

5° CONVEGNO INTERNAZIONALE E INTERDISCIPLINARE
SU IMMAGINI E IMMAGINAZIONE
5th INTERNATIONAL AND INTERDISCIPLINARY CONFERENCE
ON IMAGES AND IMAGINATION

IMG2025



a cura di / edited by
Valeria Menchetelli
Francesco Cotana
Eleonora Dottorini

IMG2025 IMAGE ETHICS

PUBLICA

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Atti del 5° Convegno Internazionale e Interdisciplinare
su Immagini e Immaginazione

Proceedings of 5th International and Interdisciplinary Conference
on Images and Imagination

a cura di / edited by
Valeria Menchetelli
Francesco Cotana
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CALL FOR PAPERS

Le immagini, pervasivamente presenti nella nostra quotidianità, hanno il potere di plasmare le nostre percezioni, di influenzare le nostre opinioni e di orientare i nostri comportamenti. La libertà di accesso ai contenuti visivi, unita alla democratizzazione dei processi di produzione e condivisione, è espressione di una civiltà tecnicamente evoluta, ma anche della facilità di manipolazione che viene attuata proprio attraverso le immagini. La primigenia funzione comunicativa delle immagini e l'uso strumentale che abitualmente ne viene fatto lasciano così emergere l'urgenza di una riflessione profonda sul ruolo etico che le immagini rivestono e sulla loro responsabilità sociale.

In un contesto culturale stridente, poiché animato da un orientamento costruttivo alla valorizzazione plurale delle differenze, al rispetto delle risorse e alla salvaguardia dei diritti, ma allo stesso tempo drammaticamente ferito dall'inasprimento dei conflitti, dall'individualismo e dall'incapacità di dialogo, l'interrogativo che investe chi si occupa dello studio e della produzione di artefatti visuali è un imprescindibile appello al riconoscimento e alla riaffermazione della loro radice etica.

Le immagini costruiscono identità individuali e collettive, definiscono canoni estetici e comportamentali, promuovono valori culturali; le immagini possono affermare o negare, accogliere o escludere, accusare o difendere, tutelare o violare, comprendere o discriminare. La consapevolezza di questo ruolo sociale delle immagini e delle implicazioni etiche che da esse scaturiscono richiede capacità critica nella loro interpretazione e coscienza progettuale nella loro produzione.

La quinta edizione del convegno *IMG* chiama la comunità scientifica a partecipare a un dibattito sul valore etico delle immagini nella società, assumendo la trasversalità e l'interdisciplinarietà come cifra distintiva e come occasione per l'apertura di un confronto su temi di interesse collettivo.

La città che ospita il convegno incarna il valore simbolico di luogo del dialogo e della sperimentazione orientata alla cultura etica della produzione e della comunicazione grafica. Le immagini delle *Storie di san Francesco* dipinte da Giotto nella Basilica Superiore e i valori etici in esse racchiusi assumono la potenza evocativa di elementi d'ispirazione.

I contributi potranno presentare riflessioni teorico-critiche, pratiche e casi studio improntati alla comunicazione etica, strumenti per la progettazione etica, sfide presenti e future introdotte dalla dimensione etica. I contributi potranno toccare uno o più tra i *Topics*, ambiti specifici di studio e applicazione, e dovranno essere riferiti a una tra le *Inspirations*, messaggi etici provenienti dall'insegnamento francescano.

TOPICS

Immagini e ambiente, Immagini e clima, Immagini e conflitti, Immagini e condivisione, Immagini e conoscenza, Immagini e consenso, Immagini e cultura del progetto, Immagini e cura, Immagini e differenze, Immagini e diritti, Immagini ed economia, Immagini ed educazione, Immagini e habitat, Immagini e integrazione, Immagini e luoghi dell'abitare, Immagini e memoria, Immagini e minoranze, Immagini e modelli sociali, Immagini e pace, Immagini e patrimonio, Immagini e pianeta, Immagini e promozione, Immagini e pubblica utilità, Immagini e responsabilità sociale, Immagini e risorse, Immagini e salute, Immagini e sostenibilità, Immagini e valorizzazione, Immagini e vita

Images, pervasively present in our daily lives, wield the power to shape our perceptions, influence our opinions and direct our behaviour. The freedom of access to visual content, coupled with the democratisation of production and sharing processes, is an expression of a technologically advanced society but also of the ease of manipulation implemented precisely through images. The primordial communicative function of images and their habitual instrumental use thus reveal the urgency of a profound reflection on their ethical role and social responsibility.

