



The history of XIX century Brazilian Philosophy as an unfortunate fable

A história da filosofia brasileira do século XIX como uma fábula infeliz

La historia de la filosofía brasileña en el século XIX como una fábula infeliz

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Abstract

The historiography of Brazilian philosophy, as represented by authors like Silvio Romero, Tobias Barreto and Cruz Costa, has established a negative view of such philosophy which became an unfortunate tradition that prevents an adequate understanding of the country's philosophical past. This situation reflects on the understanding of the country's philosophical present and future. The current paper intends to analyze such a negativist tradition, revealing its superficiality, its ethnocentrism, and its blatant rhetoric, suggesting the need of an urgent reevaluation of the history of Brazilian philosophy.

Keywords: History of Brazilian philosophy. Silvio Romero. Tobias Barreto. Cruz Costa. Brazilian negative self-image. Philosophical ethnocentrism.

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Resumo

A historiografia da filosofia brasileira, representada por autores como Silvio Romero, Tobias Barreto e Cruz Costa, estabeleceu uma infeliz visão negativa, que se tornou uma tradição que tem impedido a compreensão adequada do passado filosófico do país. Essa situação tem reflexos na compreensão do presente e do futuro filosófico do país. O presente trabalho pretende fazer uma análise dessa tradição negativista, mostrando sua superficialidade, seu etnocentrismo e sua retórica flagrante, sugerindo a necessidade de uma reavaliação urgente da história da filosofia brasileira.

Palavras-chave: *História da filosofia brasileira. Silvio Romero., Tobias Barreto. Cruz Costa. Autoimagem negativa brasileira. Etnocentrismo filosófico.*

Resumen

La historia de la filosofía brasileña del siglo XIX, contada por autores como Silvio Romero y Tobias Barreto, estableció una desafortunada visión negativa de la misma, que se ha convertido en una tradición que ha impedido una adecuada comprensión del pasado filosófico del país. Esta situación repercute en la comprensión del presente y futuro filosófico del país. El presente trabajo se propone analizar algunas tesis de Romero y Tobias que contribuyeron a la creación de esta tradición negativista, mostrando su superficialidad y errores a partir del modelo de complementariedad sistema/contexto. El principal objetivo de este texto es sugerir la necesidad de una reevaluación urgente de la historia de la filosofía brasileña.

Palabras clave: *Historia de la filosofía brasileña. Silvio Romero. Tobias Barreto. Autoimagen negativa brasileña. Filosofía de segunda mano.*

Introduction

A significant portion of the Brazilian philosophical community shares the belief that Brazil does not have a philosophical mind and that an authentic Brazilian philosopher is yet to come. This belief led some historians of nineteenth century Brazilian philosophy to defend the following claims: i) none of the Brazilian thinkers of the period may be properly called a *philosopher*; ii) all these thinkers are mere dilettantes who developed second hand philosophies which are not worthy of consideration; iii) these second hand philosophies present no serialization of ideas. These historians also believe that the philosophical doctrines adopted by nineteenth century Brazilian philosophers were completely out of context, lacking a real connection with reality. I acknowledge that there is another portion of Brazilian philosophical community which includes some historians of Brazilian philosophy such as Antonio Paim and his followers who approached the subject in a more respectful and considerate way. But unfortunately, they also offer misinterpretations which are in need of reassessment.

In the current paper, for reasons of space, I shall leave aside Antonio Paim and his followers and focus on the common place view with respect mainly to nineteenth century Brazilian philosophy. I shall challenge this view, arguing that the history of Brazilian philosophy has been constructed in a biased way and somehow based in inadequate categories. This has led to the current prejudiced view of nineteenth century Brazilian philosophy. As against this, I shall try to reveal some of the misinterpretations involved and their unfortunate consequences.

To that goal, I shall discuss initially the *vexata quaestio* about the identity of Brazilian philosophy, recurring to an approach that might help us in overcoming some difficulties which are always haunting this subject. After that, I shall discuss some aspects of the views of two historians of nineteenth century Brazilian philosophy which I deem as main responsible for the misconceptions mentioned. These authors are Silvio Romero and Tobias Barreto. As the present paper has an introductory character, I shall not be able to go deep into these Author's views, limiting myself to only one or two aspects of their doctrines. But I expect to show in the end that the facts concerning nineteenth century Brazilian philosophy show that they really misinterpreted it in the aspects considered and that whoever follows them is contributing to the preservation of a distorted image of such a philosophy. I apologize in advance for the quantity of information about nineteenth century Brazilian philosophy that will be presented in the current paper without a more detailed justification. Anyway, such justification will be found in the second and third volumes of my *History of Brazilian Philosophy*. The second volume has already been published, and the third volume is currently in process of completion and probably will be ready by the second semester of 2023. The ideas presented here may be seen as a brief of some of my general conclusions as exposed in the third volume.

The system/context approach

As already mentioned, I shall discuss initially the important question about the identity of Brazilian philosophy which is in general involved in most discussions about the history of Brazilian philosophy. Of course, the question is linked to the problem of the identity of Latin American philosophy and my analysis will take advantage of the discussions already made on the subject. But it is important to remind here that these discussions have been made mainly by Hispanic American thinkers who tend to stress the aspects belonging to the Hispanic American philosophy, to the detriment of the aspects belonging to Brazilian philosophy as such. This probably is the result of the use of the dangerously generic idea of *Latin American philosophy*, which suggests that all countries included in such a notion are bound to share more aspects in common than the ones we may in fact find.

At this point, I shall make a historical *excursus* in order to show that, in virtue of its historical circumstances, Brazilian philosophy occupies a peculiar position in the context of Latin American philosophy. As a matter of fact, the Portuguese colonization of Brazil was in some aspects much more obscurantist than Hispanic colonization, and this caused a cultural delay which left the Portuguese colony intellectually well behind her Hispanic neighbours. But later on, the colony experienced an authentic revolution by the time the Portuguese Court, fleeing from Napoleon's army,

transferred to Brazil. The colony was suddenly elevated to the rank of United Kingdom to Portugal and the independence movement which followed was led by Peter I, a Portuguese monarch. As a result, differently from Hispanic American colonies, the independent Brazil became a constitutional monarchy under the name of First Reign. Peter I was an authoritarian ruler and quickly became very unpopular. For this reason, he abdicated in 1831 and left his five year old son as heir to the Brazilian throne. The country experienced then a period of political instability while waiting for the heir's majority. In order to prevent this, the heir was officially declared of age when he was only fifteen years old. He assumed the Brazilian throne under the name of Peter II and this fact gave origin to the Second Reign which lasted from 1840 to 1889. The country experienced then a relative stability during this period. All these facts created historical circumstances which were very different from the historical circumstances of Hispanic America. For example, the Hispanic colonies adhered to positivism and republicanism by the occasion of their respective independence movements, whereas Brazil adhered to spiritualism and constitutional monarchy by the same period. Some of these circumstances will be explained later. The important point to be made here is that Brazilian peculiar historical circumstances, marked by the presence of a Portuguese monarch in the country, determined choices of philosophical systems which were not the same as the ones determined by Hispanic American historical circumstances.

