Futurism, Dadaism, and Surrealism. In this work, he declares that Brazilians do not have to look far for "primitivist" inspiration since they have their own Tupi tradition. Haroldo de Campos argues that Oswald's "antropofagia" is a theory formulated from the disabused point of view of the "bad" savage, devourer of the whites—the cannibal. This view does not involve submission (conversion), but rather, transculturation.[6]

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[3] Jürgen Habermas, *Habermas And The Unfinished Project Of Modernity*, eds. Maurizio Passerin d'Entrèves and Seyla Benhabib, Mass.: MIT Press, 1997, 39
[4] Mark A Pegrum, *Challenging Modernity*, London: Berghahn Books, 2000
[5] Danilo Mezzadri, *The 1922 Week of Modern Art and Its Celebrations: A Study of Historical Reconstruction and Nationalism in Brazil*, Michigan State University, 2007, 48-49
[6] Haroldo de Campos, Antonio Sergio Bessa and Odile Cisneros, *Novas*, Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 2007, 159

However, the "disabused bad savage" is just another stereotypical image of a person with different cultural roots and does not provide a realistic portrayal of the indigenous population. It is still, like the "good" savage, the Other, an alterity with a different label.

Schwarz suggests that Brazilian Modernism's "present-day success has to do with its integration into the discourse of conservative modernization". He refers to Oswald's invention as "an easy formula for Brazil, the juxtaposition of elements characteristic of colonial Brazil with those of bourgeois Brazil, and the raising of the product of this juxtaposition—disjointed by definition—to the dignity of an allegory of the country as a whole".[7] While he sees the fact that there is a "lack of intellectual continuity" in Brazil as problematic, Schwarz praises Machado de Assis, Mário de Andrade, and Antonio Candido: "None of them lacked information or an openness to contemporary trends, but they all knew how to make broad and critical use of their predecessors' work, which they regarded not as dead weight but as a dynamic and unfinished element underlying present-day contradictions".[8] Interestingly, by 1924, when Oswald published *Poésia Pau-Brasil* (along the lines of his *Manifesto Pau-Brasil*), his and Mário's friendship and collaboration, already under strain, saw a major rupture. The original group of artists and poets that showcased modernism in Brazil in the famous "Semana" of 1922 had fallen apart and Mário criticised Oswald for levity and for his generalizations.[9] Mário's novel *Macunaíma*, analysed here in Chapter Two, belongs broadly to Brazilian Modernism, but its writer did not follow the two famous manifestos of Oswald de Andrade. Mário, wisely, had already recognized his own lack of knowledge regarding many aspects of his country. On the contrary, Oswald says "a floresta é a escola", despite the fact that his upbringing was in an urban environment and did not have the same ethnographical interests as Mário.[10] Mário had already distinguished the great differences that existed between himself, the middle-class poet at his desk in the metropolis of São Paulo, and the forest rubber tapper in the northern state of Acre in his poem "Acalanto do Seringueiro", as I will discuss in Chapter One.

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[7] Roberto Schwarz and John Gledson, *Misplaced Ideas*, repr., London: Verso, 1992, 110

[8] Idem

[9] Vera Lucia dos Reis, *Perfeito Escriba (O)*, São Paulo: Annablume, 1998, 148

[10] Gilberto Mendonça Teles, *Vanguarda Européia E Modernismo Brasileiro*, Petrópolis: Editora Vozes, 1972

Intriguingly, Oswald's manifestos borrowed much, in terms of presentation and style, from Tzara and Marinetti. Tzara's poetry was also quite well known to the Brazilian Modernists, since he was at the heart of the European avant-garde, fathering Dadaism. At the time that Oswald wrote his manifestos, in Europe, Dada came to an end—the last Dada soirée was held in Théâtre Michel in 1923[11]—and Surrealism took hold in many avant-garde circles. Coincidentally, the falling out of Oswald and Mário and between Tristan Tzara and André Breton happened at approximately the same time. In 1922, Breton had already become enraged with Tzara when he refused to join the organizing committee of the "Congrès international pour la détermination des directives et la défense de l'esprit moderne". His reply to Tzara while addressing the committee not only questioned the latter's position within Dadaism, but also emphasised his foreign origins.[12] The rivalry of Tzara and Breton did not stop there, as Pegrum notes, for "the large number of critics and art historians who consider the two, Dadaism and Surrealism, in conjunction. Surrealism represents, after the explosion of Dada, a retreat to more traditionally modern concerns: the (re-)establishment of order and meaning, and the construction of the utopia of the inner being".[13] Tristan Tzara may not have signed the *Manifeste du surréalisme* of 1924, but he was influenced by it and influenced his friends and rivals in the movement. Perhaps the most relevant sign of this influence, on and by Tzara, is his poetry collection *L'Homme approximatif* (1931). The collection was praised by Surrealists and was composed and published at a time of brief reconciliation between Tzara and Breton's Surrealist group; it did not last long. Tzara and others distanced themselves from the group for many reasons. Among these were the group's hegemonic tendencies, lack of activism, and its discriminatory views, such as the surprising homophobia of Breton and other members. Tzara's close friendship with Crevel, as well as his personal beliefs, mobilization, and commitment to social causes, signalled this distance once again. His prose piece, *Personnage d'insomnie* (1933-34), makes reference to dreams and brings to mind certain Surrealist ideas, as I show in Chapter Two. However, even in that case Tzara makes his own exploration of the subject. He says: "ce qui lie ce rêve à la valeur expérimentale que j'aimerais lui octroyer réside précisément dans sa nature de rêve éveillé, car l'opposition et la réunion de ces deux termes dont l'aboutissants paraissent contradictoires, exigent

