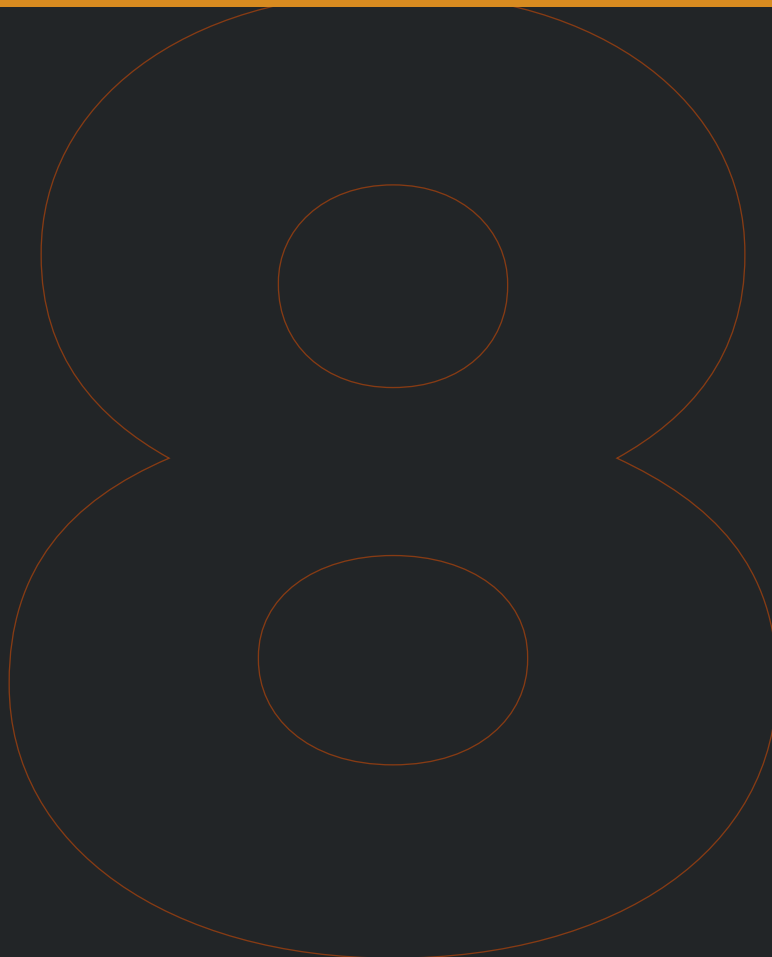




MACHADO DE ASSIS MAGAZINE

BRAZILIAN **LITERATURE** IN TRANSLATION







**BRAZILIAN LITERATURE IN TRANSLATION
LITERATURA BRASILEÑA EN TRADUCCIÓN**

#8

RIO DE JANEIRO
2022

**REPÚBLICA FEDERATIVA
DO BRASIL**

**PRESIDENT OF THE
REPUBLIC**

Jair Bolsonaro

MINISTRY OF TOURISM

Carlos Alberto Gomes de Brito

**SPECIAL SECRETARIAT
FOR CULTURE**

André Porciúncula

**FUNDAÇÃO BIBLIOTECA
NACIONAL**

**NATIONAL LIBRARY
FOUNDATION PRESIDENT**

Luiz Carlos Ramiro Júnior

**NATIONAL LIBRARY
FOUNDATION EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR**

João Carlos Nara Junior

**GENERAL-COORDINATOR
OF RESEARCH AND
PUBLISHING**

Elton Gomes dos Reis

**COORDINATOR OF
PUBLISHING**

Claudio Cesar Ramalho
Giolito

**COORDINATOR OF
INSTITUTIONAL
COOPERATION (CCI)**

Fernando Berçot

**MACHADO DE ASSIS
MAGAZINE BRAZILIAN
LITERATURE IN
TRANSLATION
Year 5 - Number 8**

CURATOR

Márcia Xavier de Brito

EDITOR

Elton Gomes dos Reis

EDITORIAL BOARD

Allan Carlos dos Santos
Carlos Ramallete
João Carlos Nara Júnior
Karleno Borcarro
Luiz Carlos Ramiro Júnior
Paulo Polzonoff Júnior
Rodrigo Alexandre de
Carvalho Xavier

EDITORIAL PRODUCTION

Paula Rocha Machado

COPY EDITING ENGLISH

Russell Thorne Sloan

COPY EDITING SPANISH

Virginia Elena Hernández

TEXT REVIEW

Carlos Santa Rosa
Paula Rocha Machado
Pamela Saavedra (Spanish)
- MC&G Design Editorial
Luiza Ferreira (Portuguese
and English) - MC&G Design
Editorial
Mickael Marques (French) -
MC&G Design Editorial

DESIGNER

Varnei Rodrigues -
Propagare

EDITORIAL ASSISTANT

Janilda Rodrigues de Souza
Taiyo Omura

INTERN

Victória Alexandria Milanês

ADDRESS

Fundação Biblioteca
Nacional
Av. Rio Branco 219 - 5º
andar
Rio de Janeiro - RJ
20040-008
editoracao@bn.gov.br
www.gov.br/bn/pt-br

**Illustration of Machado de
Assis**

Public domain / Arquivo
Nacional Collection

ISSN: 2359-4101



Check out other
publications of the
National Library
Foundation



Fundação BIBLIOTECA NACIONAL

SECRETARIA ESPECIAL DA
CULTURA

MINISTÉRIO DO
TURISMO



PÁTRIA AMADA
BRASIL
GOVERNO FEDERAL

EDITORIAL

EXPORTAR TRADUÇÃO: UMA VERSÃO DO BRASIL

O tradutor, como dizia Ortega Y Gasset, exerce uma “tarefa literária específica”, visto que abre os caminhos de outros idiomas e outras culturas. Essa transposição não é tarefa fácil, exige do profissional não só o conhecimento das línguas de origem e de chegada, mas os meandros e atalhos das culturas, algum conhecimento do autor e de seu “entorno”, além de uma boa noção dos limites do traduzir. Não é tarefa fácil, pois envolve interpretação, recriação, sensibilidade e ousadia – tudo dentro dos limites estreitos do respeito ao autor e à obra. Desse modo, o tradutor torna-se um mediador intercultural, um verdadeiro “embaixador”.

A literatura traduzida, portanto, tem um papel de destaque na formação e renovação das várias literaturas nacionais e funciona como um método enriquecedor das culturas. O Brasil, de país essencialmente importador de literatura, aos poucos, vem conseguindo atingir visibilidade literária na nova “aldeia global” da pós-modernidade. Há uma tendência mundial a valorizar as diferentes culturas e, passada a curiosidade do estrangeiro por imagens estereotipadas e exóticas muito em voga até meados do século XX, vemos crescer a difusão de uma produção literária mais diversificada e, portanto, mais representativa da verdadeira cultura brasileira.

O sucesso desse novo olhar para a cultura brasileira se deve, em grande parte, aos esforços de instituições governamentais, agentes literários, estudiosos e editoras em divulgar no mercado internacional nossas obras e autores. Nesse cenário, destacamos o papel efetivo da Fundação Biblioteca Nacional com o Programa de Apoio à Tradução de Livros Brasileiros no Exterior, criado em 1984, concedendo bolsas de apoio à tradução e apresentando o autor nacional nas grandes feiras literárias do mundo.

A presente publicação é parte dessa proposta de ampliar e aprimorar a apresentação do conjunto da produção literária nacional. Desde os dias do “Guia conciso de autores brasileiros” em 2002 e 2004, passando pela primeira versão da revista editada entre 2012-2015, a Machado de Assis Magazine chega a uma nova fase. Nas três revistas de 2021, tentaremos retomar e dar publicidade ao melhor da produção dos anos 2015-2021, para, a partir daí, prosseguirmos com as chamadas públicas por novas traduções e versões da brasilidade.

O curador.

EXPORT TRANSLATION: A BRAZILIAN VERSION

The translator, as Ortega y Gasset used to say, performs a “specific literary task”, as they pave the way for other languages and cultures. This transposition is not an easy task, it requires from the professional not only knowledge of the source and target languages, but also of the intricacies and shortcuts of cultures, some knowledge of the author and their “surroundings”, in addition to a good understanding of the limits of translating. It is not an easy task, as it encompasses interpretation, recreation, sensitivity, and boldness – all within the narrow limits of respect for the author and the work. In this way, the translator becomes an intercultural mediator, a true “ambassador”.

Translated literature, therefore, has a prominent role in the formation and renewal of various national literature and works as an enriching method for cultures. Brazil, a country that is essentially an importer of literature, has, little by little, been able to achieve literary visibility in the new “global village” of post-modernity. There is a worldwide tendency to value different cultures and, once the foreigner’s curiosity for stereotyped and exotic images that were in vogue until the mid-twentieth century, we see a growth in the spread of a more diversified literary production and, therefore, more representative of the true Brazilian culture.

The success of this new look at Brazilian culture is due, in large part, to the efforts of government institutions, literary agents, scholars, and publishers to promote our works, as well as authors in the international market. In this scenario, we highlight the effective role of the National Library Foundation with the Support Program for the Translations and Publications of Brazilian Authors Abroad, created in 1984, granting translation support grants and presenting our national authors in great literary fairs around the world.

This publication is part of this proposal to expand and improve the presentation of the whole of our national literary production. Since the days of the “Concise Guide for Brazilian Authors” in 2002 and 2004, passing through the first version of this magazine published between 2012-2015, Machado de Assis Magazine has reached a new phase. In the three issues planned for 2021, we will try to take up and publicize the best production of the years 2015-2021, and from then on, we will continue with the public calls for new translations and versions of Brazil.

The curator.

EXPORTACIÓN DE LA TRADUCCIÓN: UNA VERSIÓN DE BRASIL

El traductor, como decía Ortega y Gasset, realiza una “tarea literaria concreta”, ya que abre el camino a otras lenguas y culturas. Esta transposición no es una tarea fácil, requiere del profesional no solo el conocimiento de los idiomas de origen y destino, sino también los recodos y atajos de las culturas, cierto conocimiento del autor y su “entorno”, además de una buena comprensión de los límites de la traducción. No es una tarea fácil, ya que abarca interpretación, recreación, sensibilidad y atrevimiento, todo dentro de los estrechos límites del respeto por el autor y la obra. De esta forma, el traductor se convierte en un mediador intercultural, un verdadero “embajador”.

La literatura traducida, por tanto, tiene un papel destacado en la formación y renovación de diversas literaturas nacionales y funciona como un método enriquecedor para las culturas. Brasil, país esencialmente importador de literatura, poco a poco ha ido logrando visibilidad literaria en la nueva “aldea global” de la posmodernidad. Existe una tendencia mundial a valorar las diferentes culturas y, una vez pasada la curiosidad del extranjero por imágenes estereotipadas y exóticas que estuvieron en boga hasta mediados del siglo XX, vemos un crecimiento de la difusión de una producción literaria más diversificada y, por tanto, más representativa de la verdadera cultura brasileña.

El éxito de esta nueva mirada sobre la cultura brasileña se debe, en gran parte, a los esfuerzos de instituciones gubernamentales, agentes literarios, académicos y editores para promover nuestras obras y autores en el mercado internacional. En este escenario, destacamos el rol efectivo de la Fundación Biblioteca Nacional con el Programa de Apoyo a la Traducción de Libros Brasileños en el Exterior, creado en 1984, otorga que presenta becas de apoyo a la traducción y presentando al autor nacional en las grandes ferias literarias del mundo.

Esta publicación forma parte de esta propuesta para ampliar y mejorar la presentación de toda la producción literaria nacional. Desde los días de la “Guía Concisa de Autores Brasileños” en 2002 y 2004, pasando por la primera versión de la revista publicada entre 2012-2015, la Machado de Assis Magazine ha iniciado una nueva etapa. En las tres revistas del 2021, intentaremos retomar y dar a conocer lo mejor de la producción de los años 2015-2021, y de ahí en adelante, continuaremos con las convocatorias públicas de nuevas traducciones y versiones de la brasilidad.

El curador.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SUMARIO

ENGLISH

1) Freedom by a Thread – The History of Quilombos in Brazil.....	11
2) Black Women of Brazil in Slavery and Post-Emancipation.....	18
3) Brazil and the Dialectic of Colonization	23
4) The Sanitation of Brazil: Nation, State, and Public Health 1889-1930	30
5) Religions in Rio.....	36
6) Miss Dollar — Stories by Machado de Assis.....	42
7) Chronicle of the Murdered House.....	50
8) The Body Snatcher	57
9) Rio Noir.....	63
10) The Invisible Life of Euridice Gusmao	67
11) Tiger Fur	72

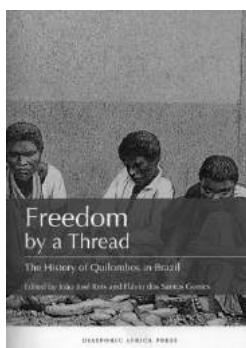
ESPAÑOL

12) Amor.....	76
13) Experimentar lo Experimental	80

FRANÇAIS

14) La défunte suivi de pardonne-moi de me trahir	86
15) Les livres de Sayuri.....	101

ENGLISH



1.

The book: Freedom by a Thread – The History of Quilombos in Brazil

Edited by João José Reis and Flávio dos Santos Gomes

Original title: Liberdade por um Fio – História dos Quilombos no Brasil

ISBN: 978-19-37306-31-1

Year of original publication: 1996

Year of translated version publication: 2016

Original publisher: Editora Companhia das Letras – São Paulo

Translated version publisher: Diasporic Africa Press – New York

Number of pages: 526

The editors / authors: João José Reis and Flávio dos Santos Gomes

INTRODUCTION - A HISTORY OF FREEDOM

JOÃO JOSÉ REIS AND FLAVIO DOS SANTOS GOMES

The enslavement of Africans in the Americas consumed the lives of around fifteen million or more men and women who were ripped away from their land. The slave trade through the Atlantic was one of the greatest commercial and cultural enterprises marking the foundation of the modern world and the establishment of a global economic system. Brazil's participation in the tragic venture was enormous. It is estimated that close to 40 percent of the African slaves came to Brazil. Here, despite the intensive use of indigenous work force¹, it was the Africans and their descendants who constituted the main labor force for over three hundred years of slavery. Slavery penetrated every aspect of Brazilian life. In addition to setting sugar mills, farms, mines, plantations, factories, kitchens and large halls into motion, the African slaves and their descendants left their mark upon various other aspects of material and spiritual life in this country, its agriculture, culinary, religion, language, music, arts, architecture, etc. The list is long, and we are already tired of hearing it.

Where there was slavery there was resistance — a struggle that took on many forms. Even under the threat of the whip, slaves either negotiated spaces of autonomy with the slave masters or played lazy at work, broke tools, set fire to plantations, attacked slave masters and overseers, or rebelled individually and collectively. Here too, the list is long and well known. There was, however, a type of resistance that could be characterized as most typical of slavery and of other forms of forced labor: the escape and formation of communities of runaway slaves. Yet, it is important to remember that running away not always led to the establishment of such groups. The escape could be executed both individually and in groups, but slaves eventually would seek to disappear behind the anonymity of the mass of enslaved and freed black people. In these cases, their destiny could be the cities, where the circulation of men and women of various skin tones was not unfamiliar. In fact, they came to constitute considerable portions of the free population and even became a majority in some regions.

Escapes that led to the formation of runaway slave groups, often joined by other social characters, took place in the Americas where slavery thrived. These groups had different names: in Spanish America: *Palenques*, *cumbes*, etc.; in English: *Maroons*; in French: *Grand maroonage* (to differentiate from *petit maroonage*, the individual escape, usually temporary). In Brazil, these groups were mainly called *quilombos* and *mocambos* and its members *quilombolas*, *calhambolas* ou *mocambeiros*.

¹ See: John Monteiro, *Negros da terra* (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 1994).

The phenomenon of quilombo formation has been heavily studied across the American continent, yet the quality and quantity of the studies vary from place to place. For instance, some of the most studied are the quilombos of Jamaica and Suriname, which were able to celebrate peace treaties with colonial powers, acquiring a certain autonomy, allowing them to survive to the present day. Because they were able to constitute themselves as relatively independent communities, it was possible to study these quilombos “from inside,” that is, through oral sources and the surviving memories of its descendants.² We can assert that this memory has not been totally erased in Brazil, once we consider the communities called “remnant *quilombos*” which are actually able to trace their past to the groupings constituted prior to the abolition of slavery in 1888³. In this volume, this is the case of the chapter written by Euripedes Funes, which is largely based upon memories of remnant quilombolas from the state of Pará. Yet, unfortunately, the study of the majority of quilombos in the Americas and in Brazil, in particular, depends exclusively upon reports written by foreigners, and often by members of repressive forces. Nonetheless, even though the history told by these sources is problematic — as Richard Price has demonstrated so well while comparing and examining divergences and agreements between documents from the Dutch colonizers and the oral tradition of the *Saramaka* — the researcher should not give up investigating the history of quilombos. For the historian, the most sensitive approach is to follow basic guidelines to read documents critically, identify circumstances and intentions of scribes and what can be read between the lines, and to explore small evidence, as one attempts to hear the silences. At last, it is advisable not to be misled by documents that articulate the voices of repression, but rather to use them as weapons that may open the path towards a history of runaway slaves.

Nonetheless, the problems regarding sources are only one of the obstacles. There are theoretical and methodological issues that may be even more crucial issues related to themes, which we could call “classical” in the approach towards the given phenomena. Among these themes we could list: the conditions that stimulate escape and the constitution of quilombos, such as the nature of relations within the slavery system and a geography that facilitates the installation and

2 On Suriname, see various works by Richard Price, among which the following stand out: *First-time* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1983) and *Alabi's World* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990); on Jamaica, Mavis Campbell, *The Maroons of Jamaica, 1655-1796* (Trenton: Africa World Press, 1990) and various articles by Barbara Kopytoff, “The Early Political Development of Jamaican Maroon Societies”, *The William & Mary Quarterly* 35, n. 2 (1978): 287-307; “The Development of Jamaican Maroon Ethnicity”, *Caribbean Quarterly* 22 (1976): 33-50; “Colonial Treaty as Sacred Charter”, *Ethnohistory* 26 (1979): 45-64; “Jamaican Maroon Political Organization: The Effects of the Treaties”, *Social and Economical Studies* 25 (1976): 87-105. About quilombos in various regions of the Americas, see the following collected volume by Richard Price, which, although somewhat outdated, remains useful. *Maroon Societies* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1979). The same author updated the historiographical discussion in “Resistance to Slavery in the Americas: Maroon and their Communities”, *The Indian Historical Review* 15, n. 1-2 (1988-9):71-95.

3 It is not always possible to trace the origin of these groupings back to the slavery period. On these communities, see Eliane Cantarino O'Dwyer, ed., *Terra de quilombos* (Rio de Janeiro: Associação Brasileira de Antropologia, 1995) and José Jorge de Carvalho, ed., *O quilombo do Rio das Rãs* (Salvador: EDUFBA/CEAO, 1996).

defense of fugitive communities; the defense tactics and repression of quilombos; the demography, economy, society and the structures of power inside quilombos; the relations of the quilombos with the society around them (combining various previous aspects); the type of society and culture created by quilombos and the continuities and ruptures with experiences brought from Africa. When we say that this last aspect synthesizes the issue discussed as a whole, we place ourselves at the heart of a discussion that has permeated every study about quilombos in the Americas and particularly in Brazil.

The list of authors that have studied Brazilian *quilombos*, especially that of Palmares, is quite long.⁴ As shown by Silvia Lara in this volume, colonial essayists had foregrounded the quilombola resistance and the difficulties in eradicating them as early as the end of the seventeenth century. Even so, this mode of slave struggle was emphasized in their writings mainly in order to extol the colonial authorities that repressed it. Palmares and other quilombos would become brief chapters in Brazil's military history. Despite some important contributions, this treatment barely changed until the nineteenth century.⁵

More systematic reflections related to quilombos would appear in Afro-Brazilian studies in the 1930s. Generally speaking, following the foundational studies of Nina Rodríguez at the turn of the century, Arthur Ramos and Edison Carneiro furthered their interpretations through a cultural studies lens. Later, Roger Bastide took on this task. According to this current of thought, the social organization of quilombolas was identified with a counter-acculturation effort and as a resistance to the European acculturation of those living in the slave quarters. R. K. Kent, a North American Africanist, followed some clear clues left by Nina Rodrigues and Edison Carneiro, as he sought to redefine Palmares as a true African state in Brazil. This is the vision of quilombo as a restoration project, in the sense that the fugitives sought to restore Africa on this other side of the Atlantic. An interpretation that holds a restoration perspective can also be found in Eugene Genovese's important study on slave rebellions in the Americas. Many times, inadvertently, these authors have inspired a popular conception of quilombos as isolated and isolationist communities whose intention was to recreate a pure Africa in the Americas. They would be a type of alternative society to the slavery-based one, where everyone would be free and possibly equal, just as they would have been in a considerably romanticized Africa.⁶

4 [Translator's note:] "Quilombo dos Palmares" was not only the largest quilombo in colonial Brazil, but also the one that managed to resist the longest, thus becoming emblematic of slave resistance.

5 See an evaluation of the historiography on slavery of this period in Luis Carlos Lopes, *O espelho e a imagem: o escravo na historiografia brasileira* (1808-1920) (Rio de Janeiro: Achiamé, 1987), *passim*.

6 Raimundo Nina Rodrigues, *Os africanos no Brasil*, 5 ed. (São Paulo: Editora Nacional, 1977), chapter 3; Arthur Ramos, *O negro brasileiro* (Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira, 1935); *A aculturação negra no Brasil* (São Paulo: Editora Nacional, 1942); Edison Carneiro, *O Quilombo dos Palmares*, 4th ed. (São Paulo: Editora Nacional, 1988), the edition of which includes an article "Singularidades dos quilombos", p. 13-25, first published in 1953, in which Carneiro emphasizes the relation among quilombos and the surrounding society. Also, in the "Apresentação" (Presentation) to this edition, Waldir Freitas Oliveira discusses the evolution of Palmarian studies; Roger Bastide, *As Américas Negras* (São Paulo: Difel/Edusp, 1974), chapter 3; R.K. Kent, "Palmares: an African State in Brazil",

In spite of the efforts of some authors to document the social and cultural syncretism developed in quilombos since Palmares, there remains in these readings a basic impulse to locate Africanism or African survivals — a method that became internationally successful as a result of Melville Herskovits⁷ studies of Afro-American cultures. To balance this out, we suggest that it would be more productive to investigate how quilombolas kept on living in their havens with rhythm and means that were rather distinct from the formation of an Afro-Brazilian society that had begun in the slave quarters. Institutions and, above all, worldviews brought by Africans (who were not simply a blank slate upon which slave master, government and colonial church inscribed their desires for domination), performed a fundamental contribution to the creation of this new society. Cultural exchange and social alliances were intensely forged among Africans themselves, originating from diverse African regions, in addition to, of course, those born from the relations that were developed with the local black, white, indigenous and mixed-race inhabitants. This process took place all around, following rhythms and generating combinations that varied across the territorial immensity of an enslaving Brazil. And above all, it is towards this process of building new institutions, cultures, and social relations that the scholar should turn, so that they may discover why quilombolas and slaves in general chose to keep certain aspects of their African origins over others while africanizing their new world and renewing whatever they could carry from the old Africa⁸. And to better understand this process, we believe that it is important that the slavery historian, and in particular, those focusing on slave rebellions, investigate the history of Africans prior to the Atlantic crossing.

Since the end of the 1950s, studies on slave rebellion have gained popularity, first in parallel to the expansion of left movements and, in a following moment, to the rise of black movements. We are not saying that left and black militants had neither reflected upon nor been inspired by slave rebellions prior to that date. Palmares itself had been memorialized during the formation of black organizations in the 1920s and 1930s, one of which, the Palmares Civic Center, founded in 1927, provided leaders and ideas to the Brazilian Black Front (Frente Negra Brasileira) in the following decade. At the same time, Marxist intellectuals of that period, such as Aderbal Jurema, wrote about slave rebellions as episodes of Brazil's class

Journal of African History 6 n. 2 (1965): 161-75; Eugene Genovese, *From Rebellion to Revolution* (New York: Vintage, 1979), chapter 2.

7 Pay special attention to the classic work by Melville J. Herskovits, *The Myth of the Negro Past* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1958 [1941]), which remains a source of inspiration, similarly to the collected volume by Joseph E. Holloway, ed., *Africanisms in American Culture* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990).

8 The inspiration is already present in the classical essay by Sidney Mintz and Richard Price, *An Anthropological Approach to the Afro-American Culture* (Philadelphia: Institute for the Study of Human Issues, 1976), which, nonetheless, defines a rapid Afro-American process of cultural formation that cannot be generalized. In a recent article analyzing the African Institution of *kilombo*, which inspired the Palmarians to organize themselves, Kabengele Munanga suggests that the Brazilian quilombo would be a “copy” of the African, but then he vehemently clarifies his point about the adaptation that has possibly taken place in Brazil, from which we conclude that there was no copying as such. See K. Munanga, “Origem e Histórico do Quilombo na África”, *Revista USP* 28 (1995-6): 63.

struggle. And we should not forget the connection of Edison Carneiro, an expert on Palmares, with the Brazilian Communist Party — which led to his persecution. He found refuge in the *candomblé* spiritual center Axé Opô Afonjá, presided by his friend, the famous high priestess, *dona* Aninha. In fact, we can assert that the mixed-race socialist Edison Carneiro practiced a double militancy, in the left and in the black movement, as his engagement against racism and the persecution of *candomblé* spiritual centers attest.⁹

In Clóvis Moura's *Rebeliões da senzala* (*Slave Quarters' Rebellions*), originally published in 1959 by Zumbi Press, *quilombos* were revisited from a more strictly Marxist perspective. Rich in empirical material gathered from printed sources, the book came out during a moment in which various scholars — the most well-known of them being those connected to the University of São Paulo — placed great effort on combating an old idea systematized by Gilberto Freyre in the early 1930s: the conception that Brazil's slavery relations had been generally harmonious. But if in the revisionist analyses of the so-called "Paulista School" — formed by Florestan Fernandes, Fernando Henrique Cardoso, Octavio Ianni — the slave resistance was placed as second priority in order to highlight the objectification of slaves, Clóvis Moura and later Luis Luna, José Alípio e Décio Freitas, among others, would favor addressing resistance. Thus, *quilombos* and rebellions began to figure among issues in focus, even though their study was overburdened by a tendency to discuss guerilla tactics and the interaction between *quilombos* and other political movements. The predominant inclination of this historiography was to define black resistance in the *quilombos* as a negation of the captive system through the creation of an alternative free society. There was, in this sense, a return — though through other means — to the thesis centered on the marginalization and isolation of *quilombos*, generally defined by the Palmares model. At the same time, this historiography figured *quilombolas* as incapable of proposing the destruction of the slavery regime as a whole. The rebels had not reached the necessary "level" of class consciousness to take this definitive step in the struggle, as they were incapable of deciphering the "laws" that supposedly rule social transformation. A political behavior and power logic specific to the rebel slave, upon which their actions could be analyzed, was simply not conceivable. Generally guided by a more or less disguised evolutionism, these authors substituted the investigation of meanings that slaves themselves lent to their actions with a lamentation over their inability to grasp the meaning of a history mastered by the historian. In this regard, there is indeed a convergence of these authors with the "Paulista School"¹⁰ theses.