Even so, some of the problems affecting Hispanic American philosophy have their counterparts in Brazilian philosophy. One of them is the problem concerning the identity of Brazilian philosophy. Now in his study of the identity of Latin American philosophy, Jorge Gracia distinguishes four basic stances with respect to the problem: the universalist stance, as defended by Risieri Frondizi, the culturalist stance, as defended by Leopoldo Zea, the critical stance, as defended by Salazar Bondy, and the ethnic stance, as defended by Gracia himself. As far as I can see, the ethnic stance is a variant of the culturalist stance, with the proviso that *cultural context* be replaced by *ethnos*. In fact, Gracia defines *ethnos* as a group of people who have been brought together by history and this seems to be little different from some people who have been brought together by historical circumstances defining a historical context. In this perspective, the word *ethnos* seems to give merely some cultural personality to the historical context to the point of running the risk of reifying such context. In virtue of this, I shall consider only the three remaining stances. And, for reasons of space, I shall not develop further the explanation of these stances, assuming that the reader is sufficiently acquainted with them (see GRACIA, 1988, pp. 16-26; see also NUC CETELLI, 2010, pp. 36-43). But I shall adapt them to the Brazilian case, which is different from the Hispanic American case.

As far as the historiography of Brazilian philosophy is concerned, the Brazilian nineteenth century historians used mainly a version of the critical stance, leading to the above mentioned common belief that Brazil has not a philosophical mind and for this reason has not produced anything philosophically worth of consideration. The universalist and culturalist stances did not play a relevant role in Brazilian historiography of the period in question. For this reason, they will not be considered here.

As far as the critical stance is concerned, I shall claim that it has been applied to the Brazilian case in two steps. In the first one, the Brazilian historical circumstance is described as belonging to an ill formed society which desperately needs to be radically reformed in order to become civilized. This means that a philosophical system made in France, for example, on account of its universality, may be applied to France and any other country of which the historical circumstances reveal a similar level of civilization. But surely it cannot be applied to Brazilian miserable primitive historical circumstances which did not reach the level of civilization. For this reason, whenever a Brazilian philosopher gets his inspiration, say, from a French thinker, he is automatically viewed as distancing himself from Brazilian historical circumstances and thus making French philosophy instead of Brazilian philosophy. In the second step, the works of Brazilian philosophers are analyzed with extreme rigor and prejudice, mostly on the basis of ethnocentric criteria, in order to confirm the notion that such works are inadequate expressions of the ill formed society to which they belong.

Now I think the above version of the critical stance as applied to Brazil involves some misconceptions about the Brazilian historical context and the scope of philosophy. It is true that the predatory Portuguese colonization gave origin to an ill formed society, marked by authoritarianism, patriarchy, conservatism, obscurantism, slavery, massacre of the indigenous population, etc. These features certainly contribute to validate the strongly negative image construed by the adherents to the critical stance. But it is also true that since the transfer of the Portuguese court, the Brazilian society had developed an amount of positive features leading to a relative alleviation of colonial conditions, such as the opening of Brazilian ports to friendly nations of Portugal, the creation of a Royal Press authorized to publish newspapers and books, the creation of the Bank of Brazil, the creation of the Royal Military Academy, the creation of medical schools, etc. Later on, during Peter the First's rule, two law schools were created. Of course, these positive features did not elevate post-colonial Brazilian society to the same level as the one reached by European societies. But they at least provided the country with better conditions than the ones belonging to the colonial period. And nobody can deny that these better conditions contributed to elevate the intellectual level of a portion of the Brazilian population. True, this portion was represented mainly by the Brazilian elite. But this very same elite was then led to reflect about the country's situation. In most cases, the elite tried to defend the *status quo*, but and in some cases a portion of the elite defended a radical reform of Brazilian society. The abolitionist movement and the indigenist movement are representatives of the reformist tendency. Now this reflected upon the domain of philosophy, which is characterized in nineteenth century by the appearance of many authors, many books and many reviews on philosophical subjects. This means that although revealing a low level of civilization according to European patterns, Brazilian society was able to provide a historical context fit for philosophical reflection. Unfortunately, the adherents of the critical stance refused to acknowledge this fact. But if we take this very fact under consideration, then the pessimist conclusion of the critical stance as far as Brazilian historical circumstances is concerned, is in need to be reassessed.

In order to explain my point, I shall present now my idea of *philosophy's scope*. I assume that in general philosophical systems have at least two dimensions: the *doctrine* and its *context*. The doctrine is related to the system's pretensions to universality, whereas the doctrine's context is related to the system's connections with reality. These dimensions are mutually exclusive, for the universality of the system does not cohere with the particularity of its historical context. The way to overcome this opposition is to assume that philosophy is a complex object of analysis, and that the duality system/context reflects such complexity. Thus, the only procedure to adequately understand a philosophical system is to appeal to two complementary descriptions, one of them concerning the doctrine and the other concerning the context. Although the descriptions are mutually exclusive, we need them both in order to adequately seize the object of study, namely, philosophy as a system formulated within a particular historical situation. I acknowledge that this procedure corresponds to an adaptation of Bohr's complementarity principle, as formulated in the domain of quantum mechanics, to the domain of philosophy. This is not a novelty, but the complementary approach system/context seems to provide an adequate method to study our problem.

In the Brazilian case, the approach system/context is connected to the phenomenon of cultural transposition. The process of colonization involves the inevitable imposition of the colonizer's culture upon the colonized subjects. I shall concentrate my attention on the predominantly Portuguese culture resulting from the colonization of Brazil. For this reason, I shall leave aside the question of what happened to Indigenous cultures and African cultures because this would complicate the discussion far beyond the scope of the present paper. This means that I am considering only part of the problem, but I expect this procedure will not harm my main conclusions.

