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Arts, Crafts and Schools in the Missionary Action of the Jesuits and the Ancestral Knowledge of the Original Peoples of Brazil

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Abstract- This paper deals with the first crafts brought by the Portuguese colonization, so that in the tropics living conditions similar to those they had in Europe were created and thus favoring the economic and cultural organization that the colonizers needed. By means of the letters inscribed in the study of Serafim Leite, it accesses reports and testimonies of the Jesuits of the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries, to understand the transposition of arts and crafts from Europe to colonial Brazil and the adoption of the arts and crafts of the so-called indigenous who suffered this colonizing action. It uses documentary and historiographical sources of the Society of Jesus, alongside interpretive studies on its action in the construction of the Brazilian colony. It reveals that such technical intertwining explains more vividly how Brazil was made in its beginnings, before it came to be configured as a patriarchal and slave society, as well as what it means socially today, when it exposes a fragile structure of nation and cultural identity too much. controversial.

Keywords: *jesuits, indigenous, crafts, colonization of brazil.*

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I. Introduction

Every society has its knowledge, which directs the work of daily practice, related to survival in the natural environment and the construction of a cultural environment. Before trying to understand how these processes and interactions take place in time and space, it is necessary to move away from judgments that establish hierarchical scales of value, unlike the trend impregnated with evolutionism that classifies everything, according to the assumption that, seen in linear time, simple activities generate more complex ones, or that these are superior to them.

I think it is more rigorous to adopt as an interpretation guide the cultural relativism defined by anthropology, in particular, the one that inherits, as an alternative to the evolutionary stance, the teachings of Franz Boas (1858 -1942), for whom "each culture would contain in itself its own values". and its own unique history (...)". (ERIKSEN; NIELSEN, 2010, p. 54)

The history of Brazilian education is impregnated with this notion, that is, with a hierarchical cultural confrontation between tribal peoples and civilized Europeans. The widespread and crystallized chronicle is authored by Christian missionaries or with a position aligned with them, which names, adjectives and classifies the original peoples, based on the Christian, mercantile and literate civilizational principle, a narrative that is formed throughout the colonial process and its historiographical constitution.

I will not go into this clash in depth, as I have in mind and urgently another exhibition corridor, but I will allow it to be interviewed in some passages of this study, where I make some reading indications, albeit minimal, on the state of the art in that this question is found among Brazilian historians.

> It was the records and interpretations formulated by colonizers, chroniclers, missionaries and official history, which annulled them as protagonists of history, allowing only to consider them as exotic objects, residues of a distant past. Otherwise, it is necessary to see them as living and throbbing, resistant and creative entities, not as pieces in the windows of a museum. That is, as collectivities whose forms of otherness are being permanently reconstructed in their villages and in their political struggles, in rituals and in their daily lives. (SOUZA; WITTMANN, 2016. p.10)

I am interested here in bringing some contribution to the debate already discussed, highlighting the interactive way in which these different types of knowledge were involved, due to the Portuguese colonial process of occupation of the territory that the invaders and builders of Brazil called. I draw attention to the fact that arts, crafts and schools were practices that punctuated the missionary action of the Jesuits and outlined a given civilizational process, which at the beginning defined the material and spiritual foundations of Brazilian society.

Craftsmen and artists are at the base of the first crafts brought by the Portuguese colonization, so that in the tropics living conditions similar to those they had in Europe were created, thus favoring the organization of the agrarian, pastoral and extractive economy and the cultural adaptation, which the colonizers needed.

By means of the reports and testimonies of Jesuits from the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries, we can understand the transposition of arts and crafts from Europe to colonial Brazil. Among them, the presence of bricklayers, carpenters and blacksmiths stands out; not to mention the weavers, carpet makers, potters, sculptors, tailors, embroiderers, painters, scribes and schoolmasters. The list of activities practiced for the

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sedimentation of Portuguese Christian civilization in the Brazilian tropics is long and suggestive.

