Chapter 4
Challenging Alterity: The Process of Building Knowledge of the Indigenous Peoples Psychological Characteristics

The Jesuits used the psychological knowledge of their own cultural universe not only for the knowledge of themselves, but also for the understanding of the Indians with whom they lived. This was particularly challenging given the anthropological and cultural diversity between the world of missionaries and that of natives. And, as we will see, the Jesuits will try to understand the Indians from the cultural categories provided by their world of origin, the same applied to the knowledge of their own experience. The use of these categories before the other is guided by the observation of behavioral signs.

A first aspect of this knowledge was constructed by the use of a set of knowledge spread in Western medicine and which we have already seen employed in the bosom of the Society of Jesus: the galenical hypocratic humoralist theory. Among the authors of the letters, José de Anchieta shows a particularly attentive look at the psychosomatic traits of the natives' temperament: he states that the Indians "are somewhat melancholic" (Anchieta 1988, p. 442).

4.1 The Sensory Powers of the Indians

As far as the external and internal senses are concerned, the theme of imagination stands out in the observation of the Indians. In a letter written by Piratininga in 1557, when he reported the removal of the Indians from the newly created Jesuit school, Anchieta wrote that "most of these Indians (…) made other addresses not far from here, where they now live, because (…) now persuaded them a diabolical imagination, that this church is made for their destruction" in which we can close them". This "diabolical imagination" comes from the fact that "other Indians tell you this", especially "some of their wizards, whom they call shamans" (Anchieta 1988, p. 366). Possibly Anchieta following the Tomist doctrine on this subject: according to the Tomist conception, the imagination can be diabolical because the

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devil has power to act in the internal and external senses of man. In the case of the imagination, the devil acts on the individual by making him appear as real, something deceptive, or by making him see something different than he is, by modifying the sensitive species received by the external senses.[1]

Such a conception became very widespread in sixteenth-century theology, especially in the inquisitorial manuals (Clark 1997). For this reason, the Jesuits, realizing that the words of the sorcerers contradicted those used by them in preaching, sought to propose actions that would add strength to the word and that they could act on the imagination of the Indians, as appears in this Letter of Anchieta to Father General D. Laynez, written by St. Vincent on January 8, 1565. In their relationship with the indigenous chief Pindobuçu, the Jesuits use images to impress and persuade him: "Pindobuçu told us among other things: 'You all know the things! God discovers them all! Ask him to give me a long life, and I'll put myself on your behalf." And from then on, he would always come to see us in the morning, to see if we had anything to eat and looking for it, and asking us many things of God. In fact, according to Anchieta, the imagination of the Indians seems particularly influential, to the point that "if they want to die by seizing only death in their imagination or by eating land; or tell them that if they are going to die or make them afraid, they die briefly (Anchieta 1988, p. 442). The same is confirmed by the Portuguese Jesuit F. Cardim. Cardim, in the account of his visit to Brazil, commented that the Indians are in extreme submission to the power of imagination. They "are so afraid of the devil (…) and it is so much the fear they have of him that they die only by imagining him, as has happened many times" (Cardim 1980, p. 87).

4.2 The Appetites (Sensitive and Intelligible) of Indians

The Jesuits portrayed in their letters the force that, in the psychic dynamism of the Indians, seemed to have sensitive appetites: according to the priests, their excessive movement toward inappropriate objects would determine 'unnatural' conducts such as anthropophagy. In reporting to Inácio de Loyola the situation of the natives on the coast of Brazil, Anchieta pointed out that, "from Pernambuco (…) over 900 miles, (…) the Indians without exception eat human flesh; in this they feel so much pleasure and sweetness that they often travel over 300 miles when going to war. And if they captivate four or five of their enemies, without taking care of anything else, they return to the village with great voices and parties and copious wines, which manufacture with roots, and eat them in such a way that they do not lose even the slightest nail, and all their lives boast of that egregious victory" (Anchieta 1988, pp. 108–109).

[1] According to Thomas, good and evil angels have the power to alter the movements of animal spirits and moods that allow the external senses to receive information from the external world (See Thomas Aquinas. *Summa Theologica*, Part 1, *quaestio* 114, art. 4) (Veja-se Tomás de Aquino. *Summa Theologic*a, Parte 1, qaestio 114, art. 4).

However, the question is complex: for the understanding of anthropophagic conduct, Anchieta also referred to the movement of intellectual appetites. How can we explain the behavior of the prisoners condemned to this atrocious death, who accepted it as an honor, except by judging and adhering to the will of the Indians to the values of their cultural tradition? "Even the captives think that it is a noble and dignified thing for them, facing such a glorious death, as they judge, because they say that it is proper to the timid and unsuitable for war to die so that they have to bear in the grave the weight of the earth, which they think to be very great" (Anchieta 1988, p. 109).

