

# *Preludes to Modernism in Brazil*<sup>1</sup>

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**Abstract:** *This study focuses on certain significant events in the years immediately preceding the Modern Art Week, the landmark in Brazilian Modernism, in 1922. These events open up what may be described as the first Modernist period, from 1917 to 1929, which could even be extended up to the Exhibition of 1931.*

**First act: the *avant-garde* is born**

**Period: just before 1922**

**Scene: *Paulicéia* is declared to be modernist**

After the First World War, as a result of the impulse given to industrialisation by the transfer of the production of consumer goods to the Americas, São Paulo became a metropolis which bragged of its own cosmopolitanism as an indicator of modernity and the spirit of renewal. In the euphoria of urban growth, it was all too easy to ignore how provincial both cultural and social life continued to be. Immigration – above all that from Italy – brought the expansion of libertarian ideals of anarchy and trade unionism. But the arts, including literature, were not aerated by the fresh breezes of the *avant-garde*. In São Paulo, in 1913 and 1914, the exhibitions of Lasar Segall and Anita Malfatti, instead of enabling us now to anticipate our first date parameter, caused no impact at all, despite the commitment to Expressionism that they demonstrated. Like Segall, Malfatti, as Marta Rossetti Batista stresses, was, in the opinion of the academic community, merely “a student who revealed her aptitude for the profession” and “one of the foreign artists who dropped anchor here.”<sup>2</sup> The painter, seen as “Impressionist” in 1914, was amused to register, in her exhibition diary, the arrogance and ignorance of contemporary European artistic trends in the declarations aroused by her work in critics and illustrious visitors, such as the architect Dubugras and the painters Parreiras and Pedro Alexandrino.<sup>3</sup>

In São Paulo, the coffee barons were prospering, planting and exporting the celebrated Brazilian coffee. They welcomed industrialisation, despite the uncomfortable association with the *nouveaux riches*. They travelled to Europe, with long stays in Paris. They were educated and kept up to date with what was happening. From their ranks would come the great patrons of Modernism, Freitas Vale, Paulo Prado and D. Olívia Guedes Penteado. As they evolved they learned to welcome the manifestations of the new in literature, the visual arts and music. Around 1917, it was possible to observe that

young writers were already risking change, in their desire to contest the Parnassian canons which were dominant in Brazil. In addition to Baudelaire, root of the modern eye, and of Whitman, master of the *avant-garde*, these young people were diligently reading writers who, in the Old Europe, were already seen as played out from the point of view of the *avant-garde*. For them, there was nothing newer or more worthwhile than contact with Unanimist poetry and that of the Abbey of Creteil, with Verhaenen, Gustave Kahn, Stuart Merrill, Francis James or Claudel, presented in the Universal Literature courses at the Philosophy Faculty by the monks of São Bento,<sup>4</sup> or discussed in conversations at Freitas Vale's Vila Kyrial. They were unaware of Sousândrade, but adored Antônio Nobre, Alphonsus de Guimarães and the poetry of the day-to-day of Mário Pederneiras. As poets, their work revealed traces of Parnassianism; nevertheless, in exploring Penumbra lyricism, they were expressing their anxiety to represent the century which was imposing a new world of the modern city and of the dawning solidarity between mankind.

But if, in literature, the Brazilian Academy of Letters prescribed Parnassianism for one and all, the innovations introduced by Symbolism, which it so despised, were finding expression, albeit in an isolated fashion, in the Novist poetry which sought to unite the cult of subjectivity with an awareness of the word. At the same time, amongst the Penumbrists, free verse was establishing itself.

It is noteworthy that, on 28 May 1909, the *Estado da Parahyba* newspaper had printed, on its front page, the translation of the eleven points of the Futurist Manifesto which had been published by the *Figaro* of Paris, in February that same year.<sup>5</sup> However, the repercussion, just as with the news of Marinetti's proclamation, circulated by the press of Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo, was insignificant, merely journalistic in its impact. Even the fact that the magazine *Orfeu* in Rio de Janeiro enjoyed the participation of Ronald de Carvalho did not enable the ideas of the Futurists to go beyond the three numbers that Portuguese Modernism accepted, being restricted in Brazil, in 1915, to very few readers.<sup>6</sup>