[11] Marius Hentea, *Tata Dada, The Real Life and Celestial Adventures of Tristan Tzara*, MIT Press, 2014, 194
[12] Hentea, 179-180
[13] Pegrum, 289-290

impérieusement la création d'une nouvelle notion, celle de la poésie".[14] He wrote this observation in 1933, the same year that he started working on *Personnage d'insomnie*, a work in which he expands on the exercise of insomnia when the insomniac creates the story of the "personality of insomnia". Béhar speculates that the novelette may not have been published at the time because Tzara was not close with the Surrealists, or for personal reasons. Still, it should hold, even posthumously, "une place exceptionnelle dans la bibliothèque du rêve".[15]

Returning to Brazilian matters, one can immediately point out how problematic looking at a pre-colonial version of Brazil is with regard to the fact that Oswald de Andrade was part of a society consisting of a multiplicity of ethnicities: descendants of backgrounds as diverse as Japan, Nigeria, and Lebanon. Schwarz argues that, even though the idea of swallowing the "alien" resulted in some sort of copying of this alien element, it still had regenerative effects, which, at first, seemed fresh, but soon proved to be susceptible to misinterpretation. He adds: "The programmatic innocence of the Antropofagos, which allows them to ignore the malaise, does not prevent it from emerging anew".[16] In brief, the *Antropofagia* movement was full of idyllic conventions related to the image of pre-colonial Brazil. The examples of Mário de Andrade's work that I am going to explore show how he progressively recognized his predicament of being trapped in an anachronistic, unrealistic presentation of Brazilian culture and society, and tried to elucidate it. Similarly, Tristan Tzara did not insist on disavowing Western culture, as his Dada persona indicated, which was at times a response to an impasse in European culture that culminated in the atrocities of the First World War.

The two writers compared here kept an open mind about cultural influences. Tristan Tzara carried his Romanian Jewish heritage with him and combined these influences with others from European poetry. However, characterising either the Romanian/French poet or the Brazilian one in terms of the periphery-centre model is inappropriate, since both also read Walt Whitman, Rimbaud, and Baudelaire alongside readings from their own cultures. Furthermore, they both lived in newly industrialized metropolises. Their common Western readings have often overshadowed the fact that they both read and valued works closer to their individual

[14] Tristan Tzara, Œuvres Complètes Tome 3 (1934-1946), edited by Henri Béhar, Paris: Flammarion, 1979, 102
[15] Béhar, 562
[16] Schwarz, 8-9

environments, as well as those of so-called remote places. I suggest that we should, instead, refer to a conversation between a type of convergent evolution in modernism and a nomadic approach to thought—nomadic in the way described by Deleuze and Guattari: "The nomad has a territory; he follows customary paths; he goes from one point to another; he is not ignorant of points … A path is always between two points, but the in-between has taken on all the consistency and enjoys both an autonomy and a direction of its own".[17] This idea is exemplified by the function of the "in-between" in language and culture in the works of Mário de Andrade and Tristan Tzara, which I shall compare in Chapter Two.