The European arts and crafts were added to the arts and crafts of the so-called indigenous people who suffered this colonizing action. This shows a symbiosis of diverse cultural heritages and highlights the importance of understanding this past as a hotbed of other cultural developments. Such technical intertwining explains more vividly what Brazil was made of in its early days, before it came to be configured as a patriarchal and slave society, as well as what it means today, when it exposes a fragile structure of nation and cultural identity that is too controversial.

I use documentary and historiographical sources of the Society of Jesus, alongside interpretive studies on its action in the construction of the Brazilian colony. I emphasize that craftsmen and artists from the colonial period had their occupations and uses defined, largely depending on the needs posed by the Jesuit missions, which involved the establishment of residences, churches, schools and villages; from these places, countless urban centers and points of irradiation of missionary and civilizing actions emerged in the service of the purpose of expanding the business and lands of the Portuguese Crown, always threatened by other European nations, such as France and Holland.

The work of Serafim Leite (2004) on the history of the Jesuits, and, in particular, what he wrote about arts and crafts (2008) developed by them in Brazil, alongside schools and colleges, were indispensable for the composition of this work. The greatest importance of this historiographical source is in the use of letters from missionaries about their actions and relationships in the catechetical ordering process, together with the Brazilian natives who were opposed to it, in a form of astute and fierce resistance to the purpose of erasing their traditions and cultural codes.

This study was originally presented at the XVIII Congress of the History of Education of Ceará, organized by Linha História e Educação Comparada/ UFC, in August 2019, in the town of Nova Russas, and its Portuguese version was published in the collection Histórias de Artes, Ofícios e Escolas, from the UFC Editions, in the same year, and our intention is to publish it in other languages and editorial channels, to expand the circulation of the debate proposed here.

II. European Arts and Crafts in Colonial Times

The first Jesuits arrived in Brazil in 1549. Settled in Salvador, they tried to provide a new life to live here and carry out their Christianizing missions. Manuel da Nóbrega's letters – most recently edited by Paulo Roberto Pereira and published as a complete work in 2017 – give the purest testimony of his impressions and actions in that second half of the 16th century, a time full of novelties and uncertainties regarding success of the company set up by the Society of Jesus and the Portuguese Crown in Brazil.

In a letter written in 1558, almost ten years after his arrival, Nóbrega complained about the cannibalism and rebelliousness of the natives, recommending to the King of Portugal how to subdue them.

> This gentile is of a quality that is not loved for the good, but out of fear and subjection, as has been experienced, and therefore if His Highness wants to see them all converted, have them subjugated and must make the Christians spread throughout the land and distribute to them the service of the Indians to those who help them to conquer and lord it, as is done in other parts of new lands, and I don't know how it suffers, the Portuguese generation that among all nations is the most feared and obeyed, being on this coast suffering and almost subjecting himself to the most vile and sad heathen of the world.
>
> Those who killed the people of the bishop's ship (Sardinha) can soon be punished and subjected and all those who are proclaimed as enemies of Christians and those who want to break peace and those who have slaves of Christians and do not want to give them away and all the others that did not want to suffer the just yoke that they were given and therefore rise up against the Christians. When the gentiles were taken to subjection, many forms of ill-possessed slaves and many scruples will cease, because men will have legitimate slaves, taken in a just war, and they will have vassalage services for the Indians and the land will be populated and Our Lord will win many souls and Your Highness will have a lot of income in this land, because there will be many cattle breeding and sugar mills since there is not much gold and silver. (NÓBREGA, 2017, p. 246-247)

The enterprise of winning souls for the Lord and earning a lot of income for Your Highness was set in motion. Alongside the indigenous resistance to this purpose, "many cattle breeding and sugar engines" were needed, which required a certain materiality and the collaboration of countless craftsmen and artists.