The appetites of the Indians become disordered because they are guided by inadequately valued objects, and they are accentuated by the "unbridled passion of the drinks": "when they are drunker, the memory of past evils is renewed, and they begin to boast about them soon burning with the desire to kill enemies and the hunger for human flesh".

Anchieta's position referred to anthropological theories of contemporary authors: the Jesuit José de Acosta and the former Jesuit Giovanni Botero.[2]

José de Acosta stated that "barbarians" are those who depart from the straight inspiring reason of human habitual practices. The definition of right reason and customary habits is grafted onto the Aristotelian-Tomist view. According to Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274), human intelligence has a natural tendency toward its Creator. At the same time, man is a composite of body and soul and, therefore, his thinking is an act that takes place within the corporeality and material conditioning in which he lives (example: climate, geographical space, etc.…). In this way, by changing some conditions (e.g., politics), an educational process could take place that leads to and transforms the condition of barbarity into another, of civilization.

Acosta pointed to "monstrous deviations" from the conduct of indigenous populations that he classified within an established hierarchy of human conditions, as "wild men" in a state of absolute barbarism. Among them, described as "without law, without king, without covenants, without fixed magistrates or regime of government," anthropophagi and without fixed abodes, capable of carrying out crimes

[2] Giovanni Botero, after entering the Society of Jesus at the age of 16, in 1580 left the order because of disagreements with his superiors, and from 1582, he resided in Milan as secretary to Cardinal Carlo Borromeo and then to his nephew, Cardinal Federico. His most important work is Relazioni universali (in four parts; a fifth part was published in 1895), an anthropological geography, with detailed news about the physical, demographic, military, and political configuration of the nations of the Old and New World. The five volumes were written in 1591, 1592, 1594, 1596, and 1611. In Botero's work, the spirit of the Company is evident, and most of the sources used are Jesuit. As Descendre (2005) observes, Botero's work has an apologetic intention: the description of the missionary movement in the world evidences the strong expansion of Christianity conceived according to the vision of the Council of Trent. Latin America is one of the themes treated by Botero in the Relazioni universali. Extensive parts of the work are dedicated to Latin America: the first part of the fourth book; the entire fifth book; in the fourth part, the first, second, third, and fourth book; some sections of the fifth part. Botero also dedicates five pages of the Fifth Report to Brazil, reconstructing the anthropological history of the country.

that made them "like beasts," would be "a good number of Brazilian peoples (Acosta 1987, pp. 68–69).

The stereotype of the Latin American natives was conveyed by the writings of Giovanni Botero (1544–1617), author of the voluminous work Universal Relations (1591–1596), a great compendium of elaborated anthropological geography. The objective of the treatise was to portray the characteristics of what the author considered to be the new Christian orb, based on the reading of letters, reports, and other Jesuit documents, among others. Botero takes up the opposition between the wild man and the civilized, having as comparison criterion the straight use of reason, formulated by Acosta. In the third part of Relations (1595), he defines Brazilian Indians among the most barbaric peoples, "for leading a wild and bestial life without chiefs, without laws, without any form of civility and politics" (Botero 1595, p. 2).

The writer also formulates a derogatory assessment of his psychological characteristics: "his understanding seems obscured by the senses, reason by appetites, and judgment by passions. His thought does not depart from the earth, nor does it extend beyond the present object" (Botero 1595, vol. 3, p. 2). For this reason, the natives do not worship any divinity, although they rely on "the sorcerers and their false prophecies. Botero believes that it is appropriate to deal with the anthropophagous Indians as if they were "madmen", and should also resort to the use of weapons (Botero 1595, vol. 3, p. 53). The fourth part of Relations (1595) relates the missionary work of the Jesuits in Brazil: Botero tells of the great difficulty encountered by the missionaries, caused by the "bestiality" of those populations. To exemplify his judgment, he again describes in detail the anthropophagous ritual (Botero 1595, vol. 4, p. 78).[3]

Therefore, the similarity between Anchieta's interpretation of indigenous behavior in his letters and the texts of Acosta and Botero is evident. They are all inspired by the model of Aristotelian-Thomistic philosophical psychology of sixteenth-century Jesuit thinkers. When the prevalence of sensorial powers, especially sensitive appetites, over intellectual appetites and cognitive powers occurs, individuals are unable to judge and evaluate the objects of their desires. The resulting dissatisfaction leads them to excesses in their behaviors and experiences of sensations and affections. They present unruly habits, among which violence, cruelty, anthropophagy. Such processes can also be determined by supernatural influences (the demons) and the consumption of herbs and drinks. These influences can act not only on the sensory level but also on the functioning of intellectual appetites.