In a dissonant cultural context, animated by a constructive orientation towards the plural valorisation of differences, respect for resources and the safeguarding of rights, but at the same time dramatically wounded by the exacerbation of conflicts, individualism and the incapacity for dialogue, the question that invests those involved in the study and production of visual artefacts is an inescapable call for the recognition and reaffirmation of their ethical roots.

Images construct individual and collective identities, define aesthetic and behavioural canons, and promote cultural values; images can affirm or deny, welcome or exclude, accuse or defend, protect or violate, understand or discriminate. Awareness of this social role and the ethical implications that arise from images requires critical capacity in their interpretation and design consciousness in their production.

The fifth edition of the *IMG* conference invites the scientific community to engage in a dialogue on the ethical value of images in society, assuming transversality and interdisciplinarity as its distinctive features and as an opportunity to open a debate on topics of collective interest.

The city hosting the conference embodies the symbolic value of a place for dialogue and experimentation oriented towards the ethical culture of graphic production and communication. The images of the *Stories of St. Francis* painted by Giotto in the Upper Basilica and their ethical values assume the evocative power of inspirational elements.

The contributions will be able to present theoretical-critical reflections, practices and case studies marked by ethical communication, tools for ethical design, and present and future challenges introduced by the ethical dimension.

The contributions may touch on one or more of the *Topics*, specific areas of study and application and must refer to one of the *Inspirations*, ethical messages from Franciscan teaching.

Images and care, Images and climate, Images and conflicts, Images and consensus, Images and design culture, Images and differences, Images and economy, Images and education, Images and environment, Images and habitat, Images and health, Images and heritage, Images and integration, Images and knowledge, Images and life, Images and living places, Images and memory, Images and minorities, Images and peace, Images and planet, Images and promotion, Images and public benefit, Images and resources, Images and rights, Images and sharing, Images and social models, Images and social responsibility, Images and sustainability, Images and valorisation

INSPIRATIONS



*Omaggio dell'uomo semplice
Homage of the simple man*

rispetto – semplicità – valore
respect – simplicity – value

“Quando un uomo semplice di Assisi stese le vesti dinanzi al beato Francesco e rese omaggio a lui che passava; oltre a ciò – si crede per ammaestramento di Dio – asserì essere Francesco degno di ogni riverenza, come chi era per fare in un tempo prossimo grandi cose, e perciò dover essere onorato da tutti.”

“When a simple man from Assisi spread his robes before the blessed Francis and paid homage to him as he passed by, he asserted –it is believed by the teaching of God– that Francis was worthy of all reverence, as one who was to do great things in the near future, and therefore should be honoured by all.”

[Bonaventura da Bagnoregio, *Legenda maior*, I, 1]



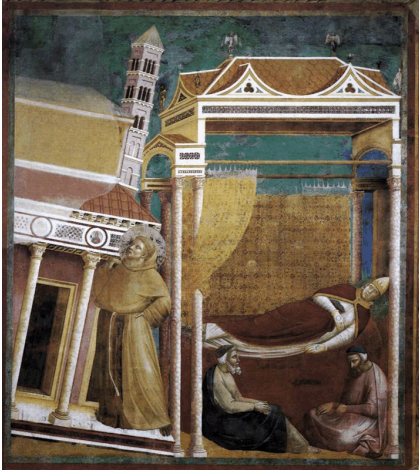
*San Francesco dona il mantello a un povero
St Francis gives his cloak to a poor man*

dono – condivisione – empatia
gift – sharing – empathy

“Quando il beato Francesco si incontrò con un cavaliere, nobile ma povero e malvestito, dalla cui indigenza mosso a compassione per affettuosa pietà, quello subito spogliatosi, rivestì.”