The very construction of residences and chapels, roads, towns and cities, adornments and clothing required the recruitment of a set of different crafts and craftsmen. For the construction of schools, in particular, the Jesuits brought principles of architecture of medieval Arabic and Christian roots, which use the idea of the court (inner courtyard) as their starting point, being embedded in their buildings all over the world.

> According to Robert Smith, the Portuguese transferred to Brazil and here recreated, by replica, the solutions found in their cities, both with regard to the construction of houses and in the construction of the urban aspect that cities should present. It seems to us that this transfer also took place in relation to the court, as a constructive program, adopted by the Jesuits as soon as they came to Brazil.
>
> The court, as a constructive program, was the basis for the construction of monasteries of religious orders in the Middle Ages. One of these monasteries, that of Santo Antão, the Old one, in Lisbon, from which Dom Manuel expelled the

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> Moors in 1496, was donated to the Jesuits in 1542. It had already been a convent of nuns, both of the Third Order of Saint Francis and of the Dominican; and it had also already belonged to the titular bishop of Rusiona, by resignation of which the Jesuits took possession, through Simão Rodrigues, by donation from the king. This monastery was the first house the Jesuits ever possessed in the world. It was from there that the Jesuits of Portugal left to settle in Coimbra and Évora. Nóbrega was there, before leaving for Brazil, in 1549, as he was also in Coimbra, where he helped in the construction of the local College in 1548, shortly before coming to Brazilian lands. (CARVALHO, 1982, p.23.

The cited author draws attention to the fact that the inner courtyard of residences and schools was adopted by the Jesuits, not as a place of meditation and recollection, as were the medieval monasteries, but to connect classrooms, workshops and administrative activities. school, so that "it was that courtyard, in fact, the "noisy creative center" of the various activities that the Jesuits performed. (IDEM, p.24)

However, this architectural structure, before being a courtyard, is walled and guarded, establishing a clear dividing line between those inside the dwellings and those outside; rule opposed to the constructive principle that guided the native peoples, who organize their large and high dwellings - in open and collective space, willing to live with the forests that surround them - distributed around a large village, where all community life converges, as well as its guests and visitors.

However, the first Jesuit constructions made in colonial Brazil had to adapt to what was done in the constructions of the native peoples, also due to the material found to carry out this work, such as the use of thatch for the roof and the layout of vines and natural wood for its walls.

> "The first dwellings the Priests had were poor thatched mud houses; his sweat and work cost him, dragging his back to wood and water", wrote the Priests in response to a Chapter by Gabriel Soares. They were the houses of Ajuda. Before leaving them, they made others on Mount Calvary, then outside the city, and the Governor gave them a mud house inside it, close to the walls. They were the first three addresses in Bahia. None of them had the indispensable requirements for college, although in all of them catechesis were carried out and the rudiments of reading and writing were taught. Nóbrega, among the instructions given him by the Provincial of Portugal, included, as we have seen, that if there was a disposition in Brazil for a school or a retirement for boys, he should found them. (LEITE, 2004, p. 21)

Bricklayers and carpenters are very active craftsmen in this foundation enterprise, but they face many difficulties. Serafim Leite states that "the first work of the Jesuits was the chapel of Ajuda, in Bahia, founded at the same time as the city. It was initially covered with straw (the famous "sé de straw"), followed by other buildings made of rammed earth and stone and lime." (LEITE, 2014, p. 405)

After the arts of construction, there is the activity of manufacturing fabrics to supply clothing needs. Speaking of this initial moment, Serafim Leite (2004), in volume I – III of his work, states that "the beginnings of autonomous crafts in Brazil are in the textile industries genre. That of masons and carpenters are prior, of course, and began to be exercised with the very construction of towns and cities" (Idem, p. 403).

Regarding the art of weaving, in particular the aforementioned historian emphasizes - based on a meticulous reading of the Jesuit letters under his examination - that in a few years this practice had spread along the coast. It started in Bahia and extended to Espírito Santo, where some boys acculturated in the Bahia mission married Indian women and would have taught them the craft.

