

## The Crisis of Messianic Philosophy<sup>27</sup>

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doi: [10.34632/diffractions.2020.8413](https://doi.org/10.34632/diffractions.2020.8413)

Ritual ANTROPOFAGIA<sup>28</sup> among the Greeks was recorded by Homer and, according to the documentation of Argentine writer Blanco Villalta, it was found in the Americas among those peoples who had reached a high level of cultural development – the Aztecs, the Mayas, and the Incas. In Columbus's words, *comian los hombres*. They did not do so, however, out of gluttony or hunger. This was a ritual that, being also found in other parts of the globe, seemed to express a way of thinking, a worldview that characterized a certain primitive phase of all humanity.

Seen, thus, as *weltanschauung*, it uneasily fits the materialistic and immoral interpretation of the jesuits and the colonizers. Rather, it is a religious act that belongs to the rich spiritual world of primitive man. Its sense of harmony and communality is at odds with cannibalism, which is anthropophagy out of gluttony and also anthropophagy out of hunger, notoriously present in chronicles of besieged cities and lost travelers.

The metaphysical operation linked to the anthropophagic ritual is the transformation of taboo into totem. From the opposed value into the favorable value. Life is pure devouring. In this devouring, which threatens human existence at every turn, it is up to man to totemize the taboo. What is taboo, if not the unreachable, the limit? While in his fundamental axiological scale, Western man elevated the categories of his knowledge up to God – the supreme good – primitive man instituted his scale of values up to God – the

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<sup>27</sup>I take the original excerpts in Portuguese from *Do Pau-Brasil à Antropofagia e às Utopias: Manifestos, Teses de Concursos e Ensaios*. See Works Cited.

<sup>28</sup>I have decided to follow de Andrade's original capitalization and italization, as well as to keep his choice of leaving several references, titles, and expressions in their respective original languages.

supreme evil. There is herein a radical opposition of concepts leading to a radical opposition in behavior.

And all goes back to the existence of two cultural hemispheres that divided history into Matriarchy and Patriarchy. The former is the world of primitive man. The latter, that of civilized man. The former produced an anthropophagic culture, the latter a messianic culture.

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We thus arrive at a time for momentous questions. If the present century, during its first half, was a field for experimentation in History, it was no less a laboratory for hypotheses and research.... Karl Marx had reduced to mere accountancy the flights of German metaphysics. And Friedrich Nietzsche stated that the great problems are to be encountered in the street [...].

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Philosophy has never been an autonomous discipline. Either for or against life, either deceiving men or believing in them, Philosophy has always depended on the historical and social conditions under which it was cultivated.

This is the first statement of the present thesis that coincides not only with Karl Marx, but with Kierkegaard and Friedrich Nietzsche.

Yet another thinker, the bitter Schopenhauer, brought into the intellectual debate of a century ago an element that had long been hidden under the guise of Religion and Ethics. He was able to pinpoint the role of the will as a primordial element of life and it is undoubtedly from this that Sigmund Freud's recondite universe is derived. It is an element that is deeply and categorically linked to philosophy today.

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... The essential formulation of man as an issue and as a reality is thus:

1<sup>st</sup> term: thesis – the natural man

2<sup>nd</sup> term: antithesis – the civilized man

3<sup>rd</sup> term: *synthesis* – the technicized natural man.

We are living in a state of negativity, that is what is real. We are currently living through the second dialectical term of our fundamental equation.

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In the world of the primitive man known as Matriarchy, society had not yet been divided into classes. Matriarchy rested on a threefold foundation: matrilineal descent, the common ownership of land, and a classless State or, in other words, the absence of the State. When the class system was established, as a result of the patriarchal revolution, one class seized power and began to command all others [...]. This was when the coercive organization that is the State was established; legality personified.

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The historical rupture with the matriarchal world took place when man ceased devouring man to begin enslaving one another. Friedrich Engels noted the fruitful dialectical progress that this constituted for humanity.

In effect, enslavement resulted from the division of labor and the organization of society into classes. Technical progress and social hierarchy were created. And the history of man became, as Marx has stated, the history of class struggle.

One class gained predominance over all others. This was the religious class. A world free of obligations to God was replaced by a world beholden to a Supreme Being

that dispensed both reward and retribution. It would have been difficult for man to endure his condition as slave were it not for the idea of an afterlife. Hence the importance of messianism in the history of patriarchy.

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The history of the priesthood is characterized as the source of what Friedrich Nietzsche would call "Slave Morality" [...].

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The Priesthood stands for leisure consecrated to the gods [...]. The word leisure in Greek is *sxolé*, from which the word school is derived. As such, we can easily identify the idlers in ancient society as those men who evaded manual labor in order to dedicate themselves to conjecture and to the conquests of the spirit.

The underpinning of every religion and every demagogy is leisure. Man accepts work to conquer leisure. And today, through technical, social and political progress, we have reached the era when, according to Aristotle, "the spindles work of themselves," and man leaves behind his condition as slave and finds himself once again on the threshold of the Age of Leisure. This is the presage of a new Matriarchy.