On that note, it is necessary to point out Huyssen's acknowledgement that, "the cultural dimensions of globalization and their relation to the whole history of modernity remain poorly understood, often for the simple reason that 'real' or 'authentic' culture … is seen as that which is subjectively shared by a given community and therefore local, whereas only economic processes and technological change are perceived as universal and global. The global-local binary, however, is as homogenizing as the alleged cultural homogenization of the global it opposes. It lags behind the transnational understanding of modern cultural practices that was already achieved by segments of the modern movement".[18] Within these particular segments Huyssen refers to contemporaneity, which can be applied to Tristan Tzara's and Mário de Andrade's research and work as well. As for his suggestions on overcoming this lag, the issue remains as to where the present comparison is situated. The global-local opposition's narrowness excludes human movement, transnational phenomena that do not necessarily, if ever, imply an effect on a global scale, rewriting, and repetition and, of course, different languages and different topoi.

Although Huyssen does not use the term rhizomatic, perhaps due to his concrete, specific suggestions for inclusive and effective comparison in a "globalizing world", it is a term that has been used, for instance, by Alexandru Bar's study of Tristan Tzara and Marcel Iancu's "multi-layered identities" (2018). Needless to say, Bar's research and terminology is enlightening regarding the ideas put forward by Huyssen and Appadurai. The fact that Tzara was Jewish and Mário mixed, or that he might have had homoerotic relations, cannot be used to define them. However, it is astonishing that, until recently, these facets had been entirely dismissed or, one might say, concealed. The multifaceted aspects of their work, their

[17] Gilles Deleuze, Félix Guattari. *A Thousand Plateaus*, Continuum, 2004, 419
[18] Huyssen, 193

personalities, and their identities are precisely addressed by the word "journeys" in the title of this book. They were not mere admirers of different cultures and their own; their journeys were intellectual, physical, and ontological. This is not the case of Gauguin's Haitian paintings and André Gide's Congo, or someone like Tarsila do Amaral's studies in France with Fernand Léger. Here we encounter a distinct phenomenon of two writers and poets, Mário de Andrade and Tristan Tzara, two intellectuals with kaleidoscopic and, simultaneously, very fixed backgrounds. Neither of them travelled much, or at least not as much as some of their contemporaries did in the form of periegesis, for long periods, and they did not undertake, or in Tzara's case complete, formal study abroad. Yet, their curious minds searched, observed, and absorbed the rhythms and expressions of language in their multifaceted cultures, as well as those of others, and produced combinations of rhythms, poetry, and prose calling for introspective reflection, as well as sociopolitical interrogation.

Mário, who is referred to by his first name as is the Brazilian tradition, and Tzara, undertake, in their earlier work, research into secondary ethnology and incorporate it into their poetic and literary compositions. Their main difference is that the former, later in his career, organized proper ethnomusicological research in Brazil. Thus, I intend to demonstrate that their practice was broadly significant in the development of modernism and that their personal study, as expressed in their essays, articles, prose, and poetry, advanced these mediums, and even the then-young disciplines of ethnology and folk studies, as well as others. Their methods and their backgrounds illustrate that canonical models pointing to the dichotomies of the centre-periphery and high-low artistic expression are outmoded and, most of all, ineffective.

The present book specifically concerns case studies of Mário de Andrade's poetry collection *Clã do Jabuti* (1927), the novel *Macunaíma: o herói sem nenhum carater* (1928), and the opera *Café* (1955). These are placed in dialogue with Tristan Tzara's poetry collection *Poèmes nègres* (1916-17), the novelette *Personage d'insomnie* (1935), and individual poems from the collections *Terre sur terre* (1946) and *Le Signe de vie* (1946). I follow the chronological order in which these texts were produced and, starting with something from their early experiments with poetry, I give the book its driving focus on the parallel creative path of Mário de Andrade and Tristan Tzara. The first chapter embarks on a comparison that shows the desire of each writer to explore what appears to be the Other. To twist Lacan's words, the two poets often appeared to other people as Others, and

"there is not an Other of the Other"; that is, as Fink explains "no position outside of language that allows us to discuss language as a whole without having to rely on language itself in our discussion".[19] In Mário's *Clã* this is obvious, as, at times, it is communicated in his original verse, which is interrupted or dominated by folk poetry/ethnopoetics. In Tzara's collection, as will be discussed later, the very choice of the ethnopoetic content speaks for itself. Chapter Two compares two prose texts that, again, engage oral narratives, but focus more on language and identity, on questions of the role of nature in contrast with an industrialized urban environment, on production and consumption, and, last but not least, on the role of tradition and adaptation to the new. Finally, in what begins the pursuit of a deeper understanding of the self, Mário and Tzara's work will be shown to result in a militant poetics that matures with their respective, active participation in the pursuit of justice, as we shall see in Chapter Three.