> [...] In 1562, it is said, of the Captaincy of Espírito Santo, in this house "some young men from Bahia were raised, whose priests married Indian girls and from them learned to be weavers and the women to spin and tailor, and earn their living in the way of white people", which is something to be highly esteemed. Women tailors, or seamstresses, would not be just Indians; around 1578, they were already engaged in the highest industry of embroidery and vestments. It can be deduced from an order for ornaments to be made in Bahia, at that time, for the church of São Paulo de Piratininga. (LEITE, 2004, p. 403)

So much effort in this art is related to the purpose of dressing the priests, yes, but, above all, the Indians, whose cultural tradition leads them to walk in innocent nudity, adorned with straw ornaments, paintings, bird feathers and seeds; peoples who do not understand the Jesuits' insistence on covering their bodies with robes similar to those they wore, even though the priests cannot produce enough clothing to meet this moral demand.

> [...] And the priests tolerated being naked, so as not to fall on them the burden of dressing them, in a land where the Priests themselves had difficulty. They fostered the rudimentary weaving industry, but that was not enough. Then, it was necessary to create the habit of balance in clothing, which is only acquired with time. Outside the processions, and when the Indians proceeded individually, they used their clothing in an unexpected way: "one day they go out with a cap, cap or hat on their heads, and everything else naked; other times they bring a short garment to the waist with nothing else. When they get married, they go to the wedding dressed, and in the afternoon they go for a walk with only the cap on their head. In the fields they are almost always naked, both men and women. (LEITE, 2004, p. 254)

In the same chapter, Serafim Leite talks about the industry of espadrilles, made of vegetable fibers, to withstand long walks in the forest and periods of flooding when the paths were flooded.

> The Brothers made them; and Anchieta speaks of himself in 1554: I learned "a craft, which taught me the necessity,

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> which is to make espadrilles, and I am already a good master and I have made many for the Brothers, because you cannot walk around here with leather shoes in the mountains. They were the footwear used by missionaries "due to the harshness of the jungles and large floods of water, as Leonardo do Vale refers to, who brought espadrilles made of thistles, which was the leather of those times. The way to do it was this: they went to the field, brought certain thistles or wild caragoatas, threw them in the water for 15 or 20 days, until they rotted. From these they took large ribs, like linen, and stiffer than linen. (IDEM)

With regard to the functioning of the Colleges, as Serafim Leite warns, they required different jobs, such as "buyer, porter, cook, dispensary, cafeteria, sexton, nurse, barber, wardrobe, tailor, shoemaker, hotelier, the one in charge of the corrals, carpenter, turner, (...)." (Idem, p. 404). He also remembers the creation of workshops, in the surroundings of the colleges, which involved: "the people in charge of the mills, the practitioners of surgeries, the craftsmen specialized in goldsmithing and even statuary, although generally the finest sculptures of famous statuary came from Lisbon" (Idem); activities related to the provision and restoration of books are also included, which included the planning of libraries, considered the first in Brazil.

> The content of the College libraries in the 16th century is easy to infer from the faculties they taught. The most important was, without a doubt, the one in Bahia with its three courses in Humanities, Arts and Theology (...). In 1567, Nóbrega cites, in addition to the books of Sacred Scripture, Saint Thomas Aquinas, Scotus, Soto, Doctor Navarro, Panomitano, Silvestre, Acursio, Nicolau de Lira, Gabriel, etc.; and with such precise references that they imply immediate consultation of these works or most of them. (LEITE, 2004, p. 390)

Crafts, businesses and edifications of the Jesuits started in Bahia were gradually extended to the entire Brazilian territory, constituting important milestones of colonial penetration and indigenous domination, which until today mean a lot for us to understand the civilizational process embedded in this enterprise, which had, at the same time, time, economic and religious nature, as the two sides of the same coin.

