

***Tropicalismo* in Classics. Contemporary Brazilian Approaches to the Value of Classical Antiquity in Higher Education: Between Colonial Legacy and Post-Colonial Thinking**

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Abstract

The article discusses the position of classical antiquity in higher education in Brazil, taking into account post-colonialism in South America and calls for ‘decolonisation’ in the field of classical archaeology globally. It is concerned with how the subject of classical antiquity in Brazil intersects with ideals of classical antiquity as European heritage developed during the colonial period, and its perceived embodiment of colonial, eurocentric ideals. This particular inflection in the study of classical antiquity is here referred to as tropicalismo. Situating the discussion within the philosophy of historiography, intellectual and cultural history, it combines empirical ethnography, theory in archaeology and classical reception studies, touching on themes stretching from colonial-era policies to modern-day Amazonian anthropology. The study shows that the emergence of classical archaeology in Brazilian university education, rather than propping up a colonial elitist perspective, helped the foundation of indigenous archaeology at the time of the last dictatorship, thus aligning with progressive social movements. It also documents how the perspective of classical archaeology in Brazil differs from dominant euro-centric models, therefore offering an intrinsic, if not explicit, form of decolonised classical archaeology at a time that the ‘decolonisation’ of archaeology as a discipline

remains a hotly debated topic – and largely a desideratum – in European and north American theoretical movements.

Keywords: *Classical Antiquity, Post-Colonialism, Brazil, South America, Higher Education*

(...) there is a secret agreement between past generations and the present one. Then our coming was expected on earth. Then, like every generation that preceded us, we have been endowed with a weak messianic power, a power on which the past has a claim. Such a claim cannot be settled cheaply.

Walter Benjamin, *Theses “On the Concept of History”*

Introduction

In Walter Benjamin’s *Theses “On the Concept of History”*, the philosopher calls for a collective reparation for ‘the defeated of history’, for *Eingedenken*, remembrance, and *Erlösung*, redemption – in a sense that is at the same time both political and metaphysical. Benjamin’s vision of historiography is not one that merely goes against the grain of the triumphs of each era’s victors, not merely a historiography released from the buckles of servility to power (Löwy 2016, 27, 47–49).¹ Rather, it is a historiography “in solidarity with those who have fallen beneath the wheels of those majestic, magnificent chariots called Civilization, Progress and Modernity” that rejects historicism’s identification (*Einfühlung*) with the ruling class (Löwy 2016, 49). For, in Benjamin’s thinking, the future demands first that reparations be made to the past. Eclectic in its approach to historical materialism, and with a metaphysical dimension that cannot be reduced to mere allegory or metaphor, Benjamin’s philosophical manifesto remained on the sidelines of the history of ideas. The coalescence of the political and metaphysical elements in Benjamin’s *Theses*, however, found

parallels in several emancipatory movements in South America during the second half of the 20th century, as Michael Löwy (2016, 28–29) observes. Although rooted in Marxist currents and developed independently, these South American movements were permeated by a metaphysical dimension of redemption grounded in religious faith, embodying an ideology reminiscent of Benjamin's *Erlösung*.²

The main tenet of the *Theses* is encapsulated by the notion of the “opening up of history”: setting free historical and philosophical ideas from the constraints of the teleology of a pre-established, inevitable world direction, which defined many philosophical and political movements until the middle of the 20th century (Löwy 2016, 107–116). This tenet has since then evolved into a maxim informing contemporary theory in scholarship, if not always praxis. From Edward Saïd's *Orientalism* (Saïd 1978) to the explicit Marxist-based approaches to history, the field of vision has expanded to include Benjamin's ‘defeated of history’: those whose lives of injustice and inglorious deaths call for redemption by the following generations. In modern practice, the opening up of historiography to the ‘defeated of history’ calls for ways to rebuild our interpretations and meta-narratives in ways that do not conform to the past's own hierarchies and understandings of social formations and historical events. Recent post-colonial approaches in the humanities and the social sciences have emerged out of this understanding, in essence out of directing attention to the voiceless and powerless of history.

Yet in the academy's struggle for this post-colonial turn, classical antiquity was expected to atone for its use in the 17th–18th centuries colonial and imperial European forays, when western armies arrived in Africa, Asia or the Americas headed by generals with ‘Thucydides and Seneca under arm’. Classical antiquity became a bone of contention, acquiring wholly new dimensions in

nations emerging from decolonisation, such as Brazil, where at least half the current population is descended from people on the receiving end of large-scale colonial violence in the context of competing imperial interests hailing from Europe. Given the foundational role of classical antiquity in the education of European elites that supported the imperial strategies in other continents, the teaching of classics and classical archaeology in countries that were former colonies is nowadays met with ideological resistance within some progressive social movements. This amounts to resistance that may not always be explicit. It is a resistance deriving not from indifference to the subject of classical antiquity as a period of history, but from conscious opposition to it as the vestige of a repressive, authoritarian order responsible for colonial violence. Historically, prejudice against classical studies, as pertaining to the elitist class oppressor, has been documented in social struggles within the imperial motherlands too, albeit in a decolonised nation the issue becomes not only a matter of resisting the emblem of a ruling class, but also that of a specific cultural nexus originating in Europe.³

What is the appropriate approach to the study of classical antiquity in a country that suffered from large-scale colonial violence? What is the educational response to an awareness that this (colonial) past is embodied in the present? How can the progression of history in this non-linear fashion, without inevitable, teleological culminations, be communicated in teaching classical antiquity in a country shaped by the ideological teleology of European superiority? How can the value of classical education be represented in a former colony turned imperial seat, turned national democracy?

The questions raised in this context are challenging and do not demand a single answer. Why should a multicultural, tropical country in the Americas such as Brazil, which is gigantic and encompasses a population of over 200 million

people, with distinct roots in different continents (America, Africa, Europe and Asia) maintain an interest in classical antiquity in its formal education and research programmes? After all, it could be argued, classical antiquity refers to the past of Greece and Italy, two small countries located in the south-east of a distant continent that most Brazilians will never even visit. This is not a facetious question, but one that demands an answer. What are or can be the innovative contributions that the study of classical antiquity can offer? And what can be the contribution of a tropical country, far away from the traditional centres of classical education and teachings, to this field of studies? More significantly, what can such a historically elitist subject do for the ‘defeated of (colonial) history’ in Brazil? It is a polemical subject, operating in a subtle way that is however empirically perceptible. It also largely deals with competitive viewpoints on the reception of the classical past in decolonised nations that has not received much attention in mainstream scholarship in the European or north American academy, despite the significance of classical education in the development of ideas within social reform struggles closer to home, as in Britain, for which such studies exist (e.g. Stead and Hall 2015).⁴ Exceptions however are emerging that highlight the prominent role of the Greco-Roman antiquity in shaping South American history, culture and politics (e.g. Laird and Miller 2018 for Hispanic Latin America).

Here, certain themes are explored that relate to the research and teaching of classical antiquity viewed ‘from the tropics’. Methodologically, the study combines empirical ethnography on higher education, recent advancements in post-colonial perspectives in archaeology and classical reception studies, with close readings of anthropology, set within the context of the philosophy of historiography, and intellectual and cultural history. Emphasis is put on why the teaching of classical antiquity may matter to a South American country, but also on the distinctive contributions that Brazilian scholarship on the subject offers

to the field *globally*, and to other research fields (Brazilian archaeology, ethnography) *locally*. In particular, the present study reviews contemporary approaches to the value of classical education in Brazil, taking into account university research and education within the historical context that showcases the great range of classical traditions from within the country, as also existed across South America. To this end, the study examines the ideological frames, narratives and discourses with which public investment in the teaching and research of classical antiquity has been invested in the country from its inception. Formal approaches and informal attitudes are taken into account, within and outside specialists in classical antiquity, addressing the perceived value, or lack thereof, of investing administrative efforts and public funds. Several questions are raised in this process. For example, how different are the approaches in research and education to those followed in Europe and northern America? What is the fate of this subject as a discipline in Brazil? Is a classical education of value in understanding several of the institutions with which several modern states with a partial western European heritage were founded? What is the value of classical education in a country where post-colonial approaches and the contemporary emphasis on the Afro-Atlantic elements of modern culture confront head-on the importance of classics in education, considering it often and explicitly an institutional vestige of an imperial, authoritative, and even racist order? Through which strategies and to which results does the academy meet the pedagogical aims of teaching history in public schools?

Inevitably, among the topics addressed is the question of the value of teaching classical antiquity in a country with a vastly rich, complex and multivariate cultural heritage that could choose to invest public funds to educational subjects ‘closer to home’ and daily experience. This ‘polemical’ situation of challenging the *raison d’être* of the disciplinary subject can be fruitful in as much as it

creates the potential to contribute to the de facto ‘decolonisation’ of classical archaeology (as has been happening with other subjects, such as anthropology). It also provides the opportunity to give contemporary answers as to why classical antiquity still matters, reaffirming the value of classical scholarship to modern society as a whole. Decentring meta-narratives that have long been presented as neutral and objective is a valuable contribution to the field of classical archaeology where crystalised mentalities have lingered on, masqueraded as scientific facts.

In this study, I refer to the distinctive perspective and approaches that have emerged in Brazil as *tropicalismo*. This is not to be confused with the ideology that emerged during the dictatorship of the *Estado Novo* (1933-1961) in Portugal on the mode of “being Portuguese” in the world (imbued with “humanity, fraternity and Christian morality” according to that movement) which came to be known as *luso-tropicalismo*.⁵ Neither does it relate to the internationally better-known music and visual arts Brazilian movement of the 1960s. Rather, the term here is inspired by the literary movement of 19th century Brazil connected with the efforts to ‘indigenise’, that is, make Brazilian, not only the literary output of the country, set in the Portuguese language, but the language itself, its syntax, grammar and orthography,⁶ so as to offer something new: a new cultural approach that is the culmination of synergies of different cultures, mentalities, experiences and world views, peculiar to Brazil. The term is thus used here to denote the particularities of approaching classical antiquity from within this country.