Firstly, I discuss Tristan Tzara's *Poèmes nègres* and Mário de Andrade's *Clã do Jabuti* and their common ethnopoetics. Tristan Tzara, at the time of his first steps in developing Dadaism, had already demonstrated an interest in anthropology journals and texts from African and Austronesian cultures. He also became a collector of artefacts from these cultures, since he did not have the opportunity to visit most of these places. As Henri Béhar notes, Tzara was reading Leo Frobenius, Jean Paulhan, Carl Meinhof, up-to-date ethnological and linguistic accounts of African peoples and cultures, translated poetry from Madagascar, and works in Bantu languages.[20] Tzara's article in *SIC*, *Note 6 sur l'art nègre* (1917), where he praises African art, shows his personal interest in the richness of the aesthetics of African nations.

In contrast, for many artists of the time, there was a delayed conscious realization that what they saw in the Trocadéro museum of ethnology might have had an impact on their work. Béhar confirms Tzara's revolutionary opinion made public: "Tzara est, à cette date, l'un des premiers commentateurs avec Apollinaire à se tourner vers l'art nègre comme source de renouvellement".[21] Béhar's comment supplements my argument about Tzara being one of the few intellectuals at that point in

[19] Bruce Fink. *Lacan to the Letter: Reading Écrits closely*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2004, 6
[20] Henri Béhar, Tristan Tzara *Œuvres Complètes Tome 1* (*1912-1924)*, Paris: Flammarion, 1975, 715
[21] Béhar, 705

time to discern the great variety and the potential for renewal that the art and oral literature the vast African continent offered. Whenever the sources and my research findings permit, I will refer to the specific culture and language from which the poem comes, but with the provision that, at the time, borders were not as they are today and that, unfortunately, some ethnic groups have been either assimilated into others or persecuted. It will sometimes be necessary to use the more generic terms "African" and "Austronesian".

The majority of the poems in these two collections were not integrally composed by Tristan Tzara and Mário de Andrade. The former poet states this by declaring that, embedded in these poems, lie adaptations/translations of works by others and that, therefore, he cannot put his signature to them. Gabriel Soro, in his comparative study *Jean Paulhan, Tristan Tzara et le poème nègre: un aspect du dialogue littéraire entre l'avant-garde française (19e-20e s.) et les arts primitifs* (1983), offers useful insight into the way Tzara and Paulhan approached the translation of oral Malagasy poetry. Soro points out that this poetry carries impressions of phatic and emotional language. However, we cannot speak of an absolute lyricism since lyricism entails, first and foremost, the "I" and the "you": it speaks from man to man.[22] Tristan Tzara finds a revolutionary style in oral poetry. The repetition of words in the *Poèmes nègres* creates a verbal architecture that serves as the conjunction of different axes of dialogue, a strategy that was also employed by other Dadaists. Some of the *Poèmes nègres* have been the object of a recent comparative translation case study in *Migration and Cultural contact: Germany and Australia* (2009). In its second chapter, entitled "Dada among the Missionaries: Sources of Tristan Tzara's Poèmes nègres", Veit analyses the background of the German Lutheran missionary Carl Strehlow in the context of the Dada revolution. He concentrates on the meaning and purpose of adaptation by looking at Strehlow's German translation, and then Tzara's French adaptation, of oral poems by Arrernte and Luritja aboriginals.[23] Tzara's *Poèmes nègres* also features in an English translation by Pierre Joris in *Alcheringa: ethnopoetics* published in 1976 without any analysis or comparative notes. So, there are some analyses regarding the form, translation, and unique

[22] Gabriel Soro, "Jean Paulhan, Tristan Tzara et le poème nègre", ed. H. Béhar, *Melusine: L'age D'or-l'age D'homme* no. VII, Editions L'Age d'Homme, 1986, 65

[23] Walter Friedrich Veit, "Dada among the missionaries: Sources of Tristan Tzara's Poèmes Nègres", *Migration and cultural contact: Germany and Australia*, edited by Andrea Banhauer, Maria Veber, Sydney University Press, 2009, 49

adaptation of these poems by Tristan Tzara, but only in comparison to an ethnologist and language teacher, Paulhan, and a missionary and linguist, Strehlow. However, these comparative studies focus on the ethnographic, rather than the lyrical, poetic value of such poems. A comparison of Tzara's *Poèmes nègres* with the work of another poet who employed a similar mode, adapting traditional oral verse, in this case Mário de Andrade's *Clã do Jabuti*, offers a different light on the understanding of this method and the presence of ethnopoetics in more supposedly conventional poetry.

