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### ABSTRACT

Based on the significance of the narratives of European travelers of the 16th century for the historical studies of Brazilian literature, this article deals with the problem of the peculiar encounter between Hans Staden, the German mercenary who guarded the entrance to the Bay of São Vicente and his captors, the Tupinambá Indians. Preliminarily pointing to the presence, in Brazilian literary constructs of the 19th and 20th centuries, of the anthropophagic "Other", as confirmed in the adventurer's testimony, the work aims to understand the reasons for the recurrence of such an image. In the light of a proposition by Michel de Certeau,

regarding the role of the person of whom one speaks in a certain culture - but who has no voice in it - as well as the unprecedented self-perception, which, according to Tzvetan Todorov, is achieved when the Other is met, a reflection is made about Staden's dialogue with that Other and the understanding that he achieves of his diverse reality. Using the method called Todorov "typology of relations with others", an epistemological analysis is then carried out, which compares the figures of the narrator with that of the narrated, in such a text. This article concludes by demonstrating that Hans Staden: *The True History Of His Captivity, 1557*, exposes, on the one hand, the high degree of knowledge of the Other achieved by the German man-at-arms, and on the other hand, his total ineptitude to translate the Tupinambá culture in terms of the European, and vice-versa, despite establishing itself as a founding ethnographic study.

**Keywords:** Travel narratives, Images of the native indians, Anthropophagy, Other, Staden.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

[...] Cunhambebe had in front of him a large basket full of human flesh. He ate on one leg, held it before his mouth, and asked me if I wanted to eat too. I replied, "Doesn't an irrational animal eat another partner, and a man must devour another man?" He then bit her and said, "Jauára ichê." "I'm a jaguar. It's delicious." I withdrew from him, at the sight of this. (STADEN, 2008, pp. 173-174).

The excerpt above transcribed from Book II of *Two Trips to Brazil*, in which Hans Staden describes the Tupinambá anthropophagy in action - at the same time that, in dialogue with the major warrior, he declines from his comensuality and calls into question the peculiar rationality of a cannibal humanity - seems to us to constitute a good example regarding the exploration of one of the topics proposed by the present edition of the *Diadorim Magazine*, that is, the "difficulty of understanding the reality of the Other encountered and the conflicting dialogue with this reality". In this work, it will be from Staden's narrative that we will investigate the meanings attributed to this Other - and, consequently, the notions of self, of encounter, of dialogue, and understanding of reality, subliminally configured in it.

For this, we will begin with a summary of this narrative, to then seek to justify the relevance that, in the context of the history of Brazilian literature, is given to the account of adventures experienced by ancient travelers in our lands. Before we begin, however, there is a brief caveat to be made, regarding the scope of a possible typification of the relations between the European self and the other American, based on the specific example chosen for this study. We will deal with only one, among the thirty-six or so sixteenth-century and sixteenth-century chronicles (Cf. PEIRANO, 1984, p. 20) that tell us about the adventures and misadventures of European narrators, experienced them among a certain Amerindian ethnicity, then hegemonically settled on the coast of Portuguese America, the place par excellence of this meeting. Despite the varied - and sometimes discordant - information provided by these chroniclers about this otherness, it is in a systematic way that the historical literature has referred to it as the Tupi-Guarani civilization since it finds in these same sources descriptions of numerous groups, whose cultural and linguistic characteristics are very similar.

However, as the anthropologist Carlos Fausto affirms, "this Tupi-Guarani continuum", which dominated almost the entire coast of Portuguese America, nevertheless found such territorial hegemony of the self interrupted by its peculiar others: "near the estuary of the Prata by the Charrua, at the mouth of the Paraíba River by the Goitacá, by the Aimoré in the south of Bahia and north of Espírito Santo, and by the Tremembé in the strip between Ceará and Maranhão" (FAUSTO, 1992, p. 382), generically called by them tapuias, that is, non-Tupi people. Although Staden's account does not mention (directly and indirectly) more than four indigenous<sup>1</sup> nations, all of them belonging to the same Tupi group, with the contribution of the references presented by Faust, we do not intend more than to recall what was not present at the meeting themed in the present analysis, that is, all the ethnic diversity, politics and linguistics of the original peoples<sup>2</sup>, of which the portion represented by the Tupinambás, the bravest of the Tupi-speaking "nations of gentiles", was only the first to disappear.

Hans Staden, a German man-at-arms not exactly literate, left us, in a modest volume, which he originally called the True History of the naked savages and fierce devourers of Men found in the New World, America... (*Wahrhaftige Historia<sup>2</sup> und Beschreibung einer Landschaft der wilden, nackten, grimmigen Menschenfresser, in der Neuen Welt Amerika gelegen...*), the account of his engagement in Iberian navigations and presence in Portuguese America (Book I), plus a description of the life and customs of the Tupinambá Indians, who captured them and held him captive for nine and a half months (Book II). Under the seal of Philipp I, Lord of Hessa, the work had its princeps presented to readers

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<sup>1</sup> According to information provided by the Socio-Environmental Institute, there are currently 256 indigenous ethnic groups in Brazil, speakers of more than 160 languages and dialects. However, ethnolinguistic research estimates that, before the arrival of the Portuguese, this number should correspond to about a thousand.

<sup>2</sup> Although this phenomenon is not of interest to the present work, it should be noted that only the first ten editions of the *Wahrhaftige Historia* taken between 1557 and 1595, in the German, Flemish, Dutch, and Latin languages, reach sufficient print runs to mark the genesis of the publishing enterprise in the European world.

by the editor Andreas Kolbe, from Marburg, during the carnival of 1557. The unprecedented reception of such a work by a public interested in "exemplary stories", which the Reformed religion (and the graphic masters) was beginning to configure, would quickly transform this "little book" into what is now known by the term best-seller<sup>3</sup>.

Staden begins his account by telling us that, on the occasion of his first Atlantic crossing, he was employed as a gunner in the frotila of a certain captain Penteado - whose license issued by the King of Portugal authorized him to transfer deportees, trade colonial products, the practice of piracy and combat French vessels and their indigenous allies. Manning the flagship, the German adventurer would leave Lisbon in June 1547, heading for the Portuguese possessions on the North African coasts and then the Captaincy of Pernambuco. Although this journey proves to be full of adventures that would probably inspire fruitful fictional developments in future literary works, Staden does not extend himself too far in his account.