From the standpoint of philosophy, the transposition involves the application of one philosophical system belonging to a certain context to another context that is not the original one. And the main point defended by the critical historian is that such transposition cannot be made in the Brazilian case in virtue of the uncivilized context involved. As against this, I argue that if a philosophical system has a universal dimension, then it may be applied to different contexts, and the Brazilian context, whatever the level of civilization it may display, is no exception to this

fact. This means that even a Brazilian universal philosophical system, although inspired by a French system, may be applied to Brazilian historical circumstances, provided that the system in question may be somehow connected to Brazilian historical circumstances. Perhaps some adaptations have to be made, but this does not entail the system's inability to be transposed to another context.

If this is true, then we may say that a system belongs to the domain of Brazilian philosophy whenever such system satisfies the following two conditions: i) it is presented in a universal form, whatever its foreign source – if any – might be; ii) it may be connected to the Brazilian historical circumstances. In an analogous direction, Nuccetelli has proposed the following two criteria to identify a philosophical theory as characteristically Latin American: i) its originality; ii) its sensitivity to the environment (NUCCETELLI, 2010, pp. 529-30). Now by comparing both sets of criteria, we may see that the ones I am proposing are different with respect to the requirement of originality. As far as I can see, a philosophical system is still philosophical, even though it has no originality at all. And we cannot forget that its application to a different context already points to some form of originality. What is more, the question on originality would not affect at least some of my conclusions, because some of the Brazilian nineteenth century philosophical systems reveal at least some originality and this fact would make them suitable candidates even according to Nuccetelli's criteria. I expect that, although exposed very briefly, the above criteria are sufficiently clear, because they will be used by me in the remaining of the current paper.

In what follows, I shall turn the attention to some of the thesis of Silvio Romero and Tobias Barreto, whose prejudiced critical stance led to a distorted view of the history of nineteenth century Brazilian philosophy.

The case of Silvio Romero

This Author reveals a multifariously talented personality, having written texts belonging to fields so diverse as literature, philosophy, sociology, history, law, poetry, etc. Romero is a controversial writer which appeals many and many times to a sour rhetoric in order to express his ideas and criticize his enemies. He may be great in some fields such as literature, folklore, and law, for example, but paradoxically he is weak in other fields, mainly in the history of Brazilian philosophy. And the last one is the very field that interests me in the present paper. For this reason, I shall consider here some of his hypotheses in his book *A Filosofia no Brasil, Ensaio Crítico (Philosophy in Brazil, a Critical Essay)*, published in 1878. There he presents the philosophical works of the following nineteenth century Brazilian philosophers: six spiritualists as represented by Monte Alverne, Eduardo Ferreira França, Gonçalves de Magalhães, Patrício Muniz, Soriano de Souza, and Pedro Américo; four adepts of scientism as represented by Luiz Pereira Barreto, José de Araújo Ribeiro, Domingos Guedes Cabral, and Tobias Barreto. Romero justifies his choice of Brazilian philosophical works by claiming that the remaining ones were so insignificant that the mere fact of considering them would stain the pages of his study (ROMERO, 1878, pp. VIII-IX).

The main points in Romero's book which I shall address here are only two: i) his claim that only ten Brazilian nineteenth century philosophical works are worth considering; ii) his claim that in the history of Brazil's spiritual development there is no serialization of ideas. The first claim has already been mentioned and will be analyzed in due course. The second one is explained by Romero as follows. He says that Brazil's spiritual development reveals an important gap which is worthy to be considered: the lack of serialization in ideas, the absence of a genetic affiliation among them. In other words, an Author does not derive from another Author, a philosophical system is not the logical consequence of a preceding system. This means that Brazil has not an intellectual tradition in a rigorous sense. In Brazil, the fact that one reads a foreign writer and reveals preference for a foreign book decides the nature of one's philosophical opinions. The ideas of Brazilian philosophers do not descend from each other on the basis of any logic of events. Perhaps these philosophers do not even know each other and, whenever this occurs, none of them has taken advantage of the ideas coming from his predecessor, except in Magalhães case, because he inherited something from his master Monte Alverne. Such an anomaly is explainable by the little or no influence these Authors exerted on Brazilian thinking. In addition, Romero confesses to be unable to detect what kind of relation exists between thinkers

like Patricio Muniz and Tobias Barreto. The first one has read Aquinas and Gioberti and has turned into a theologian and an apriorist adherent to the Absolute. The second one has read Schopenhauer, Hartmann, Comte, and Haeckel, and turned into a critic inspired by the great idea of evolutionary relativity and also has been somehow impregnated by a healthy pessimism. Romero cannot see whatever might be binding them because their respective nurturing sources are extra national. Surprisingly, Romero thinks this is not a liability, but rather represents an advantage (ROMERO, 1878, pp. 35-6).

With respect to Romero's first claim, my research on the subject points in a different direction. As a matter of fact, I was able to count around sixty works on philosophy in Brazilian nineteenth century. With respect to other Authors not considered by Romero, my research indicates that Diogo Feijó, Frei Caneca, Nísia Floresta, the Marquis of Maricá, Antonio Pedro de Figueiredo and Inácio de Abreu e Lima, among others, are worth of consideration. Feijó has written a manual of philosophy that tries to conciliate spiritualism, empiricism and some aspects of the Kantian system as interpreted by François Villers (see FEIJÓ, 1967; VILLERS, 1830; VILLERS, 1833). Frei Caneca was a firm defender of a form of constitutional liberalism who lost his life in virtue of his ideas and his revolutionary actions (see CABRAL DE MELLO, 2001; CANECA, 1976; CANECA, 1875). Nísia Floresta was a feminist writer totally out of tune with Brazilian nineteenth century patriarchy (see FLORESTA, 1989; MARGUTTI, 2019). The Marquis of Maricá wrote a maxims book which defends a form of panentheist spiritualism mixed with a theory of reincarnation across a plurality of worlds (see MARICÁ, 1958). Surprisingly, the Marquis is still read in our days. Antonio Pedro de Figueiredo defended a personal combination of spiritualism, empiricism and an ideal of a Christian socialism, which perhaps the exception of Soriano de Souza, who was a convinced Thomist, all of them (see Figueiredo's articles under pseudonyms *A*, *RR*, and *O*, scattered in *O PROGRESSO*, 1950). Abreu e Lima advances in the same direction as Figueiredo, as far as Christian socialism is concerned (see ABREU E LIMA, 1855). What is more, all these thinkers, the ten mentioned by Romero included, did not properly offer second hand philosophies. All of them tried to give a personal touch to their respective doctrines, even though they were inspired by foreign thinkers.