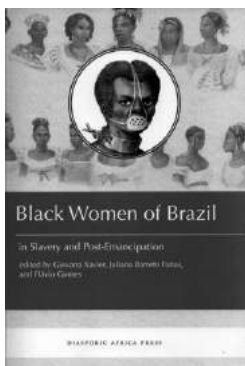
9 On Palmares and the Black Movement in the 1920s and 1930s, George Reid Andrews, *Blacks in São Paulo, Brazil, 1888-1988* (Madison: Wisconsin University Press, 1991): 145-8. Aderbal Jurema wrote *Insurreições Negras no Brasil* (Recife: Editora Mozart, 1935). On the communist connections of Edison Carneiro, including his persecution after the movement of 1935, see Waldir F. Oliveira and Vivaldo da C. Lima, *Cartas de Edison Carneiro e Arthur Ramos* (São Paulo: Corrupio, 1987): 79, 83, 91-93 *et passim*; and Deoscoredes M. dos Santos, *Axé Opô Afonjá* (Rio de Janeiro: Instituto Brasileiro de Estudos Afro-Asiáticos, 1962), 23 (this reference was brought to us by Vivaldo da Costa Lima).

10 Clóvis Moura, *Rebeliões da senzala* (São Paulo: Edições Zumbi, 1959 [there is a more recent, revised and expanded edition of this work published by Mercado Aberto: Porto Alegre, 1988]);

A few more recent studies on quilombos and slave rebellions, written in the 1980s and 1990s, have neither abandoned the cultural problematic nor the Marxist influence. In fact, in many cases, they are inheritors of these paradigms, since we find as much continuity and rupture in these as we do in those that preceded them. Nevertheless, they have generally renewed the discussion of the phenomena as they have given up both the desperate search for African traces and the teleological rigidity of conventional Marxism, updating the debate based on new perspectives of recent historiography — particularly in regard to elements that have been innovating slavery studies both inside and outside the country. These are studies that also owe a lot to the renewal of Marxist historiography, which has sought to incorporate into its concerns, through social anthropology, the symbolic aspects, and rituals of life in society while contextualizing them historically. Yet, above all, it must be emphasized that these studies reflect a concern for archival research as well as the discovery and analyses of manuscripts and oral sources that considerably expand our knowledge about quilombos in various Brazilian regions, indicating a complex relation between fugitives and diverse societal groups around them.

This collected volume presents a sample of the ways in which quilombos are being studied in Brazil. The authors of the chapters are fortunately not part of a specific historiographical “school”. The intention that guided the organizers was to provide a broad picture of the various interpretative possibilities. The readers will have the opportunity to detect theoretical and methodological differences among the authors, who, in some cases “dive” into the same data and even into the same archive, only to emerge with divergent interpretations. Another concern was to cover various periods and regions of Brazil, although, for reasons beyond our control, there were certainly important slavery zones that were omitted, such as São Paulo.

Clóvis Moura, *Quilombos, resistência ao escravismo*, Série Princípios (São Paulo: Ática, 1993). Also see Luiz Luna, *O negro na luta contra a escravidão* (Rio de Janeiro: Leitura, 1968); Décio Freitas, *Palmares, a guerra dos escravos*, 5th ed. (Porto Alegre: Mercado Aberto, 1984 [revised and expanded edition from the Spanish original published in 1971 and in Portuguese in 1973]). Among the “left” bibliography on Palmares, is the work published in the magazine *Anhembi* in 1956, and the recently re-edited work of surrealist and Trotskyist, Benjamin Peret, *O Quilombo dos Palmares: crônica da “República dos escravos”, Brasil 1640-1695* (Lisboa: Fenda, 1988). In a book format, the most recent Marxist interpretation of Palmares comes from Ivan Alves Filho, *Memorial dos Palmares* (Rio de Janeiro: Xenon, 1988). An analysis of the so-called “Paulista school” does not fit here. On this topic, see, among others, Richard Graham, *Escravidão, Reforma e Imperialismo* (São Paulo: Perspectiva, 1979), chapter 1. Within this “school”, the exception is the work of historian Emília Viotti da Costa, *Da senzala à colônia* (São Paulo: Difel, 1966), which presents a more complex perspective on the relations produced by slavery while paying close attention to the discussion on slave rebellions. A pointed critique of the objetification of slaves comes from Sidney Chalhoub, *Visões da liberdade* (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 1990): 35-43 *et passim*.



2.

The book: Black Women of Brazil in Slavery and Post-Emancipation

Edited by Giovana Xavier, Juliana Barreto Farias and Flávio Gomes

Original title: Mulheres Negras no Brasil Escravista e do Pós-Emancipação

ISBN: 978-19-37306-54-0

Year of original publication: 1992

Year of translated version publication: 2015

Original publisher: Selo Negro Edições

Translated version publisher: Diasporic Africa Press — New York

Number of pages: 443

The editors / authors: Giovana Xavier, Juliana Barreto Farias and Flávio Gomes

INTRODUCTION – BLACK WOMEN OF BRAZIL

In recent decades, studies of slavery have been consolidated in the vast historiography of colonial and post-colonial Brazil. Studies developed in graduate programs, the diversity of sources — especially approaches to quantitative data and of social history — and the abundance of approaches that refer to time and space are some of the main characteristics of that historiographical turn. Up until the 1960s, enslavement was spoken of as something generic; later the systemic approaches of pro-slavery would lose ground to the analysis of the daily life and culture of the slavery, and of the enslaved person. New themes have gained prominence. We know more about slave society in different regions and their productive activities: plantation, mining, food production, livestock, and urban slavery.

Today, we analyze emancipations, *quilombos* (colonies of escaped slaves also called maroon colonies in some literature), brotherhoods, kinship, slave revolts, and families; we approach the slave quarters, the *zungu* (low-rent living quarters for freed slaves), the slums, and barracks; and closely examine the imagined discourse and material culture of the main protagonists of slave society. Among the set of themes that were asserted, those that disappeared or reappeared, we evidence one theme even less explored: the experiences of black women. For this reason, we feature here the studies of pioneers Maria Odila Leite da Silva Dias, Sonia Giacomini, Mary Del Priori, Magali Engel, Martha Abreu, Luciano Figueiredo, Margareth Bakos, Liana Reis, Cecília Moreira, Selma Pantoja, Rachel Soihet and Maria Lúcia Mott; and the more recent analysis by Sandra Graham, Júnia Furtado, Sheila de Castro Faria, and Carlos Eugênio Libano Soares.

The originality of this collection exists in the offering of a thorough and updated survey of the topic, by gathering the articles of 20 specialists, covering Brazil from North to South in theoretical terms and in the use of diverse sources. These are scholarly texts that not only tell the story of cities, mills, factories, and mansions, but which also fundamentally reconstruct scenes and design landscapes to reveal shadows, moments, and ways of life: the body, the mind, and the soul of the women — *crioulas* (women of African descent born into captivity in Brazil), *escravas* (enslaved women), *mulatas* (bi-racial women), *africanas* (women born in Africa but brought to Brazil as slaves), *pardas* (women of mixed race, often a mix of white/European, indigenous, and African), *forras* (freed women), *pretas* (black women, typically used to refer to a woman with darker complexion), *negras* (also means black women but has less emphasis on the darkness of the shade), and *morenas* (women of African descent typically referring to a mixed-race shade of brown) — during slavery and in the first decades' post-emancipation. They were mixed universes, expanded approaches, and sources that gained attentions in other realms. Sounds and images multiplied in different concepts, theoretical perspectives, and methodologies. The

main idea was not only to trace the steps of these women, but also to walk with them, and through them. These various texts hold at the center of the analysis pathways of mini-biographies as part of a larger search for model characters, among an array of inconclusive trajectories.

The arrangement of chapters is not as concerned with chronological order as with territorial diversity. We begin in a noble space for women in slavery. The chapter on 18th century Minas Gerais, by Eduardo França Paiva, offers the first examples. By examining testimonies and witness accounts — the main source that will appear in other texts — envisioned the cultural thoughts of *negras*, *pretas*, *crioulas*, *índias* (indigenous women), *mamelucas* (mixed race of indigenous and white/European), *mulatas*, *pardas*, and *cabras* (a woman of mixed race with a black parent and a “mulatto” parent) with different “attributes” and “conditions”, who invented mixed spaces of experiences among villages and camps. We continue to Bahia in the transition to the post-colonial era. Adriana Dantas Reis brings to us the *experiences of liberty* under slavery. Strategies of freed slaves and their paths — sometimes shortcuts that were not always common — of mobility. Again, the testament offers records of goods, attitudes, and expectations in narratives where men are revealed by voices no less strong than that of the *crioulas* and *africanas*. This throws us inside of a world woven together by pain and smiles. Before continuing, we return to Minas Gerais to change the picture already drawn. Luciano Figueiredo, one of the pioneers in the research of gender and slavery, centers his analysis on the role of women street vendors. In the narratives of the characters, including Luzias and Sebastianas, we are taken to the streets, to the scenarios of affirmation, to the markets, and to the life of the small, but strong network of the black women in Minas Gerais. Also, in the environment of mining, we reach Goiás and invade an important space addressed in slavery studies, but unknown from the perspective of black women: the sisterhoods and the role of queens and judges. Mary Karasch, responsible for distinguished research of slavery in central Brazil, presents us with a new approach. Through her work, we get to know more closely the religious feminine life and association in the Catholic orders dedicated to Our Lady of the Rosary, São Benedito, and Santa Efigênia. Festivities and practices involving devotion to the saints and sisterhoods were also spaces of power and of status for black women.

The first trip the collection takes to Rio de Janeiro — the largest slave city and urban area of the Atlantic with the most Africans — we encounter more black women. Giovana Xavier guides this historical interpretation. Certainly, caricatured with views of social invisibility in the world of ideas we identify predetermined feminine roles of characters portrayed in novels, short stories, and poems. The repetition of stereotypes and labels suggests how black women were perceived, rejected, harassed, and battered. From Rio de Janeiro we make the first round to the Northeast. Initially, we land in 19th century Paraíba. Among baptisms and letters of emancipation, Solange Rocha addresses the hopes that mobilized black women. Limitations and setbacks marked the long and winding journey to liberty in a world surrounded by slavery. From there, we jump to Recife, one of the other large slave cities. Valeria Costa guides us to encounter the *africanas* and their networks — part

of which are religious — also through witness accounts. In this manner, we follow two valiant West African women: Monicas and Therezas, residents of the parishes of São Frei Pedro Gonçalves of Recife and Boa Vista. With kinfolk and courage, they left goods and much solidarity to husbands. Children, godchildren, and even slaves, in a city that became their space for projects, aspirations, and experiences.

Something complex and similar to the scenario reconstructed by Juliana Barreto Farias directs us back to the “black city” of Rio de Janeiro. *Africanas* and greengrocers/street vendors from West Africa are unveiled in divorce filings in the Arquivo da Cúria [Curia Archives] of Rio de Janeiro. Men and women tell us why they married, how they lived, and why they decided to break their unions. We enter the space of the home and from there we exit to the streets, seeing the couples between markets, shacks, and lifelong projects that transformed captives into freed women and converted them into a network of alliances and businesses that also involved frustrations of married life and dreams of family. We travel down the line to find the long-term stories of ex-slaves, narrated by Sandra Graham. As Balbina, a domestic captive, continues to be sold from one property to another from the interior of Minas Gerais and the Vale do Paraíba in the middle on the 19th century into the streets and markets of Salvador and Rio de Janeiro, the *africanas* Rosa, Henriqueta, and Sabina experienced different, but also challenging situations. Enjoying the autonomy of a more urban environment, they could win their freedom, become recognized traders, and still form new families with aggregates and offspring of their slaves, to whom they left their belongings.

From there, we continue to Rio Grande do Sul, in Uruguaiana, very close to the border. Paulo Moreira stresses the routes of black women and the formation of families as one of the expectations that surrounded emancipations. Sounds of motivation, hope, and delusion are heard in the notary records and inventories. We see an exemplary portrait of a black family coming to Salvador in the chapter by Isabel Reis. With the journeys of Augusta, Ubaldina, and Domingas, we are again driven by feminine histories, in which the daily functioning of life in which affection, marriage, neighborhood, and material resources were important items of many lives.

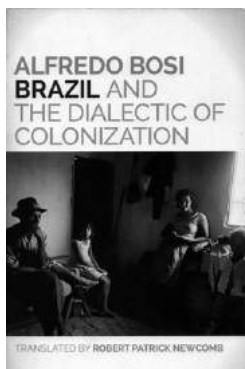
Lives with various images. The chapter by Sandra Koutsoukos shows images hardly revealed by historiography. Affection, ideologies, gifts, medical knowledge, and the labor market of wet nurses and maids are brought to life through the lenses of photographers. But still, we must know more about the wet nurse, symbol of the slave society in the Americas. It is possible to take great strides by accompanying the analysis of Maria Helena Machado. The alleged burgeoning of the relationships between owners and slaves in the domestic world had thorns of suspicion, hatred, and murder. For many slaves, motherhood and familial protection were worth more than legal emancipation. If liberty had gender, on the eve of Abolition, the meaning was ambiguous. Many factors were at play including law’s, hopes, perceptions, and expectations. Centered on the effervescent age of parliamentary abolitionism, the chapter by Camillia Cowling deals with the original form of the ceremonies in Rio de Janeiro in the second half of the 1880s, when Princess Isabel issued letters of freedom. In these occasions, the records were included in the book *Livro de Ouro*

(The Golden Book) created by the Câmara Municipal (City Council) in 1884. Feminine images of freedom and its contemplations are the background to understanding the meanings of the ritual.

These thoughts held their own narratives, either registered socially or written with pen and paper. With the original sources, Maria Cristina Wissenbach presents us with letters and the journey of the *africana* Teodora Dias da Cunha. It was in São Paulo in the 1860s that this domestic slave ordered these letters to be written. Beginning with registries and the other evidence, the author proposes to cross the blurred boundaries of the world of writing between literate and illiterate characters in a hierarchical society with defined social roles. If the historiography of slavery was still not able to enter the slave quarters — apart from the works of the occasional traveler and a few studies of archaeology — it has been possible to reach urban homes and find scenarios and practices through the actions of black women. In the chapter by Flávia Souza, they are housekeepers; the hands of innumerable domestic workers open the windows and doors of the imperial elite's homes. One example biography of someone reaching the last years of a slave society and the first decades of liberty is offered by Petrônio Domingues. In the interface of memory, we get to know the journey of the professor Eufrozina Guimarães known as Zizinha. In Sergipe, this woman reached a level of notoriety that still reverberates today with celebrations and tributes to her.

However, not everything was a festival or carnival, nor were cultural practices devoid of female characters. As such, we see the game of *capoeira* (an Afro-Brazilian form of dance and martial art) from other angles in Antônio Liberac's chapter, which examines evidence of the presence of black women among *capoeira* practitioners in the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century. The collection closes by making a turn that jumps to the history of this time. Flavio Gomes and Marcelo Paixão combine narratives found in depositions of emancipated women in the 18th and 19th centuries with the population data and socioeconomics of the 21st century exploring which aspects changed and which aspects remained from slavery, post-abolition, and the contemporary racial relations relative to the variation of the labor market and the resources left for black women.

Masters of pasts and presents, current and true, and solid as a rock, in the historiography of slavery and post-emancipation, black women are hardly approached as protagonists of more diverse stories. Although this is just the beginning, this collection takes important steps in this direction, revealing profiles previously concealed by hierarchies of gender and race.



3.

The book: Brazil and the Dialectic of Colonization

Author: Alfredo Bosi

Translator: Robert Patrick Newcomb

Original title: Brasil e a Dialética da Colonização

ISBN: 978-02-52080-84-5 (paperback)

Year of original publication: 2012

Year of translated version publication: 2016

Original publisher: Editora Companhia das Letras — São Paulo

Translated version publisher: University of Illinois Press

Number of pages: 373

The author: Alfredo Bosi (1936-2021). Emeritus professor at São Paulo University, Literary Critic and Historian. Member of the Brazilian Academy of Letters (2003-2021). He was the author of *A Concise History of Brazilian Literature* and 16 other titles.

The translator: Robert Patrick Newcomb (Ph. D. Brown University) is an Associate Professor of Luso-Brazilian Studies at the University of California, Davis. He is co-director of the Department of Spanish and Portuguese's undergraduate program in Portuguese. He is also founder and co-director of the UC Comparative Iberian Studies Working Group.

CHAPTER 1 – COLONY, CULT AND CULTURE

O novo é para nós, contraditoriamente,
a liberdade e a submissão.
(For us the new represents, contradictorily,
liberty and submission.)
Ferreira Gullar

Colo-Cultus-Cultura

It may not be in vain to begin with words. Relationships between phenomena leave marks on the body of language. The words *culture*, *cult*, and *colonization* all derive from the Latin verb *colo*, whose past participle is *cultus* and whose future participle is *culturus*.

In the language of Rome, *colo* signified *I live on, I occupy the land*, and by extension, *I work on and cultivate the land*.¹¹ *Incola*, or inhabitant, is an early descendent of *colo*. *Inquilinus*, one who resides in a foreign land, is another. *Agricola* belongs to a second semantic plane linked to the idea of work.

In the present tense, *colo* implies something incomplete or transitive, a movement that passes, or has been passing, from agent to agent. *Colo* is the root of *colonia* as a space in the process of being occupied, a land and people that can be worked on and subjected. For its part, “[c]olonus is he who cultivates a rural landholding in place of the owner, its administrator in the technical and legal sense of the word. This is found in Plautus and Cato as *colonia*...; the colony’s inhabitant, in Greek the *ápoikos*, who establishes himself in the place of the *incolae*”¹².

11 Augusto Magne tells us that “[c]olo is derived from *Kwelo*, which means to move around something, to circulate. The meaning of the root is clearly illustrated by the second part of Greek compound masculine nouns like *bou-kólos* (cowherd), *ai-pólos* (goatherd), *amphi-pólos* (servant, he who moves around a cow, a goat, or the master of the house, and takes care of them). The idea of ‘taking into one’s care’ which is apparent in these terms, explains some of the applications of *colo* in Latin. Its agrarian connotations are explained, on the other hand, by the rural character of its ruling class during Rome’s earliest days. While in Greek *kwel-* carries the meanings of ‘to move’ and ‘to habitually find oneself in’, the Latin *col-* carries the specific meaning of ‘to inhabit’ or ‘to cultivate’. Compare how the aforementioned compound words convey the idea of ‘occupying oneself with’. The ideas of habitation and cultivation are present from the earliest times because of the connection drawn between these ideas by the rural population”. (*Dicionário etimológico da língua latina*, vol. 4, Rio de Janeiro: MEC, 1962).

12 In the *Lexicon Totius Latinitatis*, Aegidio Forcellini distinguishes, with lapidary definitions, between colony and municipality: “A *colony* differs from a *municipality*: municipals in truth are citizens of a municipality, who live by their own laws and by their own right; colonists are citizens of a city who are brought to another, and who live by the laws of the city from which they originated”. And he specifies one meaning of colony: “A colony is the part of the city (state) or society that has been

It is not coincidental that whenever types of colonization are distinguished, so are two processes: that which attains to the populating of the colony and that which refers to the cultivation of the land. The idea of *colo* is present in both: I live in, I cultivate.

The Roman legal code is present in the verbal expression attached to the act of colonizing. What, then, distinguishes habitation and cultivation from colonization? In principle, it is the social agents transplanting of their world onto another, where they will work the foreign land or have others do this for them. The *incola* who emigrates becomes a *colonus*.

Mechanisms of production and relations of power, and the economic and political spheres, are reproduced and reinforced — as if they were true universals in human societies — whenever a cycle of colonization begins.

But colonization is not limited to the rearticulation of these basic features; there is the structural plus of domination, an added concentration of forces around the figure of the conqueror that at times bestows on him epic connotations of risk and adventure. Colonization gives established cultures an air of rebirth and advancement.

The marked presence of domination is inherent to colonization in its various forms and almost always overdetermines them. To take care of, the basic meaning of *colo*, not only implies attentiveness but also ordering. It is true that the colonist does not always see himself exclusively as a conqueror; he will try to imprint on the minds of his descendants the image of a discoverer and settler, titles that legitimate him as a pioneer. In 1556, by which time the *leyenda negra* (black legend) of Spanish colonization was already spreading throughout Christian Europe, the use of the words *conquista* (conquest) and *conquistadores* (conquerors) was officially prohibited in Spain, and they were replaced by *descubrimiento* (discovery) and *pobladores* (settlers) — that is, colonists.

During antiquity, the rise of powerful political structures corresponded to the establishment of true imperial systems that followed wars of conquest. The Middle Eastern empires of Alexander and the Romans are among the oldest known concentrations of state power. In the case of Rome, the central organization of the state resisted disintegration until the barbarian invasions atomized Europe, which opened the way for the continent's eventual feudalization.

Multiple hypotheses purport to explain the genesis of these systems. The internal tensions that occur in a given social formation resolve themselves, whenever possible, in outward-looking movements of desire, of searching for, and conquest of, lands and peoples capable of being colonized. In this way, demographic imbalance may have been one of the causes of the ancient colonization of the Mediterranean between the eighth and sixth century BCE. Likewise, Portugal's growing need for foreign commercial markets during the strenuous rise of the bourgeoisie served as an important factor in the kingdom's fifteenth-century expansion.¹³ In neither case can colonization be treated as a simple migratory movement; instead, it represents

displaced to another land in order to cultivate and inhabit it; 'colony' also refers to the place itself" (FORCELLINI, Aegidio. *Lexicon Totius Latinitatis*. 4th ed. Padua: Typis Seninarii, 1940, p. 692-693).

13 See Vitorino Magalhães Godinho, *Economia dos descobrimentos henriquinos* (Lisbon, 1962).

the resolution of conflicts and the meeting of needs, as well as an attempt to reassert, under new conditions, one's dominion over nature and other people — an effort that invariably accompanies the so-called civilizing process.

As I pass, at this point, from the present tense of *colo*, with all its connotations of immediate activity and power, to the nominal forms of the verb, *cultus* and *cultura*, I must leave the here-and-now for the mediated realms of the past and future.

The past: as a deverbal adjective, *cultus* refers to the land that successive generations have cleared and planted. Cultus connotes not only the perpetually repeated action conveyed by *colo*, which implies cultivation over the centuries, but, especially, the qualities that result from this labor and that are incorporated into the worked land. When peasants from Latium referred to their cultivated land as *culta*, they sought to convey a cumulative meaning: both the act of cultivation itself and the countless hours of necessary labor it absorbed. This gives the participle *cultus*, a noun that is also a verb, a more dense and vivid signifying form than is implied by the simple naming of present labor. The Latin *ager cultus* and another deverbal, the Portuguese *roçado* (both meaning cultivated land), link the idea of systematic work to the quality obtained from that work, an association that becomes part of the speaker's emotional world. *Cultus* serves as a sign that a society that produces its own food is now possessed of a memory. The word contains the struggle between the subject and the object of collective bodily effort and becomes a vehicle for indicating the presence of what *was* in what occurs *now*. Process and product coexist in the same linguistic sign.

As for the noun *cultus*, it was used to refer not only to working the land but also to the cult of the dead, a root form of religion-as-memory, as the conjuring and exorcising of those who have passed from the earth. Present-day anthropologists seem confident in their belief that sacred burial preceded the working of the soil: although the latter practice dates from the Neolithic period and the first Agricultural Revolution (beginning around 7000 BCE), the dead were already being buried some 80,000 years ago, during the time of the Neanderthals.

As Gordon Childe puts it "As to the magico-religious notions that held Neolithic communities together, a few guesses may be hazarded. The tendency of the dead, going far back into the Old Stone Age, may have assumed a greater significance in the new. In the case of several neolithic groups, indeed, no burials have been discovered. But generally the dead were carefully interred in built or excavated graves, either grouped in cemeteries near the settlement or dug close to the individual dwellings. The dead are normally provided with utensils or weapons, vases of food and drink, and toilet articles. In pre-historic Egypt pictures of animals and objects are painted on the funerary vases. They presumably had the same magic significance as the cave painting and rock-carvings of Old Stone Age hunters. In historical times transferred to the walls of the tomb, and then attached texts show that they were really designed to ensure to the dead the continued enjoyment of the services they depict".

Such tendency denotes an attitude to the ancestral spirits that goes back to far older periods. But now the earth in which the ancestors' remains lie buried is seen

as the soil from which the community's food supply magically springs each year. The ancestral spirits must surely be regarded as assisting in the crops' germination.

Fertility cults, magic rites to assist or compel the forces of reproduction, may have become more prominent than ever in neolithic times. Small figurines of women, carved in stone or ivory, with the sexual characters well marked, have been noted in camps of the Old Stone Age. But similar figures, now generally modelled in clay, are very common in neolithic settlements and graves. They are often termed "mother goddesses". Was the earth from whose womb the young grain sprouts really conceived in the likeness of a woman with whose generative functions man is certainly familiar?¹⁴

At this point it will be useful to sum up the two linked meanings of the noun-verb that shows human beings chained to the land, digging holes that nurture them while they are alive and that shelter them when they are dead:

cultus (1): that which is worked *on* the land; cultivated;

cultus (2): that which is worked *in* the land; cult, burial of the dead; a ritual undertaken to honor one's ancestors.

A group's effort to root its present experience in the past is undertaken through symbolic mediation — through gestures, song, dance, ritual, prayer, verbal evocation, and verbal invocation. In the ancient world, this was all fundamentally religious and linked the present to the past-turned-present, tying a community to the forces that created it in another time and that sustained its identity.

The cult, with its continual reassertion of origins and ancestry, is another constant in human societies, along with the material struggle for survival and the relations of power that derive from it and that are implied, both literally and metaphorically, in the active form of *co/o*.

In certain Greek colonies, the designs of the gods, as deciphered by the oracles, were often invoked as the causes of the settlement's foundation. In Delphi it was Apollo Archegetes who presided over the foundation of colonies. Portuguese colonizers in the Americas, in Asia, and in Africa were inspired by the project of spreading the faith, just as they sought to expand empire, "dilatando / a Fé, o Império" (spreading / the faith, the empire) as Camões had it. And the Puritans who came ashore on the beaches of New England similarly declared themselves ready to perform the ways of God.

Colonization is a totalizing process the dynamic forces of which can always be found at the level of *co/o*: in the occupation of new land, the exploitation of its resources, and the submission of its inhabitants. But the agents of this process are not merely physical supports for the operation of economic forces; they are also believers who in the arks of memory and language carry with them their still-present dead. The dead have two faces: they serve as a sword or shield in the ferocious conflicts of the everyday, but they can also make themselves heard in this theater

14 Gordon Childe, *Man Makes Himself* (London: Watts, 1965), p. 101-102. On the ancientness of funerary rites, see Henri Gastaut's succinct but well-founded "Alguns comentários a respeito do culto do crânio", in *A unidade do homem. Invariantes biológicas e universais culturais*, ed. Centro Royamont para uma Ciência do Homem, vol. 3, (São Paulo: Cultrix/Edusp, 1978), p. 254-256.

of crime, with their pained voices conveying messages of censure and remorse. Santiago de Compostela (Saint James) rallies the *matamoros*, or Moor-slayers, in the battles of the Iberian *reconquista*, and then the Cross that has defeated the Crescent is planted in the land of Brazilwood to subjugate the Tupi. But the same cross is summoned by others to preserve the freedom of the Amerindians and urge mercy for black slaves. The same mass celebrated in the Jesuit missions of the Sete Povos is heard by the *bandeirantes* who, blessed by their chaplains, will mercilessly massacre the inhabitants of these settlements. Did the God of the missionaries and the prophets answer to the same name as the God of the warriors and Pharisees? The key question to ask is how each group read and interpreted scripture so as to adapt religions universalizing discourses to its own particular practices.

What do religious symbols and rites, along with narratives of creation, the fall, and salvation, do if not reconstruct day-to-day experience, shot through as it is with economic divisions and oppressive hierarchies of power, as an idealized totality?

We can derive another participle from *cultum*, the supine of *colo*: this is the future *culturus* — what will be worked, what one wishes to cultivate.