The departure from Lisbon, the visit to the island of Madeira, the capture of an Arab vessel on the coast of Morocco, the calms and storms of the equator, the "fires of Santelmo" and flying fish of the South Atlantic current, the arrival in Olinda and the delivery of the expatriates to Captain General Duarte Coelho, the rescue of the expedition to the settlement of Igaracú under siege of the indigenous Caetés, the unsuccessful assault on a French ship found off the coast of Paraíba, the poor return navigation, a new attack, this time successful, perpetrated against a privateer, as well as the safe and sound arrival in Portugal, did not arouse in him the desire to write more than twelve pages and affix five woodcut planks to the volume.

About the second voyage, the Tedesco arquebusier reports having set sail from Seville, on the fourth day after Easter 1549, destined for the New (Spanish) Provinces of the Río de la Plata, where he intended to make a fortune, if the successive setbacks of navigation had not dragged, one by one, from the three vessels of the armada he equipped, straight to the bottom of the Ocean Sea. According to the laconic and confusing news that Staden offers us about this unfortunate Sanabria Expedition, it would have been after the sinking of the second ship, which occurred off the Island of Santa Catarina, that he, as well as the approximately eighty survivors of an original contingent of almost three hundred passengers and crew, decided to divide into two small groups: a larger one, which attempted to reach by land the village of Asunción, the seat of the aforementioned Spanish viceroyalty, and another smaller, formed by members of the family sponsoring the voyage and by experienced sailors, among whom was the arquebusier tedesco. He tells us that, under the orders of Captain Salazar, these sailors would seek to reach the village of São Vicente on board the small remaining sailboat, to charter a good Portuguese ship, with which they could take, after ten months of troubled navigations and almost two years of dangers and privations on land, its noble passengers to good fate, and with some security.

And so, the small group would depart from the port of Imbeaçã-pe (Viaçá), coasting the coast towards the north. However, after four days of journey and with only two miles to reach the village Portuguese, this ship too would go downhill. However, Staden informs his reader that, fortunately, all survived this shipwreck, that they were welcomed by the settlers of Itanhaém, and after a few days, guided by them to the village of São Vicente, where they were also well received and kept by the inhabitants, until each one found "for himself some kind of work, to earn his livelihood. (STADEN, 2008, p. 71)

Although the rest of the text occupies most of the pages of Book I, both the adventure that follows, which is well known to Brazilian readers and the stories that have not been told to us, appear thus summarized by the author-narrator-character himself, who simply addresses his reader, in the conclusion:

Dear reader! I described my sea voyage so laconically because I wanted to tell only the beginning, how I fell into the power of the cruel wild people. I wanted to show by this how the Savior of all evils, our Lord and God, in a patent way, and without my expectation, delivered me from the power of the Gentiles. Everyone should hear that the almighty God preserves and leads, even now, so wonderfully, his faithful Christians, among the wicked people of the heathen, as he has always done from the beginning. Each one must therefore equally be grateful to God and trust in him in the time of trial. For God Himself spoke, Call for me in misfortune, thus will I save you, and you will praise me.

Can someone say that I should perhaps print everything I have known and I then needed to write a thick book. Of course, I also had much more to write, if I tried so hard, but that was not my intention. I have set forth here and there, sufficiently, the thought that led me to write this little book, namely, how we all owe God praise and gratitude, for having protected us from birth, from the first hour to the present, in our lives. (STADEN, 2006, p. 196)

Once recalled, in general terms, the "true story" of the tedesco adventurer, who once would have escaped, to the French<sup>3</sup>, from the Tupinambá banquet to which he was invited - A report that, perhaps, could be better defined by the genre Captivity Narratives, so designated by Anglo-Saxon literary studies<sup>6</sup>, than as a travel narrative -, we will then move on to the justification of the choice of the German text, given the proposed thematic context.

In the evaluation of Alfredo Bosi (2013), the first information about the Land of Brazil and its inhabitants constitute documents whose value is not only affirmed by the historical condition of "testimonies of time", but also by molding, in the understandings of the world and modes of language by which pioneer travelers and missionaries portrayed them in their chronicles, the fundamental conditioning factors of "a culture that could only later count on the phenomenon of the word-art".( BOSI, 2013, p.13) Emphasizing the relevance of the "direct takes of the landscape, the Indian and the

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<sup>3</sup> Ironically, it was the French, once enemies, who freed the German captive from his predicament. According to Staden, on the last day of October 1554, William de Moner, captain of the ship Catherine de Vetteville, set sail from Guanabara Bay, taking him on board

nascent social groups", as offered in the travel reports, the Brazilian historian suggests that such information texts represent the "prehistory of our letters".( BOSI, 2013, p.13) Although it does not confer on it of properly literary value, Bosi points out the "obliquely aesthetic interest" in the source of themes and forms offered by such narratives, to which, for use in literary constructs, would come to run not only "a romantic and nostalgic Alencar", but also "a modernist Mário or an Oswald de Andrade." (BOSI, 2013, p. 13)

However, in addition to the condition of the historical document and narrative-descriptive model, to which the complexity of the Western imaginary is interposed, it should be emphasized that *Duas Viagens ao Brasil*<sup>4</sup> also exposes itself from an autodiegetic<sup>5</sup> perspective, which about the scope of the responsibility of a narrative subject - which merges the identity of the author with those of the narrator and the hero -, the problem of an unprecedented encounter, for which the German mercenary was not prepared in the slightest. Despite the "difficulty of understanding the reality of the Other found and the conflicting dialogue with this reality", a problem for which the epigraph with which we begin this article seems to be a good example, it is verified that, indeed, in a large part of the mentioned source of texts, whether their authors, exploiters, traffickers, deportees, pirates, clerics or mercenaries, rather, they were concerned with relating the jokes and cunning with which they became entangled and disentangled from their encounters with the Other than with seeking to "know and understand (?) other thoughts, other philosophies, other religions, other conducts, other sciences, and other politics," through which, virtually and through the ages, they would unveil the diversity of the world to their Western readers.

It should also be pointed out that, judging by what Knivet, Léry, Gandavo, and Staden, among others, report, at least at first, the meetings between *perôs* (Portuguese) and *tupiniquins*, and *maírs* (French) did not seem to them to be unsuccessful.

And *tupinambás*. Because such alliances made possible, in favor of the Europeans, the regular supply of brazilwood, parrots, and other goods of commercial interest, taking advantage in turn of the indigenous artifacts usable in their agricultural, fishing, and warrior activities, which were offered to them in exchange, strictly speaking, the mere knowledge of the language by "lances" and *truchements*<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> In the Brazilian edition of *Duas Viagens ao Brasil* used in this work, the historian Francisco de Assis Carvalho Franco, from the studies of Luis Roque Gondra and Roberto Lehmann-Nitsche, corrects the date given by Staden to April 10, 1550.