The following sections do not aspire to give a template of how things should be, but they describe the trajectory of conducting research and teaching in classical antiquity in the country and modern approaches to how challenging viewpoints have been addressed, reconciled, or not. Further, the study indicates some

possible avenues of mediated understanding between opposing viewpoints. Emphasis is given to the ways via which the emergence of classical archaeology in Brazil helped the struggles of indigenous groups in the Amazon against state oppression during the second half of the 20th century. In addressing these topics, the study touches on approaches to traditions of assimilation in research and teaching, elements of romanticism, original approaches that invest in comparative studies within the official policy context and academic practice. It does so from the vantage point of empirical awareness of the politicised resistance to and rejection of classical antiquity within grass-roots movements.⁷ The discussion is framed within current post-colonial research on classical antiquity in general, and historical and anthropological research concerning colonial-era policies and ethnographic-archaeological research in Brazil.

Classical heritage as colonial legacy and ‘the opening up’ of history

In recent years, the disciplines of classics and classical antiquity have been facing an uncertain future in Europe and North America. In a fast-forward, speedy technological world, where government policies of research funding show less interest for fields where no quick financial turn-over or industrial applications can be expected, the pursuit of research into classical antiquity passes as outdated, even pointless (e.g. Pappa 2016). Protests from members of the academic community that are facing the impact of such policies have been emphasising the value of classical education in modern society. The effort to ‘modernise’ the image of the subject has sought to detach it from common views of it as an elitist, abstruse and arcane pursuit, emphasising instead the value of classical education for everyone as an educational capital: a mind-opening experience that sharpens critical faculties, mediated through the art, culture and languages of the classical world.

Outside Europe, such ways to repackaging the teaching of classical antiquity fall way short of addressing objections to the study of classical antiquity *per se*. In the contemporary constellation of culture clashes, social unrest and the theoretical demand for the emancipation of the oppressed of the past, the disciplines concerned with the classical world have been the target of social struggle movements. The importance of classics in the 18th and 19th century education of European elites transformed classics not only into the prerogative of the economically and socially powerful, but also into an instrument of legitimisation of imperial forays. The generals of British armies sent to the new colonies had often received an in-depth education in the classical philology of ancient Greece and Rome at elite public schools and universities, learning to read classical texts in the original languages, not only Homer and Virgil, but also Seneca and Thucydides. The inoculation of ideas and values of superiority through elite educational institutions was not limited to classical antiquity. Rather, it was intimately connected with the imperial values and aspirations of the time (e.g. Hagerman 2013). European empires were construed not only as the heirs of civilisation, but also as the harbingers of it in the so-called New World of the colonies. The claim to superiority was not merely one of technological or cultural advancement, but also – and vitally – a claim to morality. Civilisation was the other side of morality. In European historiography, the victor was depicted as the moral agent, an ideology made explicit in the works of 19th-century historians and philosophers such as Numa Denis Fustel de Coulanges, Victor Cousin, Leopold van Ranke and others (Löwy 2016, 42, 47–48). Classics was transformed into an argument of superiority of European civilisation that legitimised imperial and colonial violence, turning that into a moral endeavour. It is no wonder then that classical antiquity is often viewed as an instrument of imperialism and a means to legitimising colonial violence in former colonial lands. As a result, within contemporary social emancipation movements, associations are implicitly or

explicitly made between the classical world of the ancient Mediterranean and modern European empires (British, French, Spanish, Portuguese, German, Belgian). The affinities between the two are spatial (both evolving from within Europe) and historical, as classical antiquity was instrumentalised in the official ideology of European colonial empires.

How can one disentangle classical antiquity from its lingering colonial associations, especially in the mentalities of populations that suffered colonial violence? The main response in the academy has been to ‘decolonise’ the field, which consists in an ideological, as much as methodological and interpretational turn in the humanities that followed similar trends in the social sciences. The cue was taken from the social sciences, although not always successfully. Archaeology fared better in the post-colonial trends than other disciplines dealing with the past as it straddles the humanities and the social sciences.⁸ Marxist understandings of social struggles, in their multivariate form, imbued the humanities with a realization that the ‘defeated of history’, in Benjamin’s thinking, or the *subaltern* in current academic jargon,⁹ had voices and lives that need to be heard and acknowledged. The acknowledgement, the remembrance, can be understood as a form of reparation in Benjamin’s notion of *Redemption*.

The fairly recent adoption by the humanities of the post-colonial understanding of the subjugated, the hidden peoples of history, spread in several directions with uneven results, but a similar focus, to give voice to entire populations, social groups and categories that had been silenced by the hierarchies of their time and by historiography itself: from the ‘voiceless’ men, women and children slaves of the Afro-Atlantic slave trade and their descendants in the New World to the indigenous people of these ‘New Lands’ that were captured for European exploitation. For periods further back in past, the post-colonial turn would seek to give voice to the “barbarians” of the ancient Greek authors, the house-bound

women of classical Athens or the foreign, state-owned slaves toiling in the Lavrion silver mines of Athens at a time that Plato was authoring his *Republic*.¹⁰ One such development is the recent trend in the history of early modern western Europe that seeks the ‘extra-European’ subjects (Johnson and Molineux 2018), a field of study until recently barricaded behind a self-referential approach.¹¹

This trend reaped rewards, but did not escape simplifications. In Geoffrey de Ste Croix’ (1981) magisterial work *The Class Struggle in the Ancient Greek World*, the classical and post-classical Greek world history is interpreted through the lens of historical materialism, providing a critical reading of Marxist thought. Recent understandings of Marxist writings on classical antiquity, however, are based themselves on a teleological thinking of social emancipation that anticipates an inevitable culmination of class struggles through the limitations of the forces of production. Whether these are true to Marx’s own thinking or not may be debated, as the philosopher’s view of teleology in history, and the role of classical antiquity in it (Lekas 1988, 30–52), seems to have shifted over the course of his lifetime.

This socio-economically evolutionary thinking replicated the reductionism of positivist evolutionism towards societal progress from the Enlightenment onwards. The inherent teleology in it was heavily criticised by Benjamin. In the philosopher’s thinking, breaking free from the rigid framework of reductive meta-narratives of unhistorical, teleological processes involves opening up to the possibility of the unexpected to occur in the future, of progress as a possibility but not inevitability, and of potential social and political regression despite technological advancement (Löwy 2016).¹² In much of the post-colonial turn of the social sciences, this plight of socio-economic neo-evolutionism is being replicated. In historical research on the classical world, for example, the recent insistence on orthodox and unhistorical Marxist thinking

on the importance of class struggle and the accumulation of the production forces as the only engine of a (teleological) view of history has proved in itself too narrow-minded, deterministic and ultimately incapable of offering ‘reparations’ to past generations, as it sees the ‘defeated of history’ as necessary losses towards the expected progression. This understanding of Marxist thinking on ancient history has influenced meta-narratives that come from the opposite political spectrum, but converge with Marxist approaches on the insistence of structuralist, functional meta-narratives. For example, Kostas Vlassopoulos (2018, 179–208) recently criticised recent Marxist approaches to ancient Greece. In a telling example, the author criticised the concept of lowering transaction costs as an engine of social change, as encountered in some publications on ancient history, for being anachronistic, permeated by a functionalist, structuralist approach that reduces complex social, historical and political phenomena to a new teleology of accumulating production forces and ‘perfecting’ economies. Such approaches bear the hallmark of positivistic, neo-evolutionary and ultimately reductive theory rooted in a view of history as teleology.

Nonetheless, the vital contribution of ‘decolonising’ the study of classical antiquity lies in offering (theoretical) reparations to the ‘defeated of the past’ in the ancient world (slaves, women, the ‘barbarians’ of the ancient Greeks), as well to those affected by early modern colonial violence (by analogy). In essence, decolonising classical antiquity reveals the inherent injustices of the ancient world, expunging views of superiority of civilisation. Deconstructing past hierarchies and barring classical antiquity from its colonial-era moralising insignia, offers an avenue to studying the past, irrespective of the time period involved.

If decolonising the disciplinary field related to classical antiquity is one approach to justifying the contemporary study of classical antiquity, a complementary one is to trace the *longue durée* of classics and related fields that far surpass in longevity their instrumentalisation for modern colonial strategies. This functions as a reminder that classical antiquity as a field of study is not an artefact of the Renaissance or early European modernity, but interwoven with European cultures and those affected by them through colonisation. Classics did not develop in the West (Kaldellis 2007, 368). Rather, its emergence and development progressed in a continuum. Classical scholarship was a prerogative of elite education in 4th c. BCE Athens, where the literary production of the supposedly glorious 5th century BCE was already a subject of admiration and learning (Luraghi 2017). Such trends broadened and intensified during the ensuing Hellenistic period, when antiquarianism and classicism found expressions in the literary production of the time but also in the Atticizing language itself. By the 1st c. BCE, the study of classical scholarship had spread across the entire eastern Mediterranean, with a new classical and cultural epicentre in Alexandria, Egypt (Lamberton 2017, 51–57). The eastern Roman empire (Byzantium) maintained unbroken links with the classical tradition (Kaldellis 2007, 252). Knowledge of classics was prominent in the imperial court's elite education and civic life for all of Byzantine history, entailing both the study of classical texts and the appreciation – if not any strict scientific approach to it – of the material remains of monuments and other archaeological sites of classical Athens, through purposeful, guided visits. By the 12th century, Athens already possessed a tourist infrastructure to accommodate those travelling to visit ancient monuments (Kaldellis 2007, 252, 376). On such a visit to Athens, Theodoros II Laskaris (1254–1258), Emperor of Nikaia, would write “I wondered at them (ancient ruins) and bewailed our race of today and was full of tears”, a view of classical antiquity replicated in other Byzantine texts in Greek of the same century that explicitly distinguished

between ‘modern’ and ‘ancient’ Greek (Kaldellis (2007, 313, 378).¹³ To a significant extent, it was on Byzantine scholars that western European *literati*, such as Erasmus, based their research that popularised classical literature in western Europe during the Renaissance, including on ancient pronunciation, which had been diffused via the works of Byzantine scholars (Petrounias 2001; Konstantinides 1995).