Thus, in 1917, the publication of Mário de Andrade's first book, *Há uma gota de sangue em cada poema* ("There's a drop of blood in every poem"), under the pseudonym of Mário Sobral, went almost unnoticed. The critics praised his versifying ability and his moral elevation, Christian and pacifist, but were shocked by his formal innovation. Parnassian taste could not accept the originality of his synaesthesia, the importance of the voice of the day-to-day or of the rhyme constructed by onomatopoeia: "[...] Somente/ o vento continua com seu oou." ("Only the wind continues with its 'woo'.") The critics failed to detect the greatest conquests of a writer who, motivated by pacifism, repudiated confessional poetry and Parnassian description in order to assume the pain felt by all those devastated by the war, whether Allies or Germans. In this Unanimist identification it is possible to detect the roots of the literature of circumstance, of the action poetry, of the complete solidarity with the oppressed and even of the fragmentation of the self which so strongly characterised the later poetry of Mário de Andrade. This

identification would be fed by Expressionism the following year. 1917 constitutes an opening up to modernity, despite the ignorance of the *avant-garde* which, at this time, was spawning manifestos and work in Europe. This opening was born, as far as one can tell, not from reading the Romains manifesto, but from contact with the *La vie unanîme* poems, as well as reading Antônio Nobre's *Só*. In addition to this, in the suspended punctuation of the ellipses, open and intersected, may be found the germs of what Andrade would later systematise as polyphonic poetry and harmonic verse in the "Prefácio interessantíssimo" of *Paulicéia desvairada*<sup>\*</sup>, the first modern book of Brazilian Modernism, in 1922, solutions which enable us to posit the hypothesis of a dialogue initiated with the work of Gustave Kahn.

*Mário da Silva Brito*, in his history of *Brazilian Modernism*, stresses the use of typographical resources, with Futurist roots, in Murilo Araújo's *Carrilhões*, also of 1917, a book received ironically by the critics. Araújo, whose name may not be properly included in the Modernist roll of honour, made an important contribution at this time. His declaration of principles printed on the title page not only covers the freedom of the verse but also attests to the absorption of certain matrices recognised by the principal lines of the European *avant-garde*, as well as mentioning Futurism. Here are the masters repeating or initiating a role:

My poetry is not very clear in any particular part: for excessive concision is a general tendency which nowadays weighs upon almost all temperaments: in poetry, nostalgic Futurists, a Verhaenenist like Whitman or a mystic like Nerval and even our best Neoromantics demonstrate – like Debussy in music, Bergson in Philosophy or Rodin in sculpture – the victory of the sketched idea over the fully drawn one...<sup>7</sup>

*Carrilhões*, thus, did not become an object of admiration for the first Modernists to arise in São Paulo.

On the São Paulo scene in 1917, others who, soon afterwards, would join the Modernist campaign – Guilherme de Almeida, Menotti del Picchia and Cassiano Ricardo – established themselves as names praised by the critics and public alike. *Nós*, Almeida's Neoclassical poetry, *O Evangelho de Pã*, Ricardo's Parnassian verse of a nationalist future, and *Juca Mulato*, del Picchia's highly applauded regionalist poem, could never be stigmatised as "Futurist." In Brazil, Futurism existed merely as a coverall term, including any manifestation out of the ordinary.

It is not in Rio de Janeiro, at that time still the court and headquarters of academic values, but in São Paulo, the metropolis, in November 1917, that the first mark of Brazilian Modernism is generally situated. The Expressionist and Cubist art of Anita Malfatti's exhibition revealed the existence of new visual possibilities to the painter Di

\* *Paulicéia* refers to the delirious metropolis of São Paulo.

Cavalcanti and the young poets who visited it – Mário de Andrade and Oswald de Andrade, thirsty for renewal, Ribeiro Couto and Guilherme de Almeida, much encouraged. When a reactionary article by Monteiro Lobato described Malfatti's work as "paranoia or mystification," Oswald de Andrade took up the defence.<sup>8</sup> Travelling through Europe in 1912, he had been affected by the echoes of Futurism; he even wrote, in free verse, "Last trip of a tuberculosis sufferer around the city, by tram," a poem which he never kept. In *O Pirralho* ("The Brat"), a satirical newspaper, and other São Paulo periodicals, he sought an escape route for the prose and poetry of his time. In focusing upon art, he called for the inclusion of the Brazilian landscape, which would later become one of the elements of the Brazil Wood aesthetic movement. In defending Malfatti's painting, he emphasised the difference between reality in art and reality in nature, rejecting the copy postulated by the academies.