However, we have seen that Anchieta was also a man of humanist background, who believes in the power of education in the modification of human habits. By

[3] Botero attributes the state of bestiality to the action of demonic powers. It describes the emergence of superstitions that it defines as "madness" (p. 84). He states that these "sick outbreaks" are stimulated by the use of the juice of a herb called Petima, which induces in the users, symptoms similar to those we would define today as epileptic: "they fall as dead to the ground, with their mouths twisted and their tongues out, they stretch and turn all over with trembling of the whole body and speak between their teeth" (p. 85).

writing in 1555 to Ignatius of Loyola of Piratininga, where the tribe headed by Tibiriçá lived, he sought to show how coexistence with the missionaries has achieved some positive effects. He affirmed that "the other nefarious ignominies also necessarily diminish; and some are so obedient to us that they dare not drink without our permission, and only with great moderation if we compare it with the old madness" (Anchieta 1988, p. 194). Anchieta pointed out the change of habits and values "in the way of Christians", starting from the coexistence of that same population that before thought could be converted only by the intervention of military force. He wrote: "the subjection of these Indians is too much to admire, not living obliged to any laws, nor law, and not obeying anyone's authority" (Anchieta 1988, p. 110). In Anchieta's pondering, this fact is inexplicable in the light of the civilizing theory of the authors already cited, according to which there would be a foreseeable need for law, religion and obedience to a king, to enable religious conversion. But the fact is explained by the strength of educational coexistence, and this is an argument in favor of *used to highlight* the importance of the presence of the Society of Jesus in colonial territory in view of the creation and preservation of a "Christian Republic".

4.3 The Affects of the Indians

The letters reported observations of the manifestation of some specific affects in the Indians. One of them is the joy that in the view of those who wrote proves the establishment of successful social relations. The letters referred to the joy expressed by the Indians when they received the missionaries: "he was from the Gentiles very well received and welcomed with great joy" (Vale. In: Navarro 1988, p. 437); "Brother Pero Correia was received with the greatest joy when he reached the Indians to whom he was sent" (Vale. In: Navarro 1988, pp. 197–198); "we were received with great joy" (Nunes. In: Navarro 1988, p. 86).

The opposite affection, hatred, also appears among the lines of the Jesuit letters, and the intensification of this affection was attributed to the demonic action. But fear was the most cited affection observed in the conduct of the natives. The objects that induced fear in the Indians were of various natures. Some were inherent to the indigenous culture itself, such as, for example, fear of "demons". Nóbrega reported in a letter to inform his former teacher in Coimbra, Martim Navarro, about the life and habits of indigenous nations: "(The Indians) have a great sense of the devil and are terrified of him (…). And they find him at night, and for this cause they go out with a firebrand, and this is their defensive means" (Nóbrega 1988, p. 91). The fear used by the Portuguese as a strategy of domination seems to constantly mark the relations of the Indians with the colonial power, especially by the frequent and violent "punishments" that achieved the effect of Indian submission. Through the fear inculcated in the natives, the Portuguese Governor ended up collaborating with the objectives of the missionaries: for example, "he had the sorcerers arrested and another (…) of what they were all frightened that from then on began to fill the churches" (Nobrega 1988, p. 159). The adhesion of the Indians to Christianization

in many cases occurred out of fear. The induction of fear was, according to Nóbrega, one of the resources that could be used to accomplish this goal: "This Gentile is of a quality that is not wanted for good, but for fear and submission, as has been experienced" (Nóbrega 1988, p. 448).

Observations about the fears expressed by the indigenous people were also frequent in Anchieta's letters: not only fear of physical dangers, but also fear of the supernatural power of the missionaries, resulting in their surrender to Christianization: "Pindobuçu began to preach in the houses (…) saying: If we are afraid of our sorcerers, how much more should we be afraid of the Fathers, who must be true saints, and have the power to make us come with chambers of blood, coughing, headache, fevers and other diseases that we will all die!" (Anchieta 1988, pp. 134–135).