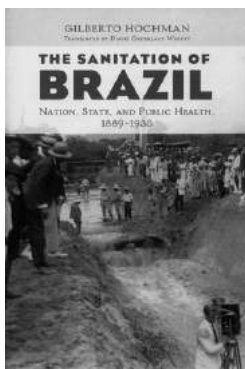
In its substantive form, the word applies to the hard work of the soil, to *agri-culture*, as well as to all the work done to a human being since infancy; in this second sense, *culturus* became a Romanized form of the Greek *paideia*. Its more general meaning has been preserved to the present day, with culture understood as the sum of those practices, techniques, symbols, and values that must be transmitted to the next generation in order to guarantee the continuity of a given state of social coexistence. Education represents the institutional staging of this process.

The ending *-urus* in *culturus* communicates the idea of the future or of forward movement. In densely urbanized societies, culture also came to be understood as a more humane form of existence, which should be strived for as the end term of a civilizing process valued more or less consciously by all social classes and groups. Culture as an ideal of personal status, by then divorced from the religious connotations of a cult, was late in coming to Rome. When it did arrive, it spread a program of *paideia* that became fixed from the fourth century BCE, as Werner Jaeger's and Henri Irénée Marrou's important studies demonstrate.¹⁵ *Paideia*: an educational ideal oriented toward the formation of the adult in the polis and in the world.

The idea of culture presupposes a productive, laborious group consciousness that prizes out plans for the future from present circumstances. This projective dimension, implied in the myth of Prometheus, who stole fire from the heavens in order to change the material destiny of humanity, becomes more pronounced during periods in which there are social classes or strata capable of future hopes and projects, as the Florentine Renaissance, the eighteenth-century Enlightenment, the various scientific and technical revolutions, or during the life cycle of socialist revolutions. The modern version of Titanism, which manifests itself in theories of social evolution, extends the certainties of the Enlightenment and conceptualizes

¹⁵ See Werner Jaeger, *Paideia: The Ideals of Greek Culture*, trans. Gilbert Highet (New York: Oxford University Press, 1939-1944), the first German edition is from 1936; Henri-Irénée Marrou, *A History of Education in Antiquity*, trans. George Lamb (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1956).

culture in opposition to nature, generating a rationalized view of history as reducible to the development (technical or otherwise) of productive forces. Culture thereby approximates the idea of *colô* as labor and distances itself, at times antagonistically, from *cultus*. The present becomes a kind of spring, an instrument in the service of the future. As culture's productive function becomes accentuated, man is obliged to gain systematic dominance over the material world and over other men. In this context, to acculturate a people means subjecting them, or in the best cases, adapting them technologically to social arrangement held to be superior. In certain military-industrial regimes, this relationship is openly and unabashedly manifested. To produce is to control workers, consumers and prospectively, citizens. Economics is politics in its brute form, and knowledge is power, to cite Francis Bacon's crude equation.



4.

The book: The Sanitation of Brazil: Nation, State, and Public Health | 1889-1930

Author: Gilberto Hochman

Translator: Diane Grosklaus Whitty

Original title: A Era do Saneamento: As Bases da Política de Saúde Pública no Brasil

ISBN: 978-19-37306-54-0

Year of original publication: 1998

Year of translated version publication: 2016

Original publisher: co-edited by the Associação Nacional de Pós-graduação e Pesquisa em Ciências Sociais (ANPOCS)

Translated version publisher: University of Illinois Press

Number of pages: 216

The author: Gilberto Hochman is researcher and professor at the casa de Oswaldo Cruz, Fundação Oswaldo Cruz. His other books include *Cuidar, controlar, curar*, *Políticas públicas no Brasil*, and *Médicos intérpretes do Brasil*.

The translator: Diane Grosklaus Whitty was born and educated in the United States, where she received a B.A. in psychology from the University of Wisconsin-Madison (1976), with an emphasis on psycholinguistics. She lived for 23 years in Brazil, where she still maintains an active translation business. Her translations include *The Devil and the Land of the Holy Cross: Witchcraft, Slavery, and Popular Religion in Colonial Brazil*.

CHAPTER 2 – THE SOCIAL NATURE OF DISEASE: EXTERNALITIES, CONSCIOUSNESS, AND COMMUNITY

In 1895, Dr. Cyrus Edson, New York City health commissioner, published a paper with the suggestive title “The Microbe as a Social Leveler”. An enthusiast of the new conquests in the field of bacteriology, Edson asserted that the equality among humans so desired by socialists was becoming a reality not through political projects or revolution but through “infinitely tiny” organisms invisible to the naked eye: microbes, the cause of communicable disease. Human beings stand as equals before the menace of disease, he wrote, because “the microbe of disease is no respecter of persons” and pays scant heed to the status, class, race, or gender of its prey. Disease thus equalizes people and “binds the human race together as with an unbreakable chain of mutual dependence”.¹⁶

Edson further argued that the prospect of contagion inextricably bound poor and rich, healthy, and ill, mansions and tenements, diverse regions within a country and across the planet. No one anywhere was safe from “the threat of disease, and for this reason, no one could be indifferent to the fortunes of other people, wherever they might live — on the same street, in the same city or country, or in other, far-off place.

Edson asked, what do a prosperous American and a poor Russian peasant have in common? The disease-causing microbe.¹⁷

For Edson, public health initiatives would have to reach all communities as a necessary consequence of this endless chain of humans and societies. Herein lay the “socialistic side of the microbe”.¹⁸ When confronted by the revolutionary action of these invisible beings, people seemed to have more in common with each other or at least to be equally fragile, interconnected in a vast web of interdependent relations, leading to an awareness of community at both the national and international levels.

Public health professionals, political reformers, and observers of everyday life had been keenly aware of the phenomenon, contemplated in Edson’s brief article since the mid-nineteenth century, well before bacteriology and microbiology stepped onto center stage thanks to the work and discoveries of scientists such as Louis Pasteur and Robert Koch.¹⁹ Industrialization, urbanization, and population growth

¹⁶ Edson, “Microbe as a social Leveler”, 424, 422.

¹⁷ Ibid., 425.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Pelling, “Contagion/Germ Theory”.

had created a society where disease formed one of the primary bonds between people, especially when it struck in epidemic fashion. Once nation-states had formed, these problems were perceived to be circumscribed within specific political and territorial spaces, and their solutions were deemed the responsibility of these nations. Moreover, there was a rising conviction that the individual local solutions of the day were no longer effective against an ever more collective, national problem.

In keeping with this interpretation, the wealthy and healthy showed concern for less fortunate and the ailing and combated the status quo not solely out of ethical or moral concern but primarily because they realized the threat of disease had fashioned bonds of solidarity and reorganized society (no doubt to the dislike of many). The elites now understood that they no longer enjoyed social immunity from what was largely an inescapable problem for everyone. In other words, the elites recognized they were no longer exempt from the negative effects generated by the less fortunate, leading to the development of a social conscience — or, in the terms to be used in this book, an awareness or consciousness of social interdependence.²⁰

From a historical standpoint, the awakening of this social consciousness formed a significant chapter in Brazil's discovery of national community or nation-state building. The recognition of this generalized interdependence and its effects bred an abstract sense of responsibility and sparked debate about how to improve the plight of the underprivileged and consequently attenuate the threats felt by the powerful, well-to-do, and healthy. If consciousness of social interdependence is bound up with the emergence of national community, addressing its external effects is bound up with the role of public authority.

Over time, as voluntary, individual solutions proved highly ineffective in attending to the direct and indirect consequences of individual and group deficiencies or adversities — whether their impact on others was immediate — the need to manage these externalities generated mounting demand for collective, compulsory care. Microbes and epidemics wove a vast web of individuals and regions and thus collectivized the health problem, hindering any attempt to foster localized, individualized protection schemes. If, as Norbert Elias suggests, complex figurations should be indirectly understood through an analysis of their bonds of interdependence, then analyzing the birth of this consciousness can be instrumental when studying the process of shaping a national community and public power.²¹

Once the bond that rendered people socially and politically interdependence had been perceived and an awareness of interdependence acquired, negative effects might be controlled. Edson identified this bond as the disease-causing microbe. But the elites identified this bond of independence less with the microbe (or germ) and more with a very blatant feature of the diseases induced by these invisible pathogenic agents: communicability. Disease transmission thus displays analogies to the external effects of individual behavior in society.

20 See De Swaan, *In Care of the State*.

21 Elias, *Introdução à Sociologia*, 143.

Leaving aside any attempt to precisely define the terms *contagion* and *infection* or to trace their historical development, both have acquired commonplace meanings far looser than their strictly medical and scientific senses. For centuries, even their medical and scientific denotations could not be separated from their religious, cultural, political, and economic overtones in Western society.²² Roughly put, *contagion* involves the idea that diseases can be transmitted directly, from one person to another, or indirectly, through air, water, living organisms, or other contaminated media or objects.²³ An *infection* can be defined as “the invasion of the body by pathogenic microorganisms that reproduce and multiply, causing disease”.²⁴ Distinguishing between the agent that is transmitted via people or the environment (a process more readily associated with contagion) and the transmission process itself (more readily evocative of infection) has always presented something of a challenge.²⁵

Many authors agree that laypersons have by and large come to use these terms loosely and interchangeably.²⁶ The popular connotations of the two words have less to do with characterizing the causal agent or means of transmission and everything to do with the idea that some diseases are communicable. To cite one example in Brazil, in a book on public health education, Barroso describes the popular criterion for identifying what he termed “diseases that can be caught”: “the healthy catch diseases from the ill, and the happenstances that may have prompted this matter little”.²⁷

According to some authors, the nineteenth century saw the close of a long process that begun during classic antiquity — that is, the secularization of the concept of infection. As religious interpretations were superseded, so too were the beliefs nourishing the first public health reforms: that epidemics were the product of environmental conditions such as atmospheric factors and weather, local circumstances, untreated sewage and garbage, unsafe water supplies, and unventilated, overcrowded housing.²⁸ According to the miasma theory, diseases were transmitted through humors that arose from rotting organic (plant or animal) matter and consequently were a by-product of specific environmental conditions, not of microbes.²⁹

Through the nineteenth century (at least until bacteriology stepped in to provide scientific proof), the controversy over the germ theory of disease — that is, the idea that infection and contagion occurred via micro-organisms — always came hand in hand with heated debates and invariable clashes over disease prevention measures, particularly those intended to combat and avoid the spread of epidemics. Sowing panic and producing scenes of great human drama, epidemics afford privileged

22 Baldwin, *Contagion and the State*; Pelling, “Contagion/Germ Theory”; Temkin, “Historical Analysis”.

23 Dwork, “Contagion”, 75-77; McGrew, “Contagion”, 77-79.

24 *Mosby’s Medical Dictionary*, 921.

25 Pelling, “Contagion/Germ Theory”, 314-315.

26 *Ibid.* p. 309-310.

27 Barroso, *Doenças que Pegam*, 14.

28 Temkin, “Historical Analysis”, 144.

29 Hannaway, “Environment and Miasmata”; Pelling, “Contagion/Germ Theory”.

opportunities for analyzing issues of interdependence. In the literature on the social, cultural, and political impacts of disease from the mid-nineteenth century through the first two decades of the twentieth, the major yellow fever epidemics, cholera epidemics (an illness many authors see as the paradigm of urban social interdependence), and the Spanish flu pandemic are the most often cited examples.³⁰

The measures taken to beat back epidemics hail serious implications in the realm of trade, public authority, individual liberty, and political order, and the contagionist and anticontagionist camps espoused divergent views in this regard. In brief, the anticontagionists championed concrete local measures to improve the social and environmental conditions that bred epidemic-causing miasmas. This “environmentalist” or “ecological” approach was the driving force behind the first nineteenth-century sanitary reforms in Europe and the United States. Public health policies based on anticontagionist views, which rejected the germ theory, denounced the local agents believed to spread epidemic diseases — garbage, sewage, polluted water, crowded and poorly ventilated housing — and promoted an agenda to ameliorate them.³¹ Implementation of this agenda began in the mid-nineteenth century, and although the effort was bolstered by medical and scientific ideas disproven in later decades, it made two valuable contributions: it tied illness to the wretched living conditions then prevalent in urban areas, and it occasioned creation of the first urban public services, including sanitary sewers, water supplies, garbage collection, the regulation of dairy products and other food items, and so on, ultimately recording a victory for the collectivization of welfare.³²

Until the late nineteenth century, no clear scientific evidence supported the contagionist perspective, which blamed microorganisms for spreading disease. The contagionist action plan centered on impeding contact between sick and healthy. This approach thus reinforced the role of the public authority in the regulation of countless activities, especially forced isolation and regional or nationwide quarantines, which are imposed particularly to keep ships suspected of carrying sick passengers from making port.

Since the enforcement of quarantines interfered with business, international trade, and freedom of movement, an apparently scientific debate morphed into a political one. Granting more power to government and bureaucratic agencies also stirred unease at a time when liberalism was spreading. This has led some authors — most importantly, Erwin Ackerknecht — to suggest that the conflict between proponents and opponents of the theory of contagion was at the same

30 On the yellow fever, see Duffy, “Social Impact of Disease”. On cholera, see De Swaan, *In Care of the State*, 124-128; Fraser, *Evolution*, 50-60. On the Spanish flu, see Crosby, *America’s Forgotten Pandemic*. Some historians of medicine consider “collective fear” the strongest social force behind the emergence of public initiatives to combat disease. In the opinion of Richard H. Shryock, this fear springs from the sudden violence of an epidemic, ignorance about its causes or means of transmission, and the lesions it may leave behind, visible to all (*Medicine in America*, 141). However, in these interpretations, social forces are not central but rather complement the medical and scientific prerequisites for fighting a disease.

31 Rosen, *History of Public Health*.

32 De Swaan, *In Care of the State*, 131-137.

time a conflict between autocracy and liberalism. According to these scholars, anticontagionism and the antiquarantine movement, in conjunction with nascent liberalism, found greater echo in the second half of the nineteenth century, just before advances in bacteriology dispelled the erroneous presuppositions underlying the anticontagionist stance and proved the germ theory.³³

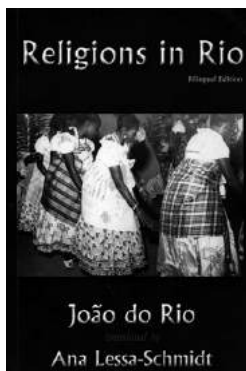
Simplified as it is, this overview highlights how the debates over the communicability of disease were never exclusively scientific. The concepts of contagion and infection could be seen in terms of the relationships between individuals within a society as well as between them and their surrounding environment, a notion that was not so far from the idea proposed by hygienists in the mid-nineteenth century and upheld for quite some time.³⁴ Despite of being grounded in what would later be deemed false assumptions, many of these notions led to effective actions, since they sought to mitigate the negative consequences of the environmental background where social interactions transpired.³⁵ As J. I. Schwartz argues, an etiological hypothesis does not need to lie correct to result in a public health program that has at least some success.³⁶

33 Ackerknecht, "Anticontagionism". Although I have presented simplified versions of both the germ and miasmatic theories, I am well aware of the tremendous complexity and long historical evolution of the noncontagionist and contagionist theories. Ackerknecht, "Anticontagionism", offers a classic text on the clashes between these two interpretations in Europe through the nineteenth century and on the origin of diseases and their means of transmission. Pernick, "Politics, Parties, and Pestilence", is an important source on these debates and their ramifications in the United States, especially regarding yellow fever epidemics. On national and regional quarantines in the context of U.S. federalism, see the writings on yellow fever in the southern United States by Humphreys, *Yellow Fever*; J. H. Ellis, *Yellow Fever*. For critiques of Ackerknecht's perspective, see Baldwin, *Contagion and the State*; Hamlin, "Commentary"; Stern and Markel, "Commentary".

34 Fraser, *Evolution*, Ch. 3.

35 Santos, *Razões da desordem*, 52.

36 Baldwin, *Contagion and the State*; Briggs, *Cholera and Society*; Duffy, "Social Impact of Disease"; Fraser, *Evolution*; Hamlin, *Public Health and Social Justice*; Rosenberg, *Cholera Years*.



5.

The book: Religions in Rio

Author: João do Rio

Translator: Ana Lessa-Schmidt

Original title: As Religiões no Rio

ISBN: 978-09-90589-98-3

Year of original publication: 1904

Year of translated version publication: 2015

Original publisher: Gazeta de Notícias

Translated version publisher: New London Librarium, Hanover, Conn.

Number of pages: 419

Synopsis: For the first time in English, the book displays João do Rio's reports on the bizarre confluence of European, North American, and African that found adherents in Rio de Janeiro. Candomblé, Spiritism, Positivism, Satanism, Judaism, the Cult of the Sea, the New Jerusalem, the Physiologists, the Priestesses, the Evangelicals — they all fell under his scrutiny, and it takes the reader into one of the most glorious and mysterious cities at the turn of 20th century.

The author: João do Rio (1881-1921) was a chronicler, translator, and literary journalist before the term existed, before anyone saw that journalism could be raised to the level of art by infusing it with intellectual insight and sociological analysis.

The translator: Ana Lessa-Schmidt, Ph.D. is a linguist and translator. She researches and lectures on Brazilian Cultural studies in the areas of post-conflict, visual culture (cinema and photography), literature, music, the arts in general, and the Portuguese

language. Her translation of Machado de Assis's short story "Trio in A Minor" appears in *Ex-Cathedra: Stories by Machado de Assis* — bilingual edition.

THE NEW SPELLS OF SANIN

JOÃO DO RIO

“So be it!” Antônio said, taking courage: “Sir, you can go, but do not spit, do not smoke, and do not eat in this house. I will not go”.

“Will you accompany me to the door?”

“I’ll go to the corner. I will be on the lookout. Sanin and Ojô are likely to end my life.”

Antonio’s life is, in all respects, a precious one, and at that time it was even more so because I was holding it. I pondered and agreed.

“You’re right, you stay on the corner.”

It was raining buckets. Antônio, without an umbrella, dressed in a cape that came down to his feet, constantly lit a cigar which kept going out again.

“But what is this Sanin, anyway?”

“An evil sorcerer!”

“But is he a *babaloxá*, *babalaô*. trafficker...?”

“*Babalaô*, no Sir. It takes a lot to be a *babalaô*. For the novitiate alone it takes a long time, many years, and the ceremony is very difficult. When an initiate wants to become a *babalaô*. he has to take to the *babalaô* who consecrates him: two black goats, two guinea fowls, two country chicken, two ducks, two pigeons, two catfish, two guinea pigs, a kilo of pond scum, one *ori*, a piece of *ossum*,³⁷ a piece of chalk, two geese, two roosters, a matting, two snails, and loads of parrot’s red feathers.”

“It is hard.”

“And that’s not all. He must also take a kilo of African black soap, which is called *ochê-i-luaiê*³⁸ and he does not enter the *ibodo-ifá*³⁹, or room of the saints, without wearing new clothes and carrying at least 200\$000⁴⁰ in his pocket. The future *babalaô* stays in the *ibodô*⁴¹ for seven days, where no one can enter so as not to see the secret.”

37 *Ossum* or Annatto (lipstick tree, *Bixa Orellana*), is a red dye from the pulp enclosing the seeds of the tree, used for coloring fabrics, varnish, etc. In this case here, it’s used to make a paste which is cut for *candomblé* rituals.

38 *Oxéiluaê*, black soap

39 *ibodô-ifá*, room where the divinations are made.

40 Twenty thousand *réis*.

41 Room which serves as cloister.

"What is the secret?"

"The secret is a parrot's egg. Have you ever seen a parrot's egg, Sir? Never! It is not easy. And those who see such an egg risk going blind. The egg is called *éiú*⁴² in African, the parrot *odidé*. It is the egg that they keep inside a gourd or *ybadú*.⁴³ The initiate is completely naked, sitting on the matting, and the old *babalaô* asks if he'd like to do the Ifa. If the answer is affirmative, forty-two palm kernels are washed with various herbs, and the new *babalaô* bathes in that water."

"Next, they shave his frizzy hair, saving it for the big sacrifice. They paint his skull with chalk, and the killing takes place."

"All the animals?"

"All fall at the slash of sharp razors, blood fills the bowls, runs through the house, but nobody knows about it, because there, alive, there are only two *babalaôs* and the acolyte, the first sacrifice is for Eshu. They mix rooster blood with clay, a doll is formed, stuffed with the feel, liver, heart and head of the animals. They make the shape of eyes, nose, and mouth from four whelks, and the Eshu is made. Next, they stab the other animals, sacrificing to the Ifa. The new *babalaô* receives some of this blood on his head. The acolyte or *ogibanam* ties a parrot feather with black thread to his forehead and, thus ready, the new mathematician sits for six days learning the practice of some fearsome spells and praying to the *odú ifa*."

There are sixteen Ifas: *Ogbe Meji; Oyeku Meji; Iwori Meji; Odi Meji; Irosun Meji; Owonrin Meji; Obara Meji; Okanran Meji; Ogunda Meji; Osa Meji; Ika Meji; Oturupon Meji; Otura Meji; Irete Meji; Ose Meji; and Ofun Meji*. At the end of the seven days, they gather the bones, heads, feet of animals with food scraps, the parrot feather from the young professed, herbs from previous services, and put everything in a bowl to throw wherever *opelê* tells them to in the sea, in a lake, in some river. The initiate is the one who takes the bowl, without losing his mind, singing three incantations on his way...

We were at Largo do Capim. There was so much that it forced us to shelter at a tavern, and Antônio, already seated, drinking port wine, and lighting up the disgusting tip of his cigar for the thirtieth time, was getting ready to sing the pleasing chants. He even got to perform one, the second and shortest:

*O-ché-yturá a narê praquê
Abá gun-nem-gum gebó
Oury ôcú ou-myn-nan
Essé ouxy-cá gô-xê-nan lô nan*

This frightening prayer means: "African black soap serves to protect the king's people as they eat vulture and shea butter. As for us, if we get close to eating shea or vulture, we will die today. He does not protect a son as a son".

"But what about Sanin?"

42 *Eiú*.

43 *Ibadu*.

"Don't you really want to learn it, Sir? Forget Sanin. It's raining so much!"

"Is Sanin a sage or not?"

"He's a scoundrel."

"Even better."

When I came out from the tavern, Antônio reached out his hand.

"Orum-my-lá ború ybó, yê, ybó, ybó, xixé!"

Such a kind black man!! With that priestly gesture he told me:

"Satisfy the God who makes everything and fashions everything, amen!"

I opened my umbrella and answered already from far off.

"Ybó-xixé!"

Sanin now lives in the house of the famous Ojô, the social director of sorcery. Ojo's house is on Rua dos Andradas, almost at the beginning. It has a poor appearance and an unpleasant smell. When we knocked, the rain pounded around with a deafening noise. Nobody answered. We knocked again. Someone was certainly spying on us. Finally, the lattice door opened, and a woman appeared.

"Babá Sanin?"

"He is not here."

"I have been sent by an acquaintance. Do not worry."

"The house belongs to Emanuel..."

"Ojô, I know very well. It was Miguel Pequeno who sent me. Open up."

The door closed again. The woman went to check, but it didn't take her long to return, opening the door a bit and saying mysteriously: "Come in".

The room had sand on the floor. The repaired furniture indicated that Ojô lives well. In a chair a starched white suit, and farther away, a straw hat attested to the presence of the sorcerer.

"So, what about Sanin?"

"He is coming soon."

Shortly afterwards Sanin appeared, wearing a blue blouse and a red cap, the classic type of Mina that has disappeared, sidling up with wary eyes. The poor devil is always afraid of the police, the newspapers, the agents. For his limited African brain, Rio has been through fantastic transformations since he arrived. He is a scoundrel, proud of the spell and a terrible fear of jail. It was certainly, almost by force that he appeared, and only very slowly did his fright let him speak.

"Baba Sanin, Miguel Pequeno sent me here for a very serious business. Baba has some new spells."

"He doesn't have..."

"I know he does." I opened the wallet, a showy satchel, like those men of the square carry: huge, with silver clasps. "Do not be afraid. If Baba does not do the job for me. I am lost. It's my last hope."

"What job?"

I rummaged the notes in the satchel, slowly, to show them. I pulled out a little piece of paper and whispered mysteriously:

"Here's her name..."

On the face of the sorcerer slid an evil smile: "Aha! Aha... It's good".

"Sanin, I have faith in the saints, but the other sorcerers can't do their job."

"You will finish it. Look, you can count on..."

Everything in this world is hope for money, happiness, peace; and both live in hope, the sorcerer who gives it and the poor creatures who will seek it through him.

Sanin began to speak of the spells of the others and remembered his own in bits, and soon, with the hope of earning more, was making revelations to me.

Each sorcerer has his own spells. Abubaca Caolho, the alcoholic from Rua do Resende, has the *ibá*, a bowl with alligator peppers and herbs to do harm. When speaking of the *ibá*, it is said simply: Abubaca's spell. *Gia*, duck's head with slugs and the hair of the person, is an invention of Ojô and serves to make one go insane. Whoever wants someone to go insane, arranges or fakes the work of Ojô.

"But Baba Sanin, how do you know all this?..."

"So, have I not learned? I know everything."

And as he knows everything, he gives me recipes. I hear, without amazement, sitting on a chair, that camel's hump with monkey's body and a black goat with herbs kills us, and that this discovery was made by the celebrated João Alabá, a smart, wealthy black man from Rua do Barão de São Félix, 76. And that's not all. Sanin takes me slowly around the spell warehouse. I take curious notes of this moral and physical medicine.

To kill, there are still other processes. The ne'er-do-well Bonifácio da Piedade finishes off a meek citizen just with spit, scraps, and thirteen prayers; João Alabá can have a whole city killed with a pig, a sheep, a goat, a black rooster, a tortoise, and clothing from the creatures, aided only by two naked black men with *tessubá*, a rosary, in hand at the midnight hour. Popped corn, a boy's arm, chili pepper and angel-foot plucked from the cemetery will kill in three days; two tortoises and two snails, two *obis*, two *orobôs*, and earth of the deceased under seven prayers that last seven minutes calling for the person seven times, is the recipe for Emídio to dispatch enemies from this life.

There are spells for everything. A horse's droppings with herbs and two prayers, according to Alufá Ginja, produces hysterical attacks. A pair of socks with the trace of the person, herbs and two prayers, all in a bottle, will madden the person. Hair of a corpse, nails, alligator peppers and herbs compel the fellow to commit suicide. Heads of snakes and tortoise, earth from the cemetery and snails push back a life as much as pigeons with weeds, and there is nothing like doves to make the life of a man to go backwards in life...

"But what about for good luck, dear uncle?"

"There is the hand from the statue of an angel stolen from a cemetery on a Friday."

"And for a man to become a thief, for example?"

"A mouse, head of a cat, herbs, the person's name and prayers."

"And to make a couple fight?"

"Head of a monkey, spider and a new knife."

"And to tie them together for life?"

The black man thought, staring at me:

"An *obi*, one *orobô*, toe and hand nails, eyelashes, and slugs..."

"All that?"

"Prepared by me."

Sanin then tells me of his spells. Sanin is a poet and a fantasist.

Dependent upon Ojô, and almost his slave, this strong black, forty years old, brought from central Africa the poetic ability of those people with their toasted brains, the latest of the fantasy sorceries. To subdue, Sanin wears a *breve*, which is set on his neck. The *breve* contains two *tiras*, the head of a peacock and a hummingbird, all colorful and bright. For loving eternally, heads of turtledoves in little velvet bags; to erase longing, purple stones from the sea.

When someone pays him to turn a man into a wandering Jew, the black man prepares heads of rabbits with startling alacrity; black pigeons, the pain; and herbs from the fields, and buries it all in front of the door of the new Ahasuerus.⁴⁴ When he intends to keep a woman forever, he makes a *breve* of essences that the impassioned suitor shakes when he sees her. Sanin is also bad — but in an interesting way.

His death works are the most difficult. At noon Sanin raises a cane and prays in the *terreiro*.⁴⁵ Shortly after, a wasp comes out of the cane and flies away. It will look for the victim, and it won't stop looking until it has injected him with death.