With respect to Romero's second claim, the results of my research indicate that he is wrong. As a matter of fact, he was not able to notice the logical and chronological relations among the Authors mentioned and their respective doctrines. When Romero talks about serialization of ideas, he is probably thinking of the logical relations like the ones we may find among the doctrines of Bacon, Locke, Berkeley and Hume, or among the doctrines of Descartes, Spinoza, Malebranche and Leibniz. In both cases, we may say that there is among the Authors a genetic affiliation such that a philosophical system may be seen as the logical consequence of the preceding one. We may say also that even in the case of thinkers such as Descartes and Locke there is a relation of logical opposition between their respective philosophical systems. All of this certainly would contribute to establish the existence of an intellectual tradition in the rigorous sense as proposed by Romero.

Now if we look at the cultural atmosphere of Brazil in the nineteenth century, we shall observe that all philosophical doctrines and systems in this period are not only entirely contextualized, but they also entertain both logical and chronological relationships among them. For example, by the time Romero wrote his book, Brazilian history extending from 1808 to 1880 could be divided into four main periods. The first one is known as the Transfer of the Portuguese Court to Brazil and extends from 1808 to 1821, when king John VI and his entourage returned to Portugal in virtue of the Liberal Revolution in the city of Porto. From the philosophical point of view, this period is marked by the presence of doctrines linked to empiricist spiritualism, as represented by the ones assumed by the Portuguese Silvestre Pinheiro Ferreira and the Brazilian Diogo Feijó. The empiricist spiritualism was an eclectic combination of catholic spiritualist doctrines with empiricist doctrines inspired by Locke or by Condillac and was defended in philosophy manuals of Authors such like Genovese and Storchenau. This doctrine was in vogue in Portugal and her Brazilian Colony by the end of the eighteenth century and expresses the philosophical tradition which was chosen as a substitute to the preceding Jesuit scholasticism which was in vogue before the Jesuits were expelled from Portugal and Brazil in 1759. The presence of the Portuguese Court in Brazil since 1808 obviously inspired the continuity of such

tradition, but also meant a significant alteration in the general *status* of the Brazilian Colony, which was not only elevated to the political rank of United Kingdom to Portugal, but also was benefited with the political, economical and cultural improvements above mentioned. This new situation also motivated the development of an open mindedness regarding the introduction of philosophical novelties in the cultural domain. This fact may be observed in the doctrines of the forementioned Pinheiro Ferreira and Diogo Feijó. The Portuguese Pinheiro Ferreira was a diplomat who arrived in Brazil in 1810, following king John's Court. Pinheiro Ferreira was responsible for teaching a course on philosophy in Rio de Janeiro and for writing a book entitled *Preleções Filosóficas (Philosophical Lectures)* as a text aid for his course (see PINHEIRO FERREIRA, 1813). His philosophical system is an original and new form of empiricist spiritualism which he proposed against the Portuguese traditional empiricist spiritualism dominated by the influence of the Italian thinker Antonio Genovese. I have not mentioned Pinheiro Ferreira's name in the above list of nineteenth century philosophers worthy of attention because he was Portuguese, and I am mainly concerned with Brazilian thinkers. Anyway, he has somehow contributed to the further evolution of Brazilian philosophy. As to Diogo Feijó, I have already indicated his original attempt to reconcile catholic spiritualism with some Kantian doctrines as exposed and interpreted by François Villers.

The second period of Brazilian history is known as the First Reign and extends roughly from 1821 to 1831. When king John returned to Portugal, he left behind his son, Peter, who ruled the country initially as a Regent Prince. The Portuguese Constitutional Assembly was not satisfied with this situation and demanded the immediate return of the Regent Prince to Portugal. Despite that, he decided to stay in Brazil, as a result of the great pressure Brazilians exerted on him to do so. The conflict with the Constitutional Assembly got stronger and ended with the Regent Prince's declaration of Brazilian Independence in 1822. This led to the formation of the Brazilian Empire and the Regent Prince took the title of Peter I. The remaining of the period which is known as the First Reign is marked by the war of independence against Portugal, by the war of independence of the Cisplatin Province which gave origin to Uruguay, and by Peter's authoritarianism that earned him a great unpopularity among Brazilians and which motivated the insurgence known as Ecuador Confederation which was fiercely repressed by his government. The incompatibility between Peter's authoritarianism and the aspirations of Brazilians ended with his abdication in 1831, when he left the country and moved to Portugal. The cultural atmosphere of the period was clearly favourable to the development of liberal ideas stemming from the French Revolution. The liberal ideas defended by Frei Caneca in various texts between 1823 and 1824 and Feijó's fight in 1827 against celibacy, even though he was himself a catholic priest, are clearly inserted in this context.

The third period of Brazilian history is known as the Regency Period and extends from 1831 to 1840. As already mentioned, Peter I left behind his son as heir to the throne. But the infant was only five years old when his father left and for this reason the country was ruled by regents until he could be able to occupy the throne. The lack of a monarch weakened the central government and motivated the appearance of a series of insurrections which lead to a period of great political instability. For this reason, there were various changes in the form and composition of the regency, giving origin to the Provisional Regency (1831), the Triple Permanent Regency (1831-1835), the Unitary Regency of Feijó (1835-1837) and the Unitary Regency of Araújo Lima (1838-1840). The whole period was marked by insurrections like the Revolts in Rio (1831-1832), the Cabanagem Revolt in the Province of Pará (1835-1840), The Sabinada Revolt in the Province of Bahia (1837-1838), the Balaiada Revolt in the Province of Maranhão (1838-1841), and the Farroupilha Revolution in the Province of Rio Grande do Sul (1835-1845). The cultural atmosphere of the period was clearly favourable to the appearance of liberal and reformist ideas. This may be illustrated by Eduardo Ferreira França's doctoral thesis in Paris, defending a materialist view of human beings, in 1834, and by the publication in 1833 of Nísia Floresta's translation of the feminist work *Les droits des femmes et l'injustice des hommes*, under the title of *Direitos das mulheres, injustiça dos homens (Women's rights, men's injustice)* (see LIMA DUARTE, n.d.). At that time, the authorship of this feminist work was falsely attributed to Mary Wollstonecraft, when in fact it was written by a certain Sophia, "a woman of quality", under the title of *Woman not Inferior to Man*, and then translated into

French and falsely attributed to Mrs. Godwin (see SOPHIA, 1743; ANONYME, 1750). Other important illustrations of the reformist ideas prevailing in the period are the two following texts written by Gonçalves de Magalhães: *Ensaio sobre a História da Literatura Brasileira* (*Essay on the History of Brazilian Literature*), and *Filosofia da Religião* (*Philosophy of Religion*), both published in 1836, during the Author's stay in Paris (see MAGALHÃES, 1836a and 1836b). Although the first of these texts is not properly philosophical, it presents Magalhães' diagnostic of Brazil's moral circumstances and offers a program for a spiritual reform of the country which was later expressed in his main philosophical work, namely *Fatos do Espírito Humano* (*Facts of the Human Spirit*) (see MAGALHÃES, 2004). And his text on philosophy of religion goes in the same direction. The period was also marked by some weak attempts to preserve the tradition of empiricist spiritualism, as we can see from Monte Alverne's courses on philosophy in Saint Joseph's Seminar in Rio from 1830 to 1836, and from Miranda Rego's *Lições Elementares de Lógica e Metafísica* (*Elementary Lessons on Logic and Metaphysics*), published in 1839 (see MIRANDA REGO, 1839).