In essence, the study of classical antiquity evolved as a continuum already in antiquity, emerging first within the lands from which it sprung. Far from being a by-product of European imperialism, it had already emerged in antiquity, encompassed later the Hellenistic East and the Roman Empire, subsequently morphing into Byzantine humanism (Bazzani 2006, 32–52). The classical curriculum and European imperial values, as for example once instilled at elite British educational institutions, were totally unscientific, and so unrelated to the subject of classics or classical antiquity *per se* (e.g. Hagerman 2013). For this reason classical antiquity cannot be reduced to an instrument of modern imperial aspirations. A longer-term perspective should emphasise the constellation of cultures, periods and eras its study encompasses, some of which continued with mutations in modern countries with no imperial aspirations (or potential), such as 19th-century Greece, or seek its value in understanding modern cultures.¹⁴ Thus, central to revisiting the image of classical antiquity in decolonised nations is the understanding that it cannot be simply dismissed as a means to an end in imperial forays. Rather, it reflects cultures and periods that are worth studying in their own right (as any other culture), independently of their millennia-later instrumentalisation for colonial pursuits.

Classical antiquity and the representation of the past in Brazil: contested narratives and new synergies

Latin American countries possess their own, distinctive classical traditions that are interwoven in the creation of culture and nation. To quote the Peruvian historian Jorge Cañizares- Esguerra (2018, 200) “the conceptions of time, space, hierarchy, labour, family, the sacred, and community in Quito [...] make it far more convergent with the legacy of classical Rome than London or several other European cities”. In several ways, this tradition was part of colonial violence. While, for example, the University of San Marcos in Lima enjoyed huge sums of funding and could support hundreds of students in Master’s and doctoral studies educated in “the liberal arts, theology, jurisprudence, and medicine” during the mid-17th century, the wealth for such investment in academic excellence came from the labour of the indigenous labourers from the Andes, including those toiling in the silver mines in Charcas (Cañizares- Esguerra 2018, 197–198), bringing to mind the foreign slaves toiling in the silver mines of classical Athens during its philosophical and scientific flourish that allowed the prosperity in which Plato and Aristotle could found philosophical schools.

In nations formed through colonisation, discourses of historical narratives are tainted with issues of who owns the past more than in other regions of the world. In South America, the voices, interests and cultural sensibilities of different social, ethnic, cultural and hierarchical groups are contested, claiming stakes in the representation of the past (Menezes Fereira, 2008, 37–62).

Excavating, for example, indigenous archaeological sites in Brazil or Argentina, affects directly indigenous communities whose views of the past are radically different from those of state archaeological teams undertaking the excavations. The latter are often staffed by descendants (occasionally only 2nd or 3rd generation) of Europeans, resulting in situations fraught with problematic,

antithetical worldviews, community needs and visions of the past and the future. In several ways, there is no equivalent in Europe for this kind of ideological challenge that requires different counterpoints to be addressed and resolved through dialogue and collaboration with indigenous populations, with understanding and sensitivity for their world views and community histories and with reflection on the value of archaeology on the part of archaeologists and cultural heritage staff. This involves large-scale compromises as to the formal norms of archaeological research. In these situations the explicit political nature of the praxis of archaeology cannot be ignored or avoided. Instead, the call is for a new archaeology that provides the “tools to strengthen the claims and rights of Indigenous peoples, their identity building processes, and their heritage demands” (Flores and Acuto, 2015, 179).¹⁵

The study of classical antiquity and of archaeology in Brazil is not immune to this heavy legacy and contesting representations of the past, but falls squarely within this context.

Classical traditions in Brazil, the representation of classical antiquity and Brazilian antiquity narratives from the colonial legacy to the abolition of monarchy

The role of classical antiquity in Brazil is reflected through the homologous heritage in terms of language and legal-civic systems but also analogous traits: the first in the sense that modern Brazil traces some of its features to the classical past and its legacy, the second in the sense that studying ancient Greece and (imperial) Rome, with a critical view and not with the glorious reverence accorded to the triumphant victors of history, can always teach us about the present.

The legacies from the Greco-Roman world appear in the language, legal and state institutions of Brazil, as the state was formed from a post-Roman country, Portugal, which historically carried much of the legacy of Roman state institutions.¹⁶ The spoken language and several of the institutions of Brazil evolved out of the classical, Greco-Roman antiquity, through a long process of Roman colonization, the diffusion of Roman institutions and the Portuguese colonisation. Portuguese, the prevalent language of Brazil, derives from Latin, through an almost direct link with classical antiquity. Knowledge, or at least some familiarity with Latin, would not have been the privilege of a minority in Brazil. Catholic mass was held in Latin in South America for centuries, so a large part of the population would encounter the language during liturgy.¹⁷ Latin was also the preferred language of instruction in schools run by Catholic Orders for much of South American history, and was often included in the syllabus of state schools too in the 19th century, even those for artisans (Miller 2018, 146–148).

Another linguistic influence, far more subtle, is of the Greek language on the vernacular. Portuguese is extremely rich in Greek words as loans, as an extensive vocabulary passed through Latin or later influences from other Latin-derived languages.¹⁸ The classicising tendencies are also evident in personal names. Brazilian names derived from Greek mythology permeate the mainstream of Brazilian given names, only in part explained through East Roman (Byzantine) influence on Portugal during the 6th-7th century Justinian ‘restoration of the western provinces’.¹⁹ Greek mythological names that are rarely or never used in Greece (because of changing tastes or heavy mythological ‘load’ which creates taboos) are common in Brazil (e.g. Glauco, Cassandra, Eulalia, Thales, Temístocles, Euclides, Ifigeneia).²⁰ This tradition of choosing Greek and Roman names is notably common in South America. Discussing classicism in modern Latin American literature, Robert T. Conn

(2018, 140) comments on the Chilean novelist Roberto Bolaño's (1953–2003) novel *Estrella Distante* (Bolaño 1996), where one of the book characters makes some biting comments on this custom of adopting ancient Greek names.

The classical traditions, in terms of historical legacy, that are constitutive of the country in terms of language and legal systems can be considered to an extent inherent to the creation of Brazil. The classical past, however, was also explicitly instrumentalised by state institutions that propagated ideas and doctrines from Europe on the significance of the Greco-Roman origins. Reflective of this is the use of classical antiquity in Brazil for the creation of national narratives by state actors and institutions, and the way this trickled down in society.

Classical archaeology and ethnography arrived in Brazil in the form of elite European antiquarian collectorship and as a study of the indigenous communities, respectively. The arrival in 1808 of the royal family in Brazil, under British instigation during the Napoleonic wars, effectively resulted in the transference of the seat of the vast Portuguese empire (encompassing regions in Europe, the Americas, Africa and Asia), from Lisbon to Rio de Janeiro (Funari 2002, 131–153). The discourse on civilisation brought to Brazil by the ruling elite was that of European superiority, which excluded the majority of people living in Brazil at the time, namely the indigenous populations and the enslaved populations forcefully taken to Brazil from Africa and their descendants.

The establishment of the Royal Museum in Rio de Janeiro in 1818 was a reflection of the European culture and arts that the imperial court was intent on bringing to Brazil.²¹ It was modelled on imperial museums in Europe that displayed zoological, botanical and mineral material, as well as archaeological and ethnographic collections. Pedro Paulo Funari (2002, 138) has argued that

the Museum's collections functioned as an index of the supposed inferiority of the subjugated nations, intending to demonstrate and legitimise European superiority: claims of superiority over other peoples and cultures could be made by exhibiting their supposedly 'inferior' civilisations. As in Spain, where royal collections of Greek and other antiquities formed the basis of modern museum collections (García Alfonso 2012, 120–137), classical Greek and Roman collections arrived in Brazil as personal possessions of members of the aristocracy, some finding their way into the Museum's displays (Funari 2002, 138). While in private collections, classical artefacts were the possession of aristocracy and emblem of personal prestige. Once displayed at a museum, they functioned as an index of European superiority.

In the colonial lands of South America, classical antiquity was not only used in juxtaposition to the Amerindian cultures, but also as a way to interpret and situate their cultures, or 'improve' them by creating ideal states. Such was the case with the Guarani, groups of indigenous tribes that still occupy parts of southern and central Brazil. At the time of the colonisation, the Guarani were settled in the south-eastern part of South America from the littoral of the state of São Paulo to Rio Grande do Sul, and along the rivers Parana, Uruguay and Paraguay (Santos de Miranda et al. 2016, 53). In the late 18th century, the Catalan Jesuit missionary José Manuel Peramás, while exiled in Italy, authored a treatise in Latin on the 30 Jesuit missions among the Guarani, established in the Spanish province of Paraguay, in comparison to Plato's Republic, entitled in *De administratione guaranica comparata ad Republicam Platonis commentarius* ("A Commentary on the Administration of the Guarani compared to Plato's Republic"). Desiree Arbo (2018)'s exegesis of the Jesuit's text shows that Peramás's conviction of a possible ideal society being formed in the Jesuits missions among the Guarani of the Province of Paraguay of New Spain was historically contingent. As the author observed, the Jesuit's treatise

came after the missions had been expelled by the Spanish Crown in 1767, and was perhaps fuelled by the experience of that event and the motivations behind it, though the Platonic analogy was not new. The appropriation of classical texts as sources of inspiration but also authority travelled across the Atlantic and offered many levels of contested ideas, philosophies and strategies regarding the representation of indigenous societies across South America.