The wasp is a banal spell in comparison to the river dolphin which is put alive inside a human skull; the spell of the bat; the spell of the wing that kills at a touch; the spell of the fox and kerchief; and I found him executing the greatest spell: a spiny puffer fish with alligator's egg — the *babalaô* of the water, a puffer which shrinks and swells at the will of prayers and commands souls for all eternity.

"But why did you, such a powerful man, not want to receive me?"

"Because they are talking about us, because the police are coming. The other day we even did an offering at Campo do Santana with the teeth and eyes of a sheep, tortoises, herbs and two prayers for those who talk about us to stop talking."

"But why a sheep?"

"Because the sheep dies in silence. It was Antônio Mina who did the offering, and we all prayed on our stomachs, and we all gave for the offering, which cost one hundred and eighty-three thousand *réis*."

Then I got my hat and shook hands with the fantasist Sanin.

"Well, it was wrong, Baba, it was wrong giving your money, because I am the one talking about you all."

And as the awestruck black man opened his huge mouth, I opened my satchel and convinced him that all his fantasies, snatched from the hinterlands of Africa, are not worth the pleasure of selling them for a good price.

Money, deaths, and infamy are the foundation of this formidable temple of the spell!

44 The name of the Wandering Jew, according to legend.

45 A *terreiro* is the shrine, or headquarters where the *Umbanda* or *Candomblé* meetings are held, generally outdoors.



6.

The book: Miss Dollar — Stories by Machado de Assis

Author: Machado de Assis

Translators: Greicy Pinto Bellin and Ana Lessa-Schmidt

Original title: Miss Dollar

ISBN: 978-09-98273-02-0

Year of original publication: 1880-1890

Year of translated version publication: 2016

Original publisher: Various Brazilian periodicals and women's magazines

Translated version publisher: New London Librarium, Hanover, Conn.

Number of pages: 527

Synopsis: The *Miss Dollar* collection presents ten short stories never translated into English before. They represent Machado's earlier work and his transition into his more sophisticated works of the early 1880. Though relatively simple, at times even silly, they are surprising in their subtle revelations of modernism, feminism, and the evolution of Brazil's rigid social-economic class structure as it moved from imperial to republican government.

The author: Machado de Assis (1839-1908) is considered one of the greatest writers of Brazilian Literature. Machado's greatest works are *Dom Casmurro* (1899), *Memórias Póstumas de Brás Cubas* ("Posthumous Memoirs of Brás Cubas", also translated as *Epitaph of a Small Winner*) and *Quincas Borba* (also known in English as *Philosopher or Dog?*). He has been praised by Harold Bloom as the greatest black writer in Western literature.

The translators: Greicy Pinto Bellin has a master's degree in Literary Studies by Universidade Federal do Paraná and a Ph.D. in Poe, Baudelaire and Machado de Assis. She is interested in the translation of Machado's essays to bridge the gap related to the insertion of this writer in the context of world literature.

Ana Lessa-Schmidt, Ph.D. is a linguist and translator. She researches and lectures on Brazilian Cultural studies in the areas of post-conflict, visual culture (cinema and photography), literature, music, the arts in general, and the Portuguese language. Her translation of Machado de Assis's short story "Trio in A Minor" appears in *Ex-Cathedra: Stories by Machado de Assis* — bilingual edition, and João do Rio's anthology *Religions in Rio*.

FRIAR SIMÃO

MACHADO DE ASSIS

Friar Simão belonged to the order of St. Benedict. When he died, he looked like a fifty-year-old man, but he was in fact thirty-eight. The cause of this premature aging came from the one that took him to the cloister when he was thirty years of age and, as far as it was possible to know through some memory fragments left by him, the cause was a worthy one.

Friar Simão had a taciturn and distrustful temperament. He used to spend whole days in his cubicle, the place he left only at lunchtime and for worship services. He didn't have any friends in the friary because it wasn't possible to establish with him the preliminaries in which relationships are founded and consolidated.

In a place like a friary, where the communion of souls should be faster and deeper, Friar Simão seemed to escape the general rule. One of the novices nicknamed him *Bear*, but this designation was well understood only among the novices. The professed friars, on the other hand, held a certain respect and veneration for Friar Simão, despite the grief inspired by his solitary temperament.

One day, it was announced that Friar Simão was seriously ill.

Medical assistance was rendered, and the patient received all the necessary care. The illness was fatal. Friar Simão passed away after five days.

During these five days of illness, Friar Simão's cubicle was full of friars. He didn't say a word during this period, except for the last and fatal minute, he sat up on his bed, called the abbot closer and said the following sentence in his ears with a suffocated voice and strange tone:

"I die hating all humankind!"

The abbot moved back to the wall when he heard these words, especially considering the tone with which they were said. As to the friar, he fell on his pillow and passed away into eternity.

After the honors due to the dead brother were done, the religious community asked the abbot about the words he'd heard, which were so sinister that they scared him. The abbot referred to them, making the sign of the cross. But the other friars saw in these words nothing but a secret from the past, undoubtedly important, but not so much as to strike the abbot's spirit with terror. He explained to them the idea that came to his mind when he heard Friar Simão's words, in the tone with which they were said, and accompanied by the stare which fulminated him. He believed that Friar Simão was insane, even more, that he was already insane when he entered the order. Simão's devotion to taciturn and lonely habits seemed to be the symptoms of a light and pacific mental alienation, but during eight years it seemed to be impossible that Friar Simão had never revealed his insanity; they opposed the abbot, but he persisted in his belief.

Nevertheless, they proceeded with the inventory of the objects that belonged to the friar, and found, among them, a roll of papers properly bundled, with this label: "*Memoirs to be written by Friar Simão, of St. Agatha, Benedictine friar*".

This roll of papers was a great find for the curious community. They would finally penetrate the mysterious veil that involved the friar's past life, and perhaps confirm the abbot's suspicions.

The roll was opened and read in the presence of everybody.

It consisted, in its majority, of incomplete fragments, truncated and insufficient notes; but a general reading could confirm the suspicion that Friar Simão had been insane for some time.

The author of this narrative rejects the parts of those *Memoirs* that aren't absolutely important: but he seeks to take advantage of the more useful or less obscure ones.

II

Friar Simão's notes have nothing to say about the place where he was born or his parents' names. Of his principles it was possible to know that having concluded his preparatory studies, he wasn't able to follow his career as a writer, as he wished, and he was obliged to work as a bookkeeper in his father's commercial house.

Simão's cousin was, at that time, living in his father's house, an orphan whose parents left her to be taken care of and educated by Simão's father. It seems that his assets turned him into the right person to do so. As for the orphan's father, once rich, he lost everything in gambling and commercial misfortunes, becoming reduced to the ultimate poverty.

The orphan's name was Helena. She was beautiful, sweet, and extremely kind. Simão, who had been educated with her and lived under the same roof, couldn't resist the elevated qualities and the beauty of his cousin. They loved each other.

Marriage was in their dreams for the future, which seems to be a natural thing for the hearts of lovers.

It didn't take a long time for Simão's parents to discover their romance. Now it must be said, even if the friar's notes didn't bring any formal declarations about it, it must be said that his parents were extraordinarily egotistical. Maintaining Helena was a gesture of goodwill, but they couldn't consent to marrying their son to the poor orphan. They had a rich heiress in sight and believed that the young man would marry her.

One afternoon, as the lad was making progress in bookkeeping, his father came into the office with a grave and at the same time smiley air and told his son to stop working in order to listen to him. The young man obeyed. The father said:

"You are going to leave to the province of ***. I need to send some letters to my correspondent Amaral, and, as they are of a great importance, I don't want to trust our sloppy postal service. Do you want to go in the steamboat, or you prefer our brig?"

This question was asked with great prudence.

The old tradesman didn't allow his son to object to the request: the young man was forced to answer.

The young man got embarrassed, lowered his eyes, and answered:

"I'll go wherever my father wants."

The father mentally appreciated the son's submission, as this made him save the money of the steamboat's ticket, and he happily told his wife that the young man hadn't made any objections to his request.

In the evening the two lovers had the chance to meet alone in the dining room.

Simão told Helena what happened. They both cried furtive tears, and they had the hope that the trip would last a month, if that.

At teatime, Simão's father talked about the trip, which should last only a few days. This revived the hopes of the two lovers. The rest of the evening was used by the old man to give his son advice on how to behave at the correspondent's house. At ten o'clock, as usual, they all retired to their rooms.

The days went by very fast. Finally, dawn broke on the day when the brig was to leave. Helena left her room with eyes red from crying. When she was abruptly interrogated by her aunt, she said that the redness was an inflammation she got from many hours of reading the previous night. The aunt prescribed her an abstention from reading and bathing with mallow water.

As for the uncle, having called Simão, he handed a letter to the correspondent and gave Simão a hug. The suitcase and a servant were ready. The farewell was sad. The parents cried a little, but the girl cried more.

As for Simão, his eyes were dry and burning. He was resistant to tears, the reason why he suffered more.

The brig left. Simão didn't leave the top deck of the boat for as long as he could see land. When, to use Ribeyrolles⁴⁶ picturesque sentence, all the *walls of the prison*

46 Charles Ribeyrolles (1812-1860), a republican French politician and journalist, exiled in Brazil due to his participation in the 1848 revolution in Paris and author of *Brésil pittoresque* (1859), which was

that walks finally closed. Simão went down to his cabin, sad and with a heavy heart. There was a premonition within him saying that it would be impossible to see his cousin again. It seemed he was being deported.

Arriving at the place of his destination, Simão looked up his father's correspondent and handed him the letter. Mr. Amaral read the letter, looked at the young man and, after some silence, he said, giving back the letter to him:

"Well, now it's necessary to wait for me to obey your father's order. However, come to live in my house."

"When can I go back?" Simão asked.

"In a few days, unless things get complicated."

That *unless*, put in Amaral's mouth as incidental, was the main clause of the sentence. The letter written by Simão's father said the following:

My dear Amaral.

Ponderous reasons force me to send my son away from this city. Hold him over there however you can. You will say to the boy that the reason for the trip is, supposedly, my necessity to go into business with you, making him believe that the trip won't last long. You, who also had, in your youth, the sad idea of engendering romances, may invent unforeseen circumstances and occurrences, so that the boy doesn't come back before further orders. I am, as always, etc.

III

Days and days went by, and it was never the moment of going back to the father's house. The ex-novelist had in fact a fertile imagination and never got tired of inventing excuses to convince the poor young man.

However, as the lovers' spirits are no less ingenious than the novelist's, Simão and Helena found a way to establish correspondence, and this way they were able to console themselves during the absence, with the presence of letters and paper. Héloïse⁴⁷ used to say that the art of writing letters was invented by a lover who was separated from the man she loved. In these letters they swore eternal fidelity to each other.

By the end of two months of frustrated waiting and active correspondence, Helena's aunt caught a letter from Simão. I believe it was the twentieth. There was a great storm in the house. The uncle rushed from his office and came to know the facts. As a result, he banished ink and paper from his house and instituted rigorous vigilance over the unhappy girl.

The letters directed to the poor exiled young man began to decrease. The young man inquired the reasons for such thing in the long, emotional letters; but as the rigorous control in Simão's house acquired extraordinary proportions, all

translated by Machado de Assis (1839-1908) in 1858. Ribeyrolles was a pioneer in photographing Brazil's agricultural production and the work of the slaves on the farms.

47 Héloïse d'Argenteuil (1101-1164) was a French nun, writer and abbess who became known for her love affair and correspondence with the famous philosopher and professor Peter Abelard. The romance was discovered by her family, and Abelard was castrated consequently.

the letters written by the young man ended in the hands of the old man, who, after appreciating his son's loving style, burned passionate epistles.

Days and months went by, and no letter from Helena was received. The correspondent exhausted his creative vein, and he didn't know how to hold the young man anymore.

Simão receives a letter. It was his father's handwriting. The only difference was that this letter was longer, much longer than the others. The young man opened the letter and, trembling and pale, read it. In this letter, the honored tradesman told his son that Helena, the good girl he'd intended to make his own daughter by marrying her to Simão, the good Helena had died. The old man copied some of the latest obituaries he saw in the newspapers and added some home consolations. The last consolation told Simão to embark for home to be with him.

The last sentence of the letter said the following:

Anyway, my business hasn't worked out: I couldn't marry you to Helena, as God look her. But come back, my son; you could console yourself marrying another girl, the daughter of counselor ***. She is a grown-up woman and a good catch. Don't be sad; remember me.

Simão's father didn't know the extension of his son's love, and he wasn't a big genius at assessing him even though he knew him. Such pains cannot be consoled with a letter or with marriage to a counselor's daughter. It was better to call him over and prepare him to receive the news, because to put down coldly in a letter was to expose the young man to certain death.

Simão's death was contrary, not certain. His body was alive, but he was morally dead, so dead that he got the idea to go look for a grave. This would be a good place to show some of the papers Simão had written about his suffering after receiving the letter; but there are many flaws, and I don't want to cripple the friar's naive and miserable position.

The grave chosen by Simão was a friary. He answered his father that he appreciated the counselor's daughter, saying that, from that moment on, he belonged to God's service.

His father was impressed. He never suspected that his son could make such resolution. He hurriedly wrote to him to see if he could make the young man change his mind, but it was impossible.

As for the correspondent, for whom things were more and more embroiled, he allowed the young man to go to the cloister, as he wasn't willing to participate in a business he knew almost nothing about.

IV

Friar Simão of St. Agatha went back to his home province on a religious mission, just after the facts I've just told you.

He got ready and embarked.

The mission wasn't in the capital city but in the countryside. When he arrived at the capital, however, he thought that one of his duties was to visit his parents.

They'd changed both physically and morally. It was certainly the pain and remorse of having precipitated their son's decision to become a friar. They had sold the business and were living off its revenue.

They welcomed their son with great excitement and true love. After tears and consolations, they asked about the reasons for Simão's trip.

"What brings you here, my son?"

"I came to fulfill a mission from the priesthood that I've embraced. I came to preach, so that the Lord's flock never strays from the good path."

"Here in the capital?"

"No, in the countryside. I'll start in the village of ***."

The old couple trembled, but Simão didn't notice a thing. He left the following day, with some insistence from his parents for him to stay. They noticed that their son didn't even mention Helena. They also didn't want to hurt him by talking about this subject.

Some days later, the village Friar Simão mentioned was excited to hear the missionary's sermons.

The old church in the village was packed with people.

At the announced time, Friar Simão occupied the pulpit and started his religious speech. Half of the people became bored and left the church in the middle of the sermon. The reason was simple. Being used to the lively pictures of Pedro Botelho's⁴⁸ cauldrons and other golden tidbits used by most preachers, the people couldn't pleasurably listen to the simple, soft and persuasive language used in the sermons of the man who was the base of our church.

The preacher was almost finished when a couple, husband, and wife, rushed into the church. He was an honored ploughman, reasonably well-off with the small farm he owned and the goodwill to work. She, was highly considered for her virtues, but had an invincible melancholy.

After taking holy water, they both chose a place from where they could easily see the preacher.

A scream was heard, and everybody ran in the direction of the newcomer, who had just fainted. Friar Simão had to stop his sermon while the incident was straightened out. But, through an opening in the crowd, he could see the face of the woman who fainted.

It was Helena.

In the friar's manuscript there is a series of ellipses occupying eight lines. He himself doesn't know what happened afterwards. But the fact was that, after recognizing Helena, the friar continued the sermon, but it was a different one. It wasn't logical and had no subject matter, being true delirium. The consternation was general.

V

⁴⁸ A witchdoctor who lived in Brazil in colonial times, and who used to heal people by using herbs. His bad reputation among the nobles led them to burn his house and kill all his family. Since then, the expression "Pedro Botelho's cauldron" is used to refer to hell or the devil.

Friar Simão's delirium lasted a few days. Thanks to the care he received, he was able to recover, and it seemed to everybody that he was cured, except for the doctor, who wanted to continue the healing. But the friar said positively that he was retiring to the cloister, and there were no human forces that could make him change his mind.

The reader will naturally understand that Helena's marriage was arranged by her uncle and her aunt.

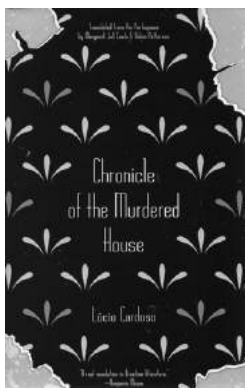
The poor lady couldn't resist the commotion. She died two months later, leaving her husband, who really loved her, inconsolable.

Friar Simão, retired to the cloister, became even more lonely and taciturn. He was still a little alienated.

We already know the facts surrounding his death and the impression it caused in the abbot.

The cellar occupied by Friar Simão of St. Agatha, remained religiously closed for a long time. It was opened only many years after his death for the arrival of a secular old man, who, for alms, got from the abbot the favor of ending his days living with the doctors of the soul. It was Simão's father. The mother had died.

Everybody believed that he, in his last days of life, was no less crazy than Friar Simão of St. Agatha.



7.

The book: Chronicle of the Murdered House

Author: Lúcio Cardoso

Translators: Margaret Jull Costa and Robin Patteson

Original title: Crônica da casa assassinada

ISBN: 978-19-40953-50-2

Year of original publication: 1959

Year of translated version publication: 2016

Original publisher: José Olympio

Translated version publisher: Open Letter/University of Rochester

Number of pages: 592

Synopsis: Set in the southeastern state of Minas Gerais, the novel relates the dissolution of a once proud patriarchal family that blames its ruin on the marriage of its youngest son, Valdo, to Nina — a vibrant, unpredictable, and incendiary young woman whose very existence seems to depend on the destruction of the household. This family's downfall, peppered by stories of decadence, adultery, incest, and madness, is related through a variety of narrative devices, including letters, diaries, memoirs, statements, confessions, and accounts penned by the various characters.

Prizes: BTBA — Best Translated Book Award for Fiction (2017)

The author: Lúcio Cardoso (1912–1968) was a Brazilian novelist, playwright, and poet. He turned away from the social realism fashionable in 1930s Brazil and opened the doors of Brazilian literature to introspective works such as those of Clarice Lispector — his greatest follower and admirer.

The translators: Margaret Jull Costa is one of the most acclaimed translators of modern times. She has translated dozens of works from both Spanish and Portuguese, including the works of Javier Marias, José Saramago, Eça de Queiroz, and Fernando Pessoa, among many others. Her translations have received numerous awards, including the International IMPAC Dublin Literary Award, the Oxford-Weidenfeld Translation Prize on three occasions, and the Portuguese Translation Prize. In 2014 she was made an Officer of the Order of the British Empire.

Robin Patterson, graduated in Law from the University of Cambridge, he worked in banking with French banks, already doing translations. His career took a different direction after he had his first translation lessons in a masterclass at Birkbeck College's summer school in London, led by Margaret Jull Costa, in 2012. He went to improve his skills at the British Centre for Literary Translation (BLCT), where a partnership with Margaret Jull Costa has been consolidated.

THE PHARMACIST'S THIRD REPORT

LÚCIO CARDOSO

After the work on the pharmacy had finished, carried out with Senhor Demétrio's assistance, I must confess that my greatest wish in life was to own a dog. I wasn't thinking of a pedigree dog with silky, well-groomed fur, nor one of those fierce hounds they keep on the big country estates up near Rio Espera and Queimados, but a medium-sized animal, perhaps some kind of mongrel, but with a strong, gentle appearance, always ready to come when called. You could well say, and I would not necessarily disagree with you, that such are the dreams of an old bachelor. For those, like me, who are accustomed to solitary conversations, it is always good to find a listener, even one who cannot reply. I would call this dog Pastor, which seems to me an appropriate and even poetic name. I've often imagined him lying beside me, and me saying to him: "Such is life, Pastor. Each to his own. It wouldn't matter that he couldn't reply and merely wagged his tail, looking at me with the tender eyes of a true canine friend. I would thus be sure of having a faithful listener, one who would never contradict my opinions, as could all too easily be the case with one of my own species".

This is not the only reason that makes me wish for Pastor to arrive. With the increase in stock and a subsequent increase in value, I find that I no longer sleep easily

in the back room, mainly because of all the reports of thefts and burglaries in and around our town (Vila Velha is coming on in the world, of that there is no doubt...), sometimes almost in broad daylight. Just now, for example, to everyone's alarm, people are saying that the notorious Chico Herrera has returned and is already up to his old tricks over in Serra do Baú. So, in addition to being a faithful companion, the dog could also stand guard over the shop. I heard that outside the town, over by Fundão, there was a man who wanted to sell a dog, a fine rat-catcher but which had recently taken to chasing his hens. I pounced: it was exactly the animal I needed, since I kept no poultry in my back yard. This rat-catcher, I confess, was nothing to write home about: thin and bony, with a snout gouged with scars left from previous encounters with hedgehogs and wild pigs; he barked little and spent most of his time crouching in the corner. But although not exactly what I had imagined, he served my purpose. I trained him carefully and he grew accustomed to sleeping at my feet while I did the accounts and made up the cashbook. I like seeing him prick up his ears at the slightest sound and listening to him snarl at the most imperceptible of noises. It's the old rat-catcher in him, as if he could sense his prey out there in some dark, invisible wood.

It was precisely such a warning signal that caught my attention one night just recently, during a heavy, relentless downpour. I didn't hear the knocking at my door because of the streams of water running off the roof, and it was only when Pastor suddenly jumped up, ears pricked, that I realized there was someone outside. It was late and the pharmacy was already closed — who on earth could be looking for me at such an hour, and in such foul weather too? Of one thing there could be no doubt: it was clearly an emergency. So, I got up, closing my book and muttering under my breath, not wanting to get out of the habit of grumbling, went to the window and pulled up the sash:

"Who's there?"

I saw a shape moving in the darkness.

"You're needed, doctor."

Hearing that muffled voice and seeing a figure that seemed more anxious to hide than to reveal itself, I hesitated.

"Sorry, you've made a mistake. The doctor lives farther along, next block down."

Then the man moved closer, and I was able to see him properly: he was dark-skinned, middle-aged, and over his shoulders, like a cape, he wore a sack made of coarse cloth. I remembered having seen him a couple of times near the Meneses' house. He told me that he'd already gone to the doctor's house, but that the doctor was on a call in Fundão.

"But what do you want?" I asked, not without a certain impatience, looking out at the pouring rain.

"Senhor Valdo sent me to get you. He said that if I couldn't find the doctor, you would do."

"Oh, he said that, did he?"

"Yes, he did, he said that you could stand in for the doctor."

"Is it Senhor Valdo who's sick?"

"No, it's the mistress."

It's true, some patients did, from time to time, seek me out when they couldn't get hold of the doctor, so this certainly wasn't the first time. But even so I shook my head and wondered. Going to the Chácara in that weather was no laughing matter. I imagined the muddy track, rutted by carts and stray cattle from the surrounding countryside. I asked once again if Senhor Valdo had expressly told him to knock at my door, and when he said yes, I realized that I had no choice and that I would have to go with him. I asked him to wait and went to get dressed. While I was doing so, Pastor kept growling by my side, as if he wasn't at all pleased. "You see?", I said to him, "I have to go out in a weather like this, and I'll be paid a pittance". He agreed, and I promised him I'd be back shortly. Putting on my thick drove's cape, it occurred to me that there might in the end be some recompense, at least in terms of finding out some gossip about the Meneses family. "And what's more", I continued out loud, "it's all part of the job. Whose idea was it to set myself up as a pharmacist in a poor town in Minas Gerais? I should have been a civil servant in Rio, that's what I should've done". Once again Pastor agreed with me and accompanied me, tail wagging, as I gathered the things I needed. I closed my case, bade Pastor farewell and within few minutes I was at the dark-skinned man's side, heading toward the Chácara. We took a shortcut along a narrow path that left the main road and ran alongside an old slave cemetery, weaving between the clumps of crocuses that carpeted the marches on either side of us. A muddled orchestra of frogs were croaking so close by that they seemed at any moment to be about to join us. Puddles of water glistened in the darkness, and the rain continued to fall, dripping softly on the leaves. Hoping to break the monotony of the walk, I asked:

"What happened?"

And he replied:

"The mistress suddenly felt unwell. She was sitting at the piano, and had an argument with her husband... I don't know. I think she fainted."

I couldn't resist exclaiming disapprovingly:

"Honestly, that family!"

And we continued in silence, me snug in my thick cape, he sheltering as best he could under his sack. Through the rain, I could make out a few rough crosses and the remnants of whitewashed tombstones that glowed in the darkness: it was the old slave cemetery. The Chácara, therefore, wasn't very far away. Now and then, I stepped into a deep puddle as I tried to keep to one side of the path, since I didn't like having that man walking behind me — he was, after all, a stranger. It wasn't long before we rejoined the road leading to the main gate of the Chácara. I must confess that as we drew near, its avenues seemed even gloomier than usual. In the distance, I could make out the dark shape of the house, with a couple of windows lit. It was filled by a dense air of secrecy, of a life lived apart. "Strange creatures, those Meneses", I thought again. And the whole landscape gave off a coldness that came not so much from the rain as from the hostility emanating from its silent, austere occupants.

Senhor Valdo was waiting for us at the top of the steps, a lamp already lit. As soon as he saw me, he exclaimed:

"You certainly took your time! I thought you weren't coming."

"You forget, sir, that I am a mere maker of medicines", I replied, with a certain irony.

"At times like this", he replied, "your assistance will be invaluable".

As I set down my case and removed my dripping cape, I tried to find out what had happened. Senhor Valdo told me that just after dinner, Dona Nina had sat down at the piano, feeling overcome by a sudden illness. She was feeling better now, thanks to some lemon balm tea she had drunk, although she was still very weak. Since she did not generally enjoy good health, he had thought it best to call someone, for he himself had little understanding of medical matters. In the absence of the doctor, the task had fallen to me: there was no one in the town better qualified. He added that he hoped I would forgive the inconvenience, but that he would reward me generously. Clearly, he knew who he was dealing with, and this promise did indeed encourage me somewhat. As he was explaining all this, he led me to the drawing room, and, with my customary pleasure and curiosity, as if I were attending a magic show, I revisited those surroundings so typical of such families: heavy, antique furniture of mahogany and jacaranda that spoke of an illustrious past, of generations of Meneses who led perhaps simpler and more tranquil lives, whereas now a vein of disorder and dissolution adulterated those finer qualities. Even so, it was easy to see what they had once been, this country nobility, with their crystal gleaming gently in the darkness, their dusty silverware attesting to a faded splendor, their ivories, and their opals — yes, one certainly had a sense of comfort there, and yet it was merely a survival of things long gone. In this slowly disintegrating world, there seemed to be an evil gnawing away inside it, a latent tumor deep in its guts.

Dona Nina lay stretched out on a couch (a tattered chaise longue over which they had spread a red shawl) and she was visibly pale, her forehead glistening with sweat. But even in that state I had to admit that she was a very beautiful creature, endowed with a delicate, decadent beauty very much in keeping with the spirit of the house. Her breathing was irregular, and she followed my movements with eyes that seemed both fearful and suspicious. She said nothing to, but I was aware she was studying me intently. I sat down beside her and took her pulse, which was very fast. I asked how she felt, and she said it wasn't the first time she'd felt nauseous and feverish, with blurred vision and other peculiar symptoms. I called Senhor Valdo to one side:

"She's pregnant!" I exclaimed.

His eyes widened:

"Pregnant?", and he stared at me as if I had just said something utterly outrageous.

I nodded my head gravely and returned to finish my examination. Without me needing to say a word, Dona Nina had understood everything. With her head resting against the wall, she appeared apprehensive and even paler.

"Oh, good Lord", she said, "I'm not ready for this".

I told her that all she needed was rest. Finally coming to his senses after the shock of the news, Senhor Valdo went to the door and called for his sister-in-law:

"Ana! Do you know what Senhor Aurelio has just told me? We're going to have a child in the house."

Dona Ana gave me an indefinable look — I believe I even saw in it a faint touch of irony — and said simply:

"Well, it's high time there was a Meneses heir."