The escape from the arrival of the priests for fear of their supernatural powers is reported in a letter by Francis Pires: "The Gentiles ran away from them like death and evicted the houses and ran away through the woods (…) and some came on the way to pray to the priests not to harm them, to pass by (…) and, trembling like the verge, did not want to hear the preaching" (In: Navarro 1988, p. 393 6396).[4]

In the discourse of the Jesuits, the descriptions of the behavior of the Indians signaling fear were associated with the construction of moral habits, positive (moral and theological virtue, uprooting of vicious customs, obedience to priests and colonial government, conversion to Christianity), or negative (refusal of the relationship, flight, enmity). The association between the affection of fear and virtue was explicitly assumed in the letters, as a possible resource of missionary strategy.[5]

[4] The fact that, especially in warlike situations, the demonstration of the adversary's strength and the punishments inflicted are causes of fear and can obtain desired effects goes back to the doctrines of Aristotle and Thomas. Aristotle in Rhetoric states that being fear, or fear, a passion aroused by the imagination of a coming evil that can cause destruction or pain, the condition for us to experience fear is that these evils seem close and imminent (as is, for example, a warlike circumstance). Thus, for Aristotle, the objects that arouse fear are exactly those that seem to have great power to destroy or to cause damage from which great pain results. Therefore, the signs of such things induce fear by indicating the approaching of something to be feared. As for people who induce fear, Aristotle presents a great variety of cases: among others, the hatred or anger of people who have the power to do us great harm. Thomas, for his part, states that "fear is aimed at two terms, namely the evil from which it flees and the good which, by its virtue, can inflict evil. And it is in this way that God is feared by man, while he can inflict a punishment, spiritual or bodily. In the same way a man's power is feared, especially when he is wronged, or unjust, because then he is immediately led to cause evil. Thus we also fear who has power over us, that is, we fear to depend on another, so that it gives him the power to do us harm; such is the case of one who, being conscious of a crime, fears that another will reveal it" (Thomas, Summa. Op. Cit. 2005, vol. 7, p.81–83).

[5] In the *Dialogue on the conversion of the Gentiles* and in a letter written in May 1558, Nóbrega summarized the theological and political reasons why he thought that "servile fear" would be the only way to subjugate the Indians and subjugate them within the space of mildew controlled by the missionaries. This position had political as well as theological and legal consequences. In fact, according to Eisemberg, "by amalgamating the concepts of libertas and dominium (…) the Jesuits distanced themselves from the concept of freedom as an inalienable objective right (ius), breaking, perhaps for the first time, with the then dominant Dominican interpretation of tomism" (Eisemberg 2000, p. 146).

However, the fear observed in the behavior of the other is one of the effects of the failed establishment of social interaction: this emotional phenomenon manifests refusal, defensive attitude, flight, in the face of a type of relationship judged as dangerous, negative. In this sense, the emergence of this affection in the relationship between the Indians and the Jesuits was a clear sign of a crisis of the missionary method. Not by chance, the recourse to fear as an instrument of indoctrination emerged in a second stage of missionary presence, after the defeat of the initial attempts to evangelize the Indians. An evangelizing method based on the establishment of positive social relations and rational discourse would be the opposite of a domineering and imposing relationship based on manipulation and emotional control. In this second sense, evangelization would not be founded on the establishment of a social relationship of belonging and community. Instead, it would be founded on the induction of virtuous habits, on the formation of an ethical conduct where diversity must be assimilated, or eliminated.

Among the intellectual appetites observed in the Indians, the most quoted by the authors of the letters was love. The correspondence of the Indians to the evangelizing work of the missionaries was described in terms of the affection of love. Anchieta, when narrating that the Jesuits promoted teaching, an element that attracted the will of the Indians, said: "a boy leaving his relatives, stayed with us, and joined the boys to learn the first elements. The main care we have of them is to declare to them the rudiments of the faith, without neglecting the teaching of the letters; they esteem it so much that, if it were not for this attraction, perhaps we could not lead them to anything else" (Anchieta 1988, pp. 307–308). The same author, in a letter of 1549 to the Provincial of Portugal, Simão Rodrigues, reported the symbolic exchange attitude of an Indian chief: "He is very fervent and a great friend of ours: we gave him a red hat and some pants. Bring us fish and other things from the land with great love" (Anchieta 1988, p. 113).

In another letter of 1565, Anchieta reported loving and caring attitudes expressed by members of the indigenous communities: Cacique Cunhambeba had helped the Jesuits by endangering their own lives and had shown his love for them through various gestures: "One of them, a man very dear to his family (…) called Cunhambeba, got into a canoe, which was not yet finished, and came to help us during the night, half flooded, by a very rough sea. (…) we left very early in the morning to his village, where he had ordered us to build a small house in the middle of it to say missa. And when he saw us, like all the women in the village, they were so happy, as if we had risen from that hour, speaking to us words of great love." (Anchieta 1988, pp. 145–146).