Mário de Andrade compiled the poetry collection *Clã do jabuti* (Clan of the tortoise) by combining traditional songs and tales with his own poetic compositions. Many of the twenty-two poems are composed in particular musical forms. Beyond that, the dates of composition of these poems signal Mário's awareness of the polyphony and cultural diversity of his native Brazil. It starts with poems written in 1924 when he travelled, along with other poets and artists from the metropolis of São Paulo, to the interior of Brazil and the state of Minas Gerais. In "Noturno de Belo Horizonte", Mário de Andrade describes nighttime in the city of Belo Horizonte, the capital of Minas Gerais. He talks of the silence that makes the:

> Vento florido roda pelos trilhos.
> Vem de longe, das grotas pré-historicas…
> Descendo as montanhas
> Fugiu dos despenhadeiros assombrados do Rola-Moça…[24]

The poet then stops his own recitation and the rest of the verses are not Mário's own. He reuses a traditional *balada* song from the region of Minas Gerais. Suarez and Tomlins translated some poems from *Clã do Jabuti* into English, at the same time commenting on their content and form. They observe that, in the poems, "Mário's most pictorial and sensorial views of Brazil come to us on hot nights of sensuality. He identifies this sensuality as the contribution of Africa to the national psyche".[25] However, this is a rather platitudinal observation overlooking the poet's inclusion of the Yoruba when he refers to significant civilisations. Mário uses folk tales from all regions of Brazil. The previous

[24] Mário de Andrade, *Mário de Andrade*: *Poesias Completas*, edited by Zanotto Manfio, Itatiaia: São Paulo, 1987, 184
[25] Jose I. Suarez, Jack E. Tomlins, *Mário de Andrade: The Creative Works*, Lexington Books, 2000, 73

example from Minas Gerais includes elements of the history of the region. In Minas, prehistoric paintings are to be found, as well as narratives from colonial times. Brazil's first capital, Vila Rica—now known as Ouro Preto—is one such example of a city that reflects these diverse narratives, drawn from a variety of people and from all facets of life. All kinds of people brought along their stories and created new ones, from Jesuits to Africans, indigenous slaves, and freed men; from baroque artists to Portuguese immigrants turned Brazilian patriots and revolutionaries along with all those that simply passed by because of the area's famous seventeenth-century gold rush. In between the verses of "Noturno de Belo Horizonte", Mário adds:

> Eu queria contar todas as histórias de Minas
> Aos brasileiros do Brasil…[26]

An interesting case study is presented in *Clã do Jabuti: uma partitura de palavras* (2006), developed by Christiane Rodrigues de Souza from her thesis on Mário's poetry collection. Souza's research is significant because the reader is offered a categorization of the poems according to their musical origins. Rodrigues de Souza analyses poems that fall under the category *Coordenadas*: Mário had used this same word, "coordinated", to refer to how some of his compositions are coherently linked. Here we encounter an analysis of poems that deal with passions, personal relationships, and desires among people, and, perhaps, the poet's own such feelings, as well as incidents of everyday life on the streets of Brazil. What follows are poems inspired and adapted by orally preserved indigenous traditions. One of Rodriques de Souza's chapters is dedicated to an analysis of the particular sound patterns of certain verses. It includes a note on how Mário de Andrade tries to create a dialogue between poetry and folk traditions to show that, despite the differences found among Brazilians, there is nothing like storytelling to gather people under the same roof. This analysis of sound and phonetic distribution within Mário's poetry shares a style of analysis with Stephen Forcer's study *Modernist Song: the Poetry of Tristan Tzara* (2006). He comments on poems from the collections *Vingt-cinq poèmes* (1918), *De nos oiseaux (*1923), *L'Homme approximatif* (1931), *Où boivent les loups* (1932), *Midis gagnés* (1939), *De mémoire d'homme* (1950), and *Miennes* (1955). Forcer's attempt to look at Tzara's work beyond the legendary Dada movement and his prompting of research into further examples of Tristan Tzara's extensive work has particularly encouraged my own work.

[26] Mário de Andrade, 186

During the period of *Clã do Jabuti*'s composition, from 1924 up to its publication in 1927, Mário de Andrade thoroughly studied the folk legends and songs of his country, Capistrano Abreu's study of Amerindian linguistics, and Dürkheim and Theodor Koch-Grünberg's studies of Amazonian myths. The Brazilian writer was fluent in French and German and read a variety of European ethnographic texts before they appeared in Portuguese translation. In 1928, just a year after *Clã do Jabuti*, he published the novel *Macunaíma: o herói sem nenhum caráter*, which also maps many of Brazil's folk traditions. These two works were produced around the time of Mário's travel to North and Northeast Brazil, as well as the Amazonian side of Peru. His travel journal from that time was published posthumously under the title *O Turista Aprendiz*.