Her husband also appeared at the doorway but did not enter. He was swathed in shadows and seemed to be held back by an inexplicable timidity. On hearing Senhor Valdo repeating the news, he shook his head:

"In that case, she must be taken to Rio de Janeiro. We don't have the facilities here to deal with that kind of situation."

Senhor Valdo erupted:

"We don't? Nonsense, Demétrio. Nina will stay right here. The Pavilion suits her very well and there she will find all the rest she needs."

Senhor Demétrio cut in coldly:

"The Pavilion is not to be recommended. It's downright unhealthy and, besides, it's too far from the house."

He had a point, for the Pavilion, where the couple was now living, was little more than a long-abandoned, glorified gazebo with no home comforts. But Senhor Valdo, thrilled with the idea of becoming a father, ignored all such remarks and immediately began to plan out loud a series of renovations that he maintained would completely transform the Pavilion and make of it a magnificent residence, better even than the house itself. The boy — he was quite sure it would be a boy; indeed, it could only be a boy — would receive every possible care and attention. Perhaps even Betty herself might want to look after him — why not? And so, he paced from one side of the room to the other, rubbing his hands, and it was a pleasure to see him so full of manly enthusiasm. His enthusiasm, however, was not shared by the others. A strange silence had descended on the room as if everyone else had lost interest in the subject, making Senhor Valdo's delight seem disproportionate and futile. Still lying on the couch, Dona Nina had picked up a magazine and was pretending to leaf through it. I noticed, though, that she seemed agitated, and her hands were trembling. Dona Ana had turned away and appeared to be absorbed in some detail of the room that no one else could quite determine; and as for Senhor Demétrio, he was waiting, head bowed and hands folded, for his brother's high spirits to cool. Senhor Valdo as if none of this were of any importance to him, or indeed as if he hadn't even noticed what was going on, came over and stood beside his wife:

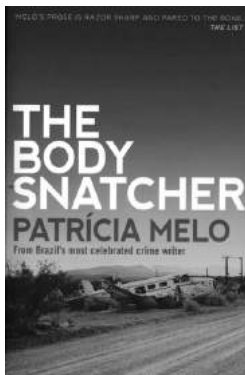
"You'll see, Nina. Everything will turn out just fine", he murmured, taking one of her hands, which she allowed to lie limply in his.

Only after he had repeated these words a couple of times did she down the magazine and look calmly up at him:

"Perhaps Demétrio is right, Valdo. There are no facilities of any kind in Vila Velha." He, however, was not about to give in:

"We can go to Queimados — there's a hospital there. It isn't very far, and that way we would avoid a long journey."

Dona Nina merely said: "Queimados!", but it was clear she wasn't thrilled by the suggestion, perhaps because the little hospital in that town was not exactly famous for the care it lavished on its patients, indeed she had heard that it was more of a poorhouse than anything else. Senhor Valdo was clearly not listening, and he continued elaborating his many plans. Finally, turning again to me, he asked what type of treatment should be provided, what would be needed, what should be done and what should be avoided. I set out the usual facts I would have assumed were common knowledge and was rather surprised that the Meneses did not apparently know them. He interrupted me once or twice, in order to clarify some detail, he hadn't understood. Then, at last, when he had tired of this, and judged he had exhausted all the advice I could possibly provide, he sat down beside Dona Nina, and the two of them carried on a whispered conversation whose meaning I could not make out. At that moment, seeing them sitting so close to each other, I had no doubt that the greatest possible harmony existed between them. The rumors that had at one time been circulating in town must, I thought to myself, be completely unfounded — and I couldn't help but regret that such a fine, decent couple, who, in their own home, conducted themselves in such sincere and amicable manner, should be exposed to the frivolous, indiscreet comments of half a dozen idlers with nothing better to do.



8.

The book: The Body Snatcher

Author: Patrícia Melo

Translator: Clifford E. Landers

Original title: Ladrão de Cadáveres

ISBN: 978-19-08524-53-9

Year of original publication: 2010

Year of translated version publication: 2015

Original publisher: Editora Rocco

Translated version publisher: Bitter Lemon Press — UK

Number of pages: 189

Synopsis: This tightly plotted novel by Brazil's best-selling crime author is a tale of drug dealing gone wrong, police corruption, and macabre blackmail, set in a heat-soaked town in the vast untamed Brazilian lowlands bordering Bolivia. One bright Sunday, alone on the banks of the Paraguay River, the narrator witnesses the fatal crash of a small plane. He finds a kilo of cocaine in the dead pilot's backpack and pockets it along with the pilot's expensive watch. Thus begins the protagonist's long slide into corruption.

When the police locate the crash site, the pilot's body is missing, and a large-scale search ensues. Our hero, now involved in a busted cocaine deal, ends up owing a Bolivian drug gang so much money that blackmailing the wealthy family of the dead pilot seems to be the only way out. When the family secretly agrees to pay serious money to recover the body of their son, our hero, who does not have the pilot's body, decides someone else's will do... Or so he thinks.

Press reviews: “An excellent and atypical book, a fantastic adventure” — Huffington Post; “An explosive mixture of dread, greed, and corruption. You won’t put it down until you’ve read the very last page” — Cosmopolitan.

Prizes: Deutscher Krimi Preis for 1. Platz International (2014)

The author: Patrícia Melo (born 1962 in São Paulo) is a Brazilian author. She has written a few successful novels, including *The Killer* and *In Praise of Lies*. Her works have often dealt with sex and violence in a heavily urbanized setting.

The translator: Clifford E. Landers. Translator of books by Rubem Fonseca, Jorge Amado, João Ubaldo Ribeiro, Nérida Piñon, José de Alencar and other Brazilian authors. Ph.D. in Political Science; Retired university professor. Awarded Mario Ferreira Prize and fellowships from Fulbright Commission and National Library of Brazil. Author of *Literary Translation: A Practical Guide*, published by Multilingual Matters.

CHAPTER 11

First Brian blew his brains out. Ten days later, Robbie hanged himself. And then Justin drank rat poison. And Max, three days later, followed the path of Brian, Robbie, and Justin. I thought to myself, the people in that area, Texas, I’m not sure exactly where it was, Wisconsin, the people there must wake up every morning wondering who’s going to hang himself today. Who’s going to jump from the tenth floor?

It’s no coincidence, concluded the experts. I don’t know where I read the story, but the theory is that it’s an epidemic. Somebody kills himself and the news spreads like the flu. A powerful virus. It appears in all the papers, on television, radio, and those dead who hours before were just a shy student, just a widower, a peaceful appliance salesman, or the son of Chinese immigrants, with no talent or luster, are transformed into celebrities like movie actors or baseball players. A dark fame, true. Infectious stars.

The others, the ones who don’t kill themselves, foster death and mount the spectacle. That’s also part of the sickness. They gossip, comment, really smear themselves. They devour newspapers. They live off that. The funeral is a great event, with the presence of the mayor, who eulogizes the hanged man in a lovely speech. Schoolchildren join hands and sing a hymn. A period of mourning is declared, and the team flag is flown at half-staff. It’s like the awarding of a local Oscar. It’s a prize, the homage. You kill yourself, and in exchange you become famous in your little town. For a few days. And sometime later, somebody else hangs himself, and then

another, in a vicious circle that paradoxically lends life to those dead cities with names like Frostproof.

An epidemic, say the sociologists. And it does no good to wash your hands. No good to disinfect with alcohol. Or wear a mask. The only way for you not to blow your brains out is to turn off the television. Turn off the radio. Not to read newspapers. To leave the city.

I felt contaminated myself. In my opinion, what we were experiencing in Corumbá was an outbreak. Of a different sort, but equally vicious. In all the papers, on the radio and television, the exclusive topic was the pilot's accident. The difference was that no one had killed himself. It was pitiful seeing Dona Lu. She had lost a lot of weight. I practically had to carry her to the car when we went to the church. On those occasions, the vultures hovered around her, all but asking for autographs. Does it hurt badly? Is what they wanted to know. How much does it hurt to have a son disappear? Jackals after raw meat. They liked feeling pity for that rich and attractive woman, who was royally screwed despite being rich and attractive. They felt good about that. Dona Lu's misfortune allowed them to feel sympathetic. In fact, that's another symptom of the epidemic. Pathological generosity that surges in the community. Instead of fever and diarrhea, there suddenly appears that symptom, compassion.

The young people of the city organized and went out in search of the pilot, in the vicinity of the Old Highway. At the location of the accident there was now a cross. And flowers, Junior lives. Banners like that proliferated around the city.

The worst part was the vigils. I would sometimes arrive for work and there was no other way to get into the garage except by stepping on flowers and candles. We would gather up the bouquets to open a path, throw everything in the trash, but right away they would bring more flowers, more garbage, and block the entrance again. On a Monday, there were also bags of French fries and Coca-Cola cans strewn around. In the riding area. Where people suffered a little to enjoy themselves a lot. At the misfortune of others. Instead of going to park or the movies, they suffered on our sidewalk, joining hands, with prayer and song. And later, tired of amusing themselves by crying, they would return to their homes, satiated.

There was no rest. By day, indignation, and at night, bad dreams. In them there was always a cake with several layers, like the ones my mother used to make, and on top, instead of the smiling bride and groom, was the wreckage of an airplane around which vultures and gulls circled endlessly. I observed the small dark cloud of birds and, as I was getting up to shoo them away, I realized I was moving with the vultures. I woke up, feeling the giddiness of rapture. Or of failing, I don't really remember.

The epidemic didn't last long. A month, perhaps. A bit more. And when we were at the apex, with the entire city greatly enjoying itself, the inevitable happened. That's how an epidemic works, according to immunologists. It peaks and then begins to retreat. Descend. Really plummet.

Just as we were beginning to experience a bit of peace, Dona Lu sank for good. She wasn't resigned. How could my son, so loved, my only son, my love, not

come through this door again? I want my son, she repeated to her husband like a spoiled little girl.

We could hear her sobs from the kitchen. Doctors came to sedate her. But she would wake up and resume her wailing. Sometimes she would become confused and ask us if Junior had woken up, if he'd had breakfast. Sometimes she would call me to look at albums of Junior as a child. We spent afternoons like that, looking at photos from the past.

I recall one day when I returned from the bank where I'd gone to pay some bills, I went to look for her in the office to give her the receipts and found her with her head on the desk, weeping uncontrollably, crying like a small child. Where is my son?, she asked when I came in. I want my son she said, almost imploring, looking into my eyes, that's how she spoke to people, with her penetrating gaze, fearless, and when you answered, she would listen with almost childish attention, believing, as if the others were incapable of lying.

What could I say at that moment? That her son was food for the piranhas?

True, I had said that. In different form. Not to her, to her husband. If she answered the phone I hung up. But on two occasions, in the middle of the night, from the pay phone at the corner of my block, when I was sure it was him on the phone, I said point-blank: your son is dead.

And hung up. I thought the information would help, that knowing it they would go forward, look for the body in the river or else start to accept the idea that their son had died, at least that, but what's odd is that at no time did they take that hypothesis into consideration. Some crazy guy keeps calling, Dalva said one morning. A psychopath.

And so, my warnings were just one more element of the family's nightmare. They would listen to me, and the next day go on believing their son would be found. They didn't want to know that he had fallen into a river full of piranhas. They didn't even give it a thought. The piranhas. They had raised cattle for decades and were all too familiar with losing steers to the piranhas in the very river where their son had crashed, but they chose to overlook that detail.

Five weeks after the accident I received my first pay and took Sulamita for pizza in a restaurant near the belvedere on Santo Inácio Hill, from which we could see a stretch of the Paraguay River in the distance.

The night was hot, stuffy, and we sat at a table outside to enjoy the view.

Sulamita was a bit down, and I felt her mood had to do with my own reluctance to meet her family. She had been insisting on it for some weeks, and I had to put her off a little because of Rita. Not that I didn't like Sulamita. But Rita was something else entirely. Rita was as bubbly as a waterfall, everything about her was lushness and strength, hyper-feminine, legs exposed, always wearing rings, necklaces, and clogs, always gesticulating. I was crazy about all of it.

Carlão believed she was attending to clients, and Sulamita thought I was putting in overtime at the Berabas', and we would go to motels, fill the tub and stay there, fucking and escaping the heat.

One day we were embracing in bed after making love when I asked why she didn't get out if her relationship with Carlão was so bad. I think that at the time I was also thinking about a more serious step with Rita. Why?, she said. Because I have a heart. Carlão left a long-standing marriage and two daughters to be with me, and now that I'm with you, in a good thing, now that I'm in love with you I just say ciao? Just like that? No, I'm not that kind of woman. I want to do things right, she said. Without hurting anybody.

After that, I understood where Rita was coming from and slowed things down. Actually, I saw it was time to end the affair. But that wasn't easy. We had a crazy connection; she knew how to keep me close. Naturally, we started fighting a lot too. Especially because of Sulamita. Or Carlão. I didn't like the idea of dumping Sulamita, and that irritated Rita.

Carlão also exasperated me. He would sometimes call three times in a row to ask dumb questions. A goddamn drag. You're not even married and already act like a husband, she said. That's when things heated up. We'd fight, she'd phone, and I wouldn't answer, or vice versa. I would plead, she would plead, we'd both say no and yes, yes, and no, we'd make up and then fight again, go back, and get offended, then make up again.

Our relationship really heated up one Thursday when I went out to have some beers with Carlão and he told me he wanted to have a child with Rita. I got pissed off.

That Saturday at the pizzeria, in that infernal heat, without even the hint of a breeze, I finally told Sulamita she could set up the lunch with her family on Sunday.

She kissed me and said she loved me. But she was still sad, I noticed. Sad and in love.

On Sunday I woke up resolved to get my life back in order. Rita called and I made a point of telling her, I'm going to meet Sulamita's family, and we may get engaged. You're ridiculous, she answered, and hung up in my face, before I could tell her she was the one who was ridiculous with that talk of a baby.

As I was getting ready to leave, Moacir knocked at the door. I had been trying to talk with him for a week, to find out what the fuck was going on, why he was so tuned out, didn't open his workshop anymore, slept late, left the junk piled up at the entrance to the house, cans from the shop. The neighborhood kids were already starting to steal that crap.

He was also drinking. At least that's what Sulamita kept telling me. But what really worried me was Eliana. It was true that we were making some money. Not much, because my strategy was to sell cheaply to undercut the competition. But it was driblets and drabs, coming in every day. Every day Moacir would push a few fives and tens under the door of my room: he paid for his part, and that was good for both of us, I could spend it all without calling attention, I spent it on motels and restaurants with Rita, and with Sulamita, too.

I'd bought a ring for Sulamita that I was going to take to the lunch, and a tray for Sulamita's mother and a hunting knife for her father. I spent everything, but without calling attention to myself, while Moacir — what a bungler, and that business of not

opening the workshop? And Eliana, who went around in new clothes, all dolled up? Why'd she dyed her hair blonde? To make herself stand out?

On Friday, as I was leaving for work, I noticed that everybody in Moacir's house, including Serafina, was wearing new sneakers. The same model. What's this, I asked, a football team? I explained to Moacir that he was attracting unwanted attention. You think the people in the neighborhood don't see it? You go barefoot and all of a sudden show up in new Reeboks? You think people don't spot the splurge?

I'll be careful, he said. He swore he'd talk to Eliana, but I noticed that he reeked of alcohol, and became more concerned.

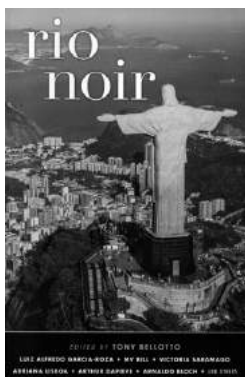
I'm talking seriously, I said.

I know, Moacir answered. He asked how much of the drug we had left.

A little less than two hundred grams, I answered.

Is it all? We don't even need to bag it. Let me have it all, I have a major buyer.

The sun was searing when I got in the car, and the landscape shimmered like it was a bad film.



9.

The book: Rio Noir

Author: Tony Bellotto and others

Translator: Clifford E. Landers

Original title: Rio Noir

ISBN: 978-16-17753-12-1

Year of english version publication: 2016

English publisher: Akashic Books

Number of pages: 247

Synopsis: Award-winning series of original noir anthologies. For the first time into South America the book comprises all new stories, each one set in a distinct neighborhood or location within the respective city. The city revealed in this book is a different Rio. Even though famous landscapes are present in its pages, what is exposed is a world of shadows, blood, intrigue, violence, hideouts, and mystery.

The author (of the selected story): Luis Fernando Verissimo was born in 1936, in Porto Alegre, where he still resides. A columnist for various newspapers, he boasts a vast literary oeuvre that includes children's books, humorous stories, comics, and novels, published both in Brazil and abroad. Many of his works have been adapted to cinema, TV, and the theatre.

The translator: Clifford E. Landers. Translator of books by Rubem Fonseca, Jorge Amado, João Ubaldo Ribeiro, Nélida Piñon, José de Alencar and other Brazilian authors. Ph.D. in Political Science; retired university professor. Awarded the Mario Ferreira Prize and fellowships from Fulbright Commission and National Library of Brazil. Author of *Literary Translation: A Practical Guide*, published by Multilingual Matters.

THE WOODSMAN

LUIS FERNANDO VERISSIMO

Bangu

The dead man called late afternoon the “hour of long shadows”. That was the title of the manuscript I found in the apartment where he and the blond woman had been murdered. *The Hour of Long Shadows*. Poems, handwritten, in a pile on top of the living room table. One of the few things in the apartment not splattered with blood.

It didn’t surprise me that the guy wrote poetry. There are poets in Bangu too, why not? But everything about the dead man denied poetry. Everything about him was antipoetic, from his physical appearance to his biography, which Detective Friedrich gave me. Beginning with his name, Tadeu. But there it was, the manuscript, poems written in ballpoint pen. *The Hour of Long Shadows* and his signature, in a neat pile waiting to be found. But Detective Friedrich hadn’t noticed the pile. Police never notice poetry. I do. I even write some. I write my verses but don’t show them to anyone. They’re private musings. But that doesn’t matter. We’re not here to talk about the fleeting soul of a police reporter but about a double murder.

The two corpses lay on the sofa. The blonde in a nightgown. Beautiful. Even covered in blood she was still beautiful. He only had on underwear. Both had been stabbed to death. Deep cuts made — I don’t know why it immediately occurred to me — with a butcher knife. Or knives. So much carnage, both at the same time, it could only have been done by more than one butcher.

My editor, Mosquito, had asked me to take a look at that slaughter in Bangu. “It might lead somewhere” is Mosquito’s way of saying that the story may yield more than just another killing in a Rio suburb. Something extra behind the bloodshed to serve up to our readers.

“Look for Detective Friedrich”, Mosquito had instructed me. “He owes me a couple of favors”.

Detective Friedrich was a large, fat German with the expression of someone who had seen everything in life and had no wish to see it all again. He only said “Ha” when I told him I brought greetings from Mosquito. But he let me into the apartment before the bodies were removed and told me everything he knew about the victims. The dead man’s antipoetic name, the identity of the blonde, everything. The neighbors had said a lot, but Friedrich already knew the couple. He told me that the blonde, Cristina, never left the house by herself, only in the company of the man. The rest of the time she stayed locked up in the apartment. That was why the detective knew them. One day when the man wasn’t there, there was a fire in the kitchen. Friedrich had helped the firemen break down the door and rescue the woman. Afterwards he had advised the man not to leave the door locked like that,

but the guy ignored him. He said nothing, just grunted. Maybe his species lacked the power of speech.

Friedrich invited me to have a beer at a bar near the scene of the crime. I asked if I could take the poetry manuscript with me, and he consented with a gesture of indifference. At the bar he told me that after the fire he had begun an investigation. On his own.

"What led you to investigate that man?"

"Not the man, the woman."

"Beautiful, huh?"

"And you saw her covered in blood. Imagine what she was like without the blood. Cristina..." The detective spoke the woman's name reverently, as if summoning her to sit there with us. Her or her hologram. I could be mistaken; maybe fat Friedrich also had the soul of a poet. Bangu might be a hotbed of secret poets for all I knew...

"I discovered everything about the two of them. He already had a criminal record. Petty stuff. He was a nobody. Even his crimes were mediocre. She was the mistress of Nogueira, owner of a chain of butcher shops in the South Zone. Very rich. She lived in an apartment Nogueira had bought for her, in Laranjeiras. That was where they had their trysts. Everybody knew about the mistress in Laranjeiras, including Dona Santa, Nogueira's wife, and their two sons. In the family, the code name for her was *Laranjeira*."

"How did you discover all this?"

"It's impressive how much people open up when they see a badge."

"And?"

"And one day Nogueira has a major stroke and is at death's door. And the suspicion emerges that the old man had made a will leaving everything, including the butcher shops, or a large part of his fortune, to Laranjeira."

"So?"

"So right now, it's all conjecture. It's my hypothesis. Which might be wrong, but I think it's correct." Friedrich took a dramatic pause, ordered another beer, and continued: "Here's the hypothesis: this story is like *Snow White*".

"*Snow White*?!"

"Remember the story? The evil queen is jealous of Snow White's beauty. She asks the magic mirror who's the fairest in the land, and the mirror, with the frankness that characterizes all mirrors, says, *It's not you, it's Snow White*. The evil queen then hires someone to kill Snow White. A woodsman."

"A nobody."

"Right. The woodsman is supposed to take Snow White to the forest, kill her, and bring her heart to the queen, as proof that he killed her. The woodsman takes Snow White to the forest, and what happens? He falls in love with her. He's dazzled by her beauty. He decides that instead of killing her he's going to let her go. Or, in the case of our woodsman, stay with her. Get it? The woodsman is a minor character in the story of Snow White. A mere detail, a supporting actor. But without him and without his decision to spare Snow White there would be no story. The woodsman ends up being the most important character of all. A simple woodsman."

"How does he prove to the queen that he eliminated Snow White?"

"He takes her the heart of some animal or other, as if it were Snow White's. In the case of our Tadeu, he could even buy a heart from one of Nogueira's butcher shops; it'd be an ironic touch. Although Dona Santa, who had helped her husband in the butcher shop in the difficult early days, would inevitably recognize a cow's heart. But our Tadeu doesn't do any of that. He simply disappears with Laranjeira. Or with Snow White. And hides out in Bangu."

"According to your hypothesis, then..."

"The evil queen is Dona Santa, who has nothing saintly about her. Snow White is Cristina. The woodsman is Tadeu, who brings Cristina to Bangu and keeps her locked in an apartment, certain they'll never be discovered, until they are discovered. And executed, at the order of the evil queen. That will be the line of our investigation. I don't foresee any difficulty in finding the killer. Or killers. Nogueira's sons do whatever their mother orders. They're terrified at the prospect of being left out of the will. And they had access to sharp knives. In short: for this story to match Snow White's, all that's missing are the dwarfs."

"Did old Nogueira die after all?"

"Not yet. He's in a coma. No one knows what's in his will. He may have left everything to Laranjeira. Even the butcher shops."

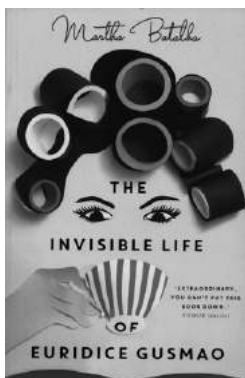
Several beers later Friedrich was relating what his father told him about Bangu, in the days when a famous textile factory and a soccer team that didn't do badly in the Rio championships were there, where Zizinho, Parada, and even the great Domingos da Guia had played.

"Today people only come to Bangu to disappear", said Friedrich. "Like me, who disappeared here six years ago and was never seen again."

Mosquito had warned me that after a few beers Friedrich would start getting maudlin. I considered asking if he'd been the one who fingered the couple's hideout to Dona Santa. Perhaps as a form of revenge, I don't know. But I thought it best not to say anything.

I went back to the office, carrying the manuscript. Maybe there was something there I could use in my story. Something about impossible loves or the like. Readers like a bit of poetry with their bloodshed. I thought about Tadeu, the nobody, the mere woodsman, who one day finds himself the owner of the most beautiful woman in the world, who owes him her life but whom he must lock inside the house. I imagined how the break-in of the apartment by the butchers must have gone down. Perhaps they arrived in late afternoon, the time of long shadows. Perhaps Tadeu feared the time of long shadows every day, and what they could bring. Later I thought about what I would tell Mosquito.

"You were right, it did lead somewhere. It's basically the story of Snow White. Minus the dwarfs."



10.

The book: *The Invisible Life of Euridice Gusmao*

Author: Martha Batalha

Translator: Eric M. B. Becker

Original title: *A Vida Invisível de Eurídice Gusmão*

ISBN: 978-17-86072-98-6

Year of english version publication: 2017

English publisher: Oneworld Publications

Number of pages: 232

Synopsis: Euridice is young, beautiful, and ambitious, and a talented musician but when her rebellious sister Guida elopes breaking her parents' hearts, she sets her own aspirations aside and vows to settle down as a model wife and daughter. She married a conventional man, Antenor, and yet as her husband's professional success grows, so does Euridice's feeling of restlessness. She embarks on a series of secret projects — from creating recipe books to becoming the most sought-after seamstress in town — but each is doomed to failure. Her tradition-loving husband is not interested in an independent wife. And then one day Guida appears at the door with her young son and a terrible story of hardship and abandonment. *The Invisible Life of Euridice Gusmao* is a wildly inventive, wickedly funny, and keenly observed tale of two sisters who, surrounded by a cast of unforgettable characters, assert their independence and courageously carve a path of their own in 1940s Rio de Janeiro. A deeply human and truly unforgettable novel from one of the most exciting new voices in world literature.

The author: Martha Batalha worked as a journalist and publisher for many years in her home country of Brazil. She moved to New York in 2008, where she worked in the publishing industry. *The Invisible Life of Euridice Gusmao* is her first novel. It was

sold to several countries, and it became a major motion picture (2019). She is currently finishing her second novel, a family saga set in Ipanema. Martha lives in Santa Monica, California, with her husband and two kids

The translator: Eric M. B. Becker is editor of *Words without Borders* and a translator of literature from Portuguese into English. He lives in New York.

CHAPTER 1

(Excerpt — pages 20-26)

When Zélia went to live with her relatives she still had the blue notebook her father had given her. “This is for you to write what you think about the world”, he’d said to her. Zélia’s little arms clasped Alvaro’s neck, who, with eyes closed, gave thanks to God for the family he’d been given. The clumsy sentences of the first pages soon evolved into elaborate paragraphs, written throughout those months of suffering. Writing was Zélia’s only solace. A solace that she stashed beneath her mattress, later to be found by her cousins, who, between giggles, read a few passages aloud before dinner. This raised the ire of Zélia’s mother, who defended her daughter with attacks on her nephews, and who was attacked in turn by her brother. Who did she think she was, besides someone who lived off charity?

Later, when Zélia left her aunt and uncle’s house, the notebook was no more. It went straight into the trash, buried Zélia harbored the illusion that if the notebook were buried in the trash, it might take her cousins’ mockery with it. It had all been a bunch of nonsense anyway.

Zélia managed to endure a lot. She endured the patched clothes and the second-hand panties. She endured the same shoes she’d used for so many years, loose around her ankles in the beginning and pinching her toes by the end. She endured her cousins’ laughter and the lack of affection from her mother, who was always worn out after doing the laundry and cooking for the fifteen people at their new home. She endured the watery soup, and the cries of her younger siblings.

But she couldn’t endure adolescence. When she discovered two bean seeds behind her flat chest, when she had stomach cramps accompanied by bleeding, when she felt unprecedented desires and fears, her unbendable optimism bowed.

Zélia’s mouth is big as a house, Zélia’s mouth is big as a house, was her cousins’ new refrain.

One afternoon when there were only a few people at home, she went into the bathroom. She locked the door and examined her face in the mirror. What she saw

was no longer the face of a slightly crossed-eyed child with a huge hair bow hanging across her temple. It was the face of a girl with ill-behaved hair, ill-proportioned eyes and nose, pimples dotting her ill-fitting forehead and a huge mouth full of lips and teeth. It was an abundant, unnecessary, excessive mouth. Two thick lines that cut mercilessly across her face. As Zélia stood there, she arrived at the conclusion she'd hold on to for the rest of her life: she was ugly.