Love is a phenomenon of the will, and for this reason, the Jesuits sought "to coopt the will of the chiefs" (Rodrigues. In: Navarro 1988, p. 410); "I use all the ways in which it seems to us that we will win the will of the Gentiles" (Nóbrega 1988, pp. 523–524).

4.4 Cognitive Powers in Indians

The Jesuits used Aristotelian-Tomist terminology to refer to the cognitive processes observed in natives. The main category used was understanding. The evaluation about the understanding of the Indians is present in several letters and acquires different valuations.

Meaningful in this respect is a letter sent by Anchieta to Inácio de Loyola in which the author described the condition of the various Brazilian ethnic groups and establishes differences between them. The description is similar to the aforementioned political theories of José de Acosta and Giovanni Botero, that peoples who do not have in their political and social organization, a sovereign, a jurisdiction, a religion, live in a condition not according to reason, while peoples who have at least one of these three pillars develop toward an increasingly rational condition. In fact, according to Anchieta (and the tradition to which he is inspired), these three aspects (legal organization, government, and religion) belong to natural law. Referring to the Indians of the Porto Seguro region, the author stated that "they are indomitable and fierce, nor do they bend reason". On the contrary, "the carijós are much meeker and more prone to the things of God" in a way similar to "other people to the west, through the interior to the province of Peru". These "are very meek, they come closer to reason, they are all subject to one head, each one lives with his wife and children separately in his house, and in no way eat human flesh. Continuing the description, Anchieta dealt with the "people who call themselves Ibirajaras, who we think are ahead of all these in the use of reason, intelligence and meekness of customs. And she explains the reasons for this judgment: "All these obey one lord, have horror to eat human flesh, are content with one woman (…). They believe in no idolatry or sorcerer, and they advance to many others in good manners, so that they seem closer to the law of nature" (Anchieta 1988, pp. 117–118).

In the opinion of the Jesuits, the demand for learning manifested by the natives proved their intellectual gifts while justifying missionary work. Nóbrega wrote in a letter to the Provincial of Portugal in 1549 at the beginning of the mission of the Society of Jesus in Bahia: "They have schools to read and write; it seems to me a good way to bring the Indians from this land, who have great desires to learn and, when asked if they want to, show great desires" (Nóbrega 1988, p. 110–111).[6]

Therefore, as in the consideration of the other psychic powers inferred by the observation of the behavior of the Indians, the evaluation about the cognitive powers was associated with the response of these as to the evangelizing initiative of the Jesuits. When the Indians showed resistance to the missionaries, they were evaluated as not very rational. An example is the following excerpt from a letter written to Torres de Rio Vermelho by Nóbrega in 1557: "I have come to understand by

[6] In a letter of 1551, Nóbrega refers to the fact that several indigenous women show willingness to learn Christian doctrine and to bring their children to be taught, which would justify the creation of a College (Nóbrega 1988, p. 286). Similarly, in the same year, Nóbrega expressed himself in a letter to the Portuguese king (Nóbrega 1988, p. 292).

experience how little one could do in this land in the conversion of the gentiles for lack of being subjects, and they are a form of people in a condition closer to wild beasts than to rational people" (Nóbrega 1988, p. 400).

And in a letter written to the same recipient the following year, Nóbrega outlined a picture quite different from that set out in his initial letters. He placed the need for the Indians, once "subjected" with force, to be taught how to live "rationally", and then to be evangelized: "First of all, the Gentiles must subject themselves and make them live as rational creatures, making them keep the natural law" (Nóbrega 1988, p. 447).

4.5 Importance of the Word and Sociability Among the Natives

José de Anchieta, in the Information of the Province of Brazil (1585), a long letter addressed to the Father General of the Company, affirmed the importance of preaching as a fundamental instrument for the indoctrination of the Indians. It justified the statement by the observation that the Indians attach an enormous value to speech and the word. He wrote: "They make a lot of case among themselves, like the Romans, of good speakers and call them masters of speech. And a good speaker gets from them what he wants: he gets them to kill or not to kill in wars; or to walk one part or the other; and he is lord of life and death. They listen to him all night and sometimes also throughout the day, without sleeping or eating. To experience whether he is a good orator and eloquent, many listen to him all night long to overcome him and tire him out, and if they cannot, they have him for a great man and speaker. That is why there are preachers among them very esteemed who exhort them to war, to kill men and to do other deeds of this sort" (Anchieta 1988, p.441).