<sup>5</sup> In the online database of Oxford Bibliographies, it turns out that the entry "captivity narratives" designates accounts that originally had as their theme the capture (or abduction) of European explorers and colonizers by the native peoples of the Americas, which is why studies of North American literature simply incorporate it into their history. This textual genre is classically characterized by the use of the autodiegetic formula, through which the author-narrator-character relates his true experiences of captivity, escape, rescue, or, more rarely, his assimilation and integration into a certain indigenous community.

<sup>6</sup> The terms "lanços", in Portuguese, and "truchements", in French, designate the interpreters, intermediaries, or operators of the European traffic of forest products who, having learned the Tupi-Guarani language, fell into American territory, living in villages of indigenous allies (or close to them), to organize the collection and storage of brazilwood, furs, tobacco, etc.

it seemed to carry out the message, or "consummate" the "contacts sought and reached" with this Other, who would soon disappear from his place in the world, not even coming to know such a "space transformed through encounter."

Alfredo Bosi (2013) also seems to suggest, by bringing together two conflicting examples of Brazilian literary schools - which at different times would also adopt a similar strategy of fictionalizing the origins of our nationality, seeking them in old narratives of foreign travel - that the socio-historical phenomenon that shaped the genesis of Brazilian literature would not have been rigorously determined by European cultural conjunctures. In the understanding of this noted historian and critic, such a genesis would have happened before "from the assimilation of a colonial complex of life and thought", in which the colony originally fulfilled the role of "object of a culture, the 'other' with the metropolis." (BOSI, 2013, p.11) Thus, in the course of the process of becoming the subject of one's own culture, the just claim of ancestry or the search for one's genealogy would be implied, which, as in the cases of other American literature, was conveniently informed in foreign texts (ZIEBELL, 2002, p. 9).

The problem of an endless war (which was based on the need to avenge the relative slaughtered in the previous assault), of a religion more linked to the spiritual image of the ancestor than to that of the divinity (which explained the need for war) and of anthropophagic sacrifice (which was related to both) (FERNANDES apud PEIRANO, 1984), which the sociologist Florestan Fernandes would show to be implicit in these reports, it does not seem to have properly aroused the curiosity of such chroniclers, having been equally passed over by the authors cited by Bosi, in favor of the "anthropophagic effect" pointed out in the previous paragraph. From this, we can find a certain similarity between the evaluative judgment issued by Staden, about Cunhambebe, and the image that the noble Peri made, according to Alencar, of the Aimoré nation:

Now the Indian knew the ferocity of this people without a country and without religion, who fed on human flesh and lived like wild beasts, on the ground and through the caves and caves; he shuddered only at the thought that he might come and rob the house of D. Antônio de Mariz. (ALENCAR, 1999, p. 115)

The image that the "good Indian", configured by Alencar as a teetotaler of the vice of anthropophagy, makes about his "Other", is confirmed as a practical knowledge when he allows himself to be captured by it, as part of a certain stratagem that he prepared:

His prediction, however, did not deceive him; having obtained what he desired, having aroused the anger of the Aimorés, he broke his weapon, and begged the enemy for his life; It was of all the sacrifices that cost him the most. [...] The custom of the savages, not to kill the enemy in war and to captivate him to serve the feast of revenge, was for Peri a guarantee and a favorable condition for the execution of his project. [...]

According to the traditional laws of the barbarian people, the whole tribe was to take part in the feast, the young women touched only the flesh of the prisoner; but the warriors savoured

it as a delicate delicacy, fertilized by the pleasure of vengeance; and the old women with the fierce gluttony of the harpies that sink into the blood of their victims. (ALENCAR, 1999, p. 362)

Although with more humor, Mário de Andrade also makes the anthropophagus manifest itself in Macunaíma's "Other", that is, the capitalist Wenceslaus Pietro Pietra. We check in the following passage, the rescue of the "hero without any character", after his sorcerer brother had drunk the "giant people-eater", who had hunted him:

Then Maanape entered the other room of the cellar. The giant was there with his companion, an old caapora always pipe that was called Ceiuci and was very greedy. Maanape gave the bottles to Wenceslaus Pietro Pietra, a piece of smoke from Acará to caapora and the couple forgot that there was a world.

The hero chopped into twenty times thirty little greaves snorted at the boiling polenta. Maanape picked up the pieces and bones and spread everything on the cement to refresh. When they cooled the sarará Cambique poured over the sucked blood. Then Maanape wrapped all the bleeding pieces in banana leaves, threw the wrapping in a sapiquá, and touched the pension. (ANDRADE, M., 1986, p. 35)

Oswald de Andrade, who also links anthropophagy to the Other, unlike the first two authors, claims it, as well as otherness for himself:

Only anthropophagy unites us. Socially. Economically. Philosophically.

[...]

I am only interested in what is not mine. Law of man. Law of the anthropophagus. [...] I asked a man what the law was. He replied that it was the guarantee of the exercise of the possibility. This man was called Galli Mathias. I ate it. [...] (ANDRADE, O., 1975, p. 3)

However, once the pregnancy of the cannibal quality has been pointed out to the figuration of the Other, whose incidence in reports and chronicles of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries gains survival in literature Brazilian women of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, sometimes it is appropriate to seek the meanings implied in employment referential of such an indefinite pronoun.

Michel de Certeau (2006) suggests that having been conceived as products of experience, observation, or even research, travel reports combined with ethnographic pictures<sup>8</sup> will never cease to be the narratives that a certain social sphere has prepared to tell for itself. According to the French historian, in them, we must not seek the speech of the Other, but what "the writer says of the word" translated and instituted in place of a different enunciation whose destiny will be attributed to a meaning different from that intended by its foreign speaker. (CERTEAU, 2006, pp. 212-214)

Transformed into "exotic objects" and conferred scriptural status, such words will become known thanks to the indirect enunciation of the narrator, to assign legitimacy to the new experiences brought to the cultural economy of a given society of readers. In this way, the incorporation of the

knowledge of the Other by such a community will take the form of a repertoire of texts collected "according to the laws of a scientific representation proper to the time", ethnography, which, in the context of his analysis, Certeau calls "science of dreams". "By indicating to a group of literates what they 'should read', recomposing the representations they give themselves, these 'legends' symbolize the changes brought about in a culture by its encounter with another." (CERTEAU, 2006, p.213)