After the Independence of Brazil and the declaration of the Brazilian Empire in 1822,²² the highly popular emperor Pedro II (1831–1881) invested in cultural programmes, with an emphasis on classical antiquity. In 1838, the Royal Museum in Rio de Janeiro was renamed ‘National Museum’, and the Brazilian Historical and Geographical Institute was founded (Funari 2002, 134). In 1839, the first archaeological expedition in Brazil supposedly resulted in the discovery of a Phoenician inscription at Pedra da Gávea (Rio de Janeiro), thus making the claim that Mediterranean people had arrived in Brazil already in antiquity (Funari 2002, 134). In 1872, yet another supposed Phoenician inscription from Brazil cropped up in Rio de Janeiro, sent to the Historical and Geographical Institute as a copy of a supposed original found in João Pessoa (Paraíba). It was published by Ladislau Neto, the director of the Museum in Rio, but was dismissed as forgery (Amadasi Guzzo 2001). Spectacular archaeological discoveries of the Phoenician past in the Levantine coast (such as the royal inscription of Eshmunazar in Sidon in 1855) and progress in Phoenician epigraphic studies had fuelled a climate of studies and also forgeries (Amadasi Guzzo 2001, 660). This tallied with broader ideological narratives. Claims to ancestry from biblical lands were very much in the vogue of 19th c. BCE narratives of descent. In contemporary Britain, the Phoenicians were not only depicted as the gleaming archetypes of maritime prowess but potentially as ancestors of the British (Champion 2011). In 18th-century Ireland, Charles Vallancey (1772) had already put forward the suggestion of a Punic-Celtic

derivation of the Irish language, a postulation that was taken up in the following century too.²³ Similarly, Phoenician ancestry was sought in Canada by 1864 (Bagg 1864). Postulated biblical origins for the indigenous peoples of South America, through Phoenician seafarers or others replicated ideas with some currency in the northern hemisphere.

The beginning of the Brazilian Empire introduced however a brand new element to such antiquity narratives. With the royal court now independent from Europe and seeking a new legitimising narrative that would create roots in Brazil itself, the aristocratic elite drew part of its ancestry from the indigenous, Amerindian population, considered almost extinct by then. These pre-colonisation populations were depicted as descendants of Mediterranean peoples that had arrived in Brazil, thereafter disappearing by some cataclysmic natural disaster or degenerating into the contemporary *índios* that the colonists were encountering in real life (Funari 2002, 134). Veiled in a mythical mantle, the newly romanticised, noble *índios* became the mystical ancestors of the ruling aristocracy in the new independent country, envisioned as an Empire (Funari 2002, 135–137). The *bon sauvage* of the Rousseauian tradition, the ancestral indigenous sage lost from contemporary reality, found its realization in the literary movement of the period that overflowed into colonial art, literature, poetry and culture. José de Alencar's famous novel *O Guarani*, published in 1857, was adapted into an opera in Italian under imperial patronage, set to music by the Brazilian composer Carlos Gomes, and was first staged in Italy in 1870 (Funari 2002, 138). In almost a century, the indigenous tribes had become from objects of contemplation and experimentation on an ideal state by the Jesuits, to romanticised, national heroes.

From the abolition of monarchy in 1881 onwards, the economic and political power-centre physically shifted to São Paulo, where the emerging industrialist-

capitalist class was thriving. No longer dependent on slave labour but on the proletariat arriving from Italy, Portugal and the Ottoman Levantine coast, the new governing class dispensed with the monarchical, old elite self-representations. This new capitalist elite did not have any interest in the genealogy narratives that until then the monarchy had used to trace its origins to the indigenous groups of Brazil (Funari 2002, 138–139). The care for the preservation of the material culture of Amerindians dispensed with any interest for the living communities themselves. No longer presented as the mythical, noble ancestors of the imperial family, the indigenous people were now depicted as an obstruction to technological and economic progress. The monument of Ipiranga, where the emperor Pedro I had previously declared the Independence of Brazil from the Portuguese Empire, was now transformed into a museum dedicated to “natural history” and “cultural history” (Funari 2002, 138–139).²⁴ The physical extermination of the indigenous communities was ‘scientifically’ legitimised, as their presence was considered a hindrance to the physical expansion of the factories and agriculture. The extermination of the Amerindians had begun first with their ideological annihilation, despite some resistance from the old monarchical elite whose narrative on the origins of Brazil had previously embraced the indigenous populations (Funari 2002, 138–139). In Benjamin’s words, the indigenous populations of Brazil were to almost literally “fall beneath the wheels of those majestic, magnificent chariots called Civilization, Progress and Modernity”.

Romanticized narratives of the *índios* whose subjugation to the European colonists was a peaceful, willing process, gave rise to 19th and early 20th century representations of idyllic scenes of serene, noble encounters of European elites receiving gifts from tribal chieftains in pristine landscapes, the latter marvelling at the civilisation of the former. Old habits die hard, and in the European centres of the Afro-American slave such romanticised imagery persisted well

after WW I. At the Plaza de España in Seville, built in 1929, a panel painted on tiles, entitled *Barcelona*, depicts tribute-bearing indigenous peoples from the Americas visiting the royal court in Spain. Similar tendencies are seen through to the early 20th century Brazil, despite Brazilian artists being too close to home for comfort regarding the perception of indigenous peoples in these fantastical, convenient ways. This is seen for example in the decoration of the Coffee Stock Exchange building in the port town of Santos (São Paulo). Santos was one of the earliest and most active commercial ports in southern Brazil, instrumental in the cross-Atlantic commerce. The Coffee Stock Exchange building opened in 1922, on the centenary of Brazil's Independence, founded during a period that coffee was the main cash-crop and export commodity of Brazil. The interior of this building was embellished with oil paintings in large panels depicting romanticised views of Portuguese settlement in Brazil, from the beginning of the colonisation to the painter's era.²⁵ The three panels decorating the main hall of the building, conceived and executed by Benedito Calixto, depicted the urban transformation of Santos in three key moments: the foundation of Santos as an independent town in 1545, the port of Santos during the year of Independence, and again on the centenary of the Independence, which coincided with the inauguration of the building (Faria Alves 1999). On the first panel (the 'Foundation of the villa of Santos'), Calixto painted the early Portuguese colony, depicting key buildings of the town and historical figures, based on his research in historical archives (Faria Alves 1999, 120–133). Concerned with the genealogy and the hereditary powers of the town from its colonial origins to his day, the painter depicted historical figures representing political, administrative and religious authorities, including the family of a Portuguese colonist who had married a tribal chief's daughter. The panel was framed on either side by three indigenous tribes: Tupi and Guaianaze tribe members were depicted bringing tributes, while Carijó tribe members were

shown in realistic conditions of slavery (Faria Alves 1999, 124). Realities were slowly catching up with national narratives by the early 20th century.

References to the classical world continued to embellish elite architecture through the first part of the 20th century, through the aesthetics of architectural neo-classicism or composite forms inspired from it. The period from 1808 until 1831 was characterised by the prevalence of neo-classical influences (especially on the façades of buildings) under French influence, as seen in the Imperial Academy of Fine Arts in Rio de Janeiro, while in the late 19th century the style of eclecticism appears, with landmarks architectural designs, as of the Amazonas Theatre in Manaus, the Municipal Theatre and the State Art Gallery (Pinacoteca de Estado) in São Paulo.²⁶ The late phase of neoclassical style of Brazil was influenced by Italy. Neo-classical influences can be seen in a range of public buildings, as in decorative elements of the Mayor's Hall in Santos (Fig. 1) and in other emblematic architecture (e.g. the Doric style in the gate of the famous Consolação cemetery in São Paulo).²⁷ In later architecture, neoclassicism, far from being faithful imitation of the neoclassical style, consists in eclectic choices and innovations peculiar to Brazil. For example, the Palácio da Fazenda (Ministry of Economy) in Rio de Janeiro, built in 1939, was designed as a multi-storey, modernist building in bulky lines, made of reinforced steel, a design that won the public competition, but was never executed as such.²⁸ The original design had to be abandoned for a monumental portico in the Doric order, approached through a large flight of steps as at a Greek temple, when the then Minister of economy brought an image of a neoclassical building from Italy as a prototype for the Brazilian ministry: although built with reinforced steel, it tried to maintain ancient Greek aesthetics, including the addition of metopes with imaginative iconographic renderings inspired by Brazilian nature.²⁹ Similarly eclectic in neoclassical tastes is a monument by Galileo Emendabili dedicated to the memory of the famous

Brazilian architect Francisco de Paula Ramos de Azevedo who designed several of the architectural landmarks of São Paulo. It was originally erected at a prominent part of the city of São Paulo in 1934, opposite the State Art Gallery, one of Azevedo's architectural creations, later being transferred to the main campus of University of São Paulo (Fabris 1954) (Fig. 2). The design employed clear references to the classical Greco-Roman style. A stylobate was used as a platform on which the main monument was based, topped by the statuary of a man on horseback and a woman.³⁰ The choice of neo-classicism for honouring the memory of one of the most prominent architects of eclecticism as late as 1934 was eloquent of the heritage chosen to be emphasised by the elite at the time.