Anchieta's attention to language and use of the word here is also an expression of his interests and skills. The theatrical records written by Anchieta have used plurilingualism as a form of acculturation. It was common to use the three languages in the same writings. Thus, for Anchieta, the word would be the great resource for the transformation of the customs and ideas of the natives, according to the evangelizing objectives. Anchieta's position is inserted in a broader context. In Brazil, a colonial country where the majority of the population was illiterate, as we will see, the use of the oral word as a vehicle for transmitting ideas and as a "therapeutic" means was a priority.

Anchieta emphasized the Indian ways of experiencing social relations and related affections. Anchieta stressed the fact that the Indians "love their children very much" and showed great sociability among them: "They are not demands, but benefactors and charitable; all those who enter their homes eat with them without telling them anything (…). They live together many times and a very big house of palm that they call hollow and with such peace that they are astonished, and with having houses without doors and their things without keys by no means steal from each other" (Anchieta 1988, p. 442).

There are psychosocial phenomena observed in native Brazilians, which do not fit the traditional labels and which the author described showing their strangeness. In the Information on Indigenous Marriages in Brazil, the Jesuit sought to investigate the peculiar relationships of kinship existing in the indigenous community, trying to infer the "feelings" experienced in such social relationships. He inferred that the Indians do not have a particular "feeling of adultery". About the polygamous Indians, he stated that "it is not possible to know with which of them they joined with a marital spirit, because (…) they do not even know how to say it really, because to all they had the same spirit" (Anchieta 1988, p. 457).

The difficulty of the missionary in understanding the affective experiences of the Indian is clear. Another unusual phenomenon in European eyes, described by Anchieta and other chroniclers, is that after the birth, it is the father who receives care and visits, not the mother. According to the writer, this conduct was explained by the fact that the Indians "have for themselves that the real kinship comes from the parents, who are the agents; and that the mothers are nothing more than a few bags (…) in which the children are raised" (Anchieta 1988, p. 460). In short, the sphere of affectivity, which we have seen valued in Jesuit psychology, could also be highlighted among the psychological characteristics of the Brazilian Indian, but the specific experiences and their cultural meanings remained an unknown to the eyes of the Canarian writer.

Fernão Cardim emphasized the sociability of the indigenous people, which was expressed in various signs, from the liberality in distributing food ("they share everything they have with their friends"), to the structure of the house, called "hollow", in which "there is no reparation between them (…) and entering it you see everything you have" (Cardim 1980, p. 88). The description of the indigenous hollow made in the Narrative is even more suggestive: "there is so much conformity between them that all year round there is no fighting, and with having nothing closed there is no theft; if it were any other nation, they could not live the way they live without many complaints, grievances, and even deaths, which is not found among them" (Cardim 1980, p. 152). According to Cardim, since childhood the Indians get used to socializing. The children play among them "with much quietness and friendship. (…) Among them there are no bad names, (…) and rarely when they play they get disconcerted, nor do they get angry about anything. They rarely hit each other, nor fight" (Cardim 1980, p. 53).

As for relationships and parental affections, Cardim confirmed the fact that Indians "love their children extraordinarily" and that "they do not give them any kind of punishment" (Cardim 1980, p. 91). He pointed out that "children are joyful and given to play", more than the children of the Portuguese. He noted that the natives "have no kind of punishment for their children; there is neither a father nor a mother who in all life punishes or touches a child, so much so that they carry them in their eyes" (Cardim 1980, p. 153). Cardim noted that, in spite of this, "when they are little, they are obedient to their fathers and mothers, and all of them are very kind and pleasant. This fact should intrigue the mentality and pedagogical concepts of Fernão Cardim, a Portuguese Jesuit, used to consider punishment as necessary in

the educational relationship, according to the practice of his time in Europe, when it was used to punish even university students, princes and kings (Ariès 1978).

A ritual that documents the ways of welcoming the Indians in front of foreigners, involving affective manifestations, is the tearful greeting reserved for guests, or new arrivals. The observer Fernão Cardim commented: "it is not only a new thing, but of great amazement, to see the way they welcome the guests, who they welcome crying in a strange way" (Cardim 1980, p. 153). The narrator declared his inability to evaluate the affective dimension of this gesture: crying in the eyes of the European was an expression of sadness, but for the Indian crying could also communicate joy. However, he recognized the value this practice assumes for the other and the need to respect it: "At this time of sad or joyful reception, the greatest insult they can do is to tell them to be silent, or that it is enough with these cries". Sociability within the tribe contrasted with the aggressiveness and violence shown in behavior against enemies. In this respect, Cardim confirmed the judgment of the other authors: "they are intrepid and ferocious, which is astonishing" (Cardim 1980, p. 105).