Based on such a consideration, the Other, for example, the savage of Staden's texts, should be configured not by the "truth" that transpires from that text, but by its relation to the language that treats it as the object of discourse that "makes it the foolish word that enchants Western discourse, but that, because of this, makes writing indefinitely the science that produces meaning and objects" that seeks to explain it. (CERTEAU, 2006, p.235)

However, if Michel de Certeau<sup>7</sup> points to the variety of fictional meanings that can be attributed to the "person" always absent from the discourses that culture, which reifies it, usually repeats to itself, it remains to reflect on the instance of the encounter, always before the scriptural statute, when the Other is properly configured as the object of a narrator self. Because there are strong links between a certain investigation by Tzvetan Todorov (2019) and the question on which we seek to reflect, we turn to his studies to try to find, beyond the interpositions of the subjects, traces of the people with whom and of whom this traveler of ours speaks. In the work *The Conquest of America* (2019), the Bulgarian theorist situates the historical moment marked as the Age of the Great Navigations (or Age of Discoveries) the original landmark of the notions of subjectivity and otherness, relating such ideas to the discovery that the self – the European narrator subject -, makes of itself, from the antinomic encounter with the Other

## 2 THE NARRATED AMERINDIAN OBJECT

For Todorov, certain differences between the "unknown land" – which would come to be known by the name of "America" – and the "known world" – Europe – were configured in the Western imagination long before the "discovery"<sup>8</sup> of that continent itself. And the Antipodean Other, wonderful human inhabitant of these cursed or Edenic territories, evidently constituted a significant part of such fiction.

It seems to us to be a consensual understanding among historians that it would have been Christopher Columbus who first sought to shape ancient and medieval idealizations about lands and ignotous beings – whose evidence he thought he found in his navigations led to the West – in new stereotypes, which would soon be assimilated to Modernity. However, as Todorov points out in the

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<sup>7</sup> Two Trips to Brazil, by Hans Staden, because it is formally divided into "history" (Book I) and "description" (Book II), corresponds exactly to the model highlighted by Certeau.

<sup>8</sup> Diaries of the Discovery of America, Book of Prophecies, Letters addressed to the Kings of Spain and to friends, etc

aforementioned work, specifically in the chapter entitled "Columbus Hermeuta", such preconceived notions would necessarily affect the perception of the effective differences experienced by the navigator in the extraordinary voyages he undertook (TODOROV, 2019, pp. 19-46).

They constituted the core of the problem of incomprehension, in which Todorov begins the investigation of the question of the self and the other, not only the exposition of the interpretations inferred by Columbus from his dialogues with the Indians – marked by an original linguistic barrier almost always underestimated – but also the examination of certain terms that express, for example, judgments of positive or negative values, through which the navigator informed the ideological, cultural and hierarchical complex that constitutes the mentality of the West about the differences of those "savage" humanities with which it had been confronted.

According to the Bulgarian philosopher and linguist's reading of the reports and documents left by the navigator<sup>9</sup>, it appears that he would have contemplated the inhabitants of the territories found as mere objects, as living beings that were part of the peculiar and enchanting natural landscapes, which followed each other in the course of his navigations; moreover, Todorov observes that, as the good and bad successes of the adventure of discovery were precipitated, The adjectives attributed to the inhabitants of the Caribbean varied, that is, the "most generous people in the world" who "do not covet the goods of others" soon become "thieves, cowards and fearful." (COLOMBO, apud TODOROV, 2019, p. 54)<sup>10</sup> In short, for the author of *The Conquest of America*, Columbus would not be able to understand the Indians, nor would he make any effort to do so.

In the instance of this extreme and exemplary encounter, it happened that the first conqueror not only cast his gaze on the object to be explored but also mirrored in the presumed optics of this object<sup>11</sup>, a glimpse that, at the same time, would reveal and refuse the discovery of otherness.

According to Todorov's proposition, it is defined from this way of seeing the foreigner in his territory – contemplation that merges with the imagination of a simultaneous reflection in the unknown gaze – a modern (and paradoxically medieval) mentality of the Other, of which we are legatees: "We are all descendants of Columbus, it is in him that our genealogy begins – if the word beginning has a meaning. [...] Men have discovered [with him] the totality of which they are a part. Until then, they formed a part without a whole." (TODOROV, 2019, p.7)

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<sup>9</sup> According to Todorov, expressions transcribed from Columbus' diaries and letters, such as

The above-mentioned ones would have contributed strongly to the construction of the myth of the "good savage".

<sup>10</sup> "It is possible, as Columbus says, that the Indians considered the possibility that the Spaniards were beings of divine origin; which would give a good explanation for the initial fear, and its disappearance in the face of the human behavior of the Spaniards." (TODOROV, 2019, p.57)

<sup>11</sup> Reneging on the inference of Amerigo Vespucci, according to which the lands discovered at the western edge of the Atlantic Ocean were not part of Asia, but of a continent unknown to ancient European science (*Mundus Novus*, 1504), Columbus, until the date of his death (May 20, 1506), was still convinced that his navigations had reached the eastern coast of Asia.

We can then infer from the reading of the first section of Todorov's work, which he calls "Discovering" that, although the trust placed by Columbus in the teachings of Ezra, Pliny, and St. Augustine, and likewise, in the references presented in Pierre d'Ailly's *Imago Mundi* and Ptolemy's *Codices Imago Mundi*, proved effective in his attempt to find a way to the Indies<sup>12</sup>; in other respects, this same ancient and canonical knowledge could not lend themselves, at least about the strange humanity with which the Admiral would have been confronted in the Antilles, to the confirmation of truths aprioristically determined by analogies with biblical pages.

According to the understanding of the Bulgarian theorist, despite the relevance of the misconceptions and contingencies that are evident in Columbus' navigations, do not discredit the historical fact that grants him the title of Discoverer of the Americas, because his failed encounter with the Indians left no more than a bad sense of otherness, we cannot extend his triumph to the distinction of the discoverer of the Americans. (TODOROV, 2019, p.69)

However, in *The Conquest of America*, Todorov does not restrict his investigation only to the descriptions and judgments that Christopher and Fernando Colombo made about the indigenous Caribbeans but extends his analysis to the vast documentation produced on the subject of the conquest of the territory from the Americans, by Hernán Cortez, Bartolomé de Las Casas, Diego Durán, Bernardino de Sahagún, as well as several other editors. Basing his analysis on the modalities of enunciations developed in chronicles, testimonies, memoirs, histories, theological quarrels, letters, and testaments written between the end of the fifteenth century and the end of the sixteenth, the Bulgarian theorist constructs a typology of the relations established between the conquerors and the Native Americans.