All social techniques, legislation as well as politics, optimality criteria, as well as Occupational Health and Safety, have reduced work, and have organized and compensated it on sanitary and perpetually self-contradictory grounds. It is the apportioning of leisure, to which every man born of a woman is entitled. And the common ideal would be retirement, which is the metaphysics of leisure.

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Before continuing the story of the clothed man, let us spend a moment on what man is.

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Thus, in the course of the transformations of beings, man would have once been mollusk, fish, lizard, bird and mammal. And from him there would have derived, as collateral, the fixed types of these species.

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Original promiscuity is a fact [...].

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To Bachofen, as popularized by Nietzsche, we owe the earliest research on Matriarchy. As we have already stated, human culture is divided into two hemispheres – Patriarchy and Matriarchy.

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It is Greece that provides the decisive testimony of the culture in which everyone would be equal, ownership would be shared and there would be no dominance of man over man. The best account of the age without masters or slaves is given in Plato's Republic, from which opulence and poverty would be banished and all classes would be made equal...

However, the text that marks the shift into Paternal Law and consequently finds itself at the dawn of the Patriarchy is Aeschylus's *Oresteia*. We find the first reference to this text in Bachofen.

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The climax of Patriarchy is represented in Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. The vengeance and resentment of the Prince against his adulterous mother resound loudly here [...]. The tragic fate of Prince Hamlet, which is the same as that of Orestes, has been repeated on the paths of Patriarchy throughout the millennia. From Sophocles' *Electra* to O'Neill's *Electra*, through Racine, Goethe and Ibsen, it is invariably the drama of the child's non-conformity in the face of the libertarian constant of the loving parent. It is the drama of inheritance and private property.

Today, in the messianic crisis that is making itself felt from all sides, the paternalistic climax is in decline. It is the philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre who has presented the measure of this new revolution of laws and customs [...].

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In Genesis, Eve is to blame. In Homeric Greece, it is Pandora who releases into the world all the evils contained in her box.

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From Socrates we derive the model of the perfect human puppet, long extolled by the ruling classes to maintain the slave tamed and satisfied [...].

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Socrates represents the loss of playfulness in evolved man. To endure death, he preaches the salvationist idea of survival.

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Once the medieval world was surmounted, Patriarchy underwent the first collisions of the modern spirit. Through Renaissance artists, the human body was rediscovered. With Descartes, reason affirms its existence and science extends a vast dominion over the techniques of thought, which had been unsuspected until then. These are two immeasurable conquests. Man is possessed of a body and reason. Conversely, Spinoza, by linking God to Nature, restores the human soul to its cosmic sense, outside the injunctions of the Priesthood and the Church.

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However, what caused the edifice of the visionary, priestly and castle-bound Middle Ages to tremble and collapse was the economic advent of the bourgeoisie [...]. The abyssal separation between the Middle Ages and the Renaissance is the result of the arrival of bourgeois money, and with it, initiative, credit and technical progress. Bank documents and paper currency, invented in China in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, would render monetary power so fluid, that crucial values were forced to yield in the face of the expansion of the economic values produced and multiplied everywhere. The city, as opposed to the castle, is the secret of the diabolical transformation of the world. The city is the market, the city is the desire that spurs production [...]. “City air *enfranchises*,” according to a German proverb of the day [...].

The bourgeoisie, however, soon surrounded itself with all kinds of paternalistic precautions... From this time dates the institution of monogamy among Jews. And Roman Law reappears because it is the Law that guarantees and defends property [...].

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[...] God elects the beneficiaries of profit. In contrast to the Priesthood, which is sacred leisure, there arises business which, in its virulence, is the negation of leisure<sup>29</sup>.

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<sup>29</sup>There is a wordplay with *ócio* (leisure) and *negócio* (business) in de Andrade’s original. The poet not only uses the latter for what it semantically denotes—“business”; “trade”; “deal”—but also as a prosodic pun. By using the prefix “neg-” (derived from the Latin *negare*) which means “no”, de Andrade playfully negates *ócio*,

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Let us examine the mental map of *Cogito*. This dates back to Augustine and finds its complete formulation in *Cogito ergo sum*, by a later philosopher. 'I am thought, or rather, I am the object of cogitation, and therefore, I exist.'

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It is undoubtedly with Descartes that the beginning of the modern world is outlined. His book in support of Galileo's theories had been burnt by himself [...].

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Two statements remain from all the chit-chat in *Discours de la Méthode*: Man exists, he is a reality. This Man doubts, he doubts everything. He thus may even doubt the existence of God.

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Locke influenced Jean-Jacques Rousseau. But Voltaire is the figure who expressed the definite disjunction with Christianity, and for whom "religion [wa]s either madness or trickery".