The battle of the *avant-garde* in Brazil owes much to Anita Malfatti, whose art is designed to shock, a process that may be understood in the two faces that Anatol Rosenfeld attributes to the impact arising from the processes of renewal. Shock signals, on the one hand, the scandal produced by the breaking up of certainties, that is the canons and dogmas which govern not only the visual arts but also, the very way of seeing of a society. On the other hand, shock, at its most fertile, means divulging discoveries, "showing aspects of external or internal reality under a renewed, strange and surprising light, obliging us to see and learn what generally escapes us due to the exhaustion of our sensibility, worn out by routine and habit."<sup>9</sup>

In 1942, when Mário de Andrade, in *Movimento modernista*, subjected the illusions and successes of the task that had been undertaken to rigorous analysis, he stressed this dimension of the discovery in 1917:

The pre-awareness, first, followed by the conviction of a new art, a new spirit [...] had been spreading through the [...] feeling of a small group of intellectuals in São Paulo. At first it was a purely emotional phenomenon, a divinatory intuitive [...] state of poetry. In effect: educated in the 'historical' visual arts, knowing at best of the existence of the main Impressionists, unaware of Cézanne, what was it that led us to adhere so unconditionally to Anita Malfatti's exhibition which, at the height of the war, brought Expressionist and Cubist pictures to our attention? It seems ridiculous, but those pictures were the revelation. And, marooned by the flood of scandal which engulfed the city, we found ourselves in ecstasies of delight before pictures called *The Yellow Man*, *The Russian Student* and *The Woman with Green Hair*.<sup>10</sup>

The pioneering Malfatti, after painting with Lowis Corinth in Germany, had gone on to the United States, where she had enjoyed, in 1915-16, a profound liberation of line and colour in the Independent School of Art. She had encountered her own way of transposing Expressionism and Cubism. Far from her homeland she had synthesised, for example, in her 1915 drawing, *Study of Man*, elements of a tropical space, in the

green and the exuberance of the plants which form the background to the black nude facing away from us. In the features sketched on the profiled face, it is surprising to see the meeting of Expressionism with cultures beyond the sphere of the European elite and white civilisation. The so-called primitivism which so clearly characterised Kirchner's little savage girl and which corresponds, in Die Brücke's aesthetics, to communion and solidarity, broke the arrogance of ethnocentricity and established in the artist a reencounter with Brazil. This would become the patch of banana trees and cacti explored by Tarsila do Amaral in Brazil Wood painting and in certain Anthropophagous pictures like *A negra* or *Abaporu*. In this 1915 nude, it is possible that Mário de Andrade may have detected this dimension, when he purchased it for his collection, along with *The Yellow Man*, *The Russian Student* and other works by Malfatti.

### **The Modernists join forces**

1918 and the two years that followed were devoted to reading and the beginning of discussion. Mário de Andrade learnt German in order to understand Expressionism better. He became a friend of Anita Malfatti. To her, to Else Schoeller Eggebert, the teacher who taught him Goethe's language, and to the sculptor Haarberg, he was indebted for the suggestion of books and magazines, and the revelation of poetry, fiction and like-minded visual artists and musicians.

In 1919 Rubens Borba de Moraes returned to Brazil. He had been studying in Switzerland, where Sérgio Milliet was also living. Together they brought news, fresh from Paris, about the radiation of the *avant-garde*. In 1920, in São Paulo, little-by-little, the Modernist group was formed. Writers and visual artists joined together in the magazine *Papel e Tinta* ("Paper and Ink"), where Di Cavalcanti drew his midnight phantoms. The group, of whom the most involved were perhaps Oswald de Andrade, Ribeiro Couto, Mário de Andrade, Guilherme de Almeida, Anita Malfatti and Rubens Borba, received the same year the fundamental support of the renowned creator of *Juca Mulato*. An admirer of the Futurists, Menotti del Picchia, or Helios as he was known, took on the role of the "Gideon of Modernism"; he used military terminology to describe the activity of the vanguard that was forming. In the *Correio Paulistano* and in the *Gazeta* newspapers he made his energetic contribution as a Modernist in the propagation of the concept, translating Marinetti or Govoni, presenting participants, alert to the enlistment of enthusiasts. Oswald de Andrade, in the *Jornal do Comércio*, told of the group's first great discovery, the sculptor Brecheret. Mário de Andrade related their next discovery in the first of his "letters," in the series "De São Paulo," written for *Ilustração Brasileira*, a chic magazine published in Rio de Janeiro. As a correspondent, his objective was "to reveal the artistic and literary movement of the people of São Paulo." He did this gallantly, certain of the project's innovatory nature:

Now it is Dr. Taunay who appears in the bookshops with his studies of the city's infancy, written in legitimate Portuguese (the little decorations hiccup); now it is Brecheret who sets out the project of the Monument to the Pioneers, the national anthem of the race (the Canovas tap dance); now it is Di Cavalcanti who shows his puppets, like a new Rops or Lautrec, ironic and brutal, observing the day of those who live... at night (the samba dancers roar).<sup>11</sup>

In presenting the city, the nationalistic project implicit in this text offers in prose themes and motifs which would be consolidated in 1922, in *Paulicéia desvairada*, in the poems "O trovador" and "Paisagem nº 1": the lute of the modern poet, the climate blending summer and winter, the wind cutting like a knife. It is a new poetics. Since "De São Paulo" has not yet been published in book form it is appropriate to quote a passage at length:

One can already feel that the city is once again generating ideas and schools, reactivating an almost withered tradition, almost entirely overshadowed by the bright lights of Rio..

It was no accident that Bilac chose our land from which to tell Brazil of his hopes of national renewal... He feels the biblical breathlessness of creation. The marble palaces of the Parnassians, like the meat-filled gutters of the realists, crumble over the vertiginous lute of joyous, triumphant youth... Apprehensions... Ruddy banners... There are those who preach battles and the sacrifice of the gifted...

But, in the midst of so much effervescence, Paulicéia<sup>12</sup> shivered with cold. After the florid summer in which the city opened wide its doors and windows in the last fortnight of October, once again it froze with the opening of the month of the Republic. Deepest winter. Everything was muffled up in the grey ermine of the mists, as our beloved Gui would say. A frightened breeze razored the epidermis of the streets and great drops of dew trembled in space, where a broken, multicoloured light was like a faint memory of the Sun.

These impressions of the columnist, penned in 1920, foreshadow the line "Sou um tupi tangendo um alaúde!" in the poem "O trovador" ("The Troubador"), the Modernist's profession of faith, in *Paulicéia desvairada*. In the chain of literary nationalism, in 1922, Mário de Andrade would appropriate the position of the Romantic Gonçalves Dias, which was in its turn steeped in the national impulse of Musset, transferred from medieval French tradition, most explicit in the line of "La nuit de mai," "Poète, prends ton luth."<sup>13</sup> In Gonçalves Dias's "Canção," when the poetic presence divides along three trails linked to three musical instruments, the São Paulo poet finds the harp dedicated to religious poetry; the lyre to amorous lyricism, and the "serious lute" devoted to "my own!"<sup>14</sup> In the column "De São Paulo," one may be surprised at the lute making an appearance in the twentieth century: "vertiginous," it

serves the new aesthetics, echoing, in the magazine *Klaxon*, the “light laugh of the moderns.”

In addition to pre-echoing the “poetic polyphony” proposed in the “Prefácio interessantíssimo” and put into practice in the poems of *Paulicéia desvairada*, the words, with no immediate connection between them, “Apprehensions... Ruddy banners...” resonating in their ellipses, with the telegraphic phrase, “Deepest winter.”, mark the encounter of Mário de Andrade with Futurism, which may be confirmed by the presence of works by Palazzeschi, Sem Benelli, Folgore and others, in editions from 1918 to 1920, in his library.

It is worth remembering that, in paraphrasing the Penumbriist lines of “our beloved Gui” (Guilherme de Almeida), the Modernist vision of the city was arising, a mixture of Futurism and Impressionism (both literary and artistic) presaging lines in “Paisagem nº 1” (“Landscape no. 1”) from the 1922 book. In “De São Paulo” one reads:

A frightened breeze razored the epidermis of the streets and great drops of dew trembled in space, where a broken, multicoloured light was like a faint memory of the Sun.