This "typology of relations with others" is structured from three axes: the first of an axiological character, a bias by which value judgments and the disposition of the other are expressed, within the scope of a certain hierarchy implied by moral judgments enunciated by the editors; the second, of a pragmatic or praxiological nature, is manifested textually through evidence of the closeness, the distance, or even the indifference of the writer, in his relationship with the other narrated and/or described in these documents; and the latter, whose nature is epistemic, reveals the degree of interaction established by such writers with the Caribbean, Aztec, Tlaxcaltec, Mayan, etc. cultures (languages, modes of social organization, religiosities) thematized by them in these ancient documents. (TODOROV, 2019, pp. 269-70)

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<sup>12</sup> According to Wilhelm Kloster's commentary on the maps attached to the edition of *Zwei Reisen nach Brasilien (Karte des Küstengebietes von Saint Vincent bis Bertioga und Karte zur 2. Reise)*, the designation used by Staden as Ubatuba, would effectively correspond to Ubatiba and would indicate not the current municipality of the São Paulo coast, but a site located on Ilha Grande or some beach in the municipality of Mangaratiba.

Thus, according to Todorov's method of reading, the objects of his investigation would reflect not only the other, according to the impressions made by the European rapporteurs, but also the unique features of the discoverers, conquerors, evangelizers, castaways or captives themselves, configured in the qualities of the bonds they would have established with him. Having examined the documents by the axiological bias, the philosopher and linguist points out that the chroniclers figured the Mesoamerican man as a bearer of good qualities, sometimes as a bad element, sometimes as docile and reliable, sometimes as a disguised and deceitful, almost always as an inferior, rarely as an equal.

As a result of the practice of a primary comparative method that would give rise to such judgments, in the chosen texts a common understanding is evidenced to indicate, at least in the context of the theological debate then in force, the endorsement given by these drafters to the affirmative thesis of belonging, inferred by the similarity, of the Native American to the human species. However, according to Todorov, the textual enumerations of the differences verified between this strange humanity and European man would seek to associate, in general, this other to certain mythical topoi, or even, from the Western teleological perspective, to the stage of humanity before and inferior to that already reached by the conqueror.

According to such accounts, among the innumerable shreds of evidence with which the "savagery" of the American people could be proved, only three would be those that the indisputable prominence of Western values could not televise: the practices of cannibalism, those of ritual sacrifices, and ignorance of the "true" faith. By employing this argument of force, recurrent in documents such as Cortez's *Cartas de la Relación*, Bernal Diaz's *Historia Verdadera de la conquista de la Nueva España*, and Lopez de Gomara's *Historia de la conquista de México*, the editors aimed to make explicit to their readers the insignia of rationality, in acts of conquest, of compassion, in the evangelizing actions and the moral sense, in the "just war" waged against the Aztecs. Thus, although in these texts the *faits accomplis* are disguised under a type of discourse that values the morals, faith, and reason of the "strongest", their reading truly reveals to us, under the arbitrariness of the presupposition, the rhetoric of genocides, enslavements, tortures, the plundering of wealth and territories, prohibition of indigenous religious practices, in short, the expressiveness of acts of violence committed against the Other. (TODOROV, 2019, pp.73-86)

Presented a summary of the proposition of an investigative method of the relations that have taken place Between writers and the objects of their texts, we propose to conclude this article with a the brief examination carried out under the epistemological axis, of the peculiar way in which Staden's narration exposes his learning of the Tupinambá culture. This choice is explained by the exceptional condition that is configured for the knowledge of the identity of the Other – the mastery that Staden demonstrates to have of the general Tupi-Guarani language (a condition that can be deduced from his

account), the relative freedom and the active participation in the routine activities of the villages, provided by the Tupis to their captives (information reiterated in all texts referring to such indigenous nations).

According to Todorov, under the epistemological axis of narration, there is firstly the ability manifested by the narrator in contacts and interactions in a foreign language; after that, we seek to demonstrate their intention of understanding intrinsic to the conceptions expressed by otherness, to the detriment of ethnocentric prejudices; and, finally, the evidence of the development of a certain capacity for translation, legitimized by a point of possible exchange, from one culture to another. (TODOROV, 2019, pp. 269-353).

Regarding contacts and interactions in strange lands, we will point out here not only the ability to communicate with Indians, since, in only two passages of *Duas Viagens ao Brasil*, the author-narrator-character mentions impediments to immediate linguistic communication. The first of these refers to the circumstance in which, having recently arrived in Lisbon, he needs the help of his host, who "already knew the language of the country" (STADEN, 2008, p.39), to obtain employment in Captain Penteado's navy. As for the second, it alludes to Staden's encounter, recently captured by the Indians, with the French truchement. We recall that, on this occasion, the Tupinambás had taken him to the presence of their captive - who claimed to come from France, and not from Portugal - to verify that he was telling the truth. Caruatá-uará, as the warriors called him, then addressed questions in the French language to Staden, who did not know the language, and because he could not understand it, he then challenged him, using the indigenous language. (STADEN, 2008, p.95).

Except for the occasions mentioned above, the other intercoursés presented in the report do not show any embarrassment in the interactive practices developed between the author-narrator-character and the other figures presented in the report - whether they were carried out in the Portuguese, Spanish, or Tupi-Guarani languages, whether they were fulfilled through the use of some form of pidgin which would provide the German with satisfactory interactions with the Indians, the settlers or the navigators, a hypothesis which seems to us the most probable. Of these, there is no doubt as to the high capacity of interlocution with the Other demonstrated by Staden, regarding the examination of the topic that, from the epistemological perspective, encompasses the manifestation of the writer's knowledge of the foreign language, as well as the representation of the relevance of communicative interactions in the written document.

Put aside the first news of his capture – in which the German arquebusier only he tries to enunciate the astonishing situation in which he had been involved but refrains from sketching any interference in such a scenario – it will be only from chapter 28 of Book I, (excerpt transcribed below), that it will resume the protagonist instance, reversing the condition of questioned, temporarily assumed

in its narrative. According to our understanding, such a segment of the text would effectively mark the entry of the author-narrator-character into a dangerous game with his interlocutors, whose risk implied in the bluff, appeared to be less than, simply, being willing to attend the fatal banquet to which he was invited. However, for the success of such a strategy, both the significant development of its translational skills and the growing management that Staden comes to do should compete. According to Todorov (2019), these interpretive capacities are treated, as well as the effect that the interactions resulting from them produce in the narration itself, of the other two criteria for measuring the degree of knowledge of the other manifested by the narrator. Let's move on to the way this process is evidenced, in crescendo, in the reading of five episodes of *Duas Viagens ao Brasil*.