4.6 The Temporality Experience by the Authors of Letters and the Representation of Indians in this Perspective

The psychic experiences described above are inscribed in the experience of temporality lived by the authors of the letters. To pay attention to this is also something necessary for the understanding of the psychological knowledge proposed.

The sense of time lived sustains the Jesuits' positions on action in the present. In the letters, they often referred to a near past inherent in their own experience. We have already seen that the present experience is placed as the constant criterion for discerning what is convenient for the action and intervention of the Society of Jesus. In this respect, the Jesuits revealed themselves as men from the beginnings of Modernity, permeated by the anthropological vision of pedagogical humanism and by confidence in Portuguese military colonialism as a possibility for the creation of new political worlds. In the historical circumstance of that 'present' in which the action of the Jesuits was inscribed, the colonization that implied the submission of the Indians by military force was justified as the only possibility for the realization of the missionary plan. This position, expressed in the writings of the aforementioned Joseph of Acosta, considered the natives to be capable of being transformed by military submission before and by Christian education after. Thus, the influence of the indigenous traditions of belonging was also minimized. Nóbrega justified the fact of the military and political domination of the natives by the Portuguese, as a historical necessity, to enable the realization of the project of the Company. He wrote that, in this way, it could happen of "seeing the Gentile Indians subject and put in the yoke of Christian obedience, to be able to print in them everything we wanted. For it is the Indians of such quality that, once tamed, the faith of Christ will

be written in their understanding and their will very well. This is how it was done in Peru and the Antilles, which seems to have Gentile Indians of the same condition as this one, and we have now begun to see it by experience, as I will say below. If you leave them in their freedom and will, as they are brutal people, nothing will be done with them, as we have seen from experience all this time that we have dealt with him with a lot of work, without taking more fruit from him than a few innocent souls that we send to heaven" (Nóbrega 1988, p. 193).

On the other hand, the explanation given by Nóbrega about the condition of the natives referred to an ancient time. In Diálogo sobre a conversão do gentio (1556–1557), Manoel da Nóbrega used the resource of dialog, a literary genre widespread in the culture of the time, to highlight two visions about the Brazilian Indian, existing in the Company and among themselves contradictory. The first vision is expressed by the speech of brother Gonçalo Alves, a preacher in the indigenous villages, the other by the speech of his interlocutor, brother Matheus Nogueira, a blacksmith. In the text, it is on the level of a fragility of appetites, of will, fragility defined by Catholic theology as "original sin" that the "state of barbarity" of the Indians is explained. This existential condition, by which man "was made similar to the beast", is common to all peoples, whether the most civilized or the least, in the present moment of history: "so that all, thus Portuguese, as Castilians, as Tamoios, as Aimurés, we become similar to the beast, by nature corrupt, and in this we are all equal, nor has nature dispensed with more with one generation than with another" (Nóbrega 1988, p. 238).

The long history *(magisterial history)* is invoked in this case to evaluate the situation of the Brazilian Indians in the present: "They worshipped stones and sticks of men made gods, they had faith in witchcraft of the devil; others worshiped oxen and cows, and others worshiped rats for gods, and other filth. The Jews, who were the most right people in the world, and who had accounts with God, and had the scriptures from the beginning of the world, worshipped a metal heifer. The Romans, the Greeks, and all the other Gentiles, paint and have inda por god to an idol, to a cow, to a rooster" (Nóbrega 1988, p. 239).

In the letters and texts of Nobrega, two apparently antagonistic positions are merged. On the one hand, the author uses the resource of experience, linked to personal and group experience of the new circumstances of the present. On the other hand, he uses the reference to examples of a remote past, an expression of the traditional regime of temporality, which considers history as the master of life and the past as light to think of the present. According to Hartog, this mixture is characteristic of the historical period of Humanism and the Renaissance, when the sense of temporality proper to tradition begins to be questioned.

According to Hartog (2003), on the one hand, "the top of magisterial history in general gained new and greater importance in the Renaissance, with the rediscovery and reading of ancient historians, emphasizing the imitation of the ancients and, in broader terms, the use of antiquity as a controversial instrument of criticism of

Christianity (2003, p.14). At the same time, the Renaissance is also witnessing a questioning of this vision.[7]

Nóbrega's position seems more focused on recent past experience and less on tradition. This position can be better understood by taking into account the novelty that the Society of Jesus itself proposes to represent in its historical time, being conceived as a response to the signs of the times.