> As is known, the Fathers of the Society of Jesus, of the Assistance of Portugal, had schools, residences and farms from the Amazon to the Rio da Prata and from the Atlantic coast to Mato Grosso. Many and their Houses and Churches do not exist today. But there are still, in the states of Pará, Maranhão, Ceará, Pernambuco, Sergipe, Bahia, Espírito Santo, Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo and Paraná. The ones that have reached the present day, we have almost all seen them personally and are now classified national monuments. Other churches were rebuilt either during the Jesuit period or later. It should be borne in mind that when rebuilding a Church, the contents of the previous one are never destroyed, in what is useful, especially what is silver and gold and movable art, in the fields of painting, statuary, fine carpentry: paintings, images, credences, sacred places, torches, altarpieces, and sometimes entire altars, as is evident in the Church of Embu (Mboi) in São Paulo. (LEITE, 2008, p. 32)

Serafim Leite highlights the plurality of crafts set in motion in Brazil around the Jesuit missionary action, which can be summarized as follows, according to the classification made by him:

- A) Building Arts and Crafts: 1) Building arts and crafts – including baroque architecture; 2) masons, stonemasons, marble workers; 3) carpenters, carvers, inlays, joiners, lathes and sawmills; 4) shipbuilders; 5) blacksmiths, locksmiths and smelters; 6) potters;
- B) Fine Arts: 7) sculptors and statuary; 8) painters and gilders; 9) singers, musicians and choir directors; 10) Potters, clay potters (and tiles);
- C. Manufactures: 11) Tailors and embroiderers; 12) Shoemakers (shoes and espadrilles, sole craftsmen and tanners); 13) Weavers;
- D. Offices of Administration: 14) Administrators of Mills and Farms, Shepherds, Farmers and Attorneys;
- E. Health Services: 15) Nurses; 16) Pharmaceutical Nurses; 17) Surgeons; 18) Apothecaries or Pharmacists;
- F. Other Offices: 19) Teachers of Boys and Directors of Marian Congregations; 20) Librarians, bookbinders, typographers and printers; 21) Pilots; 22) Barbers and Hairdressers; 23) Housework; 24) Singular Arts and Crafts (varnisher, recovrier, calligrapher, geographer, goldsmith, cartographer, chemist, lime maker, goldsmith, master of arithmetic, cherry worker, clock director, leather maker or paper maker. (Idem, pp.39- 108)

As the above list shows, the arts and crafts required by the catechetical and educational action of the Jesuits put into action a variety of craft knowledge, which were the basis for building social life in the colony of Brazil. Other scholars of Jesuit action in Brazil, based on the work of Serafim Leite, also highlight this technical dimension implicit in the ordering, both material and pedagogical, of their schools, which needed mills, farms and workshops for their sustenance.

> With the data we had, it was possible to show that the Jesuit colleges were not just "fortifications" of Western Christian culture within the Portuguese colony located in the American tropics. They were also places of learning of mechanical arts that frequently instructed the officers destined to operate the operation of the sugar mills, plan the architecture and build churches and colleges. Consequently, we show that Jesuit teaching was not exclusively bookish, and that the educational hegemony exercised by the Society of Jesus varied according to the historical circumstances that permeated the metropolitan colonial logic, acquiring aspects of improvisation and adaptation to the environment. (FERREIRA JÚNIOR; BITTAR, 2012, p. 713)

When we think of the Portuguese colonization process in its broadest economic and political sense, we often forget that its materiality was partly developed at the initiative of the missionaries, through the transplantation of a broad set of technical knowledge they brought from Europe.

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III. Arts and Crafts from the Cultural Universe of Native Peoples

Alongside these crafts of European origin, there were, however, those linked to the cultural universe of the native peoples, which were fundamental, above all, in the opening of land and river paths, in the handling of tropical flora and fauna in terms of food and medicine, in the location of water sources, in the use of raw materials for the construction of buildings and housing, in dealing with the climate and its variations, in rainy and arid seasons, as well as in facing physical and cultural obstacles to penetration into the territory, in opening and marking of trails and paths.