“When the blessed Francis met a knight, noble but poor and ill-dressed, whose indigence moved him to compassion out of affectionate pity, he immediately undressed and dressed.”

[Bonaventura da Bagnoregio, *Legenda maior*, I, 2]



Sogno di Innocenzo III
Dream of Innocent III

sostegno – protezione – impegno
support – protection – commitment

“Come il papa vedeva la basilica lateranense esser già prossima alla rovina; la quale era sostenuta da un poverello, mettendole sotto il proprio dosso perché non cadesse.”

“As the pope saw the Lateran basilica was already close to ruin; which was supported by a poor man, placing it under his own back so that it would not fall.”

[Bonaventura da Bagnoregio, *Legenda maior*, III, 10]



Predica agli uccelli
Preaching to the birds

esempio – comunicazione – accoglienza
example – communication – hospitality

“Andando il beato Francesco verso Bevagna, predicò a molti uccelli; e quelli esultanti stendevano i colli, protendevano le ali, aprivano i becchi, gli toccavano la tunica; e tutto ciò vedevano i compagni in attesa di lui sulla via.”

“As blessed Francis went towards Bevagna, he preached to many birds; and the exultant ones stretched out their necks, stretched their wings, opened their beaks, touched his tunic; and all this they saw the companions waiting for him on the way.”

[Bonaventura da Bagnoregio, *Legenda maior*, XII, 3]

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The Anthropophagic Movement in Brazil: Social Integration and Cultural Cannibalism Shape Modernist Architecture

Abstract

The Anthropophagic Movement, originating in Brazil in the 1920s, exemplified a distinctive cultural response to the influx of Western modernity from European migrants, characterised by a robust ethos of hospitality and empathy towards the unfamiliar and diverse. Through the analyses of the Anthropophagic Movement influence in Brazilian architecture it might be possible to better understand the hybridization of modern concept with local culture, an adaptation which is at the base of the growth of modernism in Brazil.

Parole chiave

anthropophagism, Brazil, immigration, modernist architecture, transculturation

Introduction

Saint Francis of Assisi is known for his strong focus on social integration, embodied in his life of renunciation and his commitment to universal brotherhood. The Saint lived in a time of social and political divisions, but his message of brotherhood and universal love helped to overcome barriers and foster integration between people of different backgrounds and social conditions. In this direction, with a strong spirit of welcoming and caring for the stranger, the different, the Anthropophagic Movement, born in Brazil in the 1920s, represented one of the most original cultural responses to western modernity arriving with great impetus from European states. Coined by the poet Oswald de Andrade in his *Manifesto antropófago* (anthropophagic manifesto) of 1928, the concept of “cultural anthropophagy” proposed a powerful metaphor: not to exclude the different but to accept it, to admire it in order to “devour” the most significant foreign influences and transform them into something authentically Brazilian (De Andrade, 1978). This approach had significant repercussions not only in literature and the visual arts, but also in architecture, contributing to the formation of a distinctive Brazilian modernist language.

Oswald de Andrade’s *Manifesto antropófago* advocated for a perspective in which Brazil might establish its identity via the innovative integration of various cultures. This viewpoint rejects mere replication of European patterns, advocating for an authentic synthesis that appreciates the nation’s indigenous, African, and popular traditions. Cultural anthropology emerged as a paradigm for an alternative modernity that seeks to harmonise innovation and tradition while carefully evaluating the impact of external cultural influences. In more recent time, in the essay *We are all cannibals*, also Claude Lévi-Strauss addresses the issue of cultural integration through a profound critique of ethnocentrism. The author emphasises how practices considered ‘barbaric’ by some societies are, in reality, complex and meaningful cultural expressions for others. This perspective invites recognition of the relativity of cultural norms and promotes a deeper understanding of different traditions (Lévi-Strauss, 2016). Through this reflection is possible to overcome prejudices and recognise the intrinsic value of each culture, thus promoting genuine cultural integration based on mutual respect and understanding, a eulogy to cultural anthropophagism

The antropophagic movement influenced Brazilian architecture leading to a fusion of international modernism and local culture (Ribeiro Pires Vieira, 2011). Architects such as Lúcio Costa, Oscar Niemeyer and Roberto Burle Marx embodied this synthesis. Emblematic examples include the Palácio Gustavo Capanema, which combines European modernism and Brazilian elements, and the Pampulha complex, where Niemeyer developed a fluid style inspired by nature and Brazilian tradition (Fig. 1).