The Tedesco mercenary tells us that, a few days after his capture, the warriors of Ubatuba moved to the village of Ariró, taking him with them to show him to Cunhambebe, "the noblest of the chiefs" of the various Tupinambá clans scattered throughout the region (current bay of Ilha Grande). Taken to the presence of the chief who, for his ornaments, stood out among the leaders gathered in the hut, dares the former gunboat master of Bertioga to anticipate him, paying him homage in the Tupi way:

"Are you Cunhambebe? Do you still live?" "Yes," he replied, "still alive." "Well," said I then, "I have heard much of you, and that you are a man of great fame." He got up then, walking past me in a daze and very flattered. According to custom, he carried a round stone, green in color, tucked to his lip. In addition, it had a white necklace of shellfish[...]. He sat down again and asked me what the plan of attack of his enemies, the Tupiniquins and the Portuguese. And then he asked why I had wanted to shoot them in the region of Bertioga, for he had known that I was employed as a gunner against them. I replied that the Portuguese had put me there and I had to do my job, to which he replied that I was Portuguese. The Frenchman who had come to me then called his son. He had told him that I could not understand him and it was legitimate Portuguese. I replied then, "Yes, it is true; I have long since left the French land and forgotten the language." He said, by the way, that he had already helped to imprison and eat five Portuguese; These had all pretexted that they were French, and had thus lied." (STADEN, 2008, p.98)

Notwithstanding the desire to win his sympathy, however, the prisoner was embarrassed by the insidious questions that the great chief then addressed to him. Thus, trying to reverse the course of the conversation in his favor, the prisoner does not hesitate to offer him certain strategic information, known since before his imprisonment. Staden then declares to Cunhambebe: "Your true enemies, the Tupiniquins, prepare twenty-five canoes, and they will soon come to attack your land." (STADEN, 2008, p. 99)

Since, even in response to this news, Cunhambebe does no more than follow with the enumeration of the enemies, Tupiniquins and Portuguese, who had already eaten, apparently, such a snare, committed against the old friends and now manifested to those present as a kind of augury, did not seem to have the effect of placating the inclemency of the Indians towards the foreign captive. Nor

to inspire their friendship, because, once the interview is over, the Tupinambá leader gets up and leaves the hut, leaving the others to invent a new party with Staden:

The son of Chief Cunhambebe tied my legs in three places, and I was thus, with my feet attached, to jump through the hut. With that, they laughed and exclaimed, "Here comes skipping our delicacy!" I then asked my master who had led me there, if he had brought me to kill me. He replied that he did not, but that it was only customary to treat foreign slaves in this way. And they untied my leg ropes. They then approached me and groped my flesh. One said that the leather of his head belonged to him, another that his thigh fit him. I had to sing some cost to them, and I sang religious songs, which I had to explain to them in their language. He said, "I sang about my God." They answered me that my God was filth, in their language: theõuira. The words hurt me, and I thought to myself, "O thou, good God, you must sometimes tolerate much!" (STADEN, 2008, p.100)

The next day, by express orders of Cunhambebe, the warriors would return the prisoner to Ubatuba, where, according to what he informs us, should wait for his immolation soon.

In the sequence, Staden informs the reader that his prediction, just before announced, has indeed been fulfilled, although not in Ariró, but exactly in the village to which he had just returned. According to reports, it happened that, at a certain dawn, they silently landed on the beach of Ubatuba the exact twenty-five canoes foreseen, carrying in their bulges four hundred enemy warriors, who surrounded and awakened the Tupinambás with a load of arrows shot at their village. Then the German arquebusier tells us that,

As they attacked the huts and began to shoot altogether, the assailants were filled with great panic, and the women wanted to flee. Then he said to them, "You have me for a Portuguese, for your enemy. Give me a bow and arrows now and untie my bonds. Then I will help you defend the huts." They also gave me a bow and arrows; I shouted and shot in their fashion, as well as I could, and told them they needed to be brave; There would be no danger at all. It was my intention with this, to escape through the stake that surrounded the huts, and to desert to the attackers, for they knew me well, and knew also that I was in the village. But it was still too guarded. (STADEN, 2008, pp. 101-102)

Despite the stratagem, that is, the valuable collaboration that our traveler had offered in the defense of the Tupinambá site, as soon as the Tupiniquins "beat in retreat", it was again put under moorings.

The night that followed that unsuccessful siege, Staden informs us, the "noblest" gathered in the courtyard of the village to deliberate on the most suitable occasion for the consummation of their sacrifice, a conference to which, of course, they did not forget to invite him. Disturbed by the subject of the lecture, as well as by the derision of which he was the target, he silently begged for the protection of his God. And as he now directed discouraged glances at the glare of the moon, the natives came to ask him why he looked at the celestial body in this way. Reproducing Staden's response, we highlight his enunciative adequacy to the cosmological perspective of his captors, as a sign of the first throw of the game to which we referred earlier:

"I see she's angry." For the face of the moon seemed to be so terrible that—God forgive me! - I supposed that God and all creatures must be enraged with me. In this asked me Nhaêpepô-oaçu, one of the chiefs, and also the one who wanted to make me kill: "With whom is the moon enraged?" I replied, "She looks at your cabin." With that, he became aroused and treated me with harsh words. To right the wrong, he said, "Maybe it's not your cabin. She is enraged at the slave caribous." Also, a tribe of Indians is called carijó. "Yes," he said then, "upon them fall all misfortune. So be it." I tried hard not to think about it anymore. (STADEN, 2008, pp. 102-103)

According to the narrative developed in chapter 31, the day after the frustrated assault on Ubatuba, it was known in this village that the same enemies who were rejected from there would have sailed straight to Mambucaba, to attack this other Tupinambá village; However, it seems that the Tupiniquins could not surprise the Indians of that village, because they managed to see the huge enemy contingent that was approaching, in time to escape their siege. On account of the duo's disappointment on this day, the Tupiniquins took revenge on those fugitives, setting fire to their huts. As soon as he heard this news, Nhaêpepô-oaçu decided to leave for the destroyed village, as he wished to help his relatives in rebuilding their huts. Taking with him all the warriors who dwelt with him, he bade farewell to those who remained, promising to bring back the clay and flour for the banquet at which they prepared the moquém of Staden. (STADEN, 2008, p.104).