Modern disciplines and new synergies

Given these representations of the indigenous populations in Brazil, it is no wonder that ethnographic and anthropological works were introduced late. The first federal law that acknowledged and protected the material remains of the pre-colonisation period as heritage of humankind was introduced in 1961 (Funari 2002, 143–144). The humanist turn towards the study of indigenous communities and populations began with the work of Paulo Duarte, strongly influenced by the French humanist movement. What progress was achieved in the study of the indigenous past from this humanist perspective stalled with a new dictatorial government (1937-1945). Duarte's efforts recommenced after WW II, culminating in the introduction of new laws that protected archaeological remains. Under French influence, the 'Commission for Prehistory' was established at the University of São Paulo in 1952. A new military coup in 1964 put a stop to progress and the full emergence of archaeology departments and fieldwork dedicated to the indigenous past had to await the end of the dictatorship in 1985 (Funari 2002, 143–144).

Developments in Higher Education were strongly influenced by currents in the social sciences and the humanities in France. This has led to a common misconception in Brazil regarding the origins of cultural heritage studies as born through the French Revolution of 1789 by the Jacobins (e.g. argument in Menezes Fereira 2008). In reality, the concern for cultural heritage goes back to Byzantium, as discussed above. In Brazil, the modern disciplines that deal with the classical past emerged after WW II. Classical archaeology was offered as a secondary subject at universities – but not as a graduate degree in Brazilian universities, the first of which opened in 1930. Only in the 1980s did archaeology begin to be offered as an independent degree (Hirata and Florenzano, 1999, 199–201; d’Agostino Fleming and Florenzano 2011). Until then, advanced studies in classical archaeology could only be pursued abroad, often by students who had acquired first degrees in history from universities in the country. Indigenous archaeology in the meantime had become politicised, with the military coup regime (1964-1985) not permitting studies on oppressed groups (Funari 2002). Interestingly, however, in the intervening period before the onset of this second military coup, classical archaeology was allowed to develop freely, as it was not dealing with oppressed social groups but with the ‘safe’ distant past of the Mediterranean. These circumstances permitted the advancement of classical archaeology, and by extension, directly aided the emergence of Brazilian ethnography and archaeology (i.e. of the Amerindian cultures) by offering research infrastructure.

Both fields, classical and Brazilian archaeology, did not emerge with official, top-down policy decisions, but were to a large extent the results of down-top efforts by individuals unrelated to public policy or administration, and whose work eventually gained international traction and state support. Classical archaeology as an established university subject developed from ‘left field’ through the efforts of an Italian-origin business mogul and patron of the arts,

Francisco Matarazzo Sobrinho (Hirata and Florenzano, 1999, 199–201; d’Agostino Fleming and Florenzano 2011, 217–229). This businessman secured the donation of archaeological collections from the Italian authorities, coming into personal contact with Italian state archaeological services (*soprintendenze archeologiche*). His efforts resulted in the foundation of the Museum of Art and Archaeology of the University of São Paulo in 1964, which was the first research institution in the country devoted to archaeology as a modern discipline. Further donations of classical antiquities followed by the Monographic Museum of Conimbriga in Portugal and the Museum of Archaeology in Nicosia, Cyprus (d’Agostino Fleming and Florenzano 2011, 217–218). The scholarship initially developed with French input for the study of classical Greece and empirical approaches, mostly concerned with generating terminology, classification and scholarship for the obtained collections (Sarian 2017, 26-48).

These initial classical artefact collections of the Museum of Art and Archaeology soon expanded with the acquisition of ethnographic material, including indigenous and Afro-Brazilian art. In the 1970s, the areas of research officially endorsed by the Museum encompassed the archaeology of the Mediterranean and the Near East, but also indigenous, Brazilian archaeology (d’Agostino Fleming and Forenzano 2011). So as to reflect the broadening of its interests and collections into the indigenous and African cultures (“from Africa, pre-Columbian America, Afro-Brazilian heritage and the Amazonian archaeology of Brazi”), the Museum of Art and Archaeology was renamed ‘Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology’ in 1972 (d’Agostino Fleming and Forenzano 2011, 218). It thus underwent a shift from being a research institution dedicated to classical antiquity, to one whose ambit encompassed the three heritage backgrounds of Brazil: the indigenous American (ie Amerindian), the African and the European (d’Agostino Fleming and Forenzano 2011, 219).

Effectively, under the umbrella of a research institution initially dedicated to the study of classical art and archaeology, the ethnographic and anthropological study of the indigenous communities and the Afro-Brazilian past found institutional support, even during the political oppression of the 1970s. The “defeated of history”, in Benjamin’s voice, began to be brought to the spotlight of academic interest and popular interest. For example, Eduardo Neves, began his doctoral research on indigenous archaeology (while based at a USA university) in remote Amazonian regions, which research was continued at the Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, leading to the establishment of the field of Brazilian archaeology (Neves 2018, 79-86). Since then large-scale post-graduate programmes and partnerships with international universities have followed since, and a detailed picture of pre-colonization societies is emerging. This archaeological and anthropological research into the Amerindian past is now appearing in standard academic works as an integral part of the history of Brazil (e.g. Cavalcante Gomes 2018).

Seen from the vantage point of time, the Portuguese imperial interest into classical antiquity led to the ideological marginalisation of the oppressed, indigenous populations. After the Independence, the Brazilian imperial ancestry narratives appropriated the Amerindians as noble ancestors, as a way of *indigenising* the national narrative. In modern times, however, the study of classical antiquity did not provide an antithesis to the research on oppressed social groups. Rather, during a politically oppressive period, the institutional apparatus of classical archaeology facilitated the emergence of Brazilian archaeology, and aided the training of researchers, fostering fieldwork that led to collaborations with indigenous peoples and the promotion of their living heritage as part of the national, Brazilian heritage. In this way, it opened up spaces of reflection for the ‘defeated of history’, some steps towards Remembrance and Redemption. Some of these are described below.

Contemporary classical scholarship in Brazil and the Brazilian past – *tropicalismo* as bilateral contributions

The synergy of classical and Brazilian archaeology can be considered a main feature of *tropicalismo*, the Brazilian inflection towards the study of the past. It can be seen in different events organised together, such as the annual *Semana Internacional de Arqueologia* that takes place at the University of São Paulo. Dispensing with the unnecessary polemics between prehistoric and historical-classical archaeology that mired Euro-American archaeology for decades, archaeology in Brazil offers synergies and constructive co-existence, conceiving archaeology as a single discipline with sub-fields that contribute to each other in theoretical approaches (Florenzano 2013, 31–36). This different, distinctly Brazilian inflection, finds expression in comparative studies of indigenous American and classical Mediterranean civilisations and approaches to their studies.³¹ For example, an ongoing doctoral project by Renan Falchetti Peixoto proposes a “classical Brazilian archaeology” that builds a dialectic between the historiographical approach of the Indo-European origins of the Greeks and the origins of the indigenous Tupi tribe.³² Such “Mediterratlantic” perspectives, the dialogue between European and Amerindian cultures and scholarship, have a long past in Latin America, where comparisons and cross-pollination of the Mesoamerican or South American cultures and the Greco-Roman past already emerged in the 16th century, ranging from originally Greco-Roman visual elements appearing in the post-contact Aztec pictorial manuscripts (e.g. *Codex Magliabechiano*), otherwise typical of the Mesoamerican culture of Mexico (Ellsworth Hamann 2018) to the Greco-Roman references and Christian literature incorporated in 17th century Nahuatl chronicles from also Mexico (Laird 2018).

Brazilian contributions to the study of classical antiquity also concern traditional areas of specialised research, e.g. numismatics (Florenzano 2013, 43)

and other subjects of classical archaeology (e.g. Greek cults), informed by international research (e.g. Laky 2013; 2016), as well as fieldwork itself, such as ongoing excavations in Delos and Despotiko (e.g. da Hora et al 2018). Yet even in these more traditional pursuits, there is an empirically observable, even if subtle, difference to the way Brazilian researchers approach research in the ‘classical lands’. Their relationship to the modern lands of their research is not tinged by lingering sentiments of colonial gaze. For example, many researchers quickly become fluent in modern Greek, which is not that common among European and north American university staff active in fieldwork in Greece even for decades. One reason for this may be pragmatic, in that Portuguese is not spoken in Greece. The main reason, however, may have to do with a specific ideology related to learning modern Greek. While academic polemic on the modern Greek language spills even into research that is meant to be purely linguistic,³³ Brazilian academics are not affected by such European (after all) presumptions. Without the need to resort to colonial ideas on valuing or not the modern language, Brazilians pick up modern Greek, even if academic training on classical languages has not been historically comparable to that of many European and north American universities.

Occasionally as a result, a degree of ‘spiritual’ rapprochement to classical antiquity emerges, or interpreted from a Euro-American perspective, a romanticism of the kind that in Europe was soon disappearing by the time Robert Byron’s (1929) *The Byzantine Achievement* was published in 1929. Poetry directly inspired by the classical antiquity remains contemporary.³⁴ Detachment from Greece – physical, for one thing – is not the only explanation. Rather, the different social *imaginaire* of the researcher and their social environment results in different approaches that depend on cultural sensibilities, and even in different paradigms, however much the effort to neutralise

contemporary subjectivities. This is seen for example in the understanding of ancient polytheism, given the pluralist nature of Afro-Brazilian religions.