In “Paisagem nº 1” the poet, impregnated with Baudelaire’s “Tableaux parisiens,” perceives his city thus:

My London of the fine mists!  
High summer. The ten thousand million roses of São Paulo.  
There is a snow of perfume in the air.  
It’s cold, very cold...  
And the irony of the legs of the little seamstresses  
Like ballerinas...  
The wind is like a razor  
In the hands of a Spaniard. Harlequinesque!...  
Two hours ago the Sun was burning down.  
In two hours’ time the Sun will be burning down.<sup>15</sup>

### **Oswald de Andrade: the Trianon Manifesto**

In 1921 came the first victory: the public recognition of Brecheret. Praised by all, the sculptor of the *Monument to the Pioneers* received a state pension to study for two years in Paris. But, in a country characterised by an exaggerated importance attached to academic degrees and by after-dinner oratory, there is insufficient seriousness to consolidate worthwhile projects. Such consolidation occurs in an ironic and ambivalent fashion. Thus, on 9 January 1921, the so-called São Paulo high society – the forces of

conservatism – paid homage to Menotti del Picchia in the coffee-table edition of the poem *As máscaras* – a pre-Modernist work with *art-nouveau* illustrations by Paim. Oswald de Andrade surprised most of those who appeared at the Trianon restaurant, meeting place of the São Paulo elite. Speaking in the name of the “half-dozen young artists of São Paulo,” he placed his faith in the difference, the marginality, which distinguished them. The banquet was seen as a landmark. The young people were there to pay homage to one of their own and to sacrament the formerly discriminated renewal. If Menotti was a name consecrated by two factions it was best not to confuse him with the old guard and remind him that the path of renewal was one of the fiercest and most difficult battles. Occupying, so to speak, the territory of the adversary, Oswald de Andrade decreed that night the end of an epoch, calling upon everyone to join the fight then being waged in São Paulo, the city of the twentieth century, a city which synthesised the ideal of a new world, the owner of a new thematic, of new resources to be explored by literature:

We are here in the Trianon, laying open to the public the panoramic city in the fearless cross-section of its streets of factories and its clusters of American palaces. It is the city that, in the confusion of its voices, in the endless unfolding of its newborn suburbs, in the improvised ambition of its street markets and in the victory of its financial markets, ululates an unknown harmony of human violence, of ascensions and disasters, of fights, hatreds and loves, to propose the receptivity of choice, the richest material of its suggestions and the imperative persuasion of its colours and lines.<sup>16</sup>

This tentacular city, the “Paulicéia desvairada” (“delirious São Paulo”) of Mário de Andrade, demanded the attempt at simultaneity in enumeration, in the discourse striving to reflect “American life.” The adjective “American,” later forgotten, reiterated, in these first Modernist years, the desire to incorporate into the text the dynamism and audacity of modernisation, following the example of the land of Uncle Sam, where the process had radically changed the urban landscape and human behaviour. Oswald de Andrade, in a “fiery and unrestrained style,” proposed renewal, without, however, making a programme explicit. His speech, despite the audacity of certain expressions, was limited to the worn-out oratory of high-sounding phrases, of persuasive hyperboles, of excessive adjectives. Its greatest importance was to impudently mark out the terrain, which is undoubtedly an attitude characteristic of the *avant-garde*. It made headlines. It made the *Correio Paulistano*, a conservative newspaper, feel obliged to publish the complete text of the speech that aroused so much comment.

Mário de Andrade, one of the guests, sent the *Ilustração Brasileira* his own lucid analysis of the homage, of which it is useful to transcribe the final part:

Thus the disparity between the guests who were celebrating Menotti del Picchia was more perfect than anything I’ve seen in my life. Skinflints of all beliefs, standards of behaviour of all kinds, mugs of every suburb were shuffled



together in a Hugo-esque love of antithesis. And at a certain moment there even appeared an automatic Punchinello, doublehunchbacked bearer of grateful happiness... He was demanding the place that had not been granted to the celebrity of the party in the intermezzo between his masques... This rain of fire that is Bueno Monteiro asked if I was the police. But I didn't know...