The embrace of the polyphony of the multicultural Romanian population, and an early introduction to multilingualism giving access to the study of various products of European theatre, poetry, and literature, is a characteristic that Tristan Tzara shares with the Brazilian writer. Although he addressed his mother and father in French, despite both living in Romania, Tzara wrote letters in Romanian while living in France. From a very young age, he was multilingual. Buot mentions that while Tzara was publishing in Romanian poetry journals, such as *Noua Revista Romana* and *Chemanera* in 1913, he had long discussions with Janco about Walt Whitman. At the same time, Tzara was introduced to Apollinaire's poetry and borrowed the title for one of his poems from Rimbaud: "Les Sœurs de charité".[27] His capacity for foreign languages is demonstrated by his time in Zürich, where he made use of his fluency in French, German and Romanian, as well as his familiarity with English, and Latin in his writing, employing all these languages simultaneously in Dada poems.[28] A lot of the texts regarding ethnopoetics that he translated are from magazines such as *Anthropos*, which included articles in various European languages. The Romanian poet published articles in the magazine *Konstrevy* in Stockholm, translated into Swedish by his wife Greta Knutson. These articles, originally unpublished in French, can now be found in the poet's *Œuvres complètes*, volume IV, with titles slightly changed from the original Swedish publications.[29] The article *Sur l'art primitif d'Afrique et des îles des mers du Sud*, published in Sweden in 1933, not only shows

[27] François Buot, *Tristan Tzara: L'Homme qui inventa la Révolution Dada*, Paris: Grasset, 2002, 27
[28] Hentea, 27
[29] Henri Béhar, Tristan Tzara, *Œuvres Complètes Tome 4* (*1947-1963)*, Paris: Flammarion, 1980, 674

that Tzara continued his interest in African and Polynesian cultures, it also presents us with a remarkable comparative study of the way storytelling is bound to indigenous sculpture and painting. In particular, Tzara discusses the prehistoric wall paintings that Frobenius found in Rhodesia in association with more recently discovered statues in Congo and the narratives behind them.[30]

In 1915, the young Tzara, still in Romania, had his first poems, influenced by French Symbolism, published in the journal *Symbolul*. By 1917 he was in Zürich and had already produced many Dada soirées with Hugo Ball. That same year Mário de Andrade published his first poetry collection, *Há uma gota de sangue em cada poema*, a work that can be considered more Parnassian than modernist. Mário de Andrade was a musician, singer and piano teacher long before he started writing avant-garde poetry and continued to be one after becoming a published poet. He was interested in the content of his native poems and myths, but also in their melodies. As for Tristan Tzara, he was not a musician, but he did consider, when younger, becoming a pianist. Despite this, his poems and especially his manuscripts contain variations and corrections of specific words that emphasise his preoccupation with sound and phonetic combinations.

Another element that I discuss in Chapter One, is that neither poet adapted their ethnopoetics from direct communication with indigenous people, but through translations by ethnographers, their notes, and other publications. Recycling existing material (a practice shared by Dadaists and, later, by the Brazilian Modernists, who followed the example of Mário de Andrade, Oswald de Andrade's *Manifesto Antropofagico*, and, in their turn, took the Dadaist approach of Tzara) removes the element of authorship and originality on the part of a single creator. The same effect can be found in Tzara and Mário de Andrade's insistence on the use of sound patterns in their poetry that I am addressing here. In addition, sounds, unlike image-based metaphors, offer a better understanding of the existence of rhythm within a poem. In contrast, there are examples of poets contemporary to Tristan Tzara and Mário who place more emphasis on imagery. For instance, although the Brazilian Modernist poet Guilherme de Almeida speaks of dance in his poem "A dança das Horas" (1919), he describes the images of dance and the feelings it creates. Erickson points out that the Dadaist attraction to the speech of cultures other than those of Western Europe, in, for example, the *Poèmes nègres*, is indicative of the desire for a language that can summon the creative power present at man's spiritual

[30] Tzara, 515

origins, through the power of what Hugo Ball calls "the innermost alchemy of the word".[31] In sound, Tzara found the opportunity for readers to feel something personal in poems, as opposed to a dictated way of reading and responding.