Indigenous arts and crafts related to food: gathering, hunting, fishing and swiddens; craftsmanship and housing: basketry, earthenware, armaments, weaving, native architecture; transport: canoeing and long walks, fighting venomous and wild animals and strategies for fighting in the jungle. It is a set of knowledge and practices that speak of the social organization of peoples inhabiting this part of America, about which we still do not know the origins and we lack in-depth studies on their cultural formation, as Capistrano de Abreu understood, shrewdly, in his writings about the discovery of Brazil.

> The discovered lands were inhabited by different tribes from those hitherto known by the Portuguese. They were no less different from each other, but in the midst of striking differences they presented remarkable points of profound similarity. No general designation comprehended them: foreigners called them pretos, brasis, brasilienses, and finally, Indians, the last residue of a millenary illusion, reverted by Columbus. In places where there are still independents and numerous people know them as Bugres, as in São Paulo, and in general in the South.
>
> From its past, monuments remain. Shellmounds, sernambis, or oysters from the coast and the Amazon, inscriptions traced in worm ink on rocks; stones arranged one on top of the other so that they sound when struck, no one step facilitates the knowledge of the indigenous people in the time before the discovery. (ABREU, 1999, p. 151)

In the 1587 text, we have the testimony of Gabriel Soares, in his Treatise on Brazil, among many other documents bundled in the work, A Fundação do Brasil, organized by Darcy Ribeiro and Carlos Araújo Moreira Neto.

> "It is customary for these people, when walking through the woods without knowing news of the populated place, to lie down on the ground, and smell the air, to see if it smells of fire, which they know by smell more than half a league, according to the information of who with them deals very familiarly; and as it smells of fire, they climb the highest trees they can find, in search of smoke, which they can see from afar, which they follow, if it suits them well to go where he is; and if it suits them to depart from it, they do so before they are felt; and because the Tupinambás have this knowledge of earth and fire, they are very much believed when the Portuguese offer to go to war anywhere, where the Tupinambás always go ahead, running the land as they are on errands, and showing the most people the way they will walk and the place where they will retire each night.(...)" (Apud RIBEIRO; ARAÚJO, 1992, p. 205)

About the manufacture and use of canoes in large and small rivers, we have the testimony of the German traveler Hans Stadten (1557) in an account that deserves to be seen in its details.

> There is there in that land, a kind of tree, which they call an iga-bira. They remove the bark, from top to bottom, in one piece, and for that purpose they build a special structure around the tree, in order to remove it whole. Then they bring this bark from the mountains to the sea. They heat it in the fire and bend it upwards, front and back, tying it first, in the middle, transversally, with wood, so that it does not stretch. So they make boats in which thirty of their people can go to war. The shells are a thumb thick, about four feet wide and forty feet long, some larger, some less. They row fast with these boats and in them they travel as far as they please. (...) They do not row more than two miles out to sea, but along the coast travel far. (Apud RIBEIRO; ARAÚJO,)

Another very similar testimony is given by Priest António Vieira, a century later. In both, the indigenous dexterity in these activities is highlighted, both in manufacturing and piloting canoes. Following the courses of the rivers or walking on long journeys over land, it was the indigenous people who led the Portuguese to penetrate the territory.

> Here it will be well to note that the Indians are the ones who make the canoes, cover them, caulk them, sail them, row them, and often, as we will see, carry them on their backs, and those who, tired of rowing all night and all day, they go and get what they and the Portuguese will eat (which is always the most and the best); those who build their houses, and whether they will go overland, those who carry their burdens and even the branches on their backs. All this the sad Indians do, without paying anything more, than calling them dogs, and other names much more outrageous; and the best reward that the wretched can take from these journeys is to find (which seldom happens) a corporal that does not treat them so badly. There has been a journey in which, of the Indians who left, half of them did not return, because the sheer work and mistreatment killed them. (Apud RIBEIRO; ARAÚJO, 1992, p. 210)

Historians of Brazil, between the end of the 19th and the 20th century, could recognize, like Capistrano de Abreu and Sérgio Buarque de Holanda, the active participation of the culture of indigenous peoples in the indication of paths, knowledge and techniques in the occupation and/or clearing of the territory, without which the settlers would not have carried out this penetration in such an agile and successful way from the point of view of their objectives of dominion, and to the unhappiness of the native peoples.