Within the university system, several strategies have been implemented with the aim of filtering academic research into the state school system and to the broader public. Part of this becomes available outside professional cycles through public archaeology programmes, museum activities, school visits, digital tools and contribution to the curricula of state schools of primary education. For example, the Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology (University of São Paulo) has contributed to the educational efforts for the public and importantly, to primary-level education. Digital tools in the form of cyberarchaeology (virtual reality) have been developed as a means to educating the public and pupils about classical archaeology, being freely accessible online. Example of this is a digital application for the exploration of the reconstructed interiors of excavated Roman villas in Portugal, which are available online (e.g. Martires 2017). These also function as resource for history lessons in primary education through use in the classroom, as tested through workshops held with primary school children at the same museum (Gregori 2019). Organised school visits with a different educational focus also take place, involving museum exhibitions and hands-on experimental archaeology.³⁵ Such efforts aim directly at the improvement of the educational tools and access to knowledge of classical antiquity, and to archaeology as a discipline. For example, this way, children come into contact with original artefacts, maquettes and audio-visual material that bring school children in contact with the social and political institutions and the material world of the classical Greek polis.

Other tools aim to be used in the school classroom. A physical tool for learning consisted in the creation of large wooden cases with internal compartments that contained replicas of ancient artefacts representing different historical periods.

These were offered on loan to state schools throughout the state of São Paulo, for use in history classes, as well as for other lessons.³⁶ Thus, the pupils could experience visually, but also in a tactile manner, an Aegean Bronze Age Cycladic Y-figurine, an exact replica of a black-figure Athenian amphora made in miniature, or a copy of a Hellenistic coin. Interestingly, the idea for the development of this particular educational tool was inspired by a visit to the Museum of Acropolis in Athens where such miniature cases containing replicas of artefacts were sold at the museum shop. While learning about ancient Greece, pupils could sharpen and stimulate their critical, classificatory skills.³⁷ To fully evaluate the contribution of these activities and educational learning material is vital to remember that the majority of these pupils lack the means to visit the classical world lands of the Mediterranean in order to experience the material culture of classical antiquity first-hand, or to visit museums elsewhere abroad with large collections of classical antiquities.

The importance of an education in classical antiquity extends to middle-tier state schools through teaching by academics that are also involved in university research. Guilherme Moerbeck, for example, demonstrated how, through history lessons on ancient Greek polytheism, empathy and tolerance can be built in an impoverished Rio de Janeiro community with new ties to the more radical forms of evangelical teachings. The idea was to show a form of religious pluralism that has the potential to raise tolerance toward Afro-Brazilian religions.³⁸ Explicitly, the interest here was not in the ancient past for the sake of it, or from a more abstract focus, which would have proven pointless in a community where the lives of school children are plagued by dire economic circumstances and the violence associated with the widespread narcotics trade that obstructs school attendance. Rather, it aimed at raising religious tolerance in contemporary society.³⁹

In parallel, several classically trained archaeologists participate in fieldwork at indigenous or colonial sites in Brazil, helping reveal those “subaltern” communities and cultures that official historical narratives had marginalised. Able to straddle different archaeological periods and environments, such classically-trained archaeologists contribute to the advancement of historical knowledge of early modern and modern Brazil (e.g. da Hora *et al.* 2020). More broadly, the evolution of archaeological discipline in Brazil, which began with the interest in the classical past, is now revealing archaeological sites that date back to the period of slavery, as documented by the recent fieldwork findings at the “Cemitério dos Aflitos” (the use fo which began in 1775 for the marginalised segments of the population) in the area of Liberdade, in São Paulo during excavations by the Instituto de Patrimônio Histórico e Artístico Nacional (IPHAN).⁴⁰

From this perspective, as indicated by the examples above, classical archaeology in Brazil has offered to the discipline, *globally*, new perspectives and new tools. *Locally*, it has fostered history teaching at schools and knowledge investment, through training of archaeologists, that bring to light aspects of history within Brazil.

The ‘defeated of history’ and the decentring of narratives

The uncritical adoption of the word ‘western’ to describe cultures, states, civilisations, languages and scripts, and finally, modernity itself, is often used even in publications that intend to criticise modernity and the practice of classical archaeology within it (e.g. Hamilakis and N. Momogliano 2006, 25–35). Is Brazil western? If so, in what sense? Historically? Institutionally? The answer is problematic not because of the multi-cultural aspects inherent in the formation of the country, but because of the semeiotic challenges of the term itself. After all, in the New World several of the terms and concepts developed

in the Old World present semantic rigidity that does not make them readily applicable elsewhere. Brazil, as other South American countries, decentres established narratives in several ways.

Plant domestication has long been considered a crucial stage of human civilisation, which led to sedentary societies in the Neolithic period and the slow development of towns. It is an idea entrenched in scholarship and science. Yet recent archaeological and archaeobotanical research in the Amazon upturns these views. Certain Amazonian plants (*castanha-do-Para* and *açaí*), while not domesticated, reveal growth patterns and physical spread that are the result of food-management strategies by Amazonian communities that consumed their fruits as staples for thousands of years (Neves 2018; Watling et al. 2018).⁴¹ The anthropogenic management of these plants, essentially unchanged today despite their high commercial value as cash crops and top export commodities, spans millennia, but cannot be described as domestication, neither as a foraging strategy. In fact, an appropriate term is missing (Neves, 2016, 228–244). This is a revolutionary finding, upturning decades-long scientific thinking on the origins of human civilisation as commencing with plant domestication. The Old World terminologies and classification are wanting, necessitating a decentring of our cognitive categories

How can all these seemingly irrelevant points be germane to the discussion of the study of classical antiquity in Brazil? It is because an analogous, if subtle, decentring is evident in other fields of knowledge. The attempts to decolonise the subject of classical antiquity, turn a critical eye to our prejudices and give voice to the voiceless of history, have been productive, but not always successful in a European and north American scholarship. The new post-colonial perspectives, adopted so as to gain different perspectives on histories written by victors, do not always avoid the biases that they target, namely the

colonial gaze. In Johanna Hanink's (2016) book on the 'classical debt', the intended post-colonial perspective on the reception of classical Greek antiquity in the modern world transforms in many places into an unwittingly directly colonial voice, culminating with an intrusive commentary replete with admonitions to modern Greeks as to who they are (not) and what their identity should mean, even as the book completely ignores all of late antiquity, the Byzantium and the Ottoman period and deals mainly with the reception of Greek antiquity not Greek history per se.⁴² The author's intended post-colonial voice then directly rings like a colonial one, circumscribing others' identity and notions of belonging, negating their evident ties to a continuing, living culture and language, using educational qualifications in classics as authoritative discourse, conducive to sweeping claims about the past and the present. Perhaps this failure to fulfil one's own aim of treating the past from a post-colonial perspective is because the conscious actors of scholarly decolonisation of the field come from the same socio-cultural and political *imaginaire* that created much of the bias in the first place. Vlassopoulos (2018, 212) noted that it is "particularly unfortunate that the study of the ideologies and discourses of ancient historians has been severely limited, in particular in the Anglo-Saxon world". Such tendencies tend to be rigid in that they mirror the cultural and social realities and preferences of an established *status quo* in much of mainstream scholarship.

Despite globally reaching aspirations, any scholarship in the humanities subtly offers but a specific vision of the world. This is evident to those working in the humanities from other, or within other, cultural backgrounds. Several of the maxims evident in Euro-American scholarship appear not so neutral or objective approaches, but socio-cultural tenets, amenable to deconstruction. One of those, for example, is the recent trend of viewing ancient Mediterranean societies through the lens of contemporary northern American realities, be that

of a post-modern society or of liberal capitalism. While cultural knowledge of different spheres broadens one's spectrum of understanding past realities, a mere superimposition of one context upon another, separated by time, space and culture, is simply anachronistic and results in unconvincing narratives. This remains true in western scholarship no matter the effort made to neutralise the socio-cultural visions of the researcher that never stray into complete invisibility within the humanities.

What can Brazil offer? A different set of socio-cultural sensibilities that decentre euro-centric narratives but also stray away from the condescending views reminiscent of a colonial gaze. To give an example, indigenous and Afro-Brazilian heritage is evident in modern mainstream culture and daily life, even if not always acknowledged. An aspect of these cultural influences, perhaps not sufficiently acknowledged, consists in spiritual beliefs, regardless of formal religious affiliation (or regardless of its absence). The spiritual dimension of the indigenous religions of America (de Barros Laraia 2005, 6–13), for example, permeate a facet of modern Brazilian cultural understandings in ways that are unfamiliar to someone from a European or north American background, even if not acknowledged as originating in indigenous cultures or African religions. The enduring approach to classical archaeology in Brazil from a perspective that would be considered 'romantic' in an outmoded way in Europe, as argued above, is to a degree a symptom of such different cultural sensibilities, and not a failure to 'update methodologies'. Is this approach more challenging for uncovering historical reality than the reductionist perspective of structuralism currently in vogue, which is blatantly anachronistic (as mentioned above)? The asymmetrical representation of cultural mentalities, as expressed in different scholarships, has to do more with parameters not related to scholarship *per se*, but to the political and socio-economic conjunctures that support and diffuse them (e.g. the global prevalence of the English language, or the funding

capacities of north American and north European universities, tradition-based university prestige etc).

A decentred paradigm bares not only consciously hegemonic narratives that are presented as objective scholarly arguments, revealing the *de facto* global inequalities, but goes further: it removes the layers by which a culture's social *imaginaire* infiltrates into the way of thinking about and 'doing' scholarship. The nations of the 'Global South' offer myriads of viewpoints and realities, decentring some entrenched Euro-American visions (e.g. Neves 2018). In nation states formed largely by the descendants of the oppressed, one need not carry Saïd's *Orientalism* in their back pocket to know of *othering*, both within their own cultural and social reality, and on the global stage. Multiple identities, often legally and socially excluded until two centuries ago, with remnants of discrimination still in the public speech, make the understanding of 'otherness' inherent. The descendants of the colonial-era 'subalterns' need not read post-colonial theory in order to appreciate the need to seek the slaves in the archaeological record, whether of the early modern period or of the classical world.