It was written in her fate and on her face that she be unhappy. The desires and fears she'd gained growing up mixed with a newfound bitterness, which sprouted her chest like weeds. Even in the early years of adolescence, when Zélia still told herself it was silly to think like that, she plucked the bitter little weeds one by one, but they unrelentingly multiplied. Until one day Zélia stopped plucking them, looked once again into the mirror, and decided that the ugliness of her face and the sadness brought by living were perfect companions to the bitterness she felt in her heart.

That's when the new Zélia was born. The only thing she inherited from the old Zélia was enthusiasm for life, now distorted. She would now classify others according to a cruel system devised to make sense of the world. Zélia didn't want to be, and wouldn't be, the only one who was unhappy. From that moment on she was able to find unhappiness everywhere, through things both real and simply rumored, which she spread far and wide with her enormous mouth.

Zélia had one last glimpse of hope, when she imagined a better life. It was shortly before her eighteenth birthday. For some months she had been trading letters with a distant cousin on her father's side, a certain Nicolas Staffa, who had settled down with his family in the southern part of the state of Minas Gerais. Nicolas's father was an entertainment impresario who was quickly becoming an influential person in the city of Lambari. One day Nicolas wrote to Zélia to tell her that he was coming to Rio on account of his father's business, and that he would take advantage of the trip to stay until the holiday ball at the Clube dos Democráticos. Would Zélia and her sisters like to come along? Zélia wrote back a shy but enthusiastic response: of course, they would love to go.

Zélia Staffa, Zélia Staffa, the young girl repeated to herself with a smile. Life was full of irony. In the months before, she'd been pairing her first name with the last name of all the boys she knew: Zélia Camargo, Zélia Cavalieri, Zélia Calixto. Who would think that among so many possible combinations her name would simply remain Zélia Staffa. *Zélia Staffa*. The name suited her.

By that point, Zélia was well aware of the size of her mouth and all the other causes for displeasure that surrounded it. But she had found hope in this exchange of letters with Nicolas, for two reasons: the first is that they'd already met, which meant the young man had freely chosen to continue their correspondence, even after becoming acquainted with the generous proportions of her face. The second is that when Zélia put pen to paper, she transformed into one of the most interesting women of her time.

Zélia thought of nothing but the dance. She sang softly, practiced braiding her hair, and during those few days she flashed the very last smiles that recalled those of her childhood. She sewed her own dress, a light pink outfit with a flared

skirt and puffed sleeves. She sewed a bolero jacket from ivory-colored fabric, to be worn when entering and leaving the dance. She bought new gloves, bought a hat to be paid off in installments, and borrowed her oldest sister's earrings. She followed the beauty tips found in the *Young Ladies' Journal*. She rested her eyes behind cucumber masks, she left her hair soaking in aloe vera, and added iodine drops to the bathwater to give her skin an amber tone. On the day of the dance, Zélia was so happy she even felt beautiful.

But the dance didn't go well. The Nicolas at the dance seemed different from the one she knew from their letters. He was polite but restrained. Cheerful but reserved. Their conversations died after the third exchange. There was a great distance between them, even greater than the distance between Lambari and Rio, which they managed to bridge so well during their months of correspondence.

At some point in the middle of the evening, Zélia gave up her hopes of hours of enjoyment like those spent reading Nicolas's letters. She left the young man standing in the middle of the ballroom, saying she had to retouch her make-up. Nicolas didn't do so much as say "uh-huh", he only nodded his head. Zélia turned her back and broke into tears. The interesting Zélia, or the interesting Zélia she had thought she was in Nicolas's eyes, gave way to a sad and insecure girl. With each step towards the bathroom her insecurity grew. When, on the way, she checked herself out in the wall-length mirror, all she could see was a crooked skirt, obnoxious puff sleeves, and a mouth as big as a house.

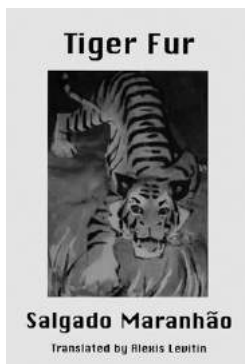
The paucity of Nicholas's words changed the way Zélia thought of herself. She was sure no one at the dance liked to be at her side. She had no idea how to dress. Her curls weren't as curly as they should be. The rouge that had given her a special something had already faded. And that red lipstick — why had she decided to use red lipstick? That lipstick attracted more attention than a traffic light. Zélia looked for a chair in the corner of the room and stayed there the rest of the night. She wished she could disappear, which was impossible. She could never disappear with a mouth like hers.

But Zélia's biggest mistake that night wasn't the dress, the hair, or the lipstick. Sitting in the corner of the room was Plinio, a young man with a skinny neck and a pained expression on his face, as though he constantly had the urge to take a pee. Plinio was accustomed to sitting in corners, and he felt right at home in that one. When Zélia sat down next to him, he didn't see a girl with half-undone curls or an oversized mouth. He saw only a girl who, like him, preferred to sit in the corner.

They married the following year. Plinio Correia would, for forty years, perform the same job as manager in Rio de Janeiro's Electric Light Company. His salary would never be magnificent or deplorable, his ambitions would waver between nonexistent and irrelevant. He expected nothing from life beyond perpetual motion as far as he was concerned, the unknown always constituted a threat. The most adventurous thing to happen to Plinio was a five-day bus trip to Iguaçu Falls. He and Zélia would grow old in the most common way of growing old, getting more distant, every single day.

At first, Zélia saw marriage as the solution to her unhappy days in Bangu. Later she saw marriage as a mistake. A mistake who snored loudly by her side every single night. When she watched Plinio sleeping with his mouth wide open, Zélia would think about the mediocrity of her life. She thought about Nicolas, she thought about how she should have made more of an effort that night at the ball. She thought about how she might have been the Casino Queen of Lambari instead of the wife of some nobody in Tijuca.

What Zélia never learned was that Nicolas hadn't kept a distance that night due to some poor intellectual display or her less-than-perfect looks. What happened was that the young man, accustomed to a dozen or so single young women in Lambari, had an overdose of sensations upon finding so many interesting Rio girls at the Clube dos Democráticos. "This city is a paradise", he'd thought to himself. He encountered little difficulty in re-evaluating his priorities, placing marriage at the bottom of the list, and putting a few years of experimentation at the top.



11.

The book: Tiger Fur

Author: Salgado Maranhão

Translator: Alex Levitin

Original title: A Pelagem da Tigra

ISBN: 978-19-35210-71-9

Year of english version publication: 2015

English publisher: White Pine Press – New York

Number of pages: 110

Synopsis: “A book of love poems written in an extraordinarily rich, imagistic, original language” (Afterword by Antonio Cicero).

The author: Salgado Maranhão won the prestigious Prêmio Jabuti in 1999 with *Mural of Winds*. In addition to ten books of poetry, he has written song lyrics and made recordings with some of Brazil’s leading Jazz and pop musicians. His work appeared in numerous magazines in the USA.

The translator: Alexis Levitin translated more than thirty-six books including Clarice Lispector’s *Soulstorm* and Eugenio de Andrade’s *Forbidden Words*.

SEA OF FLAMES

1. Before the density of your blaze
and the elusive breath
of words, there is a rite
begging for its dawn.

As intimate as an interlude
it weaves its legend

or the flagrant moment (the flirtatious look!)
in which the pupil
coagulates the gesture, the gestation.

The discreet silence of the plunge
and the lava of the empty
heart
send piercing rays into
the nomad night.

On and on I go
along the rattling of the stones
and syllables.

2.
When I dawn
and offer you the day
in slices (in the instant
when line or sign
is voice and what is lived
of no importance, just what is engraved),

far from evaluations,
my surrender strips away
the world of shell
and pearl.

Something that, subtle, pulses
as if petals were blossoming
from bones.

Joining the formulation
of the gesture:
a) the little fissures of the soul;
b) the seeping away of hope;
c) overdue installments of love.

And thus the pain of the concrete,
and thus a pain without pretense,
that aches in dreams,
not in the flesh

3.
In the wake of what is silent
or suppliant
the furtive sun of voices
shrills.

(May there still be
just
the clash of nerves
prowling round the verse
like dragonflies of fire), and there
a halo of music
furrowing deep
desire. And
a secret hunger
awakens scars.

And will there always be
that etching/edge,
that grifter's gift
between what enters womb
and tomb?

4.
Possessed the verses touch
your flesh
as if in search
of a link to music.

(Oh the treasure of the lips!)

As if silence
exiled
were holding up
a vestige of exaltation.

Possessed (in rubyred)
the heart cries
for cyclamens beneath the churning
of a sea
without a port. It rains
in the blood and in the plot
and it rains where the word embraces
the haggard eye of absence.

ESPAÑOL



12.

El libro: Amor

T tulo original: Amor

El autor: Andr  Sant'Anna

El traductor: An bal Cristobo

ISBN: 978-84-94620-32-4

A o de publicaci n del original: 1998

A o de publicaci n: 2016

Editora original: Edi  es Dubolso

Editora de la traducci n: Kriller71 Ediciones / colecci n poes a

N mero de p ginas: 81

S nopsis: *Amor* es un poema para ser le do en voz alta, de estilo “musical” hecho de aliteraciones, series combinatorias y asociaciones inusitadas. Un texto hipn tico, de humor c ustico, un poema pante sta e irreverente donde todo tiene que ver con Dios.

El autor: Andr  Sant'Anna (Belo Horizonte, 1964) es m sico, escritor y redactor de televisi n y publicidad. Es autor de la trilog a *Amor*, *Sexo* e *Amizade*, de *O para so   bem bacana* e *Inverdades*. Su cuento *O importado vermelho de No * ha sido incluido en la antolog a *Os cem melhores contos brasileiros do s culo XX* y su texto “Pro Beleleu” ha sido incluido en la antolog a *As cem melhores cr nicas brasileiras*.

El traductor: Aníbal Cristobo (Buenos Aires, 1971) es un poeta y traductor argentino. Colaboró en las revistas *Inimigo Rumor*, *Range Rede* y *Cacto* con artículos y traducciones sobre poesía argentina. Entre el 2001 y 2002 residió en Buenos Aires, donde obtuvo una beca a la creación artística de la Fundación Antorchas por su libro *Krill* (2002) y creó la colección de poesía *Bikebik*. En 2002 se radicó en Barcelona.

|||||

AMOR

(p. 51-57)

La tierra tiene bellezas increíbles como la puesta del sol y la carita de la hija de Grace Kelly y todas aquellas palabras y aquella canción de Roberto Carlos que cuenta la historia del melenudo que fue abandonado por la novia y cree que cualquier cosa va a hacer que la novia se acuerde de él. Es muy probable que la novia del melenudo nunca se acuerde de nada y se siga por ahí saliendo con melenudos y abandonándolos. Por más que el melenudo diga que la culpa es de ella, nada va a hacer que ella se acuerde de él. Pero el melenudo necesita un consuelo y, por eso, él sigue recordando a su novia, creyendo que ella se va a acordar de él. Es la historia de todas esas canciones sobre hombres y mujeres. Son muy bonitas.

Aquella canción de Paul McCartney que habla de un loco en la colina, día tras día. Debe ser muy difícil para el loco y, por eso, el loco prefirió ser un loco en la colina y no un lúcido, con los pies en el suelo, sufriendo todo el tiempo por culpa de la mujer cascabel que él debía amar mucho, día tras día. Toda esa historia podría acabar ahí.

Todas aquellas palabras de todos aquellos libros.

Dioses.

Dioses, Dioses, todas las palabras.

Todo ese dolor del melenudo que fue abandonado por la novia.

Todas estas palabras: el coño de la hija de Grace Kelly, sangre de las criaturas, la victoria de todos aquellos atletas, allá en aquella olimpiada.

Todas aquellas jugadoras de vóley de Perú, todas las victorias de la Selección Brasileña de Fútbol.

Toda aquella tragedia.

Aquella película mala, europea, en la cual aquella pareja se queda todo el tiempo conversando sobre aquellos problemas entre hombres y mujeres. Tiene aquella escena en la cual el hombre y la mujer, después de horas infernales de conversación, acaban llorando, abrazándose y haciendo declaraciones conmovedoras de amor. En esas películas, de vez en cuando, uno de los dos muere en el final. Pero eso es más

común en las películas americanas, en que las personas están siempre muriendo todo el tiempo, todo el tiempo. Emociones fuertes.

Fútbol, coños y revistas con aventuras coloridas como aquella en la que el Daredevil, aquel tipo ciego, vestido de rojo, cae en desgracia después de ser derrotado por El Rey, su archienemigo, aquel tipo gordote que tiene una novia linda, a pesar de ser apenas un dibujo. Entonces, Daredevil resurge de las tinieblas y derrota a todos los enemigos que le hicieran tanto mal. El allá, vestido de rojo, vengando la dignidad perdida.

Peores momentos: todas aquellas palabras, sufrimiento del melenudo de la canción de Roberto Carlos, todas aquellas palabras, Pelé marcando aquel golazo contra Suecia. El Príncipe de Mónaco poseyendo el coño de Grace Kelly, observando el carbono liberado por el piloto de coches en llamas. El espíritu de Roberto Carlos. Un espíritu. Pizzas y escarabajos. Juegos de Invierno en Quebec. La historia de los tres cerditos en la cual el lobo se volvía loco por devorarlos. Primero el lobo sopló la casa del cerdo flautista y, como la casa del cerdo era de paja, porque el cerdo era medio perezoso y prefería tocar la flauta que hacer una casa de ladrillos, la residencia del flautista colapsó. Ahí, el lobo atrapó al cerdo e intentó comerlo. Sólo que el cerdo consiguió salir corriendo e ir hasta la casa de su hermano, el cerdo violinista. Ahí, el lobo sopló la casa del hermano del cerdo flautista, que era de madera. Los dos cerdos sufrían, porque el lobo había conseguido derribar la casa del cerdo que tocaba el violín y también era perezoso. Lo extraño en esa historia es que construir una casa de madera debe ser difícil y, si el cerdo violinista fuese realmente perezoso, no iba a hacer una casa con las propias patas, aún más teniendo que estudiar catorce horas de violín por día. Pero no importa. Eso es sólo una historia infantil. Lo que interesa es que, al final de la historia, el lobo fue hasta la casa de Práctico, el tercer cerdo de la historia. Cuando el lobo sopló la casa de Práctico, la casa continuó en pie porque la casa de Práctico era de ladrillos. Práctico era el más inteligente de los tres cerdos. Práctico nunca pensaba en coños. Práctico tenía un mono azul y un gorrito. Práctico era buena gente porque, a pesar de que los dos hermanos de Práctico eran perezosos, él dejó que los dos cerdos se escondieran en la casa de ladrillos y, así, el lobo no pudo comerse a los tres cerditos, que podrían transformarse en un sabroso plato de frejoles con la oreja de Práctico y el rabo enroscado del cerdo violinista que tenía un sombrero de pintor. O, si no, el plato podría ser lomo de cerdo con *farofa* a la brasileña y arroz, que es el plato favorito del lobo.

Crema de espinacas. Alubias en aquella historia.

Angela Diniz salpicando sangre y Doca Street, allá, sufriendo por celos y Angela Diniz colocando las pollas de todos aquellos hombres en su coño y Doca Street, allá en la televisión, en aquel juicio, con aquel abogado de bigote diciendo todas aquellas palabras, diciendo todas aquellas cosas sobre hombres y mujeres y aquel tipo, allá en la televisión, diciendo todas aquellas palabras.

La muerte. La muerte y todos allá.

Todas aquellas palabras.

Una palabra. Otra palabra divirtiéndose.

A la hora de la comida, un filete.

Todas aquellas personas comiendo filetes todo el tiempo y eso todo el tiempo todo y todo el tiempo todo y aquel profesor, allá en aquella universidad, explicando todos aquellos números de Einstein y aquel matemático, físico todo paralítico, explicando todas aquellas palabras de Einstein y Einstein, allá en su casa, comiendo filetes y, después, allá en la biblioteca de su casa, con aquellas gafas, haciendo una montaña de cálculos y todo el tiempo todo. Todos aquellos coños, en el centro comercial. Los tres cerditos y el coño de Grace Kelly allá en aquella película en la que ella estaba tan guapa y la hija de Grace Kelly, allá en aquel club nocturno, bailando con aquel tipo guapo, bailando todo el tiempo y Pelé en aquel club nocturno, con aquella rubia bailando todo el tiempo y Ricardo Amaral abrazado con Pelé y todo el razonamiento.

Todo el tiempo todas las palabras.

Todas las palabras. Todas las canciones. Todas aquellas palabras.



13.

El libro: Experimentar lo Experimental

El autor: Helio Oiticica

Los traductores: Teresa Arijón y Bárbara Belloc

ISBN: 978-99-42220-28-8

Año de publicación: 2015

Editora de la traducción: Fundación Municipal Bienal de Cuenca / Ecuador

Número de páginas: 240

Sinopsis: Selección de escritos, cartas y entrevistas de Hélio Oiticica.

El autor: Hélio Oiticica (1937-1980) es uno de los representantes más eximios de la vanguardia brasileña de los años sesenta y setenta. Experimentando con materiales y elementos tomados de la cultura popular, y particularmente del ámbito de la samba y de los extramuros de Río de Janeiro, Hélio se propuso cerrar la brecha entre el arte y la vida propiciando situaciones, creando espacios de encuentro y diseñando vestidos y objetos portátiles y maleables con los que creó un mundo propio.

Las traductoras: Teresa Arijón es poeta y traductora. Entre otros autores, tradujo obras de Clarice Lispector, Hilda Hilst, Adriana Lisboa y Alberto Mussa. En asociación con Bárbara Belloc, creó la colección *Nomadismos*, que ya ha presentado a los lectores de habla hispana muestras de la producción ensayística brasileña en las voces de Ana Cristina Cesar, Ferreira Gullar, Hélio Oiticica, Oscar Niemeyer y Waly Salomão.

Bárbara Belloc nacida en Buenos Aires, Argentina en 1968 es poeta, editora, traductora y fanática de los multimedia.

COLOR, TIEMPO Y ESTRUCTURA (1960)⁴⁹

Con el sentido de color-tiempo se volvió imprescindible la transformación de la estructura. Ya no era posible utilizar el plano, antiguo elemento de representación, aunque virtualizado, según su sentido a priori de superficie a ser pintada. Así la estructura giró en el espacio y pasó, ella también, a ser temporal: estructura-tiempo. Aquí el color y la estructura son tan inseparables como el espacio y el tiempo, y en la obra se produce la fusión de esos cuatro elementos, que para mí son dimensiones de un único fenómeno.

DIMENSIONES: COLOR, ESTRUCTURA, ESPACIO, TIEMPO

Aquí no se da un *ensamblaje* de esos elementos sino una fusión, que ya existe desde el primer momento creativo; fusión y no yuxtaposición. La fusión es orgánica, mientras que la yuxtaposición implica una desagregación profundamente analítica de los elementos.

COLOR

Al color del pigmento, material y opaco en sí, busco darle un sentido de luz. A todo color primario y secundario puede dársele un sentido de luz, como asimismo al blanco y al gris. Sin embargo, es necesario separar los colores más abiertos a la luz y privilegiarlos para esta experiencia; colores-luz: blanco, amarillo, naranja, rojo-luz.

El blanco es el color-luz ideal, síntesis-luz de todos los colores. Es el más estático, y por lo tanto favorece la duración silenciosa, densa, metafísica. El encuentro de dos blancos diferentes se da de una manera sorda: uno posee más blancura y el otro, naturalmente, es más opaco y tiende a la tonalidad grisácea. El gris es, por eso mismo, poco usado, puesto que nace de ese desnivel de luminosidad entre un blanco y otro. No obstante, el blanco no pierde su sentido en ese desnivel, y por eso al gris todavía le queda un papel por desempeñar en otro sentido, del que hablaré

⁴⁹ Publicado originalmente en el suplemento dominical del *Jornal do Brasil* en el mes de noviembre (esta nota, como todas las que siguen, pertenecen a las traductoras).

cuando llegue a ese color. Los blancos que se confrontan son puros, sin mezcla, de allí también su diferencia con respecto a la neutralidad del gris.

El amarillo, al contrario del blanco, es el color menos estático, posee una fuerte pulsación óptica y tiende al espacio real, a desprenderse de la estructura material y a expandirse. Su tendencia es al signo, en un sentido más profundo, y a la señal óptica en un sentido más superficial. Cabe advertir que el sentido de señal no nos interesa aquí, puesto que las estructuras coloridas funcionan orgánicamente mediante la fusión de los elementos y son un organismo separado del mundo físico, del espacio-mundo circundante. El sentido de señal sería entonces una vuelta al mundo real, constituyendo así una experiencia trivial que sólo consistiría en señalar y virtualizar el espacio real. El sentido de señal en este caso es un sentido de dirección, es interno, refiere a la estructura y está en relación con sus elementos, siendo el signo su expresión profunda no óptica, temporal, etc. El amarillo también se asemeja, a diferencia del blanco, a una luz más física, más parecida a la luz terrestre. Lo importante aquí es el sentido luz temporal del color, de lo contrario sería todavía una representación de la luz.

El naranja es el color mediano por excelencia, no solo en relación al amarillo y al rojo, como en el espectro cromático: su espectro es gris. Posee características propias que lo diferencian del amarillo-oscuro-gema y del rojo-luz. Sus posibilidades todavía deben ser exploradas dentro de esta experiencia.

El rojo-luz se diferencia del rojo-sangre, más oscuro, y posee características especiales dentro del rojo. No es ni rojo claro ni rojo vibrante, sanguíneo, sino un rojo más purificado, luminosos, sin llegar al naranja porque tiene cualidades de rojo. Por eso mismo, dentro del espectro se encuentra en el campo de los colores oscuros, pero pigmentariamente está abierto a la luz y es caliente. Tiene un sentido cavernoso, grave, de luz densa.

Los otros colores secundarios y primarios: azul, verde, violeta, púrpura y gris pueden ser intensificados hasta la luz, salvo el gris, que se caracteriza por su neutralidad en relación a la luz. No me ocuparé ahora de esos colores porque tienen relaciones más complejas y todavía no exploradas en esta experiencia. Hasta ahora sólo se ha visto la relación de color con color de una misma cualidad, en el sentido luz. Es evidente que el color-luz de varias cualidades no fue explorado en conjunto; eso no solo dependerá de un lento desarrollo del color sino también de la estructura.

ESTRUCTURA

El desarrollo de la estructura se produce a medida que el color transformado en color-luz y encontrado en su tiempo propio pasa a revelar su propia médula, a dejarla desnuda.

No sería coherente, puesto que el color es color-tiempo, que la estructura no fuese, o mejor aún, que no se transformara en una *estructura-tiempo*. El espacio es imprescindible como dimensión de la obra, pero por el hecho de existir en sí ya no

constituye un problema; el problema aquí es la inclusión del tiempo en la génesis estructural de la obra. La superficie secular del plano en la que se construía un espacio de representación es despojada de toda referencia representativa, por el hecho de que los planos-color ingresan desde afuera hasta encontrarse en una línea. Así, el plano es roto virtualmente, pero no deja de existir como soporte a priori. Inmediatamente después se rompe el rectángulo, porque los planos que se encontraron comienzan a deslizarse, formando un todo orgánico. Aquí la pared no funciona como *fondo* sino como espacio ilimitado, ajeno, a pesar de ser necesaria para poder ver la obra; la obra está cerrada en sí misma como un todo orgánico, y no deslizándose por la pared ni superponiéndose a ella. La estructura es llevada al espacio, girando 180 grados sobre sí misma; este es el paso definitivo para el encuentro de su temporalidad con la temporalidad del color: aquí el espectador no ve un solo lado, en actitud de contemplación, sino que tiende a la acción, gira alrededor de la obra, completa su órbita a través de una percepción pluridimensional. De ahí en adelante la evolución se da en el sentido de valorizar todas las posiciones de visión y de investigar las dimensiones de la obra: color, estructura, espacio y tiempo.

TIEMPO

Habiendo llegado el color y la estructura a la pureza, al estado creativo primero, estático por excelencia, de la no representación, era necesario que se volvieran independientes y tuvieran sus propias leyes. Y allí aparece entonces la concepción del tiempo como factor principal de la obra. Pero el tiempo, en este caso, es un elemento activo, es duración. En la pintura representativa el sentido del espacio era contemplativo y el tiempo era mecánico. El espacio era lo representado en la tela, espacio ficticio y la tela funcionaba como ventana, campo de representación del espacio real. El tiempo, entonces, era simplemente mecánico: el tiempo de una figura a otra o de la relación de esa figura con el espacio tridimensional que se vivimensionalizaba en la tela. Ahora bien, desde que el plano de la tela empezó a funcionar activamente, se hizo necesario que el sentido del tiempo ingresara como factor principal, nuevo factor de la no-representación. Entonces nace el concepto de no-objeto, término inventado y teorizado por Ferreira Gullar, más apropiado que “quadro”, ya que la estructura no era unilateral como la del cuadro sino pluridimensional. El tiempo, sin embargo, adquiere en la obra de arte un sentido especial, diferente de los otros sentidos que posee en los distintos campos del conocimiento; está más cerca de la filosofía y de las leyes de la percepción pelo su sentido simbólico, de la relación interior del hombre con el mundo, de relación existencia, es el que caracteriza al tiempo en la obra de arte. Frente a la obra de arte el hombre ya no medita en actitud de contemplación estática, más bien encuentra su tiempo vital a medida que se involucra en una relación unívoca con el tiempo de la obra. Aquí está todavía más cerca de la “vitalidad pura” que quería Mondrian.

El hombre vive las polaridades de su propio destino cósmico. Que no es solamente metafísico, y sí cósmico: comienzo y fin.

ESPACIO

Como hemos visto, la concepción del espacio también cambia con el desarrollo de la pintura, aunque sería exhaustivo trazar aquí ese desarrollo. Partamos entonces de Mondrian, para quien el espacio era estático, pero no estático simétrico sino estático con relación al espacio de representación: por ejemplo, contra el “dinamismo” de los futuristas, que era un dinamismo “dentro de la tela”, lo estático-dinámico de Mondrian es la fijación de ese “dentro de la tela” y la dinamización virtual de su estructura horizontal vertical. Mondrian no concibe el tiempo, por eso su espacio es todavía un espacio de representación. Los concretos, derivados de la experiencia de Mondrian, conciben un tiempo todavía mecánico (cuadrado sobre fondo, etc.) y, en cierto modo, como bien dijo Ferreira Gullar, dan un paso atrás en ese sentido. La concepción que tienen del espacio es una concepción de la inteligencia de ese espacio, analítica, pero que no llega a temporalizarse, porque todavía tiene residuos del espacio de representación. No quiero explayarme aquí en el derrotero histórico de la pintura concreta, pero sí pretendo mostrar la diferencia esencial entre el no-objeto y el arte concreto, en lo atinente a su sentido del espacio. Mientras que el primero es dinámico y temporal, el segundo es estático, analítico. A esos cuatro elementos que denomino dimensiones — color, tiempo, estructura y espacio — puedo agregar otro que, sin ser una dimensión fundamental, es no obstante una expresión global que nace de la unidad de la obra y de su significación: la dimensión infinita. Dimensión infinita, no en el sentido de que la obra podría disolverse en el infinito, sino en el sentido ilimitado, de no particularidad, que existe en la relación entre vacío y lleno, desnivel de color, dirección espacial, duración temporal, etc. Actualmente creo que existen dos reacciones paralelas que se completan en la obra: una de sentido arquitectónico, otra de sentido musical en sus relaciones. El sentido arquitectónico aparece más acentuado en las maquetas y en las pinturas grandes, el sentido musical en los *Equali* o en los *Núcleos*. El primer *Equali* se compone de cinco piezas en el espacio (cuadrados iguales), pero su relación no es escultórica por el solo hecho de estar en el espacio; sería más bien una relación arquitectónica, aunque esta se realiza en las pinturas grandes y en las maquetas. La relación predominante aquí es musical, no porque las piezas creen contrapuntos o euritmia, como la música, ni porque tengan relaciones de esa misma especie con ella, sino porque la musicalidad no es *prestada* a la obra y si nace de su esencia. A decir verdad, está muy cerca de la esencia de la música. En los *Grandes Núcleos* las partes no son iguales y la relación es más compleja, imprevista. Por el hecho de que la idea se realiza en el espacio en tres dimensiones la aproximación a la escultura es tentadora, pero si se la analiza un poco más a fondo esa aproximación es superficial y sólo contribuye

a trivializar la experiencia; sería más lícito, aunque tampoco deja de ser superficial, hablar de *pintura en el espacio*.