Afterwards the *speechifying* began. There was much that was worth hearing and noting down. Mr. Putteri, in the name of the Italian community, put a high polish on some very good and sensible ideas. Too sensible even to be lovely. Oswaldo de Andrade spoke as well, representative and mandarin of a new generation, revealing much brilliance and some hope. He was the bugler of the Futurists, those "of the pathologists' domain" as certain old-fashioned critics say and write, in their gruelling rancor towards new beginnings. João Miramar said some lovely things... Which is not to say that they were well thought-out... And perhaps that's true... The men of your clan, as you call it, Oswaldo, my Tiern, don't think – they brood, they don't reflect – they feel. It's a greenhouse of mad poets, an exotic, fantastic generation blubbering over their marriage to the drizzle, ritual conventionality of the middle-ground. In this lunatic asylum they say that little thinking is done... But what sensations, what commotion, what enthusiasms, what moonshine and fireworks, where every step is multiplied and Beauty is transformed – this much beloved Errabunda in the briar patches of Perfection!... The proof of this: Oswaldo de Andrade said with his own lips that it is a sacrilege, since it imitates mystic Benedictine psalmody, and the whole room applauded. Everybody was well satisfied because they judged themselves to be included in the "half-dozen" of which the audacious young man spoke. If, in that moment of blindness, they had remembered the "half-dozen's" enthusiasm for the "pathologists' domain" perhaps they would have deserted the goad of scurrility... As if madness were not the defect or principal characteristic of the whole of humanity! But the victory of the clan is that everyone wants to be a member of it, failing to see the pride and solicitude in which it fortifies and purifies itself.

Menotti del Picchia replied to each of the innumerable orators, as one might expect of the welcoming goodness of his spirit. And he said lovely things too, in a musical discourse of the most dazzling brilliance. I believe that this artist of Moses handles prose with greater perfection than he does verse. He is a less resounding and erudite Euclid. Sentences flow from him in flexuous melody. Each one is crowned with endings which are washed ashore, wide, slow and languid, like wavelets in the dead tides of January... It is a stunning rhythm, always varied, always original... It is in his prose that Menotti sang his best lines – those that his poetics have not yet allowed, cloistered in the prison of Alexandrian rules.

And the liqueurs. The cigar smoke. The disorderly dispersal.

Staying behind, in the already deserted sanctuary, I saw that, on the sensual lips of the bronze mask of Helios, a green tear was poised, shed from the half-open eyes... And I felt that, for some time yet, artifice will continue to sprinkle the light sadness of the Pierrot on the upward audacity of the Harlequins.<sup>17</sup>

**MÁRIO DE ANDRADE**

*Ilustração Brasileira* – 21 March 1921

Even while externalising the aggressive meaning of contemporary life, Oswald de Andrade did not exploit the label of Futurism; he crossed the frontiers of the conservatives with a certain care. He kept this label in order to launch Mário de Andrade in May of that intense 1921. In “My Futurist Poet,” printed by the *Jornal do Comércio* on 27 May, in addition to flaunting the existence of the book *Paulicéia desvairada*, at that time originals known only by the poet’s friends, the columnist discusses the life and personality of the author and transcribes the poem “Tu.” In fact, the lines, in exposing the intense emotional bond between the poet and his city, assimilated the Futurism of the Technical Manifesto of 1912 far more than the stereotype of the Futurist city of Marinetti and the other São Paulo Modernists. In his zealous attempt to conceptualise the contradictory metropolis, Mário de Andrade, whose lyricism combines Impressionist tenderness, the world of dreams and of Expressionist hallucinations, with some truly Futurist epithets, coins the neologism “Bandeirantemente!” (“Pioneeringly”) to convey enthusiasm. Oswald de Andrade repeats this in order to transmit, in the press, the label that caused most hullabaloo:

Blessed be this São Paulo Futurism which has arisen as a travelling companion for those who wear out their heart and soul in the brutal fight, the American fight, pioneeringly!<sup>18</sup>