The fourth and last period of Brazilian history to be considered here is known as the Second Reign and extends from 1840 to 1889. As already mentioned, in order to prevent the political instability of the country, the son of Peter the First was crowned Emperor of Brazil in 1840. As already mentioned, he was then only fifteen, and for this reason he was officially declared of age and received the name of Peter the Second. He acquired with time a strong and vast intellectual background and was in general admired by Brazilians. The period under Peter's rule is marked by a relative internal stability, although his concerns with foreign policy led to problems with Britain and mainly with Paraguay, leading to a war against this country from 1864 to 1870. Anyway, the cultural atmosphere of the country was favourable to a conservative ideology aiming to justify the political regime of constitutional monarchy and the catholic religion. This motivated the appearance of various forms of spiritualism, as illustrated by the works of the Marquis of Maricá, Nísia Floresta, Antônio Pedro de Figueiredo, Eduardo Ferreira França, Bishop Moraes e Torres, Gonçalves de Magalhães, Father Patrício Muniz, and José Soriano de Souza, among others. The Marquis of Maricá, as already mentioned, developed a form of panentheistic spiritualism mixed with reincarnation across many worlds. Nísia Floresta developed a form of feminist spiritualism in a conservative way which attenuates Sophia's fierce feminism. Antonio Pedro de Figueiredo was an African Brazilian who translated Cousin's *Course of History of Philosophy* to Portuguese and for this reason got the nickname of "mulatto Cousin". But this is both a racist and an unfair denomination, because Figueiredo published a number of articles in the review *O Progresso* (*The Progress*), in which he defended against Cousin a personal theory of knowledge and a spiritualist version of socialism, with the intent of promoting a spiritual reform in Brazil. Eduardo Ferreira França, after his materialist phase on the occasion of his doctorate, experienced a conversion towards eclectic spiritualism. His main work in the new spiritualist phase is *Investigações de Psicologia* (*Psychology Investigations*), in which he presents the French eclectic doctrine with some hints of a personal touch (FERREIRA FRANÇA, 1973). As far as I know, this work was the first one on the subject of psychology in the Americas. Moraes e Torres, with his *Compêndio de Filosofia Racional* (*Compendium of Rational Philosophy*) represents a weak attempt to preserve the empiricist spiritualism which was in decadence in the period (see MORAES E TORRES, 1852). Gonçalves de Magalhães is certainly the most important of all thinkers in the period, with his works *Fatos do Espírito Humano* (*Facts of Human Spirit*), *A Alma e o Cérebro* (*The Soul and the Brain*) and *Comentários e Pensamentos* (*Comments and Thoughts*). In *Facts of Human Spirit*, Magalhães developed a personal form of occasionalist ontologist immaterialist spiritualism which differs from the doctrines of Authors such as Descartes, Malebranche, Leibniz and Cousin, among others who inspired him. Magalhães' two other works will be commented further ahead. An example of empiricist spiritualism was the posthumous publication in 1859 of Monte Alverne's *Compêndio de Filosofia* (*Compendium of Philosophy*), in a misplaced and failed attempt to defend spiritualism against the scientism which was gaining terrain in Brazilian intellectual field. After all, Monte Alverne's *Compendium* defended not eclecticism, as many people wrongly thinks, but an old form of empiricist spiritualism. Patrício Muniz in his *Teoria da Afirmção Pura* (*Theory of Pure Affirmation*) developed a form of ontologist spiritualism on the basis of a personal appropriation of Cousin's and Gioberti's doctrines. His language is extremely obscure and

for this reason he was fiercely criticized by Romero and other historians of Brazilian philosophy. This notwithstanding, a careful reading of his text, complemented by comparisons with Cousin's and Gioberti's corresponding doctrines would yield an relatively adequate interpretation of Muniz' philosophy. José Soriano de Souza, in his *Lições de Filosofia Elementar, Racional e Moral (Lessons on Elementary, Rational and Moral Philosophy)*, developed an exposition of Thomistic spiritualism as an alternative to eclectic spiritualism which he considered the dominant tendency in the country. He has been accused of lacking originality, but at least his exposition of Thomistic philosophy is accurate, according to specialists in the subject, such as the Jesuit Leonel Franca (FRANCA, 1964, p. 272). Finally, Pedro Américo, who is best known as a Brazilian painter, had multiple talents and among other things he has concluded a doctorate in Brussel's Free University with a thesis entitled *The Science and the Systems, Questions on History and Natural Philosophy* (see AMÉRICO, 1869). In his thesis, which was well received in Belgium, Pedro Américo argues that the European modern spirit is indebted to the great Renaissance artists who had established an intellectual freedom which was later applied to the search of truth. But he adds that free exam cannot be identified with the condemnation of the domains of feeling and faith. Religion prepares human beings to a future life, whereas science prepares human beings to present life.

Of course, the fourth period above described also includes works announcing the new times of scientific discoveries and the decadence of the conservative forms of spiritualism which then dominated the intellectual arena. These works appeared mainly after the end of the Paraguayan war, in 1870. This date marks the beginning of the decadence of Peter II's rule, which finally ended in 1889, with the proclamation of Republic. The phase of Brazilian history from 1870 to 1889 is also marked by an increase in the abolitionist movement, by a conflict between the monarchy and the Church, known as *The Religious Issue* and by a conflict between the monarchy and the army, known as the *Military Issue*. All these facts suggest that the Second Reign was gradually losing its prestige and that, from the point of view of philosophy, this situation created favourable conditions for the appearance of doctrines opposed to monarchy and to spiritualism. These new doctrines assumed the form of republicanism, scientism, and materialism. The spiritualists sensed the menace and tried to block the advance of the new doctrines by publishing new books which attempted to reconcile spiritualism with the new scientific discoveries. But under these circumstances theirs was a lost cause.

