

with the condition of the captive and castaway from Robinson Crusoe to the Robert Zemeckis film starring Tom Hanks, and so vividly in the case of the *Warhaftige Historia* itself, thus signals the uncertainty of existing categories of identity and territory, and in this way such figures become an always potent social site for the remaking of cultural worlds.

P R E F A C E

Hans Staden's *Warhaftige¹ Historia und Beschreibung eyner Landtschafft der wilden, nacketen, grimmigen Menschfresser Leuthen in der Newenwelt America gelege* (Marburg, 1557) is a fundamental text in the history of the discovery of Brazil, being one of the earliest accounts we have of the Tupi Indians from an eyewitness who was captive among them for over nine months, as well as offering a highly detailed description of the nature of early Portuguese enclaves in the region of Rio de Janeiro. The work also dates to a point in time when the Portuguese presence in the region was directly challenged by the French, who had been visiting the Brazilian coast for the trade in brazil wood since at least the 1520s. In this context both French and Portuguese attempted to recruit and maintain native alliances, making knowledge of the indigenous population much more than a disinterested ethnological issue. Staden's account therefore also hinges on the way in which this intercolonial conflict played into his situation as a captive of the Tupinambá,² allies to the French. In this way the work, although chiefly famed until now as a text on Tupian cannibalism, is no less important for appreciating the nature of European colonialism in Brazil and how that context was significant for the emergence of various ethnic and national antagonisms in Europe. In fact the issue of cannibalism, although obviously prominent in Staden's text and its accompanying visual illustrations, is by no means the only matter of contemporary interest to historians and anthropologists—how and why this should be so is part of the purpose of the introductory essay to explain.

It therefore needs to be emphasized at the outset that Staden's *Warhaftige Historia* has become a key reference in the resurgent debate on cannibalism and its discourses;³ a debate that had its very origins at the moment of the text's production, such as in the speculations of Michel de Montaigne, who also conversed with Tupi people brought as living exhibits to France, as well as in the way the idea of Brazilian cannibalism was used to mediate European controversies about the eucharistic cannibalism of Jesus Christ in Christian religions of the period.

So too, Staden's text has a particular significance in contemporary Brazil as both a source for Oswald de Andrade's inspiration for a distinct Brazilian modernism—termed the *antropofagista* movement—and for the visual reinterpretation of the woodcuts in the *Warhaftige Historia* by Candido Portinari—the Brazilian “Picasso.” A more popular legacy for the *Warhaftige Historia* is also evident in the production of children's literature based on Staden's story—Manuel Lobato's *Aventuras de Hans Staden* has gone through eleven editions and been in print since 1927—making Hans Staden somewhat analogous to Davy Crockett as an icon of the “wild frontier.” There are also renderings of Staden's account in contemporary Brazilian cinema, notably by Nelson Pereira dos Santos in 1974 but also as recently as 2000 in a film by Luiz Alberto Pereira.

Despite this cultural genealogy there has not been an English-language version since Malcolm Letts's edition of 1928, and only two versions in modern German since Fouquet's edition in 1941.⁴ While accurate transcription and translation of Staden's text are therefore the bedrock of this edition it is also our aim to make the text intellectually and aesthetically accessible to contemporary audiences.⁵ This means that we aim to alert the reader to the anthropological and historical aspects of Staden's text in the light of modern scholarship on both colonial Brazil as well as still-living Tupian peoples. Our critical introduction therefore brings new perspectives to this text, particularly ethnographic experience of ritual anthropophagy, as well as literary and ethnological critique of travel writings and its genres.⁶

Undoubtedly part of the continuing importance of Staden's text is precisely the way in which it relates to current debates on knowing or interpreting others distant in both cultural space and historical time, and the issue of cannibalism vividly highlights ideas of such difference. It is therefore crucial to note that it was the issue of observation, not of cannibalism, that was