Staden tells us that, after the absence of two weeks, the indigenous people finally returned to Ubatuba. He states that at first, he imagined being sacrificed soon after the return of the warriors, but after his arrival, he noticed that several of them were ill, which is why he supposed that the promised feast might be postponed. Called to the presence of the chief Nhaêpepô-oaçu, who had also returned ill, he talks about the recent memory of an angry moon that aimed at his hut, associating the illness that had struck the group with the bad omen, which his interlocutor had been able to interpret at the time. On hearing such a statement from the one who, hitherto, had been his worst tormentor, the German prisoner correlates the improvisation of his speech on the occasion to a manifestation of divine providence and, a little happier than before, concurs: "Today God is with me." (STADEN, 2008, p.107)

Dessarte gives the account to understand that, even for a brief moment, the German captive is allowed to neglect the concern about his imminent immolation, and decides to "advance a house" in the game of mystifications in which, in the eyes of his captors, he sought to figure himself as the beloved protégé of a god far more powerful than his maracas. Then, risking his skin, he replies to Nhaêpepô-oaçu: "It's true. You were all sick because you wanted me to eat, even though I am not your enemy. From this comes your unhappiness." (STADEN, 2008, p.107).

The unfolding of the dialogue culminates in the order given by the head of the hut to the companions: that they do no more harm to the prisoner – at least until he manages to recover his health. Staden, in turn, in response to the request of his former executioner, makes himself a "shaman" and

goes out to apply anointings to each of the Indians of the village. However, despite the farce represented by the Lutheran healer, other Indians would fall ill and several died after that. For this reason, the old women of the village appealed to him to beseech him for intercession with their God; The same ones that once, the author-narrator-character points out, "with its scratches, blows and threats", caused him many sufferings, but which, at that time, they called him "chê-raíra" (my son):

Don't let us die. We treat you that way because we think you were Portuguese, against whom we have a grudge. We have also imprisoned and eaten some Portuguese, but their God was not as angry as yours. We recognize that you are not Portuguese. (STADEN, 2008, p.109)

Continuing his true story, Staden tells us that, sometime after this event, those from Ubatuba (or Ubatiba<sup>13</sup>) would have been invited to a moquéim offered by their relatives from the village of Ticoaripe (also located in the bay of Ilha Grande). Then those who had been cured of the mysterious disease prepared to depart and put their speedy canoes into the sea, this time taking with them the German captive – only to show him off to the hosts – and also a slave Maracajá, which they intended to offer to the promoters of the banquet. (STADEN, 2008, p.112)

After arriving in Ticoaripe, Staden recounts three days of celebrations. Although several singular episodes have taken place during this celebration, due to what is intended with this summary, it would not be appropriate more than to allude to the Tupi-Guarani anthropophagic ritual itself. Then, to fulfill the purpose of adequately explaining the conjunctures that give meaning to the actions of our traveler towards his captors, we have adapted below the descriptions contained in the chapter entitled "Solemnities of the savages on the occasion of the slaughter and devouring of their enemies. How they execute these and how they treat them." (Book II), with the narration offered in the chapter "How the savages devoured a prisoner and took me with them to the feast." (Book I)

Staden narrates how the Tupinambás, according to their custom, first enjoyed the cauim made from the roots of the abati<sup>14</sup>, a drink from which he also freed the Maracajá; after which they listened attentively to the speech of the executioner, as well as the retort of the prisoner, who was afterwards slaughtered; after a single and certain blow to the skull, they took the women from the sacrificed body, they skinned it and shook its skin against the soft fire, then carved it into large pieces by the men, then took the women these pieces and ran "with them around the huts, making a great fuss, as a sign of joy" (STADEN, 2008, p.183); after which the men came again to assemble them, to effect the segmentation of such parts into smaller portions, and to proceed to share the bits of the Maracajá among all, the words being left to the men; the viscera and head to women and children; Then, each having received his share of the enemy who was due to him, they all returned to their huts to moquear him, and at last to devour him. (STADEN, 2008, pp. 112-113, 179-188)

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<sup>13</sup> Denomination for corn, in Tupi-Guarani.

Returning to follow the narrative, we observe that, once the banquet was over, the guests expressed their thanks and said goodbye to the relatives of Ticoaripe, put their boats back in the water and, without forgetting to embark on them the German captive, who now rowed alongside his masters, sailed back to the village. However, the report highlights that there was a curumin that did not row because it was entertained in gnawing a bone of the leg of the late Maracajá. Bored by the persistence of that macabre pantomime, the German captive then asks the boy to throw his snack away. However, on account of this culturally inappropriate conduct, all on board proceed to admonish our traveler, telling him that the remnants of flesh adhered to that bone constituted excellent pasture and that he should indeed be glad that that snack which the boy nibbled on did not come from his leg. (STADEN, 2008, pp. 112-113)

After the incident at the beginning of the voyage, they sailed those of Ubatuba still for three days, until they reached a certain point where the sea was very wild, from which, in order not to go downhill, they had to pour their vessels to dry land. As the weather was cloudy and the waves very high, they landed on the beach, where they rested for a moment, ate the repast they brought, and decided to follow by land the quarter mile that distanced them from the village, carrying on their shoulders the canoes, the weapons and the gifts received at the feast. Staden tells us that, only after the Indians had set in motion, the curumim threw away the rest of his lunch, and that, coincidentally after he had done so, the time cleared up again. To insinuate that the climate change reflected the improved mood of his omnipotent God, he reproaches the author-narrator-character of his captors: "You see, you would not believe me when I said that my God was angry because the boy ate the flesh of the bone." Then the Indians replied to him: "Yes, but if he had eaten it without you having seen him, we would have had a good time, for sure." (STADEN, 2008, p.114)

For six months Staden had been living among his captors, when another captive, who had been in the village longer than he had, fell ill. It was about a Carijó Indian who, having once been a slave of the Portuguese colonists, had managed to escape from São Vicente, going to seek refuge in Ubatuba. According to what the author-narrator-character of *Duas Viagens ao Brasil* informs, the Tupinambás did not usually kill indigenous people who sought shelter among them; although they were not properly adopted by the community, in exchange for protection, they were made servants by it. It turns out that this Indian, in particular, behaved in a very hostile manner towards the German captive and often intrigued him with his masters, accusing him of having been responsible for the death of the leader of a Tupinambá warrior expedition, whose musket-firing he witnessed in the times when he was a captive of the Portuguese. However, despite the fears expressed by Staden, those of Ubatuba did not listen to the calumnies of the slave Carijó. (STADEN, 2008, p.119)