... and Benjamin Franklin himself [...] is not immune to this cult of reason, which, after all, is nothing more than a cult of class reason, namely bourgeois reason. The struggle against the old prejudices continues. In the United States' Declaration of Independence, "self-evident truths" are proclaimed. "*Aimez donc la raison!*" This leads us to Boileau and to the codification of poetry itself.

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i.e., *neg-ócio*.

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[...] The arrival of the remarkable year of '48. At this point, one of the greatest documents in history appears, the *Communist Manifesto*, by Marx and Engels. As a curious rejoinder, Pope Pius IX was forced to flee Rome in the same year. And according to Bachofen's testimony, "Garibaldi, attired in red, on a white horse, followed by his black servant as he rode along the streets of the Eternal City, to the delight of the crowd." In the 1870s, within a short interval, there was the dovetailing of two other momentous events. The Commune and the Pope's loss of the *Civitas Leonina*, with the creation of the Kingdom of Italy.

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The conditions that the world had reached at the height of the industrial revolution had found their greatest examiner. This was Karl Marx. *Capital* goes beyond economic theory [...]. It is above all the psychological and social diagnosis of class struggle [...].

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Right next to the comfortable home and sumptuous life of the bourgeois, Marx iconoclastically places the tenement. In between the two, the factory [...] the dogmatic bases for the struggle of the proletariat. These are A) laws, customs, literature, and philosophy are consequences of the economic structure of society. They are its superstructure; B) it is the proletariat itself, as a class, that must decide upon its affairs; C) the seizure of power by workers will be a class dictatorship.

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Who could have foreseen, who would have dared to dream that the Messianism into which the religion of Christ had been split (Reformation and Counter-Reformation) would thrive on the barren terrain of the materialist claims of Marxism? [...].

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Psychoanalysis was slow to understand that it was necessary to strike against the paternalistic Superego. For a very long time, the solutions presented by Freud's school were unable to see past the negative remedies of the Ego (repression, regression, denial, and isolation) as well as forms of masochism (turning against oneself, turning into one's opposite) as the only way to resolve historical man's internal conflicts.

Eventually, the notion that the Superego could also be wrong was finally understood [...].

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Clearly, Freudianism suffers from the traces of its paternalistic construction. Freud and his glorious followers lack the Bachofen dimension. They were not able to see that their research was limited and their interpretation was distorted by the Patriarchy's historical agenda.

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In a matriarchal culture, what becomes internalized during adolescence is no longer the hostile figure of the individual-father, but the image of the social group.

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The fideist animal that is man, the animal who believes and obeys, has reached the end of his state of Negativity and stands on the threshold of the golden gates of a new age of leisure. Freedom is not in question at this age. Freedom only exists as demand when man starts to enslave one another and to deny that he is a Being determined by freedom, as in the case in Patriarchy. There, freedom is the awareness of necessity. In the vocabulary of

enslavement, freedom is the human tendency to return to that which is righteous, which is the natural state.

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Our thesis asserts:

1<sup>st</sup> That the world is divided, throughout its long History, into Matriarchy and Patriarchy.

2<sup>nd</sup> That to these antagonistic hemispheres correspond, respectively, an anthropophagic culture and a messianic culture.

3<sup>rd</sup> That the latter is, dialectically, being replaced by the former, as a synthesis or 3<sup>rd</sup> term, with the addition of technical progress.

4<sup>th</sup> That a new Matriarchy is being foretold, with its forms of expression and social reality which are: matrilineal descent, the common right to land, and a classless State or, in other words, the absence of the State.

5<sup>th</sup> That the current phase of human progress foreshadows what Aristotle attempted to express when he stated that “when the spindles worked of themselves there would be no further need for slaves.”

6<sup>th</sup> That, whether or not under the guise of secularity, any philosophy committed to God has never ceased to be messianic in nature.

7<sup>th</sup> That the USSR expresses but a minor desire for the great revolution of kinship that shall take place with the advent of the new Matriarchy. This revolution stressed one concern alone – that of the issue of property.

8<sup>th</sup> That furthermore, the USSR, enthralled by the fascination of action, has lost the dialectical impulse of its movement, and has congealed into a working-class dogmatics that is reminiscent of nothing short of the Reformation and Counter-Reformation.

9<sup>th</sup> That the above expresses the last refuge of messianic Philosophy, displaced from Heaven to earth.

10<sup>th</sup> That, in face of Marx's historical-collectivist conception, Existentialism expresses a high watermark of Subjectivity, one in which the individual is historicized as consciousness and as drama. In the Patriarchy.

11<sup>th</sup> That only the technicized restoration of an anthropophagic culture would solve the current problems of man and Philosophy.

12<sup>th</sup> That James Burnham's *The Managerial Revolution*, by reminding us of the tribe's gerontocracy, offers the best proposal for a controlled society that gradually suppresses the State, private property, and the indissoluble family – in other words, the essential forms of Patriarchy.

13<sup>th</sup> That man, like the virus, the gene, the merest portion of life, is realized in antagonistic duplicity– beneficial, harmful–which brings within it its conflicting nature against the world.

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