

Foreword

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Modernidade Latina: Os Italianos e os centros do Modernismo Sulamericano [Latin Modernity: The Italians and the centers of South American Modernism] is the result of an international seminary organized by the MAC USP and FAU USP, in the framework of academic collaboration between MAC USP and the Dipartimento dei Beni Culturali e Ambientali of UNIMI, between April 9th and 11th of 2013. It was part of a series of activities of the exhibition *Classicismo, Realismo, Vanguarda: Pintura Italiana do Entreguerras* (MAC USP) and the short course *Anos 1930 na Itália. As artes figurativas, as revistas e as exposições durante o Fascismo* [The 1930s in Italy. Visual Arts, Magazines and the Exhibitions in the Fascist Era].

We gathered here the essays from the lectures of the seminary, which intended to bring to the Brazilian public a wider knowledge of the artistic, architectural and industrial culture, and of the evolution of the Italian exhibition system, between the initial phase of industrial modernization of the country and the rebuilding after World War II, clarifying the numerous and fundamental relations between the collecting of modern art and the raise of an original museum experience in Brazil, with the creation of MASP, of the Biennales, and of MAM. The event aimed also to insert the Italian-Brazilian interchanges into a broader context, of the cultural influx of Italian immigration to the countries of the Conesul, placing a cooperation perspective among scholars and academic institutions from Latin America and, particularly, members of the Mercosul.

Brazil, as well as Argentina, Venezuela, Uruguay, and, to a lesser extend, Paraguay, received a great influx of Italian immigrants from the second half of the 19th century forward. This phenomenon, as it is known, had a wide impact on the engendered culture of the country on the 20th century. Especially in the city of São Paulo that resulted in intense cooperation in several fields (industry, commerce and cultural relationships), whose role on the dissemination and formation of the local Modernism is still yet to be properly studied. Particularly regarding the Brazilian production of art history, some scholars began researches about the interaction between Brazil and Italy during the first modernism, especially regarding movements such as Futurism (Annateresa Fabris) and the Novecento Italiano (Mayara Laudanna, Tadeu Chiarelli). Nonetheless, besides the well-known and fundamental role of Paris, the more recent historiography has been evidencing the importance, to the development

of the modernism ideals, of the direct exchanges between Brazilian, Argentine, Uruguayan artists, architects and intellectuals and the Italian immigrants, as well as the frequent visits of the Latin Americans to the Italian artistic centers at the time. The systematic study of the collecting of Italian modern art in São Paulo can, surely, serve as fundamental base for a more complete mapping of those interactions, highlighting the importance of movements considered as less important until now. On the Matarazzo Collection of MAC USP, alongside artists of the Novecento Italiano, such as Sironi, there are significant works by artists of the Scuola Romana, such as Scipione and Mario Mafai, paintings by Casorati, representing the industrial Turin of the collector Gualino, of the critic Edoardo Persico, of the historian Lionello Venturi, who had a great role on the making of the modern culture in Italy. The study about the influx of the second Futurism is yet to be made, particularly of the roman Futurism and rationalism, which had the important contribution of Pietro Maria Bardi, and of his collaborators on the *Quadrante* magazine, with Bontempelli and the Bragaglia brothers, experiences that surely had effects on the aesthetic thinking of the Italian critic on MASP's formation. Also not yet fully clarified is the role of Italian immigrant critics in South America, such as Margherita Sarfatti, on the shaping of the Matarazzo Collection and on the reception of Italian art in the South American cultural context. We tried to map the state of the art of researches on art conducted on the art history, architectural history, literature and cultural history fields regarding those relations. The articles assembled on this volume constitute a first *corpus* of the thinking about these questions, pointing to the (yet) inexistence of researches carried out in many fronts raised here. Finally, we aimed to present unpublished researches, conducted in Conesul and in Italy regarding the theme.

The seminar was also the occasion of a visit to Brazil of Italian scholars of utmost importance. We highlight here art historian Zeno Birolli, a great name on the studies of Italian art of the first half of Twentieth century and of the work by Umberto Boccioni, and who passed away in February 2014. By him here there is an article unpublished in Portuguese, extracted from a volume of writings published in 1983, in which the author addresses Italian abstraction of the 1920s and 1930s. Thus, we not only bring an unedited material but also pay tribute to one of the most important re-evaluators of Italian art of the between wars, as well as a great enthusiast and supporter of comparative studies between Italy and Brazil. It was on the seminar *Modernidade Latina* that we had the last opportunity to see a lecture from Birolli.