As examples of the defense of the new scientific doctrines, I may mention the works of Luis Pereira Barreto, Tobias Barreto, Domingos Guedes Cabral, José de Araújo Ribeiro and Silvio Romero. Luis Pereira Barreto was a positivist who wrote *As Três Filosofias (The Three Philosophies)*, in which he tried to apply Comte's law of the three states to Brazil. According to Pereira Barreto, the country was marked in the past by the theological state, in his times was marked by the metaphysical state and in the future would reach to the third state and become a positivist republic (PEREIRA BARRETO, 1967; PEREIRA BARRETO, 2001; PEREIRA BARRETO, 2003). Tobias Barreto was a germanist influenced by Haeckel' naturalism and fought against the predominance of French culture in Brazil. He was not a systematic thinker but wrote many independent texts defending his ideas and was also able to attack fiercely his adversaries, mostly the spiritualists. His many texts were later put together and published in the form of books of essays, such as *Ensaios e Estudos de Filosofia e Crítica (Essays and Studies on Philosophy and Criticism)*, *Estudos de Direito (Studies on Law)*, and *Estudos Alemães (German Studies)* (BARRETO, 1977; BARRETO, 1892; BARRETO, 1883). He wrote even in German, and his monography *Brasilien, wie es ist (Brazil as it is)* is the most known example of this (BARRETO, 1990). Domingos Guedes Cabral wrote *Funções do Cérebro (Brain Functions)* a doctoral thesis in which he defends Darwinism, materialism, and criticizes the Church. The thesis was refused by the Faculty of Medicine of Bahia. Even so, it was published with the financial help of Cabral's fellow students in defense of freedom of speech (GUEDES CABRAL, 1876). José de Araújo Ribeiro wrote *O Fim da Criação (The Goal of Creation)*, in which he describes the Earth as endowed with its own life and getting its food like all living beings by collecting through its atmosphere the materials coming from outer space (ANÔNIMO [ARAÚJO RIBEIRO], 1875). Silvio Romero is a multifarious intellectual who also made his incursions into the field of philosophy. He is a systematic thinker, and his ideas may be linked to naturalism,

Spencerian evolutionism and teleological monism. Romero declares to have a keenness for the newest philosophy. His main contributions in the domain of theoretical philosophy are *Doutrina contra doutrina (Doctrine against Doctrine)*, in which he attacks positivism as a dominant trend in Brazil at the time, and *Ensaio de Filosofia do Direito (An Essay in Philosophy of Law)*, in which he presents his main philosophical views (see ROMERO 1894; ROMERO, 1969). His main contribution in the domain of the history of Brazilian philosophy is his *Philosophy in Brazil*, which criticizes spiritualism, defends scientism, and praises Tobias Barreto, thus becoming a classic in the historiography of Brazilian philosophy.

As examples of failed attempts to defend spiritualism against the ever growing scientism, we have the works of Gonçalves de Magalhães and Monsignor Gregório Lipparoni. In 1876, Magalhães published *The Soul and the Brain*, in which he attenuated his extreme spiritualism as exposed in his previous *Facts of Human Spirit*, and *Comments and Thoughts*, in 1880, as a response to the advances of scientism, he made an unsuccessful attempt to reconcile his spiritualism with some of the main scientific theories of his time (MAGALHÃES, 1876; MAGALHÃES, 1880). Gregório Lipparoni in *A Filosofia Conforme a Mente de S. Tomás de Aquino, Exposta por Antonio Rosmini, em Harmonia com a Ciência e com a Religião (Philosophy According to S. Thomas Aquinas Mind, as Exposed by Antonio Rosmini, in Harmony with Science and with Religion)*, developed, as the long title indicates, an attempt to reconcile Aquinas and Rosmini and show that the resulting philosophy is in accordance with science and religion (see BANDEIRA FILHO, 1881). But Lipparoni also represents a failed attempt.

After the previous relatively long historical exposition and after the presentation of the criterion which we may call *system/context*, I believe I may draw the following conclusions from all this material. Romero's claim that there is an absence of genetic affiliation among systems in Brazilian philosophy derives from a misinterpretation of the real situation involved. It is clear that we cannot find here a serialization of the type of Bacon-Locke-Berkeley-Hume. But it is also clear that we can find another type of serialization not detected by Romero, involving logical and chronological relationships among doctrines in nineteenth century Brazilian philosophy.

I expect to have made it clear that all philosophical doctrines above mentioned are connected to their respective historical contexts. The choices of systems in a certain period of nineteenth century Brazilian history were not made at random, as Romero claims. They were made in accordance with the respective historical contexts. For example, Feijó's and Pinheiro Ferreira's doctrines which appeared on the occasion of the Court Transfer are still linked to Portuguese traditional empiricist spiritualism, but now with a touch of novelty as motivated by the fact that the Brazilian Colony reached a new political *status*. During the First Reign, Frei Caneca's liberalism, as inspired by some revolutionary ideas of the French Revolution and surprisingly by a radical reading of Thomas Aquinas' *De Regno*, is connected with the revolutionary Brazilian atmosphere on the occasion of the independence movement. During the Regency Period, Ferreira França's materialist doctoral thesis, Nísia Floresta's translation of Sophia's *Woman not Inferior to Man*, and Magalhães papers on Brazilian literature and philosophy of religion involve either anti spiritualist doctrines or reformist proposals which are connected with this transitional and politically unstable period in the country's history, marked by numerous revolts. During the Second Reign, a period marked by internal stability, the doctrines of Maricá, Nísia Floresta, Figueiredo, Ferreira França, Moraes e Torres, Magalhães, Patrício Muniz, Pedro Américo and Soriano de Souza are all attempts to provide the country with a conservatist ideology capable of justifying the traditions of monarchy and Catholicism as inherited from the colonial period. All these doctrines are variants of spiritualism, the outstanding feature of Brazilian culture at the time and as inherited from the Portuguese colonizers. This fact means that these spiritualist doctrines involve not only logical relationships among them, but also present a sort of serialization, in which the old empiricist spiritualism is succeeded by eclectic spiritualism which in turn is succeeded by ontologist spiritualism and by Thomistic spiritualism. And after that these variants of spiritualism are succeeded by variants of positivism and scientism, in conformity with the new times which motivated the search for an alternative ideology to the decadence of catholic monarchy. In this perspective, even if a Brazilian Author does not derive from another Brazilian Author, their respective choices of philosophical systems derive from their respective

historical contexts. And this fact reveals a form of intellectual tradition deriving from Portuguese colonization which Romero is unwilling to acknowledge. And if it is true that the preference a Brazilian Author reveals for a foreign book decides the nature of his philosophical opinions, it is also true that the preference in question is not something that happens by chance, but rather something that involves a conscious choice based on historical context. I expect to have made it clear that, if it is true that all the philosophical doctrines considered are proposed in a universal tone, it is also true that these philosophical doctrines are connected to their respective Brazilian historical contexts.