And because, by this point in history, the healing arts of the German captive had already gained reasonable prestige among their masters, the reader is left with the task of curing his disaffection, whose skills as a hunter were already beginning to be lacking in the hut he served. However, once the attempt to apply a bleed to the patient is frustrated, Staden ends up renouncing the charge, and therefore, those around them decide to slaughter and devour the Carijó, before he would die of the disease that affected him. Despite the protests of the German captive - who warns them of the risks of exposing themselves to the disease that then affected them when they consume the flesh of a sick person - it is not long before the warrior in charge of the blow of the club arrives at the place. The same ceremonial ceremony is then repeated, culminating in the sharing, preparation, and ingestion of the slave's body parts, except, this time, the head and guts, "of which they were disgusted because he was sick." (STADEN, 2008, pp. 120-121)

### **3 AND THUS CONCLUDES THE HIGHLIGHTED EPISODE**

I walked all over the huts. In one they roasted the feet, in another the hands, in the third pieces of the body. Then I told them how the Carijó – who baked there and went to eat – had always slandered me, and had told them that I had shot dead some of his friends while I had been with the Portuguese. This was a lie, and he had never seen me there. "You know well," I went on, "that he had been among you some years, and had never been ill. Now, however, my God had been angry because of the calumny he had spread against me. It made him sick, and the idea of killing and eating him was born in your spirit. Thus will my God act with all the wicked who have made me or make me suffer!" Many of the Indians were frightened by these words. And I thanked the almighty God for showing Himself to me, in everything, so great and so kind." (Staden, 2008, p.121)

Through the presentation of this succession of events, we try to highlight the playful character of the relationship that, in the narrative scope, comes to be established between the Tupinambás and Staden. We point out that the author-narrator-character, based on his capacity for interlocution with the captors and in a gradual acquaintance, or experience, with the inherent configuration of the world of these natives, will proceed an appreciable interpretation of otherness, which, however, will not occur because of their improbable interest in reaching the point of extrapolation of the game that defines such interaction, but because of the pragmatic need to escape from the hostile place, in which such an encounter occurs between oneself and the Other. It can be noted that the mystifications that at every moment improvises to escape the fate that seemed to be in store for him arise from the attentive observation of the customs and customs of his captors – as well as from the continuous examination, which operates through the dialogues, how they express their thoughts and feelings.

The tricks of the German adventurer would raise a growing disorientation in the referential universe of the Indians of Ubatuba, who, little by little, were forced to reformulate the bases of the cultural encounter with their other enemy – who did not look like the Portuguese – or with the other

ally – because he did not appear to be French either. Instead of offering them gifts, or arousing their appetites, this captive deliberately confused them but inspired hesitation and restlessness, in place of the confidence or resentment that belonged to the figure of the stranger. Unlike the "familiar" alterities *perô* and *maír*, this one seemed to enjoy the alliance with a powerful and vigilant God, whose ineffable manifestations the Tupinambás were not slow to fear.

However, it is also worth mentioning the circumstance in which the combination of mystifications and good luck would reach paroxysm, after which our author-narrator-character would no longer fear for his life. This takes place about two months after the illness and sacrifice of the slave *Carijó*, and seems to reflect quite well Staden's moment of self-confidence in the conduct of the trades he maintained both with his captors and with his God:

I was fishing with Paraguá, one of the noblest savages – the one who had roasted Jerome – and another Indian. At the beginning of twilight, a strong storm rose. It rained not far from us, and the wind brought us the dregs. Then the two natives asked me to speak to my God so that the rain would not disturb us. Maybe we'd catch more fish. For I knew well that in the hut we had nothing to eat.

These words moved me, and I asked the Lord with all my heart to prove in me his power, since the savages of me demanded it, and that they might see how my God is always with me. When I finished the prayer, the wind came roaring, with rain, and it rained until about six paces from us. But there, where we were, it became dry, to which Paraguá exclaimed, "Now I see that you have spoken to your God." We also caught some fish afterward.

Back in the hut they both told me that I had spoken to my God, and what had happened. Such were the other savages. (Staden, 2008, pp. 136-137)

Staden tells us that, a few days after the fishing with Paraguá, his masters, the brothers *Nhaêpepô-oaçú* and *Alkidar-miri*, who claimed the glory of his capture, and his uncle, *Ipirú-guaçú*, to whom they first offered him as a regal, took him to *Taquaraçú-tiba*, to offer him to one of the chiefs of that village. When presenting the gift to *Abatí-poçanga*, the Indians of *Ubatuba* – who after seven months of observation, decided that this rare route was eventually harmful to Tupinambá consumption – saw fit to recommend to the new owner to treat the captive well – as well as to preserve him from other relatives who might injure him some evil – because they had the proof that their God was too attentive and vengeful. Moreover, according to what the prisoner himself had informed them, such a power would soon send his brothers and friends, in a ship full of gifts, which he would immediately give them if they kept him well treated. As the gift and the counsel greatly cheered *Abatí-poçanga*, he would soon call our traveler his son and take him on the hunt, in company with his other sons. (STADEN, 2008, p.139)

With the presentation of the sequence of excerpts selected in the work *Duas Viagens ao Brasil*, in addition to the evident communication capacity manifested by the author-narrator-character with the use of the Tupi-Guarani language, we seek to point out the apprehension and handling made by

this of the complex of ideas and feelings intrinsic to indigenous otherness, which, in the face of the situations in which such performances they occur, rather to the advantage, than to the detriment of ethnocentric prejudices which, ideally, would tend to weaken in such experiences. Moreover, the account leaves no doubt as to the competence developed by Staden, from the experience of his encounter with otherness, to describe the Tupinambá culture, either in terms intelligible to the circumscription of sixteenth-century German Lutherans, or in terms that are actualized in the vast spatiotemporal domains of the so-called Western Civilization. This proof, which we intend to infer from the fragments presented by us, finds, however, its best expression in the information compiled in Book II – a pioneer source of ethnological references that Claude Lévi-Strauss would later use, on the occasion of the writing of *Tristes Trópicos*. However, the degree of knowledge of the Other, as manifested by the German man at arms, does not even come close to contemplating the problematic of an improbable translation of the Tupinambá culture by the European, for which he lacked the means, the knowledge and the ethnographic tradition that, ironically, he was inaugurated with his biased gaze.

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