The cultural context

The 20th century saw advances in construction technology, from the first use of air conditioning in large buildings around 1900

Cover

Lúcio Costa, Carlos Leão, Oscar Niemeyer, Affonso Eduardo Reidy, Ernâni Vasconcelos and Jorge Machado Moreira, Palácio Gustavo Capanema in Rio de Janeiro. Picture by Henrique Liberal. <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=153413596>

Fig. 1

Oscar Niemeyer, St Francis of Assisi church in Pampulha. Belo Horizonte, Minas Gerias, Brazil. A complex where Oscar Niemeyer combines European modernism and Brazilian elements developing a fluid style inspired by nature.



to experimentation with very thin reinforced concrete shell from 1910. New building types were made necessary and available by advances in medicine, transport communication and industry. Radical changes in political systems and social structures and a corresponding growth in urbanization also determined the main preoccupation concerning architects from urban planning to social housing. In many regions vernacular buildings were modified by technological developments and in some cases by what was seen as a new international and global style. Trade flows and the colonies system made architecture a global enterprise where the most renowned architects used to design buildings also for foreign clients in distant locations. As economic and political connections between countries have changed throughout the 20th century so the pattern of global architecture has changed.

Transformation / adaptation process on modernism buildings in Brazil could be defined as a kind of architectural transculturation phenomenon. The term transculturation has been coined by Cuban anthropologist Fernando Ortiz in 1947 to describe the transition process of merging and converging cultures. But transculturation encompasses more than transition from one culture to another; it does not consist merely of acquiring another culture (acculturation) or of losing or uprooting a previous culture (deculturation). Rather, it merges these concepts and additionally carries the idea of the consequent creation of new cultural phenomena (neoculturation). In this wide scenario the nationalist movements and newly independent colonies coincides with the modernist architectural thinking and the promotion of an international style. This, especially after the First World War was an approach that slowly and self-consciously signalled progress and deliberately broke links with the past. As the European colonies disbanded and new national identities were forged hybrid architectural approaches drew from multiple global influences emerged. Architects responded to the increasing challenges in different ways, some employed technological innovations, others got inspired from vernacular solutions to design regional interpretations of modern architecture principles (Jackson et al., 2024).

The 1922 Modern Art Week in São Paulo marked the beginning of Brazilian modernism, a movement that sought to break with European academic traditions and create a national artistic expression. In this context, cultural anthropophagy emerged as a strategy to address the tension between modernity and tradition, between external influences and local identity (Gonçalves, 1922). The idea was to critically assimilate foreign influences, reworking them in a Brazilian way, similar to the cannibalistic ritual of indigenous tribes that consumed their enemies to absorb their strength (Tufano, 2021).

Fig. 2

Oscar Niemeyer, Brasilia's Cathedral. A rational design but at the same time an expression of a unique national identity. Image by the author.

Principles of cultural anthropophagy

Critical Regionalism, as theorized by Kenneth Frampton, advocates for architecture rooted in local culture and climate, while maintaining a critical stance toward the universalizing forces of modernism. When applied to Rationalism –a movement favoring order, logic, and clarity– this approach takes on a unique form in South America, where European influences were filtered



through diverse geographies, colonial legacies, and indigenous traditions (Hartoonian, 2006). In the mid-20th century, South America became a fertile ground for a Rationalism that was reinterpreted rather than adopted wholesale. Architects like Brazil's João Batista Vilanova Artigas and Argentina's Clorindo Testa employed Rationalist principles –emphasis on structure, clarity of form, and functional planning– but infused them with local meaning. For instance, Artigas' Faculty of Architecture at the University of São Paulo reflects an honest use of concrete and a clear structural logic, but also integrates communal and climatically responsive spaces, echoing Brazilian socio-political aspirations (Del Real & Gyger, 2013).