Romero claims also that he is unable to see what kind of relation exists between thinkers like Patrício Muniz and Tobias Barreto, because their theoretical sources are extra national. Now this looks to me as a form of denial which tries to cover the sun with a sieve in order to block the passage of light. Anyone can see that the relation between the former's ontologist spiritualist system and the latter's scientist evolutionist monism is of logical opposition and that both philosophical doctrines depend on the respective choices made by their respective Authors' views of their respective historical contexts. In the case of Patrício Muniz, the important thing is to offer an adequate spiritualist doctrine to justify and preserve catholic monarchy. In the case of Barreto, the important thing is to offer an adequate naturalist and evolutionist doctrine capable of effectively fighting and winning spiritualism, thus providing a new ideology for the new republican times the country was about to experience. The fact that the theoretical sources in both cases are extra national does not alter in any way the contextualization and the logical relations involved between systems. Romero also claims on this subject that the appeal to extra national sources is not a liability, but rather represents an advantage. Now given the picture he offers of a Brazilian philosophy as not possessing an intellectual tradition and as not connected to the country's historical circumstances, I confess I simply cannot make sense of such claim. How can be the random appeal to extra national sources, which constitutes according to Romero one of the main causes of Brazil's philosophical retard, be considered an advantage?

If we ask what led Romero to misinterpret the history of nineteenth century Brazilian philosophy the way he does, the more obvious answer is that he had propagandist intentions. This may be inferred from the way he distributes the subjects in his book. The first six Authors are all spiritualists and deserve a total of 60 pages in the whole book. Monte Alverne gets 12 pages; Ferreira França gets 12 pages; Magalhães gets also 12 pages; Patrício Muniz gets 9 pages; Soriano de Souza gets only 3 pages; and Pedro Américo gets 16 pages. The four Authors which come next are adherents to scientism and deserve a total of 104 pages in the same book: the positivist Luiz Pereira Barreto gets 28 pages; the evolutionist Araújo Ribeiro gets 22 pages; the materialist Guedes Cabral gets 18 pages; the monist evolutionist Tobias Barreto, the last Author considered, is presented as a real *avis rara* in Brazilian philosophical community and gets nothing less than 36 out of the 104 pages destined to adherents to scientism.

But that is not all there is to the subject. Besides the biased distribution of subjects, Romero appeals to a shallow reading of the texts and attacks his spiritualist adversaries with a fierce rhetoric filled with *ad hominem* arguments and revealing misinterpretations of the doctrines involved. This clearly suggests that Romero is trying to depreciate and dismiss spiritualism to the benefit of scientism. The problem is that in doing so he also unjustly depreciates most of nineteenth century Brazilian philosophy. It is worth noticing that Romero's *Philosophy in Brazil* disrespects an important directive which he himself established in this book: according to him, it is an abuse in criticism whenever one takes a book and, without inquiring about the conditions under which its Author has lived, one intends to produce an assessment supposedly definitive of it (ROMERO, 1878, p. 139).

The case of Tobias Barreto

The above considerations are sufficient as far as Romero is concerned. Now I shall take into consideration the following three claims Tobias Barreto has made with respect to Brazilian philosophy: i) Brazilian philosophical retard is so great that Magalhães' work *Facts of the Human Spirit* makes the whole Brazilian philosophical library in the country's nineteenth century; ii) Magalhães *Facts of the Human Spirit* is the work of a dilettante in philosophy; iii) Brazil has not a philosophical mind (BARRETO, 1926, p. 249). In what follows, I shall discuss these claims.

As to Barreto's first claim, it has been made in 1869 in a fully dogmatic way. He does not bother to justify his claim, probably because he was playing with the expectation that the strength of his pessimistic rhetoric would be enough to express his conviction with no need of a proof. In 1878, Romero tries to mitigate his friend's claim, extending to ten the number of works worthy of some consideration. Now in my discussion of Romero's list I attempted to show that it is incomplete, because it ignores other works also worthy of consideration. This means that both Barreto's and Romero's theses are misguided in virtue of their exaggerated critical postures. I believe this is enough for my discussion of Barreto's first claim.

The second claim is also false and deserves to be discussed in virtue of its consequences for the further development of Brazilian historiography of philosophy. Barreto, just like Romero, but in his own way, appeals to a shallow reading of Magalhães' text and attacks the latter's spiritualism with a fierce rhetoric filled with *ad hominem* arguments, thus misinterpreting the doctrines involved. In his discussion of Magalhães' philosophy, Barreto accuses him of defending philosophical doctrines in such a weak way that he should be seen as a philosophical *dilettante* (BARRETO, 1977, pp. 103; 108). Now this is false for the following reasons.

In the first place, in nineteenth century Brazil, all candidates to medical and law school had to take preparatory courses which included the study of philosophy. As a candidate, Magalhães took the preparatory course to the Medicine School in Rio de Janeiro. As a medical doctor, his training by that time involved an interest in the moral conduct of people as a means of achieving a healthy society. This led Brazilian doctors to an interest in philosophy which was not the same among Brazilian nineteenth century lawyers. As a matter of fact, the latter had a different sort of training, involving an interest in philosophy mainly as long as it would benefit the practice of legislation and courtroom debates. This explains why Ferreira França, a medical doctor who was contemporary to Magalhães, affirmed that medicine and philosophy were inseparable. As to Magalhães, in addition to his studying philosophy by the occasion of the preparatory exams for admission to the School of Medicine, he attended to Monte Alverne's philosophy classes in Rio, and after that, during his stay in Paris, he attended to Jouffroy's philosophy classes. Thus, from the standpoint of Magalhães professional qualifications according to the requirements of his time, I find it hard to agree with Barreto and say that he was a philosophical dilettante. Probably his training does not meet our contemporary academic requirements but judging him on the basis of such criterion would be a dangerous anachronism.