The most crucial consideration arising from this aspect of my comparative study into an early form of ethnopoetics by these poets of Brazilian and Romanian origin, is the question of which came first—song or speech. Poetry, even free verse, is characterised by metre and musicality. The only thing we know for sure is that poetry was created to be sung, even in the first civilizations that used writing. This is perhaps the reason why the cuneiform alphabet of Sumeria was used for administrative cataloguing much earlier than the writing of the epic of Gilgamesh; or how Mycenaean Linear B was used centuries before the epic of the Iliad was finally written down.[32] Tristan Tzara and Mário de Andrade's own notes on these adapted or translated poems can offer an insight into what each understands by the phonetic value of poetry, of sound patterns and unique verse combinations, and about their understanding of ways in which the dimension of cosmogony is expressed in different cultures. The ethnographic turn emerges as a source of poetic dynamism and variation in linguistic expression, including primordial narratives, and is more than merely a tool for behavioural or cultural categorization and mapping.

From these first examples of adapted ethnopoetics, in Chapter Two we then move to a type of narrative that I call "modernist myths", comparing Mário's best-known novel, *Macunaíma: o herói sem nenhum caráter*, and Tzara's novelette, *Personnage d'insomnie*. Any attempt to summarise *Macunaíma* would be inane; since it appeals to the epic, any synopsis will always miss out certain episodes. Mário de Andrade characterised the work as a rhapsody, not only because the novel includes the author's own lyrical creations weaved together with various autochthonous and African ones, as well as myths and legends, but also because, at the end of the book, he mentions that he sings this story to us as an ancient Greek rhapsodist would do.

In one of the few critical readings of *Macunaíma* in English, Rosenberg comments that Mário de Andrade's novel of 1928 stands out, since he is

[31] John Erickson, "The Language of Presence: Sound Poetry and Artaud", *Boundary 2* 14, no. 1/2, 1985, 283
[32] Christopher Scarre, *The Human Past: World Prehistory & the Development of Human Societies*, United Kingdom: Thames & Hudson, 2013, 444

not using *Antropofagia* "to conflate it with the novel", but rather his analysis "highlights different discursive strategies that the avant-garde made available in Latin America" and he looks at their geopolitical implications. Rosenberg characterises the novel, as other critics have done before, as a "true collage of the narrative archive of the nation" and returns to the influence of Theodor Koch-Grünberg's ethnographic work *From Roraima to Orinoco* (1917).[33] The idea of the cannibal devouring cultures that developed in the avant-garde of Brazil in 1928 was not wholly new in the context of the European avant-garde. Together with Picabia, Tzara had published the *Manifeste Cannibale Dada* (1920) and many Surrealists also later used the image of the cannibal, since it provided them with a shocking challenge to bourgeois values and audiences. Even though Rosenberg notes that "*Macunaíma* and *antropofagía* share the *modernista* mistrust for an ontological search for originality and autonomy", he goes on to argue that the novel criticises anthropophagy as being only one side of the coin.[34] In addition, of course, there is the fact that Mário de Andrade wrote *Macunaíma* between 1927 and 1928, while Oswald de Andrade wrote the *Manifesto Antropofágico* in 1928, the year that *Macunaíma* was published. Reemphasising what was presented earlier, I wish to disassociate my reading of *Macunaíma* from the content of Oswald's *Manifesto Antropofágico*, since the latter touches only superficially on indigenous Brazilian identity and, to that extent, it is not central to this book.

In a similar way, in comparing *Personnage d'insomnie* by Tristan Tzara with *Macunaíma*, I am not choosing just another surrealist-driven text. Metamorphosis, identity, and language, as well as liberation from or imprisonment in the industrial world and the significance of "raw" nature elevated to an almost religious reference to cultural roots are the main elements in this comparison. The act of metamorphosis is not only present in the prose narratives that the two writers create, but is also part of their own identities, an element that they create in the space in-between narration and storytelling. Firstly, there is the transformative quality of Tzara's adaptation involved in producing the name Tristan Tzara itself—as with the term "Dada", there have been various attempts to decode this. The play of words in Romanian "trist în țară" translates as "sad in the country". This phrase can be seen as a remark about the melancholy of the Jewish community, which had suffered due to discriminatory Romanian