Brazil, at the beginning of the 20th century, was undergoing a process of accelerated urbanisation and modernisation, and the debate on national identity was becoming increasingly urgent. Cultural elites, influenced by European culture, were confronted with a reality deeply marked by ethnic and cultural mixing. Cultural anthropophagy fitted into this context as a cry for a hybrid, mestizo identity, capable of making difference a strength.

Oswald de Andrade's *Manifesto antropófago* proposed a worldview in which Brazil could assert its identity through the creative assimilation of foreign cultures. This perspective opposed the simple imitation of European models, promoting instead an original synthesis that valued the country's indigenous, African and popular roots. Cultural anthropophagy thus became a paradigm for an alternative modernity, capable of combining innovation and tradition and the sharing of ideals and common roots.

Oswald de Andrade, together with the painter Tarsila do Amaral and other exponents of modernism, helped to define a poetics that celebrated mixing and assimilation as forms of cultural resistance. Tarsila's famous painting *Abaporu* (1928), which inspired the Manifesto, depicts a human being of exaggerated proportions, symbolising a primitive and potentially revolutionary humanity.

Since then till now Brazil is probably the only country in the world where the culture still maintains characteristics of solidarity, sensuality, cheerfulness and hospitality (De Masi, 2015).

Repercussions on Modernist Architecture

The influence of cultural anthropophagy on Brazilian architecture manifested itself in the search for an architectural language that integrated the innovations of international modernism with elements of local culture. Architects such as Lúcio Costa, Oscar Niemeyer and Roberto Burle Marx were among the main protagonists of this synthesis (Cavalcanti et al., 2011).

An emblematic example is the Palácio Gustavo Capanema in Rio de Janeiro, designed between 1936 and 1945 by a team led by Lúcio Costa and including Oscar Niemeyer and Roberto Burle Marx (Cover). This building, considered the first example of modernist architecture in Brazil (Needell, 1983), combines the aesthetics of European modernism with local elements such as Portuguese azulejos and tropical vegetation in the gardens designed by Burle Marx (Sá Carneiro, 2019).

As stated before, the Pampulha architectural complex in Belo Horizonte, designed in the 1940s by Oscar Niemeyer, is one of his most significant works in this respect. Pampulha is an example

Fig. 3

Lina Bo Bardi, SESC Pompéia in São Paulo. An architecture as an instrument of social transformation and enhancing cultural knowledge. Image by the author.



of how modernist aesthetics could be reinterpreted in a local key, with the use of traditional materials and ornamental motifs inspired by indigenous and popular art.

The Brasília city project, realised between the 1950s and 1960s, can also be interpreted in the light of cultural anthropophagy. There, Niemeyer and Costa imagined a modern, rational capital city, but at the same time an expression of a unique national identity (Cavalcanti, 2003). The monumental and symbolic forms of public buildings, large squares and open spaces reflect a utopian conception of the city, where technological modernity merges with the Brazilian cultural imagination (Fig. 2).

Flávio de Carvalho, another architect influenced by cultural anthropophagy, experimented with unconventional architectural forms and artistic performances that challenged the social and cultural norms of his time. His design for the Palácio do Governo in São Paulo, for example, proposed a fortified structure that reflected the political and social tensions of the time. De Carvalho was also the author of manifestos and writings that sought to redefine the role of the architect as a critical intellectual and agent of change.

The influence of the Anthropophagic Movement on architecture did not end with classical modernism. In subsequent years, the idea of creative assimilation remained a reference point for many Brazilian architects and urbanists. In the 1970s and 1980s, in a context of economic crisis and political repression, anthropophagy returned as a critical tool, capable of reinterpreting design practices in a postmodern and decolonial key.