Mário de Andrade’s reply, “Futurista?!”, on 6 July, in the same newspaper, establishes his respect for the past, emphasising links evident in really modern art. In relation to the aesthetics of Marinetti, he accepts and applauds the formal conquests. He rejects the ideological proposals, casting doubt: how far may Futurism be seen as significant, “que futuro endireita?”<sup>19</sup> (What future is it rectifying?) He rebels against received classification, refusing each and every type of framing, preferring to be written off as extravagant and crazy, far from any school. In fact this reveals an aesthetic which is anti-school and in favour of the absolute liberty of the artist – Dadá. Oswald de Andrade, however, insists and proves the Futurism of his friend, linking his poetry to that of Guilherme de Almeida, the “Epígrafe” of *Canções gregas*, Modernist only insofar as it was written in free verse, and the Futurist recipe of Agenor Barbosa, “Os pássaros de aço.”<sup>20</sup> It may be understood, making allowance for the obstinacy of Oswald de Andrade, reassuringly, that Modernism was gradually gaining more space and that the language was being disposed of. Mário de Andrade concluded his attack on Parnasianism, taking aim at professions of faith and poetic principals. Contrasting simple,

day-to day words with the parody of Parnassian discourse, he constructed a series of seven texts entitled “Mestres do passado.”<sup>21</sup> He was not embarrassed about being partisan since he wished to denounce the corrosion of the past, at heart a Futurist endeavour. In his sights was the hypertrophy of formal elaboration isolated from free creation. Later he was to recognise that the factiousness of 1921 was pure strategy. Nonetheless, the series is evidence, from the critic’s pen, of a certain theoretical maturity in Brazilian Modernism.

## Notes

- 1 Translated from the Portuguese original by Dr Peter James Harris, State University of São Paulo (UNESP).
- 2 Marta Rosseti BATISTA, *Anita Malfatti no espaço e no tempo* (São Paulo: IBM, 1985) 29.
- 3 BATISTA 28-30.
- 4 Telê Ancona LOPEZ, “A estréia poética de Mário de Andrade,” in \_\_\_\_\_. *Mariodeandradiando*. (São Paulo: HUCITEC, 1996).
- 5 Mentioned by Gilberto de Mendonça Telles.
- 6 Mário da Silva BRITO, *História do modernismo brasileiro – I: Antecedentes da Semana de Arte Moderna* (São Paulo: Saraiva, 1958).
- 7 Murilo ARAÚJO, in BRITO 76-7.
- 8 The defence by Oswald de Andrade in the São Paulo edition of the *Jornal do Comércio*, on 11 January 1918, “A exposição Anita Malfatti,” is quoted in BRITO 53.
- 9 ROSENFELD, Anatol et al. *Vanguarda em questão*. In: Holanda, Heloísa Buarque de, e Luiz Costa Lima Lima. *Vanguarda e Modernidade: Questionário. Tempo Brasileiro*, n. 26-27. Rio de Janeiro, jan.mar. 1971, pp. 40-47.
- 10 Mário de ANDRADE, “O movimento modernista,” in \_\_\_\_\_. *Aspectos da literatura brasileira*, 4th ed., (São Paulo/Brasília: Martins/INL, 1972) 239-40.
- 11 Mário de ANDRADE, “De São Paulo,” in *Ilustração Brasileira*, Rio de Janeiro, December 1920. Annotated edition by Telê Ancona LOPEZ being prepared for publication.
- 12 The city of São Paulo (translator’s note).
- 13 See Telê Porto Ancona LOPEZ, “A biblioteca de Mário de Andrade: seara e celeiro da criação,” in *Fronteiras da criação: Anais do VI Congresso Internacional dos Pesquisadores do Manuscrito literário* (São Paulo: FAPESP/Anna Blume, 2000).
- 14 DIAS, Antônio Gonçalves. *Poesias* (nov. ed. de Joaquim Norberto Souza e Silva), Paris, Garnier, 1919; See Lopez, Telê Ancona. “A Biblioteca de Mário de Andrade: seara e celeiro da criação II”. *D.O. Leitura*, Ano 19, Nº 2002, São Paulo, Jan. 2001.
- 15 Mário de ANDRADE, “Paisagem nº 1,” in “*Paulicéia desvairada*,” in *Poesias completas* (São Paulo: Martins, 1955) 43.
- 16 The complete text of Oswald de Andrade’s speech is published in BRITO 157-9. Mário used to write Oswald de Andrade’s name as “Oswaldo”, as he used to call him personally.
- 17 Mário de ANDRADE, “De São Paulo,” *Ilustração Brasileira*, Rio de Janeiro, 21 March 1921.
- 18 Osvaldo de ANDRADE in BRITO 199-200.
- 19 Mário de ANDRADE, “Futurista?!” *Jornal do Comércio*, 6 July 1921.
- 20 Osvaldo de ANDRADE.
- 21 Mário de ANDRADE, “Mestres do passado,”.