En las pinturas grandes y en las maquetas de la relación arquitectónica se revela como predominante y evidente por el hecho de estar a escala humana. Las pinturas grandes se apoyan en el suelo y tienen un metro setenta de altura, lo suficiente para envolver en su vivencia al espectador, y las maquetas son verdaderas arquitecturas, alguna en sentido laberíntico, otras con placas rodantes. Lo que importa en esas maquetas es la simultaneidad (elemento musical) de los colores entre sí, en la medida en que el espectador circula y se encuentra envuelto en su estructura. Así se advierte que, desde el primer no-objeto lanzado al espacio, ya se manifestaba la tendencia a la vivencia del color, no totalmente contemplativa ni tampoco totalmente orgánica, sino cósmica. Lo que vale no es la relación matemática del color, o eurítmica, o medida por procesos físicos, sino su significación. Un naranja puro es naranja, pero si se lo pone en relación con otros colores será rojo-claro o rojo-oscuro, o bien otro tono de naranja. Su sentido cambia según la estructura en la que está contenido, y su significación, nacida del diálogo intuitivo del artista con la obra, en su génesis, varía íntimamente de una obra a otra. El color es, por lo tanto, significación, al igual que los otros elementos de la obra; vehículo de *vivencias* de toda clase (*vivencia* en un sentido global y no en el sentido vitalista del término). La génesis de la obra de arte está de tal modo ligada al artista y participada por él que ya no se puede separar la materia del espíritu, porque, como diría Merleau-Ponty, materia y espíritu son dialécticas de un solo fenómeno. El elemento conductor y creador del artista es la intuición y, como dijo Klee alguna vez, “en última instancia, la obra de arte es intuición, y la intuición no puede ser superada”.

FRANÇAIS



14.

Le livre: La défunte suivi de pardonne-moi de me trahir

L'auteur: Nelson Rodrigues

Les traducteurs: Alexandra Moreira da Silva et Marie-Amélie Robilliard, Angela Leite Lopes et Thomas Quillardet

Titre: A Falecida e Perdoa-me por me traíres

ISBN: 978-28-46814-97-3

Editeur: Éditions Les Solitaires Intempestifs

Année de publication: 2016

Nombre de pages: 205

Synopsis: *La Défunte* (écrit et créé en 1953) : une jeune femme d'un quartier populaire de Rio, Zulmira, déclenche une machination pour avoir un enterrement somptueux, compensation post-mortem à une vie de frustrations.

Pardonne-moi de me trahir (écrit et créé en 1957) : une adolescente est élevée par son oncle. Quand il découvre qu'elle se rend dans une maison close, il la force à retrouver sa pureté en révélant de terribles secrets sur son passé.

L'auteur: Nelson Rodrigues (1912- 1980) est un journaliste, un écrivain et avant tout un des plus importants auteurs dramatiques brésiliens du XX^e siècle. Auteur de dix-sept

pièces, on lui doit aussi des chroniques journalistiques, des feuilletons, des romans publiés sous le nom de Suzana Flag, ainsi que des nouvelles et des contes.

Les traducteurs: Alexandra Moreira da Silva et Marie-Amélie Robilliard (*La Défunte*)

Alexandra Moreira da Silva est titulaire d'une licence en langues et littératures modernes et, en 1997, d'une maîtrise en littératures modernes et contemporaines à la faculté des arts de l'université de Porto. Son domaine de recherche concerne les études théâtrales et les études de traduction. Depuis 1994, il travaille comme assistant à la faculté des lettres de l'université de Porto. Entre 1996 et 1999, il enseigne à l'École Supérieure de Musique et des Arts du Spectacle de Porto et, entre 2001 et 2003, il travaille comme professeur à l'Institut des Études Théâtrales, Paris III, Sorbonne Nouvelle. Il a traduit *Un Ennemi du Peuple* d'Ibsen, *Exécuteur 14* d'Hakim, *Perdue dans les Appalaches* de Sinisterra, *La Mastication des Morts* de Kermann, *L'Avenir du Drame* et *Cantiga para Já* de Sarrazac, *The Texts Don't Fall from Heaven and I'm Looking at Heaven in All Centuries* d'Abel Neves et plusieurs pièces de Jean-Luc Lagarce. Prépare la thèse de doctorat en études théâtrales.

Marie-Amélie Robilliard est ancienne élève de l'ENS de Fontenay-Saint-Cloud, agrégée de Lettres modernes et docteur en Études théâtrales, Marie-Amélie Robilliard enseigne les Études théâtrales en hypokhâgne et en khâgne depuis 2011. Sa thèse, menée en cotutelle aux Universités de la Sorbonne-Nouvelle et d'Évora (Portugal) a porté sur la compagnie lisboète de Luis Miguel Cintra, le Teatro da Cornucópia. Entre 2002 et 2012, elle a été conseillère littéraire du metteur en scène Emmanuel Demarcy-Mota, notamment pour les spectacles suivants : *Rhinocéros* de Ionesco, *Peines d'amour perdues* de Shakespeare, *Homme pour Homme* de Brecht, *Marcia Hesse* et *Wanted Petula* de Fabrice Melquiot. Elle a également écrit pour la presse théâtrale entre 2002 et 2005, en particulier dans la revue *Théâtre(s)* (Paris). Depuis 2006, elle est coordinatrice du comité lusophone de la Maison Antoine Vitez, centre international de la traduction théâtrale, cadre dans lequel elle a traduit des auteurs portugais (António Patrício, Jacinto Lucas Pires, Ricardo Neves-Neves, Joana Craveiro) et brésiliens (Nelson Rodrigues, Alexandra Dal Farra) et cotraduit vers le portugais des auteurs français (Fabrice Melquiot, David Lescot).

Angela Leite Lopes et Thomas Quillardet (*Pardonne-moi de me trahir*)

Angela Leite Lopes (*Rio de Janeiro, 1958*) est diplômée en théorie du théâtre de l'Université Fédérale del'État de Rio de Janeiro (Unirio) en 1981, puis s'est spécialisée dans l'œuvre de Nelson Rodrigues. En 1985, à l'Université de Paris I, elle a soutenu sa thèse de doctorat sur les thèmes tragiques dans Nelson Rodrigues, qui a ensuite été publiée sous le titre *Nelson Rodrigues, trágico, então moderno* (Editora UFRJ/Tempo Brasileiro, 1993).

Thomas Quillardet né en 1979, est un metteur en scène, auteur de théâtre et traducteur français. Il traduit par ailleurs des textes portugais en français. Depuis 2004, il est membre du comité lusophone de la Maison Antoine Vitez. Il est lauréat de la Villa Médicis Hors les murs en 2007.

LA DÉFUNTE

Acte I

Scène vide. Rideaux au fond. Ce sont les personnages qui, parfois, selon les besoins de chaque situation, apportent et enlèvent chaises, petites tables, oreillers qui constituent les signes synthétiques des multiples atmosphères. Eclairages mobiles. Zulmira entre avec un parapluie ouvert. Théoriquement, il pleut à verse. La jeune femme se trouve devant un immeuble imaginaire. Elle frappe à une porte, tout aussi imaginaire. Madame Crisálida surgit avec une assiette et son indispensable torchon. En pantoufles, décoiffée, l'air manifestement misérable et négligé. Derrière elle, pieds nus, son fils de dix ans. Pendant toute la scène, l'Enfant garde, fièrement, son doigt dans le nez. Zulmira tousse beaucoup.

MADAME CRISÁLIDA — Qui est-ce ?

ZULMIRA — S'il vous plaît. Je voudrais parler à Madame Crisálida.

MADAME CRISÁLIDA — Pour une consultation ?

ZULMIRA — Oui.

MADAME CRISÁLIDA — Qui vous envoie ?

ZULMIRA — D'une femme comme ci, comme ça, qui est venue l'autre jour...

Madame Crisálida, toujours accompagnée par le gamin au doigt dans le nez, ouvre la porte imaginaire.

MADAME CRISÁLIDA — C'est moi. Entrez.

Zulmira entre, en fermant son parapluie.

ZULMIRA — Pardon.

Madame Crisálida soupire.

MADAME CRISÁLIDA — Il faut ouvrir l'œil. Avec les policiers, ce n'est pas de la tarte. L'autre jour, je me suis retrouvée en taule.

ZULMIRA — C'est du sérieux !

MADAME CRISÁLIDA — Mais Dieu soit loué.

Zulmira et Madame Crisálida prennent chacune une chaise, derrière les rideaux.

MADAME CRISÁLIDA — Asseyez-vous.

Zulmira s'assied.

ZULMIRA — Merci.

Madame Crisálida s'assied aussi.

MADAME CRISÁLIDA — Ne faites pas attention au désordre !

ZULMIRA — Mais non !

Madame Crisálida se met à mélanger les cartes poisseuses.

MADAME CRISÁLIDA — Quand on a des enfants, vous savez !

ZULMIRA — Naturellement !

MADAME CRISÁLIDA — Et les miens sont intenable !

Bruits d'enfants. Madame Crisálida se lève. Elle va vers le fond de la scène.

MADAME CRISÁLIDA — Vous allez vous en prendre une !

Madame Crisálida revient avec le paquet de cartes, toujours suivie du mioche au doigt dans le nez.

MADAME CRISÁLIDA — Ils font encore les quatre cents coups !

Madame Crisálida se lève de nouveau.

MADAME CRISÁLIDA — J'ai laissé le manioc sur le feu. Pardon.

ZULMIRA — Je vous en prie.

Madame Crisálida s'écrie vers les coulisses.

MADAME CRISÁLIDA — Surveille la casserole. Machine !

Madame Crisálida s'assied, tout en manipulant le paquet.

MADAME CRISÁLIDA — Bon.

ZULMIRA — Je suis dans une grande détresse, Madame Crisálida.

MADAME CRISÁLIDA — Silence !

Madame Crisálida se concentre.

MADAME CRISÁLIDA — Je vois, dans votre vie, une femme.

ZULMIRA — Une femme ?

MADAME CRISÁLIDA — Blonde.

Zulmira se lève, sidérée. Puis elle se rassied.

ZULMIRA — Mon Dieu !

MADAME CRISÁLIDA — Méfiez-vous de la femme blonde !

ZULMIRA — Quoi d'autre ?

Madame Crisálida se lève. Elle change de ton. Elle perd son accent.

MADAME CRISÁLIDA — Cinquante cruzeiros.

Zulmira, bouleversée, ouvre son sac, attrape un billet qu'elle lui donne.

Madame Crisálida la pousse vers la porte.

MADAME CRISALIDA — Bonne journée.

ZULMIRA — Bonne journée.

La cartomancienne disparaît. Zulmira s'apprête à sortir. Elle aussi, mais elle s'arrête net et revient sur ses pas. Son parapluie est ouvert. Elle appelle devant la porte imaginaire.

ZULMIRA — Madame ! Madame !

Aucune réponse. Zulmira s'affole.

ZULMIRA — Je suis la femme la plus idiote du monde ! J'ai oublié de demander un million de choses ! Si mon mari va ou non retrouver un emploi. Si j'ai quelque chose aux poumons...

Elle tape du pied, comme une petite fille déçue.

ZULMIRA — Zut !

À l'avant-scène.

ZULMIRA — Plus bête tu meurs !

Lumière sur une salle de billard imaginaire. Sur scène, cinq hommes dont Tuninho et Oromar. Sur une table de billard imaginaire, ils donnent des coups également imaginaires. Le seul élément réaliste du décor, ce sont les queues de billard que chacun tient à la main. Tout en jouant, ils parlent de foot. Oromar frotte sa queue de billard avec un morceau de craie. A chaque fois qu'un des joueurs joue, il dit « marque ! ».

OROMAR — Tu vas au match dimanche ?

On entend, en même temps que le dialogue des deux personnages, la discussion ridicule des autres joueurs.

LE JOUEUR N° 1 — Carlyle n'a jamais touché un ballon de sa vie !

TUNINHO — Tu crois vraiment que je vais rater un match pareil ?

LE JOUEUR N° 2 — Qui ? Carlyle il écrase Pavão oui !

OROMAR — Alors prépare-toi - pour le Fluminense, c'est du tout cuit. Affaire classée !

LE JOUEUR N° 1 — Un footballeur professionnel qui me raterait un penalty, je lui collerais une amende !

TUNINHO — Marque ! Je suis pour le Vasco et je parie deux buts à zéro !

OROMAR — Tu délirés !

LE JOUEUR N°2 — Je m'y connais beaucoup plus que toi en foot !

TUNINHO — On parie ?

LE JOUEUR N° 1 — Des guignols !

OROMAR — Adémir joue ?

LE JOUEUR N° 2 — Vous pouvez remercier l'arbitre !

TUNINHO — Je ne sais pas, je m'en fous. On parie oui ou non ?

OROMAR — Combien ?

LE JOUEUR N° 1 — Comment ça le São Cristóvão, espèce de ?

TUNINHO — Cent mille.

LE JOUEUR N° 2 — Tu parles ! Tu parles !

OROMAR — Deux buts à zéro, d'accord.

Tuninho tend la main à l'autre qui la serre.

LE JOUEUR N° 1 — Ils jouent comme des pieds !

TUNINHO — Tu es marié ?

OROMAR — Et comment !

LE JOUEUR N°2, se dandinant — Parce que je suis un mec moi !

Le pari fait, Tuninho jubile.

TUNINHO — Tu sais quoi : je suis au chômage, entre autres lézards. En gros, fauché comme les blés. Mais je suis tellement sûr, mais alors tellement sûr qu'on va gagner les doigts dans le nez, que je te jure, ma parole, que si j'avais de l'argent, tu sais ce que je ferais, dimanche, tu veux que je te dise ?

OROMAR — Toi, tu es une grande gueule !

Tuninho est totalement euphorique.

TUNINHO — Attends, écoute la suite, zébu va ! J'irais au Maracaña. Bon. Disons qu'il peut y avoir, à la louche, minimum cent mille supporters.

OROMAR — Cent cinquante mille !

LE JOUEUR N° 1 — Moins ! Moins !

LE JOUEUR N° 2 — Plus ! Plus !

TUNINHO — Cent cinquante mille ou deux cent mille. C'est pareil. On ne va pas y passer le réveillon. Donc moi, si j'avais l'argent, de l'argent à moi, plein les poches, moi, je parierais, seul contre deux cent mille supporters, pour le Vasco. J'agitais mes biftons, sous leur nez, à ces deux cent mille supporters, en me payant leur tête : « Bande de nuls ! Deux à zéro pour le Vasco ! » Je n'aurais plus de comptes à rendre à personne, tu peux me croire, je serais le roi du pétrole !

Soudain, ils s'arrêtent tous, et se regardent.

LES TROIS AUTRES, ensemble — Qu'est-ce qu'il y a ? Qu'est-ce qu'il y a ?

TUNINHO — Le beignet que j'ai mangé, il ne me réussit pas. Aïe ! Je file chez moi ! Bye, bye !

Oromar attrape un journal.

LES TROIS, d'une seule voix — Tiens, le journal !

Tout le monde quitte la scène. [...]

PARDONNE-MOI DE ME TRAHIR

Acte I

Nair et Glorinha sont devant la porte de chez Madame Luba, toutes les deux en uniforme d'écolière, kaki, chaussettes courtes, queue de cheval, cartable sous le bras. Glorinha hésite, l'autre insiste.

NAÏR — Tu viens ou pas ?

GLORINHA — J'ai peur !

NAÏR — De qui, purée ? Peur de quoi ?

GLORINHA, un soupir — D'une tuile.

NAÏR — Ça y est, tu commences. Quelle tuile ?

GLORINHA — Je sais pas ! (Elle change de ton.) Et si mon oncle l'apprend ?

NAÏR — Ecoute bien : c'est pas toi, bon sang, qui m'as demandé de venir ici ?

GLORINHA — Si, mais... Voilà. Tu connais pas mon oncle.

NAÏR — Oh si, je le connais même trop !

GLORINHA — Ça m'étonnerait ! Je t'ai pas raconté...

NAÏR — Qu'il est chiant !

GLORINHA — ...Je t'ai pas dit que l'autre jour, tout ça parce que je suis arrivée une demi-heure en retard, même pas, un quart d'heure, peut-être - il m'a frappée jusqu'au sang ? Et en plus, il a dit ça : que la prochaine fois, il me tuerait et c'est vrai, il me tuera !

NAÏR — Pipeau, c'est du pipeau.

GLORINHA — Tu parles ! Je dois faire gaffe !

NAÏR — Mais non, il n'en saura rien ! Comment il saurait ? (A voix basse.) Juste cette fois-ci, d'accord ?

GLORINHA, tentée — J'ai bien envie, je te jure !

NAÏR — On fait comme ça, écoute : tu entres juste un moment. Je te présente à Madame Luba, qui est lituanienne, mais très sympa !

GLORINHA — Et puis quoi ?

NAÏR — Tu dis que, malheureusement, tu peux pas à cause de ceci ou de cela, tu inventes des excuses. Et tu te barres... Mais si tu viens pas, ça va se retourner contre moi, parce que j'ai promis que je te ferais venir et moi je suis réglo !

GLORINHA — J'y vais, mais je te préviens : je m'éternise pas !

NAÏR — Tu sais pas ce que tu veux, punaise !

Nair et Glorinha dans le salon chez Madame Luba. Sur scène, Pola Negri, le domestique typique des petites femmes. Dans sa volubilité frénétique, il n'arrête pas. Il s'ébouriffe, s'étire, bâille, allonge ses jambes, ouvre les bras.

POLA NEGRI — Salut ma belle !

NAÏR, à Glorinha — Je te présente Pola Negri, une vraie tornade ! Un numéro !

GLORINHA, ahurie — Enchantée.

POLA NEGRI, à Nair — C'est elle ? (Il tourne autour de Glorinha, surprise.)

NAÏR — Donne ton avis.

POLA NEGRI — Pas mal !

NAÏR — N'est-ce pas ?

POLA NEGRI, coup de coude à Nair — Madame va pas tarder. (Sans transition, à Glorinha.) Taille 42.

GLORINHA, intimidée — Exact.

POLA NEGRI, à Nair — Bingo !

NAÏR — Mes hanches, à moi, elles sont plus larges !

POLA NEGRI — Age, plus ou moins 17.

NAÏR — Presque !

GLORINHA — 16.

POLA NEGRI — C'est mieux. Comme ça c'est bien : 16, 15, 14... (Sans transition, à Glorinha.) Le trac ?

GLORINHA, hors d'elle — Plus ou moins.

NAÏR — Une boule de nerfs.

POLA NEGRI, optimiste — Ça va passer.

NAÏR — Question d'habitude.

GLORINHA, à Pola Negri — C'est qu'on est pressées...

Tu restes ? Je m'en vais, Nair !

NAÏR, autoritaire — Arrête ton cirque ! D'abord tu parles avec Madame Luba !

GLORINHA — Mon oncle va me tuer !

POLA NEGRI — Ça y est, voilà Madame !

Madame Luba est une femme grosse, immense, elle marche en gémissant et en traînant ses pantoufles. Elle donne l'impression d'un laisser-aller sordide.

MADAME LUBA, mielleuse — Comment vas-tu, Nair ? Comment ça va ? (Elle parle à Nair mais sans quitter Glorinha des yeux.)

NAÏR — Ça va bien. Et vous ?

MADAME LUBA, avec un accent violent — Moi aller très bien toujours, jamais mal aux dents...

NAÏR — Je vous amène ici...

MADAME LUBA — Oh, oui, copine école, Glorinha !

GLORINHA, toute rouge — J'étouffe un peu Madame !

NAIR parle presque en même temps — Elle sait pas ce qu'elle veut !

MADAME LUBA, à Glorinha — Y a pas raison, aucune. Des chaises, Pola Negri ! Oh, pourquoi ne pas asseoir ? Pas de chichis dans mon maison, je ne veux pas. Pola Negri apporte gâteaux, petite liqueur ! (À Glorinha.) Je pourrais être maman à vous !

GLORINHA — Il faut que j'y aille, Madame ! On m'attend... Nair m'a dit, je vous remercie beaucoup, mais c'est que je ne peux pas, hélas...

NAIR, à Madame — Elle veut, ensuite elle veut pas ! (À Glorinha.) Compte plus sur moi !

MADAME LUBA — Je comprends, mais il ne faut pas avoir de la peur... pas mettre martel en tête... Et buvez votre petite liqueur... Je n'oblige personne... Dans mon maison tout spontané...

GLORINHA pose le petit verre de liqueur n'importe où — Bon alors, j'y vais !

MADAME LUBA se lève — Un moment !

GLORINHA, perturbée — Si mon oncle sait que j'ai séché !

MADAME LUBA — Séché pas d'importance...

GLORINHA — Je ne peux pas, Madame !

MADAME LUBA lève la voix avec une autorité inattendue — Assieds-toi, petite ! Toi morveuse, moi plus une gamine !

GLORINHA explose — Et si la police vient ici ? ... Si elle arrête tout le monde et si après mon oncle doit venir me chercher au commissariat ?... Madame, mon oncle me tue à coups de bâton, je le jure Madame ! (Elle éclate en sanglots.)

POLA NEGRI — Ici, la police n'a rien à dire !

MADAME LUBA — La police est dans mon poche ! J'ai pris précautions ! Pola Negri, racontez astuce ! Glorinha pleure.

NAIR, furieuse — T'es bête ou quoi ? Essaie au moins d'écouter !

GLORINHA, à Nair, tranchante — Tu me le paieras !

POLA NEGRI se met à parler en prenant de grands airs, déployant des gestes immenses, avec mille et une réflexions — Ici, c'est du gagnant-gagnant. Fais attention et écoute bien comment Madame Luba a monté son coup. D'abord, ici ne viennent que des députés, c'est-à-dire, des clients ayant une immunité. Je te pose la question - la police va arrêter un député ? Sapé comment ? Et en plus, les femmes ici, dans cette maison, c'est pas de la camelote. On ne travaille qu'avec des fillettes, de 15, 16 et même 14 ans, de familles bon chic bon genre !

MADAME LUBA — Tu vois ?

POLA NEGRI, fourbe — Comme toi par exemple !

GLORINHA — Moi ?

POLA NEGRI — Tu es de bonne famille oui ou non ?

GLORINHA — Oui.

POLA NEGRI — Évidemment ! Alors écoute bien : si, par un hasard quelconque. La police entrerait ici, t'imagines le scandale ? On apprendrait qu'il y a une maison comme ça, faite pour ça, suis-moi bien : un centre aéré pour ados et préados, qui propose les services des élèves des meilleurs écoles, la crème de la crème de 17 ans ou moins, les filles des familles les plus invraisemblables... viennent ici, pour l'argent... (Il a un fou rire suraigu.) Elles sont payées ! Payées !

NAÏR — T'as pigé ?

POLA NEGRI — Et payées par qui ? Par un pauvre lascar ? Par Vos Excellences ! Et ça en pleine capitale de la République théophiliste⁵⁰ ! C'est pourquoi je te le dis et Nair le sait bien : Madame a monté son affaire avec sa tête ! Dans cette maison on tombe toujours sur une immunité !

MADAME LUBA — Il est très développé, mon intellectuel !

NAÏR — Il y a une chose que je ne t'ai jamais racontée : rien qu'à l'école, au moins dix filles sont déjà venues ici... ou plus, même. Qu'on m'arrache les yeux si je mens, au moins dix !

GLORINHA, plus sûre d'elle-même et plus fuyante — Madame, je comprends, mais voilà ce qui se passe chez moi : je suis très surveillée. Parce que mon oncle...

NAÏR, violente — À quoi tu joues là ?

GLORINHA — Comment ça, quel jeu ?

NAÏR — Arrête ton jeu, oui ! (À Madame Luba.) Madame, c'est une fourbe, Glorinha ! (À Glorinha.) Et à la fête, l'autre jour, nous deux, hein !

GLORINHA — J'en sais rien moi, quelle fête ? Quand ça ?

NAÏR — Au Carnaval, le dernier ! (À Madame.) Madame, on est allées en bande chez un mec. Et là-bas, vous savez ce que c'est : on a bu, on a fait la fête. Glorinha portait un déguisement sans bretelles, sans rien en dessous ! (À Glorinha.) Un petit malin est venu et, par derrière, a tiré sa fermeture éclair jusqu'en bas ! (À Madame.) Elle était à poil. Madame !

GLORINHA, avec véhémence — Madame, j'étais bourrée, Madame ! J'avais reniflé un peu de gaz hilarant, même que je ne me souviens plus de rien !

NAÏR — Et tu oses encore parler de pudeur !

GLORINHA — Écoute, jusqu'à présent j'ai pas été au-delà du baiser !

NAÏR — Quelle fourbe !

GLORINHA — C'est toi qui fais ta mielleuse !

⁵⁰ Invention de Nelson Rodrigues. *Igreja teofilista* (« église théophiliste ») apparaît également dans *A falecida* (*La Défunte* - cf. *supra*, p. 29) et *Os Sete Gatinhos* (*Les Sept Chatons*). (N.d.T.)

MADAME LUBA — Ah, on ne va pas perdre temps ! Petite fille a raison - embrasser fait pas de mal. Aucun danger ici Juste bisous, juste joujoux... Pouvoir te marier en blanc après... Pas conséquences...

POLA NEGRI, à Madame — Son Excellence a pris rendez-vous. Il demande comment ça se passe.

MADAME LUBA — Bientôt. Ça va pas tarder. (À Nair.) On va résoudre problème. Moi fais pas sale boulot.

NAIR, décidée — Laissez-moi faire, Madame. (Face à face avec Glorinha.) Allez, on va régler cette histoire. Alors voilà : c'est toi qui m'as dit que tu voulais venir, on a tout organisé et maintenant, au dernier moment, tu te dégonfles. C'est trop tard pour se défiler.

GLORINHA — J'ai changé d'avis.

NAIR — Pas de chance. Écoute, il y a un député là, qui est complètement obsédé, fou de toi.

GLORINHA, ahurie — Il me connaît ?

NAIR — Oui.

POLA NEGRI, à l'oreille de Madame — Généreux en plus !

GLORINHA — Il me connaît d'où ?

NAIR — Il t'a vue plusieurs fois. Tout à fait capable de te dégoter un super emploi dans n'importe quel institut. Ivonette, il lui en a trouvé un top. Il t'en trouve un aussi, tranquille.

GLORINHA — Ben voyons... Et c'est quoi son nom ?

NAIR — M. Jubileu de Almeida.

GLORINHA recule, paniquée — Lui ? Qui vient tout juste d'emménager dans ma rue ? Qui habite dans ma rue ?

NAIR, définitive — Eh oui : en personne.

GLORINHA, désespérée — T'es folle ? T'as bu ? (Elle serre les dents.) Pas de voisin, pas de parent ! Jamais !

NAIR — C'est trop tard maintenant, parce que l'homme est là, il t'attend depuis une heure !

POLA NEGRI — Sois pas bête, il te trouve une bonne position dans un institut !

GLORINHA, féroce — Un voisin, non !