In the second place, Magalhães might be considered a dilettante only if his philosophical work was completely weak, involving the mere repetition of old doctrines and the presence of grave theoretical flaws. Now Barreto's criticism of *Facts of the Human Spirit* depends on a shallow reading which led to a misinterpretation of the text. As far as I can see, Magalhães philosophy, although inspired mainly by some French authors such as Malebranche and Cousin, offers in fact a personal contribution which cannot be considered a mere second hand copy of these Authors' doctrines. This is, for instance, Leonel Franca's opinion on the subject (FRANCA, 1964, pp. 267-9). And the medical doctor Pierre Flourens, after reading the French translation of *Facts of the Human Spirit*, explicitly recognized that its Author was "a man of genius" (FLOURENS, 1859). In addition, Magalhães' philosophy is adequately contextualized with respect to its corresponding Brazilian historical circumstances, as we can infer from his programmatic texts on Brazilian literature and on the philosophy of religion. As a result, Magalhães cannot be considered a mere dilettante, either from the point of view of his philosophical formation or from the point of view of the quality of his philosophical system. Barreto's use of the term *dilettante* was simply a rhetorical manoeuvre to disqualify his spiritualist adversary, lacking any sound justification for doing so.

The issue on dilettantism should finish at this point. Nevertheless, I suspect that Barreto's accusation against Magalhães was naively assumed by his successors in the study of the history of nineteenth century Brazilian philosophy. What is worse, his successors dogmatically generalized the accusation, extending it to all Brazilian philosophers in the period. Influenced probably by the prejudice that an authentic philosophy may only be made by an academic philosopher, they indiscriminately accused of dilettantism all nineteenth century Brazilian

philosophers in virtue of their lack of an adequate training. In fact, there are only two Brazilian thinkers in the period which may be viewed as dilettantes: Antônio Pedro de Figueiredo and Nísia Floresta. Even so, the quality of their works and the philosophical knowledge they both reveal goes beyond mere dilettantism. Anyway, the rhetorical force of Barreto's accusation and the lack of a convenient verification of the validity of his claims unfortunately led to the creation of a distorted image of Brazilian philosophers and their respective philosophical systems in the historiography of nineteenth century Brazilian philosophy.

Barreto's third claim goes in the same direction as the previous one. He would be able to establish that Brazil has not a philosophical mind only if his claims about the Brazilian philosophical library as consisting of only one single work and about the theoretical weakness of this very single philosophical work would be true. But I expect to have shown that such claims are misguided, because they derive from a shallow reading of Brazilian philosophical works in the period, which led to the creation of the forementioned distorted image.

Now if we ask what led Barreto to make such misguided claims the answer is analogous to the one I gave in Romero's case. Barreto's aim is to contribute to the formation of a scientist intellectual atmosphere in Brazil as inspired by German culture and to succeed he needs to fight with all the strength against spiritualism and its French origins. Like Romero, he is a propagandist of scientism, but with a much stronger German flavour. What is more, both are influenced by a strongly pessimist view of Brazilian society, and this fact led them to vehemently deny that such a society might be able to produce anything one would call an authentic philosophy. And it is worth notice that, despite his contempt to Brazilian historical context, Barreto is considered a precursor of the culturalist movement in Brazilian philosophy. His followers revealed a greater interest for the cultural context, albeit some of their interpretations of the works of nineteenth century Brazilian philosophers are misguided. The great exception was Roque Maciel de Barros, who adopted a culturalist stance to write an important book on the philosophy of Gonçalves de Magalhães (see Barros, 1973). As for Barreto, he simply was not able to confront the system/context complex in a more impartial and balanced way.

Final observations

Despite the flaws above indicated in their respective critical stances, both Romero and Barreto became recognized and respected sources for the historiography of Brazilian philosophy. Romero's *Philosophy in Brazil* became a classic, as already mentioned, and Barreto's three merciless claims have been dogmatically accepted by his successors and turned into some of the main features of nineteenth century Brazilian philosophy.

The final result of Romero's and Barreto's works is the creation of an unfortunate fable which has been haunting the historiography of Brazilian philosophy up to present time. Now if I ask about the causes of the emergence of such an unfortunate fable in Brazilian philosophical community, the answer I can find indicates as the main factor the predatory colonization to which Brazil has been submitted. It has generated an ill formed country of which some effects are still active among Brazilian intellectuals. One of these effects is the negative self-image of the country which is applied to a great portion of Brazilian cultural domains: after all, an ill formed country cannot be seen with good eyes in most of its aspects. In the case of philosophy, the negative self-image is efficiently expressed by Romero's and Barreto's critical claims, leading to the distorted picture of nineteenth century Brazilian philosophy.

This notwithstanding, when I say the picture is distorted, I do not mean that the undistorted picture I am hereby proposing is something that might be fairly compared to the great moments in the history of, for instance, French or British philosophy. Authors like Descartes, Malebranche, Locke and Hume are representatives of a sort of high clergy which has no counterpart in nineteenth century Brazil. But the country has at least produced thinkers in the period which are representatives of a sort of low clergy. In this sense, Brazilian thinkers of the period might be compared for example to French thinkers as Paul Janet or Adolphe Garnier, which produced philosophies that, although possessing quality, are inferior to the philosophies of their preceding masters.

I believe we are facing here the well-known problem of assessing whether the glass containing water at only half of its capacity is to be considered half empty or half full. Influenced by the negative self-image, Romero and Barreto have no doubts in assessing that the glass is half empty, despising and ignoring the water contained in the other half. This is so because they preferred to assess Brazilian philosophers on the basis of foreign rigorous criteria which in fact do not apply to the country's post-colonial circumstances. They assume that the country will only be able to produce an adequate philosophy when it reaches the same degree of civilization as the European societies. Before that, such task would be impossible. On the basis of such criteria, they affirmed that Brazilian philosophy was out of context, but they were able to do so only because their criteria themselves are also out of context. Thus, by applying ethnocentric criteria to assess Brazilian philosophy, both Romero and Barreto reveal themselves to be naive victims of a colonized thinking.

Now if we resist the influence of the negative self-image, we shall be able to see that the glass is half full, although still lacking a portion that is to be filled. After all, if we take into adequate consideration the works produced by some Brazilian thinkers in the nineteenth century, we might be surprised to verify that, despite all the ill effects of colonization on the country, despite all the colonial trauma, they were still able to produce something worth of respect and consideration. In doing so, these thinkers have paved the way for their successors to carry out the task of filling the still half empty portion of the glass. This does not mean that nineteenth century Brazilian philosophy itself is not the result of a colonized thinking. Certainly, it is, but this involves a further task to be performed. The main point I intend to make hereby is that at present we need first to reassess Brazilian philosophy in an adequate way so that later on we may be able to analyze it in a more conspicuous way and identify its colonized features.

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