In the work Caminhos e Fronteiras (HOLANDA, 1994) - whose first edition dates from 1957 - we have an approach aimed at highlighting the cultural exchanges that took place between foreigners and natives,

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highlighting - contrary to what is normally done due to the alleged technical superiority of the Europeans - the importance of indigenous technical knowledge for the survival of the Portuguese, in areas such as opening roads, fishing, canoe production, weaving and agriculture. Here is an overview of the aforementioned work by the Brazilian sociologist and historian, which is worth reading.

> This is what the fact that the settlers were so attached to the method of building canoes made from perobas and ximbaúvas would reveal to us that, when they could no longer count on sufficient wood for this purpose, they came to harm all the commerce that had developed by river to Mato Grosso. But, we ask, did the settlers know of any other canoe-building technique before this one? Wouldn't there have been a very active learning and an adaptation that was dynamic rather than passive? In the author's examination of the adoption of hammocks and their weaving methods, he already seeks to carry out a very detailed comparative study, verifying that, "with very few exceptions, where the European adopted among us some indigenous product associated with fully developed, he also adopted these methods, refraining from modifying them. When it came to articles already known in the old world, as was already the case with cotton, he generally limited himself to improving them at some point, without, however, change them substantially" (p. 204). An interesting case of cultural exchanges took place in the field of weaving: the technique of spinning cotton, introduced by the Jesuits at the beginning of colonization, remains a homemade industry, of a primitive character. until the rise of the textile industry in the early 19th century. The Indian adopted the carding bow of the horizontal looms brought from Europe, and, on the other hand, saw their vertical looms for weaving nets adopted by the settlers. (STEINER, 1959)

Sérgio Buarque de Holanda presents an original approach, valuing the nomadic autochthonous culture par excellence and even appropriating it by the first settlers, regarding the displacement through the territory, knowledge of the jungle, refinement of the senses and their cartographic skill.

> To the senses exercised by the way of life they lead, there is added, as already noted above, an almost miraculous sense of direction. There is an example of this in the extraordinary cartographic skill with which they are often endowed. Von den Steinen describes how a Suia captain, for your information, drew in the sand part of the Upper Xingu course, with its numerous tributaries and with an indication, in addition, of thirteen riverine tribes. “each name was repeated twice, three times; where a tribe - the meynacus, for example - had five villages, drew five lines and showed me, one by one, all the fingers of his hand.” The information thus provided was so clear and curious that it was enough to encourage the wise traveler to embark on a second expedition, which took place in 1887-88, with considerable results for a better understanding of the tribes of central Brazil. (HOLANDA, 1994, p.22)

The occupation and seizure of techniques and land by the Portuguese took place, initially, on the coast, then towards the hinterland. They were faced with a territorial set of great extension, in both directions. They were lands inhabited by different ethnicities, a presence that will be seen with amazement and curiosity by the first settlers, starting with the fact that they had their own languages and moved on foot and using canoes, which they made themselves, because “they had canoes made of excavated trees or of tree bark, or rafts of buritis stalks, for example, or of reeds and reeds gathered together (...)”. (ABREU, 1999, p. 157)

> As soon as Europeans arrived at these places, they found them populated by different tribes. Some spoke a language that, due to the great extent in which it dominated, deserved the name of general. Others spoke languages that were generally little known and of limited area, languages that were called “locked”. The former, according to Frei Vicente do Salvador, called themselves Apuabetos (Apiabeté, according to Batista Caetano), the latter they called Tauias, that is, enemies. (ABREU, 1999, p. 73)

The relations between colonizers and indigenous people would have known two different phases in the 16th century, as the most current historiography attests, based on documents and testimonies from the colonial period: 1) the one that became known as the first contacts, in which some exchanges were possible; 2) the one that begins with the decision to establish governmental lines of more systematic occupation.