In the view of the Jesuits, children of their time, transformation was thought of in a perspective shaped by Humanism: it must occur through education. In the Dialogue on the conversion of the Gentiles, Nobrega puts these words in the mouth of one of the two interlocutors: iron "stuck in the forge, fire makes it so that it looks more like fire than iron. Thus all souls without grace and charity from God are cold irons without profit. But the more it is heated, the more you make of it what you will…" (Nobrega 1988, p. 240). One of the interlocutors of the Nóbrega Dialogue, the Jesuit Matheus Nogueira, considers the attribute of "bestiality" reserved for the Indians by the fifteenth-century literature, as something common to "all generations" and peoples, before going through the civilizatory process. The cultural inferiority of indigenous peoples in relation to other nations is not due to a diversity in their psychological structure (for example, the state of barbarity in which they live should not be attributed to a presumed intellectual inferiority). But it is due to education: "having the Romans and other Gentiles more police than these, did not come from naturally having a better understanding, but from having better creation, and creating themselves more politically" (Nóbrega 1988, p. 240).

In the Jesuit perception of temporality, another decisive factor is taken into account: under the circumstances, Nóbrega and the other partners appealed to divine initiative. The intervention of the latter in worldly reality was proved by experience: "When God wants to help, friends make themselves enemies in favor of Christians, and when he wants to punish, he makes enemies friends: and one thing and another was seen on this earth by experience" (Nóbrega 1988, p. 216). It has already been seen how experience can become a revelation of the divine action in human history, to the extent that one knows how to read the signs of this action. In several cases, this action was reported as "the spirit of God that moves". For the Jesuits, in fact,

[7] Hartog cites the example of the French historian J. Bodin: he, in a book of 1566, The *Method of History*, states that "thanks to history the present is easily explainable, we penetrate into the future and obtain very sure indications of what we should seek and avoid" (p. 17). At the same time, however, it presents a vision of the historical past in which it demystifies the traditional conception of "beginnings as a time of poverty and purity" and shows that, on the contrary, such beginnings were marked by superstitions and cruelties. Another contemporary author to Nóbrega quoted by Hartog is Loys le Roy, a humanist and author of *De la vicissitude ou variété des choses en l'univers* (1575): this book also "is based on the magisterial history and at the same time challenges it by trying to prove the superiority of the present". The text simultaneously makes use of various temporalities and, above all, considers the present as superior to any previous time, the commitment of the present being to correct the heritage left by barbarians, Greeks and Romans. Another example cited by Hartog can be found in the first two books of the *Essays* of Montaigne, published in 1580. Montaigne, if on the one hand is widely used of examples, as appeals to imitation, at the same time emphasizes their variety and contradiction: the examples become curiosities to highlight the multiplicity of the world and the fact that time destabilizes everything.

the value of history was sacramental, always referring to the mystery of divine Providence (Pécora 1994).

In short, the horizon of expectation about the future was sustained by the experience lived by the Jesuits: this was elaborated over a near past and in any case in the first person. It is on this ultimate horizon that the sense of temporality was placed. Time was constantly crossed by the action of the Eternal One and referred to Him. The sense of the present time was that of being grafted into the transcendent, into Eternity. The future belongs to God. On this same horizon, the writing of the letters was placed and acts, for its authors and its recipients: this was a link that links actors close in ideal, but distant in space to a time, whose present was apparently obscure and whose future was mysteriously certain. In the letters, the authors outlined what for them was a portrait of Brazilian reality and, at the same time, mirror how much they experience themselves. Psychological knowledge was mobilized for the composition of this portrait and, through mirroring, they somehow constructed the self-portrait of each of the writers.

4.7 Conclusion

The elaboration of the knowledge of the psychological characteristics of the native Brazilians carried out by the Jesuit missionaries was the effect of their vision of the world and of man and their sense of temporality. In this sense, it employed the resources of their universe of thought, especially those arising from the Conimbricenses treaties analyzed in the second chapter of this book. The influences of Humanist and Renaissance conceptions about education and civilization, considered capable of radically transforming man, were also very important. At the same time, such an elaboration took place in a temporal horizon, proper to missionaries, where the present was linked to the eternal; so that also the process of formation of man was thought in this long perspective.

The representation of the psychological characteristics of the Indians proposed in the Jesuit sources allows us to reach some kind of knowledge about the subject at the time considered, given the lack of written sources elaborated by the Indians themselves. In fact, the various indigenous peoples who lived in Brazil in the sixteenth and seventh centuries had a culture based exclusively on orality.

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