Contemporary architects such as Lina Bo Bardi were able to reinterpret the anthropophagic legacy with a social and participatory approach (Anelli et al., 2014). Her design for the SESC Pompéia in São Paulo, for example, is a work that integrates pre-existing industrial architecture with new modernist structures, creating an inclusive and dynamic public space (De Oliveira, 2006). Lina Bo Bardi saw architecture as an instrument of social transformation, capable of giving voice to local communities and enhancing popular knowledge (Fig. 3).

O interior da história (The interior of history) was the second monographic books published by Marina Waisman. The Argentinian architect and critic faces in this publication complex and dangerous theme. Marina Waisman warns that the ideas and forms of architecture have not come to Brazil as finished products, but in a process of transculturation ideas. European concepts were interpreted freely according to local circumstances. And the political, economic and other extra-architectural factors determined often the continuities and discontinuities. According to Waisman it is undeniable that there was spread of ideas from Europe to America. But this was not a gradual transmission but sometimes both quick and slow, for sure uneven.

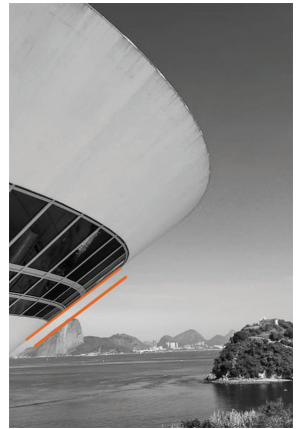
Writing about the cultural heritage of south America she stressed as "the symbiosis of such dissimilar elements, colonial and native, resulted, during three centuries under European domination, in an original architecture that, starting from European models, adapted these to local conditions, techniques, material site, scale, and so forth and, in certain periods like the 18th century, transformed their primary spatial meaning by way of the fantastic treatment of interior surfaces" (Waisman, 1993, p. 57).

Fig. 4

Oscar Niemeyer, Museu de Arte Contemporânea de Niterói. The project is deeply related to its local landscape, both visually and conceptually. Images and elaboration by the author.

Fig. 5

From the left, frames from the movies *L'homme de Rio* (1964), *Noite vazia* (1964) and *Terra em transe* (1967) where the modernist architectures are used as dystopian background of the screenplays. Screenshot from YouTube by the author.



Visual representations of modernist architecture

Visual representations of modernist architecture facilitated the formation, dissemination, and even the interrogation of a distinct national identity. The visual culture surrounding modernist architecture was instrumental in broadcasting its ideals (Silva, 2024). National and international architectural journals, featured the sleek, white volumes of Niemeyer's buildings against deep blue skies and beautiful landscape, reinforcing a sanitized image of modernity. The inspiration from the natural environment was, for many modernist South American architects a great starting point to develop architectures in perfect balance with the landscape (Fig. 4). These representations downplayed the social and political contradictions within local society, presenting instead a unifying aesthetic that could be consumed both domestically and abroad. Internationally, exhibitions such as *Brazil Builds* (MoMA, 1943) helped export this vision. Curated images and narratives depicted South America as a modern ground for architecture harmonizing tradition and innovation. Domestically, state-sponsored films and photographic essays circulated these images to a wide public, making architecture a tool of soft power. In these media, buildings became more than structures as they were emblems of a collective identity, expressions of an idealized South America (Fig. 5).

Conclusions

The Anthropophagic Movement had a profound impact on Brazilian modernist architecture, promoting an approach that enhanced local cultural identity through the creative assimilation of foreign influences. This led to the emergence of a distinctive Brazilian modernism that combined innovation and tradition and continues to influence the country's contemporary architecture. Cultural anthropophagy has proved to be a powerful metaphor for understanding the processes of hybridisation and syncretism that characterise Brazilian culture. In architecture, it has favoured the birth of an expressive language that breaks with the uniformity of international modernism, introducing elements of colour, form and meaning linked to the local context. This tradition, far from being outdated, still constitutes a fundamental resource for thinking about architecture as a cultural, political and aesthetic practice.

Through the analyses of the Anthropophagic Movement influence in Brazilian architecture it might be possible to better understand the hybridization of modern concept with local culture: a cultural adaptation which is at the base of the growth of modernism in Brazil and that is an example of cultural integration between countries in a contemporary era full of conflicts and contradictions.

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