Such a decentring of concepts common in the representation of classical antiquity and the past in general is acutely needed, unsettling long established European concepts that developed in certain contexts but became universalised as if applicable regardless of the context. Whereas synergies that in Europe tend to be *per force* theoretical reflections on the ancient subaltern, in South America they are embodied by vibrant, very much living communities, languages and cultures. An exhibition organized in 2016 using the indigenous Brazilian collections of the Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology – the same museum that was founded with classical archaeology and art as focus in 1964 – emphatically passed the message that the study of the indigenous material

culture of Brazil is only a means to the study of the indigenous culture and its valorisation, opposing ongoing attempts to physically and ideologically annul it.⁴³ Entitled, ‘Adornments of Brazil. Contemporary Resistances’, the exhibition intended to reinforce and diffuse ethnographic research on the indigenous communities of Brazil and the ongoing challenges to their survival given the threat of lifting legal protection for the *terras indígenas*: “Museum collections and new initiatives from indigenous museums fill an important gap in preserving the memory of the excluded. To study and preserve the adornments is, in itself, an act of resistance” (Santos de Miranda et al. 2017, 29).⁴⁴ In 2019, the same Museum organised an exhibition of indigenous collections entitled “Resistance Now! Strengthening and Union of the Indigenous Cultures – Kaingang, Guarani Nhandewa and Terena” (*Resistência Já! Fortalecimento e União das Culturas Indígenas – Kaingang, Guarani Nhandewa e Terena*) (Souza 2019). The exhibition was organised by the Museum with the active participation of three indigenous tribes, who themselves curated the exhibition showcasing their cultures and history, selecting artefacts, attire and photographs from the available collection, amassed from the end of the 19th century to 1974.⁴⁵ Given the popularity of these exhibitions and the ability to shape mentalities and ingrained narratives, it is more than a symbolic way of giving voice to the voiceless of history, which supplements first-hand accounts of indigenous peoples made public in books (e.g. Kopenawa and Albert 2017).

In his *Thesis XV*, Benjamin views social struggle, protest or revolution, as the interruption of the triumph of the victors, a “blowing up” of historical continuity that breaks with teleology and ‘opens up’ history. The introduction of a new calendar during the 1789 French Revolution was an act of breaking with time, a moment of “historical consciousness” of which Benjamin spoke (Löwy 2016, 89–92). The “breaking with time” was replicated in the Second (July) French

Revolution of 1830 when on the first day of fighting “the dials on clock towers were being fired at simultaneously and independently from several locations in Paris” in Benjamin’s words (Löwy 2016, 92). Löwy (2016, 92), commenting on Benjamin’s reference to these 1830 clock-shooting events, brings forth an analogy from 21st century Brazil: on the quincentenary anniversary of the ‘discovery of Brazil’ by the Portuguese in 2000, official governmental celebrations were interrupted by members of indigenous tribe members shooting arrows towards the clock that had been set up to count down the days to the date of the anniversary during protests organised by trade unions and civil right movements. The descendants of the oppressed indigenous population had interrupted the celebration of the ‘triumph’ of the Portuguese that had arrived 500 years previously, shooting arrows at the clock. The analogy does not require a close reading of the French July Revolution, but works on the understanding that past injustices must activate Remembrance, a form of reparation to the ‘defeated of the past’ in the present.

Amerindian societies have left a cultural imprint in contemporary Brazilian society, along with the heritage of Africans and Europeans. Brazil was not ‘discovered’ in 1500, despite what commemorating its ‘discovery’ suggests. It pre-existed as a land inhabited by hundreds of different tribes encompassing hundreds of different languages, most of which have now perished. What reparation can be offered for that scale of loss in the present? Or for a quincentenary that attempted to nullify that scale of colonial violence? Acknowledgement of past injustices, and legal protection in the present, are kinds of reparation for the ‘defeated of the past’, and Redemption that can lead to a better future. Classical archaeology as a discipline has played a crucial role in valorising the indigenous population and revealing colonial-period violence, even if it gained the main impetus from a research infrastructure created for classical antiquity.

Nonetheless, as shown here, classical archaeology in Brazil helped the articulation of the indigenous and African cultural input of Brazil through an educational institution at the University of São Paulo, originally established for the promotion of classical studies in Brazil, but whose aims soon extended to cover the indigenous Brazilian and the Afro-Brazilian cultures. The same university institution, as others in the country, train classical archaeologists that work on indigenous and colonial-period sites, revealing the lives of those ‘crashed under the wheels of modernity’, to paraphrase Benjamin’s words. Giving tribes in Brazil the space and decision to curate exhibitions of their own cultural artefacts at the Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, it provided a brave new path for examining and understanding the past, giving voice to the descendants of the voiceless, a small step towards Remembrance and Redemption. A lot more remains to be done from several fronts so as to acknowledge, protect, and safeguard for the future.

Concluding Remarks

Long considered the prerogative of the elite education of western European victorious imperialists and colonists, and a legitimising instrument of colonisation, classical antiquity became a shorthand for hegemonic affirmation of power, with colonialism and imperialism going-hand-in-hand. In modern movements, it was transformed into the *anathema* of several socially progressive movements (despite the co-opting of classics by workers’ movements in parts of Europe). From there, it was a short way for classical antiquity to become the target of battles for the emancipation of the ‘defeated of history’.

A sober, level-headed study of the classical world contextualises it in its ancient context, does not judge it solely by 21st-century ethical standards, and without idealising classical antiquity, it appreciates its potential for enriching our

understanding of the human condition: from humorous art and religious devotion, to drama, philosophical treatises, court speeches, and architectural aesthetics, to name a few. The study of any culture can contribute to the present, if approached from a critical perspective. Seen from this perspective, classical antiquity can still provide insights as to the human condition and a window of understanding into a society that while far removed from the present, shared many of the preoccupations and even daily concerns of many contemporary ones as revealed in drama, poetry, comedies, and visual art that survive. Judged from the 21st century, ancient Greece and Rome appear patriarchal, slave owning, racist societies, and in many ways they were all those things. Is that a reason to dismiss them as if they did not take place? Questions asked by the tragedies of classical Greece, such as the relative importance of formal law or morality in Sophocle's *Antigone*, are still relevant, address issues of contemporary contention (e.g. law versus common morality) and offer a depth of existential quest that cannot be reduced to facile treatments – and dismissal – of the output of classical antiquity. After all, studies on perceptions of civilisation, culture clashes and evolutionist approaches to the human societies were already integral parts of classical authors themselves, a product of the intellectual currents of their societies, mirroring concerns that are not unique to modernity (Petropoulos 2013, 43– 56).

The study of other cultures decentres our perception of our own: it puts it to test, to critique, to enquiry. Such learning about historical cultures, or others that continue to this day, does not automatically re-enforce colonial attitudes but instead fosters the understanding of the richness of human cultures, valorising our shared humanity. That is the main contribution of learning about classical antiquity in any part of the world, and a *raison d' être* for its continuing presence in university and school curricula. In turn, Brazil's contribution to the study of classical antiquity is an expansion of the socio-cultural lenses through

which this period and region of antiquity can be approached, broadening the span of knowledge that can be gained. Lastly, Brazil has its own share of early modern and modern classical traditions that derived from the legacy of the Greco-Roman world (Rome, in particular), as do other South American nations, which are traditions worth studying in their own right.

Illustrations



Fig. 1. Mayor's Hall, Visconde de Mauá Square, Santos (SP).



Fig. 2. Monument to Francisco Ramos de Azevedo, Cidade Universitária, São Paulo (SP).

Notes

¹ The manuscript of Benjamin's essay, edited and discussed by Michael Löwy as *Fire Alarm. Reading Walter Benjamin's 'On the concept of History'* (2nd ed.), was written in 1940, a little prior to the author's suicide following a failed attempt to escape from Gestapo in Vichy France. It was never intended for publication.

² The metaphysical dimension of Benjamin's writing is based on Judaism, while political/social movements in central and southern America trace their metaphysical elements in Catholic Christianity (Löwy 2016, 28–29).

³ For such a view of the classics in 19th century Britain but also examples of the reception and appropriation of the classical antiquity by the lower classes and the workers' movements, see Hall (2007).

⁴ For class-conscious perspectives on the study and reception of the classical world regarding Britain and the USA, see "Brave New Classics. Classics, Communism and World Culture" (<https://www.bravenewclassics.info/>) on the convergence of Soviet Marxism and classics 'from the left' in 20th century Britain and "Classics and Class" (<http://www.classicsandclass.info/>) for an archive of class-conscious writings on the classical world of the Greco-Roman civilizations.

⁵ On *luso-tropicalismo*, see Castelo (2011, 111–116).

⁶ See for example, the extensive commentary on such linguistic efforts by José de Alencar, in the 2nd edition of his novel *Iracema*, originally published in 1870 and rooted in the *indianismo* of the period (de Alencar 2016, 127–151).

⁷ For obvious reasons, and given the ongoing nature of the struggles in which such movements are embroiled, citations will not be provided in this case, not least because sympathising with the general aims of these movements should not be undermined by particular views (even if partial) on classical antiquity held by some participant activists.

⁸ On post-colonial debates in archaeology globally, see e.g. Scarre and Scarre (2010); Lydon and Rizvi (2010). For a recent example on subalternity in ancient Greece and the Greek colonisation movements in the 5th-4th century BCE, see Zuchtriegel (2017).