[33] Fernando J. Rosenberg, *The Avant-Garde and Geopolitics in Latin America*, University of Pittsburgh Press, 2006, 77
[34] Idem, 81

laws. Despite being part of Romanian culture and contributing to the country, there were always manifestations of anti-Semitic hostility.[35] A notable fact is that the first organized migration settlements in Israel were organized by residents of Moineşti.[36] Descriptions of Tzara by fellow writers and artists, such as the Dadaist Richard Hulsenberg and Germaine Everling, point out that his Romanian Jewish background, and his accent and manners, left them with the impression of him as "exotic". As early as 1922, in his poetry collection *Paulicéia Desvairada*, Mário de Andrade refers to the character of the harlequin to characterise himself. He saw in the harlequin not a hybridity of behaviours and colours, but rather a distinction of different rhombuses that co-exist. Haberly notes: "Perhaps the most fundamental theme in Mário's works is his own multiplicity … Mário rejected the commonplace idea that the three races were intermingled and fused, in Brazil or his own being; he saw himself, rather, as multiple: simultaneously black, red and white".[37] As we shall see, in his work Mário also addresses the fact that social inequality in Brazil had a large part of its basis in racial discrimination. His mixed origin is expressed with the image of the harlequin and many other poems that criticise the inequalities of Brazilian society. Andrews asserts: "Survey research has shown racist attitudes and stereotypes concerning blacks and mulattoes to be widely diffused throughout Brazilian society, and Afro-Brazilians report being the victims of subtle, and sometimes not so subtle, racism and discrimination".[38] In Brazil, there is a rich vocabulary for the description of particular racial categorizations, for example, mestizo, caboclo, or mulato. The fact that there was a "black press" that would only occasionally publish poems by someone like Mário de Andrade, whose poetry and articles were also frequently to be read in respectable newspapers such as *Folha de São Paulo*, shows how, for him, identity would have to be fluid.[39]

The prologue of Tristan Tzara's *Personnage d'insomnie* (1934) begins by calling upon not the muse, like the ancient rhapsodist, but the alcohol of

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[35] Hentea, 23
[36] Lucian-Zeev Herşcovici, Moineşti, The Yivo Encyclopedia of Jews in Eastern Europe, accessed 29 March 2012
[37] David T. Haberly, *Three sad races: racial identity and national consciousness in Brazilian literature*, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 1983, 137-138
[38] George Reid Andrews, "Brazilian Racial Democracy 1900-90: An American Counterpoint", *Journal of Contemporary History*, 31, no. 3, 1996, 483
[39] David Brookshaw, "African-Brazilian Literature", in *Concise Encyclopedia of Latin American Literature*, edited by Verity Smith, Routledge, 2014, 4

lonesomeness, as a way to express, if possible, the simultaneous confusion and clarity of the state of insomnia. The story of *Personnage d'insomnie'*s protagonist, "le divin tailleur", and his metamorphosis reads like an attempt to combat continuous and bothersome insomnia. The first chapter, entitled "Pour passer le temps", is dedicated to the peculiarity of the state in between waking and sleeping. One significant difference between this story and *Macunaíma* is that, while the latter has been the object of much analysis, there is no published interpretation of *Personnage d'insomnie* except for its edition in Tzara's *Œuvres complètes*, volume III, which includes unedited drafts in the notes. The protagonist of the story is referred to as "le divin tailleur", and, as the narration begins, the reader sees him concentrating on his job in his workshop.

The themes of *Personnage d'insomnie* can be seen as an illustration of man's fears, desires, and pleasures; of the fact that he is capable of creation and destruction; communication with or without language; of his relation to nature; and of his respect for it, but also his arrogance. It is a journey of understanding and one that offers an alternative view of biological evolution. The tailor, once metamorphosed, evolves as a being, unlike Macunaíma who just wanders. So, we speak of an approximate human being, perhaps mocking the idea of human superiority, both for the blindly religious and the scientific man. There is the unusual incident of the buds appearing through the tailor's body. More and more branches come out from his body until the narrator refers to him as "l'homme à branches". In the first chapter, it is spring and the protagonist does not realize the changes that are taking place in nature. In the third chapter, entitled "Faim de Souvenirs et Nourriture de la Mémoire", Tzara finds an opportunity to speculate on human behaviour towards nourishment, which often extends beyond need and is used to satisfy desire. His aim is to imagine humanity "à branches". The way his character is introduced when he was human, so alienated from his surroundings, changes once he becomes a "tree-man". As a humanoid tree, he becomes a genuine part of nature and explores it while also realizing that he desires love, affection, and communication. What is more, language remains an essential part of Tzara's work. While *Personnage d'insomnie*, in its first part, takes place in a state of hypocognition and semi-awake insomnia, the last part is found in a packet. It includes a story about an alternative version of humanity where all humans have branches and are tree-like.

Noteworthy points in Mário's novel include its title, *Macunaíma: o herói sem nehum caráter*, and that its primary influence is considered to be the German ethnographer's Theodor Koch-Grünberg's 1911 work *From*