> The first contacts between indigenous and Europeans took place in a relatively peaceful way; both sides sought to satisfy their interests. In the territories that today correspond to the states of São Paulo and Pernambuco, the exchange of metal products for dyed wood and wild animals between Portuguese and Tupiniquins ensured the success of colonization in these regions. In Todos os Santos Bay, Diogo Álvares, known as Caramuru, sealed the alliance between the Tupinambás and the representatives of the Portuguese crown.
>
> The situation changed a lot with the installation of the general government and the immigration of Portuguese settlers, which began to be carried out by the thousands. These immigrants established swiddens, farms and mills, and needed labor to cultivate their land. The solution found by the settlers was the brutal submission of the indigenous people who inhabited the coast. From “good savages”, the Indians became “irremediable savages”, “without faith, without king, without law”. Portuguese settlers often bought prisoners from tribal wars. (LOPEZ; MOTA, 2008, p. 73)

The authors report that, with the establishment of this governance decision, the division of land into captaincies and *sesmarias,* the implementation of the sugar economy - decisions that were in part the result of the territorial dispute between the Portuguese and the French and Dutch - tensions between settlers, indigenous and Jesuits grew. The Indians, or rather, those who were not “decimated by diseases and captivity (...)” (Idem, p. 74), would only have to flee to the interior. While “the Jesuit priest, José de Anchieta complained that, in the last 20 years, that is, between

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1560 and 1580, more than 80 thousand indigenous people had died under the tutelage of the settlers of Bahia (...)" (Idem), the enslaved people from Africa began to arrive at the end of the 16th century, thus opening another stage in the tragic history of European colonization in America.

IV. Final Considerations

In view of the comparison of readings exposed here, we can draw some precious lessons about the history of arts, crafts and schools in early Brazil, the scene of the encounter between different peoples and cultures, which are strange to the social codes of which they are both bearers, at the same time they enter into forced interaction. If we take this cultural shock to a purely religious level, we can imagine what it meant for worshipers of Jesus Christ and Tupã to decipher and translate the meaning of these very different deities.

After all, how to accept a wounded and dead God, in the face of the living strength of the forces of an exuberant nature, where the native peoples and their ancestors live? We can imagine with what amazement the native peoples looked at the arrival of priests dressed in long black robes, carrying a large cross, proclaiming the word of a crucified God whom they should follow, composing processions of children dressed in white, carrying angel wings, chanting sad, monotonous chants and prayers.

Instead of worshiping, celebrating and fearing Tupã – a Tupi-Guarani term, linked to thunder, which suggested to the first Jesuits of the Colony a synthesis of what the indigenous people could have as a belief in a single God – a symbol of the exuberant forces of nature, they should follow by imposition a foreign religion in tireless struggle with the Devil, composed of men without joy, penitents and fearful of the sins of the flesh, preaching the end of time, threatening everyone with the punishment of death and the fire of hell.

Added to the priests, there were settlers eager for riches and slaves, authorities of the Portuguese Crown, full of armaments, protocols, regulations and laws for the meticulous control of the Brazilian colony; large-scale production of sugar for the European market, the search for precise metals and a greedy and unconditional defense of the occupied territory.

How many European and indigenous arts and crafts were needed to assemble this colonial society? At what price this was done, especially when we look at the embarrassment caused by the Portuguese presence to those who inhabited this part of the world, previously ignored by Europeans, where they could live without any other shock than those who were already a millenary part of a past full of myths own, structured in narratives that reached them, orally, through their ancestors.

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