⁹ The term 'subaltern' was adopted from the work of the Italian philosopher and political theorist Antonio Gramsci (1971). The introduction of an (adapted) Italian word into English-speaking scholarship resulted in a neologism that was more the quirk of cross-linguistic scholarship (translations) than Gramsci's intention to coin a specific term.

¹⁰ On the 'barbarians' of the ancient Greek thought, see e.g. Harrison (2002) and Vlassopoulos (2013). On the Athenian wealth created by the Lavrion silver mines operated by slaves, see Cohen (2010). For a recent "iconoclastic" view of the position of exiles, women and slaves as subalterns in Greek literary texts, see duBois (2010).

¹¹ Save for historical research on imperial-period Britain that was not limited to the study of European developments, see e.g. Johnson and Molineux (2018, 62-99).

¹² The latter was an acutely felt characteristic of Benjamin's era. Technological advancement created the powerful armies of WW II, of unseen annihilatory capacity, even as the socio-political conditions in Europe had taken an abrupt turn towards one of the darkest social, ideological and political regressions of humanity (Löwy 2016).

¹³ E.g. in one of the *epistolai* of Eustathios' of Salonica (*Letter 7*), see Kaldellis (2007, p. 313, 378)

¹⁴ For continuities from classical antiquity to modern Greek culture, see the ethnographic work of Lawson (1910), capturing traditions now lost to industrialisation and other forms of modernity of the 20th century.

¹⁵ The translation is by the present author.

¹⁶ Several of the institutions of western states – legal system, the academy – ultimately drew on Greco-Roman origins. The Theodosian-Justinian Law of the Roman empire has affected the law in most western countries, and forms the basis for the *jus civilis*.

¹⁷ The reforms of the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965) allowed the use of vernacular languages in Catholic liturgy (de Theije and Mariz 2008.)

¹⁸ A striking example of such a word loan is the word *anfitrião*, ‘host’. While etymologically ultimately deriving from *Ἀμφιτρόων*, the name of Herakle’s step father in Greek mythology, the word came to mean ‘host’ in Portuguese, as in Italian, through the Roman playwright Plautus’ comedy *Amphitruo*, which inspired a play by Molière, after which *by antonomasia* all generous hosts came to be known as *anfitrione/anfitrión/anfitrião* in Italian/Spanish/Portuguese – ironic, since in the myth Zeus had stolen Amphitryon’s identity. On Plautus’ play, see Polt (2013), on its later comic permutations Domingues (2009).

¹⁹ Southern Portugal was part of ‘Spania’, one of the provinces of the Byzantine empire (552–624), see e.g. Vallejo Girvés (2012).

²⁰ This is empirically evident to a Greek. A name such as ‘Cassandra’, for example, still used in Brazil and Portugal, invokes in Greece a doomed princess cursed to prophesise negative events and never be believed. Such a loaded mythological character’s name would not be used as a personal name in Greece, where there is familiarity with mythological characters and their destinies. Other ancient names (such as Eulalia or Themistokles) sound too unattractively old-fashioned in a modern Greek *milieu*.

²¹ This is the Museum in Rio de Janeiro that burned down in the fire of September 2018.

²² Brazil continued to be ruled by the Portuguese-lineage royal family. Instead of creating a nation state, the royal elite of the country declared Brazil an empire and modelled its bureaucratic apparatus and self-image to the old European empires (Funari 2002).

²³ See e.g. http://phoenicia.org/Phoenician_Celtic_connections.html

²⁴ Herman von Ihering, the director of the new Museu Paulista, was a champion of such theories. Setting off from his native Leibnitz (Germany) to Brazil in 1880, von Ihering gained Brazilian citizenship and went on a course to ‘scientifically prove’ the inferiority of the Amerindians. The new technological progress required space for factories and urban expansion – the *índios* stood in the way (Funari 2002, 138–139).

²⁵ Brazilian architecture was influenced by Italian architectural aesthetics and cross-pollination with Spanish and Portuguese styles. During the colonial period, architectural influences were closely connected to the Afro-Atlantic commercial circuits. Seville, the main commercial port in Spain of the expeditions in the Americas, was embellished with gold from the Americas, while, as a common saying goes, the gold imported from the Americas turned into the stone in Seville’s monumental architecture. Architectural styles that travelled across the Atlantic reflected the close economic relationships.

²⁶ C.W.G. Duarte, ‘Aspectos arquitetônicos do Pórtico Dórico do Palácio da Fazenda no Rio de Janeiro’, V Semana Internacional de Arqueologia. Discentes MAE-USP, 8–12 May 2017, São Paulo (oral presentation).

²⁷ See note above.

²⁸ See note above.

²⁹ See note above.

³⁰ The steps leading to the stylobate are flanked by two bronze statues of women in the nude reminiscent of classical rendering, while either side of stylobate is adorned by more statuary: a complex of two classical-style male figures in the nude to the left of the steps, and a male figure representing the honoured architect to the right. On the platform formed by the stylobate, two rows of

four Doric columns each, made of granite, were topped by a solid base recalling an entablature, supporting a bronze complex of a classical-style naked athlete on horseback and a veiled woman.

³¹ This is rare in classical archaeology, with exceptions (e.g. Bajema 2017).

³² ‘A Brazilian classical archaeology: the advent of the Greeks in the Aegean and the comparative study of the Indo-Europeans and the Tupi’ (*Uma Arqueologia Clássica brasileira: o advento dos gregos no Egeu e o estudo comparado da origem dos indo-europeus e dos Tupis*), by Renan Falchetti Peixoto, supervised by Prof. Maria Beatriz Borba Florenzano, Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology. Falchetti Peixoto describes this work in progress as follows: “a classical Brazilian archaeology is a proposal of rooting a classical question of European archeology in the debate of the origins and expansion of the Tupi in the tropical lowlands with the intention of demonstrating a situational dialogue of a research process initiated far from the European research centers” (the translation into English is by the present author).

³³ For ideological inflections in what should have been linguistic-literary research, see e.g. the biased commentary in Mackridge (2014, 133–164).

³⁴ E.g. a collection of poems drawing on classical Greece and its mythology entitled *Fragmentos Pagãos* written by classical archaeologist, under the pen name *Mavetse Dionysopoulos de Argos*, currently under plans of publication.

³⁵ Unlike archaeology departments of other universities, one of the purposes of the Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology is explicitly , aimed towards the public and state schools, providing educational visits and workshops for school pupils and continuing education seminars for school teachers, comments by M.B.B. Florenzano during the *Debatendo o ensino da Antiguidade no MAE, apresentado pelos professores Guilherme Moerbeck (UERJ) e Elaine Farias Veloso Hirata (MAE-USP) ocorrido no dia 18/10/2017 às 14h00 no Museu de Arqueologia e Etnologia da Universidade*, Coordenação geral do Laboratório de Estudos sobre a Cidade Antiga – Labeca –MAE/USP, São Paulo (oral presentation).

³⁶ E.F.V. Hirata, ‘O Labeca – Laboratorio de Estudos e o Ensino da Historia’, in *Debatendo o ensino da Antiguidade no MAE, apresentado pelos professores Guilherme Moerbeck (UERJ) e Elaine Farias Veloso Hirata (MAE-USP), no dia 18/10/2017 às 14h00 no Museu de Arqueologia e Etnologia da Universidade*, Coordenação geral do Laboratório de Estudos sobre a Cidade Antiga – Labeca – MAE/USP, São Paulo (oral presentation).

³⁷ See note above.

³⁸ G. Moerbeck, ‘Historica e cotidiano escolar: praticas, metodos e teoria do ensino’, *Debatendo o ensino da Antiguidade no MAE, apresentado pelos professores Guilherme Moerbeck (UERJ) e Elaine Farias Veloso Hirata (MAE-USP) ocorrido no dia 18/10/2017 às 14h00 no Museu de Arqueologia e Etnologia da Universidade*, Coordenação geral do Laboratório de Estudos sobre a Cidade Antiga – Labeca –MAE/USP, São Paulo (oral presentation).

³⁹ On published work on religion in classical Greece, e.g. Moerbeck (2018).

⁴⁰ <https://www.geledes.org.br/arqueologos-encontram-ossadas-da-epoca-da-escravidao-em-terreno-no-centro-de-sao-paulo/>; <https://www.portalr3.com.br/2020/02/sitio-arqueologico-cemiterio-dos-aflitos-na-liberdade-sp-e-cadastrado-pelo-iphany/>

⁴¹ The Brazilian nut (*castanha-do-Para*) and *açai*, a palm berry, are both harvested from plam trees and are common in mainstream Brazilian diet, albeit as nutritious delicacies and not as staples, which is their role in indigenous Amazonian diet (Neves 2016).

⁴² Hanink (2016) dealt with the ‘classical debt’ to the Greeks in the modern world, but the discussion touched on issues of cultural and ethnic continuity that far surpass her training as a classical archaeologist. In places, as an *a priori* narrative of modern Greek ties to the past as constructed, Haninks’ text recalls the sort of unhistorical approach, prejudices and entitlement of the then criticised

and now discredited 19th-century German publications on the origins of modern Greeks (most notably by J. P. Fullmerayer) which betrayed an explicit (political) agenda of severing modern Greeks from their history and language, considering them a nation of delusional impostors that usurped obsolete, musealised specimens of a dead nation.

⁴³ On indigenous, specifically Yanomami, worldviews and activism, see the account by Kopenawa and Albert (2017).

⁴⁴ The translation is by the present author.

⁴⁵ https://jornal.usp.br/cultura/indigenas-contam-sua-propria-historia-em-nova-exposicao-na-usp/?fbclid=IwAR1dZn-V50CTgPNv3gaamXx3WEMOEOSyI2l7Q4MdSmZw4nZGM_VT46e63l8

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