MADAME LUBA, chargée d'une violence insoupçonnée, elle crie, remplit la scène avec sa voix. Sa colère est sincère — Pas crier ! Chez moi, moi seule crie ! En Lituanie j'avais ton âge, j'avais ta petite ceinture, j'avais ton petit corps... Et je vivais ! Moi, curieuse de caresses ! Mais toi aucune envie de vibrer, petite. Oh, pas de vie en toi ! (Brusque et sauvage.) Appelle oncle de jeune fille ! Appelle oncle ! Téléphone-lui !

GLORINHA — Non !

NAÏR — Si, je vais l'appeler !

GLORINHA, suppliant — Tu es mon amie, Nair !

POLA NEGRI — Prête ?

NAÏR — Oui ou non ?

GLORINHA, en sanglots — Mais je dois faire quoi ? Finalement, je ne sais même pas !

NAÏR, séduisante — Simple comme bonjour ! C'est vraiment pas sorcier. Ecoute, pour moi. Faut pas se compliquer la vie, c'est que dalle. (Vague.) Il suffit que tu sois gentille avec l'homme et c'est tout. Je te jure qu'il n'y aura aucune conséquence... Un vieux qui ne tient presque pas debout...

MADAME LUBA — Emmenez la fille dans la chambre, Pola Negri !

M. JUBILEU — Je suis là. (En effet, vient de paraître, sur le pas de la porte, le député Jubileu de Almeida, vieux, très vieux. Paternel.) Vous pouvez lâcher la fillette, Pola Negri !

MADAME LUBA — Fillette fait beaucoup de chichis, député !

POLA NEGRI — À fond !

M. JUBILEU s'approche. Il s'incline devant Glorinha — Regarde-moi, comme ça. Essuie tes larmes et bavardons un peu. Tu peux prendre mon mouchoir, il est propre. (Il a donné son mouchoir à Glorinha. À Madame.) Saviez-vous, Madame, que moi et Glorinha - Ton nom, c'est bien Glorinha, n'est-ce pas ? - que moi et Glorinha sommes voisins ?

MADAME LUBA — Oh, savais pas !

M. JUBILEU — Eh oui. Et, maintenant, s'il vous plaît, je voudrais rester seul avec notre Glorinha. (À Glorinha.) Tu as confiance en moi ?

GLORINHA se mouche — Plus ou moins.

Les autres sortent.

M. JUBILEU — Mais tu vas me faire une promesse : tu ne vas plus pleurer. Promis ?

GLORINHA — Promis.

M. JUBILEU — Voilà, c'est bien. Autre chose : ta maman est encore vivante ?

GLORINHA — Elle est morte.

M. JUBILEU, se retenant — Tu vois, je ne te fais rien ? Je t'admire, mais nous sommes là, à discuter, normalement. Ta petite maman est morte et... Tu as un père ?

GLORINHA, sans l'entendre, crispée — Ma mère s'est suicidée !

M. JUBILEU — Allons bon !

GLORINHA — Quand j'avais 2 ans. Mon père, alors, est devenu fou de chagrin et mon oncle s'est occupé de moi.

M. JUBILEU passe la main sur les cheveux de Glorinha. Il commence à être à bout de souffle — Depuis que j'ai déménagé, je te vois tous les jours... Tu as un petit corps qui... La peau lisse, pas un bouton, pas une tache. (Tremblant.) Les fillettes

ont, vraiment, une odeur de fillette... (Il change de ton.) Ça veut dire que tu n'as même pas connu ta maman... (S'exaltant et perdant le contrôle de ses propres paroles.) Mais il doit y avoir des portraits, des souvenirs ! (Il serre Glorinha dans ses bras.)

GLORINHA — Vous me faites mal !

Il n'y a aucune connexion entre ce que dit M. Jubileu et ce que fait M. Jubileu.

M. JUBILEU, à bout de souffle — Tu sais taper à la machine ? Je te trouve un petit poste, on ment sur ton âge, je le jure, je t'en trouve un, oui. Mais écoute : ne fais pas attention à ce que je vais dire, non... (Tout à coup il se met à crier comme un possédé. Hors de lui.) Les deux modalités d'électrisation observables dans les corps correspondent aux deux espèces de charge électrique trouvées dans l'atome ! (Changement de ton, il demande en sanglotant.) Ne bouge pas : reste comme ça !

GLORINHA se dégage sauvagement — Lâchez-moi ! Vous êtes fou !

M. JUBILEU traîne à genoux et, à genoux, en nage, il court après la petite — N'interromps pas ! Ne m'interromps pas !

GLORINHA, furieuse — Vieux gâteux ! (Elle saute par-dessus les tables, les chaises).

M. JUBILEU, une plainte énorme — Il ne faut pas m'interrompre !

GLORINHA, hurlant — Je ne veux pas, je l'ai déjà dit !

M. JUBILEU, à bout de souffle — Pourquoi ?

GLORINHA, derrière un meuble — Il faut que j'y aille !

M. JUBILEU pleure, presque — Mais ce n'est pas un argument ! Faisons comme ça - encore dix minutes, ou cinq. Cinq, d'accord ? (Une lamentation infinie.) Cinq, ma fille, cinq ! Je te donnerai tout, tout... (Glorinha est contre le mur, sans pouvoir s'enfuir.) Tu es en colère contre moi ? Je ne t'ai rien fait. Qu'est-ce que je t'ai fait ?

GLORINHA — Rien... Mais si mon oncle apprend que je suis venue ici, que je suis ici...

M. JUBILEU — Sois sage, gentille ! (Il la prend par les deux bras. Il hurle convulsivement.) Mettons que le noyau de l'atome se présente, ouh là là ! Se présente constitué de protons... Le noyau de l'atome, le noyau de l'atome, OH, le noyau de l'atome... Constitué de protons, le noyau de l'atome...

Glorinha se dégage en le poussant sauvagement. L'autre la poursuit, étourdi, dans ses appels frénétiques.

GLORINHA — Sale mec ! Pervers !

M. JUBILEU — Ecoute : Je te parle de loin, je ne m'approche pas, je le jure ! Je ne te touche pas ! Je sais ce qui t'effraie : ce sont ces choses que je dis, n'est-ce pas ?

GLORINHA, un sanglot — Je veux y aller !

M. JUBILEU — Mais écoute : Les choses que je dis c'est simplement une leçon de physique, tu comprends ? Il faut que je dise une leçon de physique sinon je ne suis pas un homme, je ne suis rien ! Chez moi, je ne peux pas faire ça... (À bout de

souffle.) Une leçon de physique... Mais si tu ne veux pas l'entendre, bouche-toi les oreilles, c'est tout ! (Il veut s'approcher de Glorinha mais elle le menace.)

GLORINHA — N'approche pas ou je crie !

M. JUBILEU pique une crise de fureur. Il se dirige vers la porte. Il crie — Pola Negri ! Pola Negri !

POLA NEGRI, promptement — Vous m'avez appelé. Excellence ?

M. JUBILEU, frénétique — Venez ici, Pola Negri. Mais qu'est-ce que c'est que ça ?

POLA NEGRI — Qu'est-ce qui s'est passé ?

M. JUBILEU — Cette fille, si elle est là, c'est parce que c'est une dépravée, une perversité... (il change de ton, il pleurniche, tend les deux mains crispées)... mais elle ne veut rien faire avec moi, Pola Negri ! (À nouveau agressif.) Elle ne sait peut-être pas à qui elle a affaire ! Dites-lui qui je suis !

POLA NEGRI — Elle le sait, Excellence !

M. JUBILEU, sans l'entendre — Dites-lui que les journaux m'appellent « le garant moral » ! Expliquez-lui, aussi, que j'ai une chaire à l'université.

POLA NEGRI — Je vais m'occuper d'elle tout de suite. (Il avance vers Glorinha, qui recule.)

GLORINHA, féroce, à Pola Negri — T'es pas un homme !

POLA NEGRI — Viens, minette !

M. JUBILEU, une demande abjecte — Tiens-là, Pola Negri ! Tiens-là !

POLA NEGRI saute sur la fillette et la serre fermement. Attrapée par le dos, les bras en arrière, Glorinha ne peut pas se défendre — Ça y est, Excellence.

GLORINHA, affolée — Je te crache à la figure !

M. JUBILEU se tient à quelques mètres de distance. Il balbutie — Tu m'aimes bien, mon petit ange ?

GLORINHA, frénétique — Tu me dégoûtes !

POLA NEGRI — Elle vous aime, Excellence ! Vous pouvez me croire, elle vous aime !

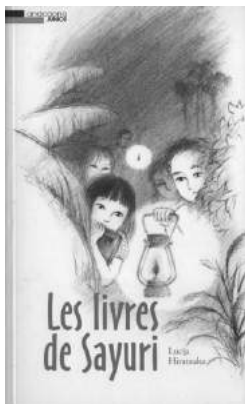
M. JUBILEU, délirant — Elle m'aime bien, Pola Negri. Elle m'aime bien ? (Et tout à coup le député se met à crier.) Le noyau entouré par les électrons libres ! (Il sanglote.) Electrons, l'atome, l'atome ! (Il supplie Pola Negri.) Continue à dire qu'elle m'aime, Pola Negri, mais n'arrête pas, sans interruption !...

POLA NEGRI, mécaniquement — Elle vous aime, vous admire, vous adore, ouais, vous aime beaucoup !

M. JUBILEU, à l'apogée — Un atome peut perdre ou recevoir des électrons dans sa périphérie et ces opérations détruisent l'équilibre entre les charges des protons et celles des électrons périphériques...

Finalement, M. Jubileu tombe à genoux, parce qu'il atteint son extase. Ainsi, à genoux, il plonge son visage entre ses mains et pousse un interminable sanglot,

fort comme un mugissement. En synchronisation avec le député, Pola Negri continue son débit de parole.



15.

Le livre: Les livres de Sayuri

L'auteur: Lucia Hiratsuka

La traductrice: Paula Anacaona

Titre: Os Livros de Sayuri

ISBN: 978-29-18799-87-0

Editeur: Éditions Anacaona

Année de publication: 2016

Nombre de pages: 144

Synopsis: Sayuri, fille de Japonais récemment installés au Brésil, rêve d'apprendre à lire et à écrire. Mais la Seconde Guerre mondiale vient briser son rêve : le Japon est du côté de l'Allemagne nazie, alors que les Brésiliens soutiennent les Américains... La communauté japonaise est donc surveillée de près par la police, qui interdit d'écrire ou de lire le japonais.

Mais Sayuri réussit à cacher un livre, sous son matelas... Et rien ne l'empêchera d'apprendre à lire et à écrire, même si elle doit traverser la forêt la nuit, pour aller dans une école secrète !

Un roman écrit et illustré tout en délicatesse sur le goût de la lecture et la résistance culturelle, avec un petit dossier à la fin « En savoir plus » pour mieux connaître le Brésil.

L'auteure et l'illustratrice: Lucia Hiratsuka est une artiste plasticienne, illustratrice et écrivaine brésilienne. En 1995, elle remporte le Trophée APCA pour ses livres *Hatikazuki Hime*, *Momotaro* et *Tanabata* (tous issus de la collection Japanese Tales and Legends). En 2019, Lúcia a remporté le prix Jabuti dans deux catégories : "meilleur livre jeunesse"

pour *Histoires sauvées par le fleuve* (SM Editions) et “meilleure illustration” pour *Chão de Peixes* (Pequena Zahar).

La traductrice: Paula Anacaona a fondé les éditions Anacaona fin 2009, par passion pour la littérature brésilienne, trop méconnue, trop peu publiée en France. Elle porte la double casquette d'éditrice et de traductrice — ayant traduit à ce jour, pour les éditions Anacaona et d'autres maisons, plus de cinquante livres. Par ailleurs, elle traduit également de l'anglais pour diverses organisations internationales. Elle passe à l'écriture en 2016 : d'abord avec deux romans jeunesse (publiés aux éditions A dos d'âne, disponibles sur le site : *Maria Bonita, une femme parmi les bandits* et *Jorge Amado, sur les terres du cacao*), puis écrit une nouvelle, *Super-Carioca*, publiée dans Je suis Rio.

LES LUMIERES DE LA ROUTE

La nuit n'est plus aussi noire que les premiers jours. Les herbes hautes ne me font plus aussi peur. Et les formes des arbres, qui avant semblaient faire exprès de m'effrayer, sont devenues amusantes.

Et la lune ? Les jours où elle devient une grosse boule, nous ne prenons même pas de lanterne. J'aime lever la tête et la voir marcher avec nous. Si je m'arrête, la lune s'arrête aussi. Si j'avance, elle avance aussi. Quand elle se cache, notre chemin devient un peu plus sombre. Mais elle réapparaît tout de suite après, éclairant les arbres, l'herbe haute, les garçons en tête, le visage sérieux de ma camarade Nami. La lune est comme une lanterne.

Les lanternes décoraient l'école les jours de fête. Quel dommage que nous n'ayons plus de fêtes à l'école — ni cinéma ni théâtre.

Un jour, nous avons accueilli le spectacle de l'homme des ombres. L'école était pleine, presque toute notre communauté était là.

Je n'avais pas compris d'où venaient les ombres. Ces ombres-là n'avaient-elles pas de maître ? Normalement, toutes les ombres ont un maître, comment était-ce possible ? Les ombres étaient apparues sur le drap blanc tendu, et elles avaient dansé, chanté, s'étaient disputées... Tout le monde avait bien ri. Je n'avais jamais vu mon père s'amuser autant.

Lorsque ce n'est pas la pleine lune, c'est impossible de marcher sans nos lanternes, nos compagnes. Une nuit, les garçons marchaient en tête. Nami et moi les suivions quand soudain, après le virage — plus aucune lumière.

— Ils sont partis si vite... ai-je dit, surprise.

— Où sont-ils passés ? s'est inquiétée Nami.

Même en courant, ils n'auraient pas pu aller aussi loin...

— Bouh ! Bouh ! Ont-ils crié en sortant des arbustes.

Nous avons sursauté, effrayées. Ils ont éclaté de rire si fort que j'ai eu peur que quelqu'un les entende. Heureusement, il n'y avait pas de maisons à proximité. Mais j'étais furieuse ! En plus, nous avons dû faire le reste du trajet dans le noir — sous l'effet de la peur, nous avons fait tomber nos lampions et les garçons avaient éteint les leurs volontairement. Et nous n'avions pas d'allumettes sur nous... Nous avons fini le trajet, mal éclairés par un petit quartier de la lune. Conclusion, nous sommes arrivés en retard. Si Hanae avait été avec nous, elle aurait grondé les garçons

Quelques jours plus tard... Nous rentrions de classe. Dans le ciel, la lune toute fine nous accompagnait. De temps en temps, le vent faisant danser les herbes.

— Hé, regardez a dit Seji. Vous voyez ?

J'ai vu une petite lumière au loin. Ou plutôt, deux.

— Pourtant, il n'y a pas de maison, là-bas... A fait remarquer mon frère.

— Quelqu'un arrive dans notre direction !

— Et si c'était un revenant⁵¹ ? A plainsanté Shin.

— Arrête ! Ai-je dit, la voix tremblante.

Yukio a lâché un petit rire forcé — mais j'ai bien senti que lui aussi mourait de peur.

— Qu'est-ce que vous voyez ? A demandé la discrète Nami. Elle aussi avait l'air effrayée.

— Vous ne voyez pas les deux lumières ?

— Je ne vois rien, a dit Hanae, qui nous accompagnait ce soir-là.

Et Hanae n'était pas le genre de fille à mentir.

J'ai senti un vent glacé. Je me suis accrochée à son bras car mes jambes sont devenues toutes molles. Les lumières disparaissaient et réparaissaient, comme si elles se cachaient derrière les buissons.

Débarassons-nous des cahiers, vite ! A dit le plus âgé des garçons, en jetant ses affaires au milieu des hautes herbes . Nous dirons que nous allons rendre visite à un voisin !

Une visite, à cette heure ?

— Il ne vaudrait pas mieux se cacher ?

— Calmez-vous !

Hanae, sans montrer de panique, nous a fait signe de continuer à marcher en silence. Personne n'a bougé. Je ne pouvais pas partir, j'étais comme paralysée. Les lumières n'avaient pas l'air de lampions. L'une était plus grande que l'autre. Étaient-ce une lanterne et une petite lampe à mèche ? Ou des bougies ?

— Les lumières se sont éteintes...

— Moi, je ne les ai pas vues. Mais c'était peut-être un paysan des environs, a suggéré Hanae.

51 Sorte de fantôme. C'est une personne qui est morte, mais qui revient dans le monde des vivants en prenant une apparence humaine (personne ne sait si les revenants existent vraiment...).

Autour de nous, l'obscurité. Personne n'a plus rien dit et un lourd silence s'est installé. On entendait même nos respirations. Nous avons attendu quelques minutes qui ont paru une éternité. Où les lumières étaient-elles parties ? Elles avaient disparu tout d'un coup.

— Récupérez vos cahiers.

Chacun s'est mis à chercher ses affaires dans les hautes touffes d'herbe. Je suis restée immobile, les jambes ramollies, les mains moites. J'ai fait un effort terrible pour ne pas m'écrouler sur place.

— Tiens, Sayu ! Ta sacoche, a dit Yukio en me la tendant.

Mon coeur battait la chamade, et si fort que je pensais que tout le monde l'entendait. D'où venaient ces lumières ? Si c'étaient des paysans du coin, où étaient-ils passés ? La route est longue et droite, ils venaient forcément dans notre direction. Ou bien s'étaient-ils cachés, et nous observaient-ils ?

— Allons-y.

Hanae m'a prise par la main et nous avons continué notre route.

Nous avons dépassé l'endroit où nous avions vu les lumières. Rien. Quelques herbes hautes, mais personne ne pouvait s'y cacher.

Cette nuit-là, après l'école, une fois rentrée à la maison, je n'ai pas réussi à m'endormir. Je me suis cachée tout entière sous les couvertures. Ces lumières qui tremblaient... J'étais sûre que c'étaient des personnes avec des lampions ! Elles avaient dû les éteindre ensuite, ou se cacher dans une cabane...

Mais il n'y avait pas de cabane sur cette route... Et si c'étaient vraiment des revenants ? Les revenants peuvent-ils apparaître n'importe où, traverser les portes et les fenêtres ? Papa dit que les revenants n'existent pas, mais je ne sais pas s'il dit la vérité ou s'il dit cela pour me rassurer.

J'ai l'impression d'avoir entendu le coq chanter à l'aube — où étais-je déjà dans mon rêve ? J'ai quand même fini par sombrer dans le sommeil.

— Sayuri, réveille-toi, il est tard ! A appelé Emiko.

J'ai eu du mal à ouvrir les yeux.

C'est drôle comme tout semble différent la journée. Ma peur a un peu disparu. Mais pas mes questions. D'où venaient ces lumières ? Quelqu'un a-t-il découvert que nous étudions en cachette ? Allons-nous devoir arrêter les cours ? Je ne connais même pas toutes les lettres, je sais si peu écrire...

Je suis entrée dans la cuisine. Tout le monde était déjà parti, à la magnanerie ou aux champs.

Ces lumières me faisaient encore plus peur que le noir. J'ai essayé de ne plus y penser. J'ai lavé les tasses et le filtre à café, me suis acquittée de toutes mes tâches domestiques — mais impossible de détourner mon attention. Comment fait-on pour penser à autre chose ?

Maman approchait. Elle n'était pas seule : J'ai reconnu la voix de notre voisine, la mère de Shin.

Je me suis glissée près de la fenêtre sans être vue. Ma mère, la bassine de légumes dans les bras discutait dans la cour.

— Hier, les enfants ont vu deux lumières, a dit la voisine. Je crois que c'est l'esprit de cette femme...

— Tu crois vraiment ? Tu ne penses pas que ce sont des paysans du coin ?

— C'est ce que dit Hanae. Mais Seiji a dit qu'il y avait une petite lumière et une grande. Ça ne peut être qu'eux. La femme et son petit garçon qui sont morts...

— Les pauvres... Dit maman en essuyant la transpiration sur visage avec un mouchoir. Le petit n'était encore qu'un bébé... Prions pour leur âme, pour qu'ils arrêtent d'errer sur Terre.

De qui parlaient-elles ? Mais leur conversation changea de sujet, maman commentant la chaleur qui arrivait.

Je suis retournée à la cuisine et me suis assise sur le tabouret, les bras autour de mes genoux repliés.

— Que se passe-t-il ? A demandé ma mère en entrant ici en me voyant ainsi recroquevillée.

— Rien.

— Comment ça, rien ? Je sais. Tu as entendu notre conversation ?

— Maman, et si c'étaient vraiment des revenants ?

— Les esprits sont inoffensifs, a dit ma mère en allumant la poêle.

Les pailles de maïs et les brindilles se sont mises à crépiter.

J'avais vu les lumières tremblotantes. Une plus grande et une plus petite. La mère et le fils.

Je ne savais pas quelle peur était la pire : la peur des revenants ou celle de perdre mon livre ? Ou celle de ne plus pouvoir étudier ? J'aurais tellement aimé que la classe ait lieu la journée...

Nous avons continué nos trajets nocturnes, éclairés par la lumière ténue des lanternes — et moi, morte de peur... De temps en temps, un petit animal nous frôlait et nous surprenait, ou alors nous entendions les sabots d'un cheval et nous nous cachions rapidement.

Et les lumières tremblotantes ? Nous ne les avons plus jamais revues.





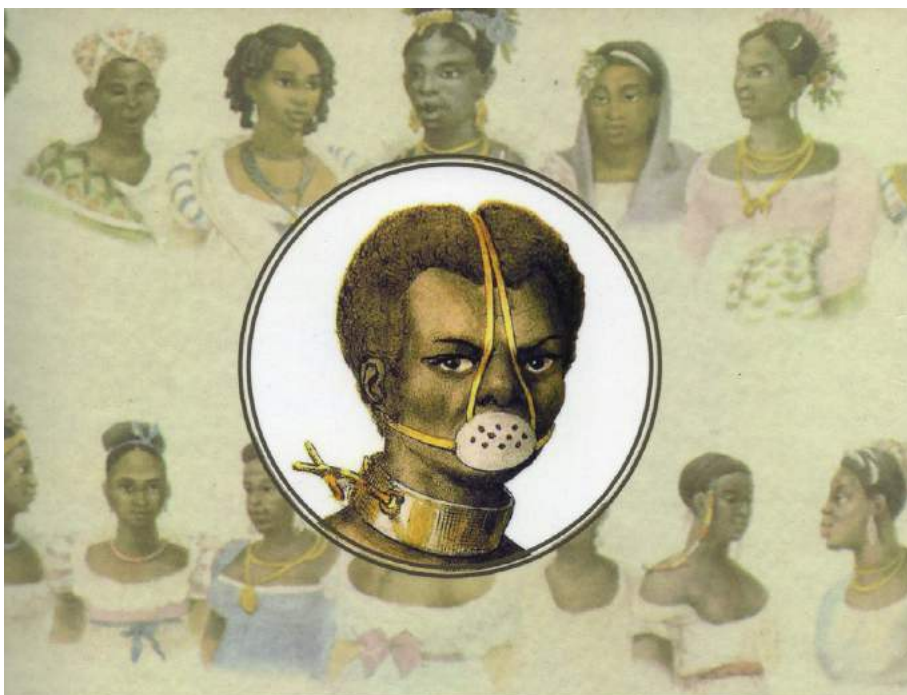
Freedom by a Thread

The History of Quilombos in Brazil

Edited by João José Reis and Flávio dos Santos Gomes



DIASPORIC AFRICA PRESS



Black Women of Brazil

in Slavery and Post-Emancipation

edited by Giovana Xavier, Juliana Barreto Farias,
and Flávio Gomes

DIASPORIC AFRICA PRESS

ALFREDO BOSI
BRAZIL AND
THE DIALECTIC OF
COLONIZATION



TRANSLATED BY **ROBERT PATRICK NEWCOMB**

GILBERTO HOCHMAN

TRANSLATED BY DIANE GROSKLAUS WHITTY

THE SANITATION OF BRAZIL

NATION, STATE, AND PUBLIC HEALTH,
1889-1930



Religions in Rio

Bilingual Edition



João do Rio

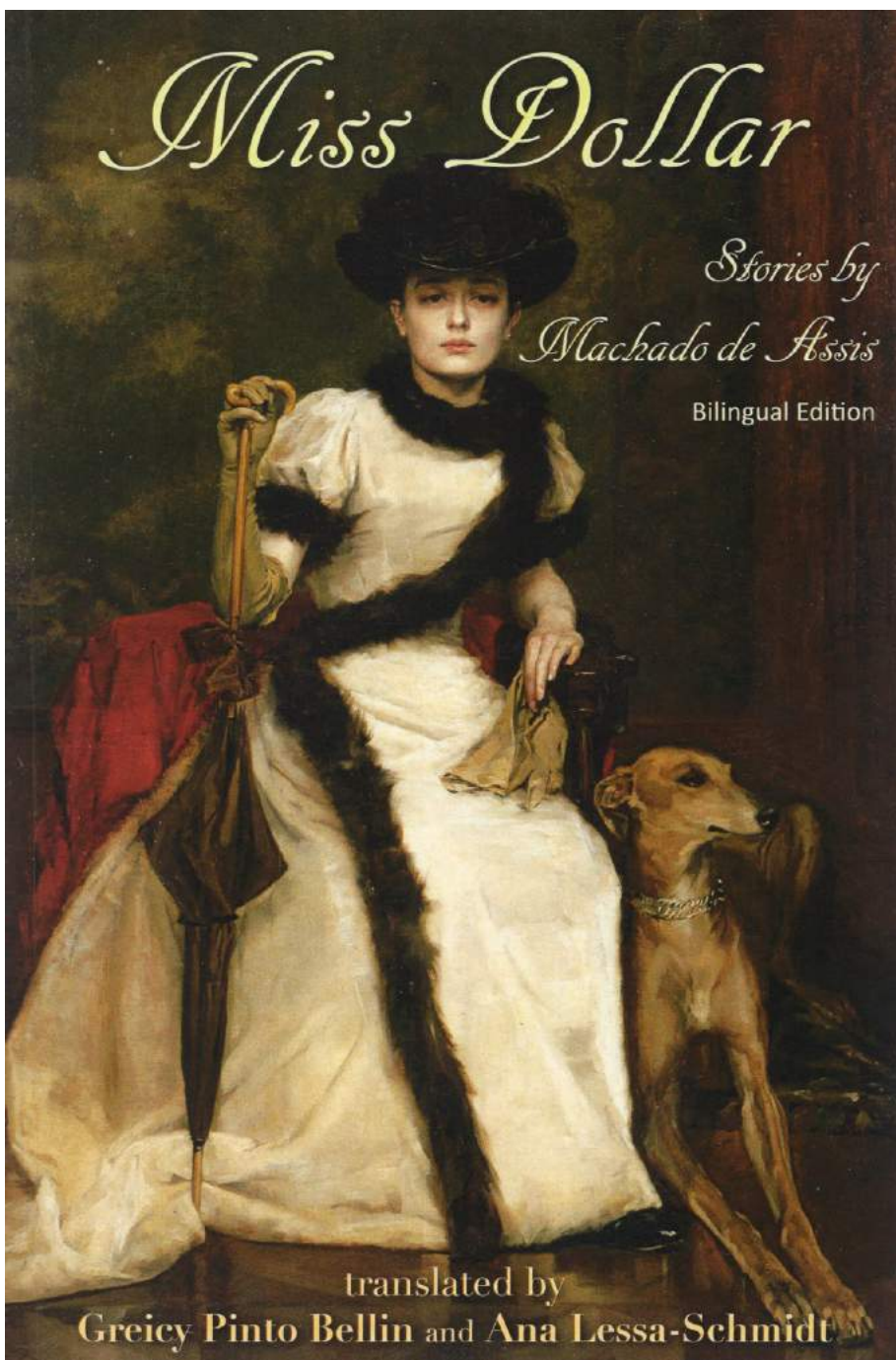
translated by

Ana Lessa-Schmidt

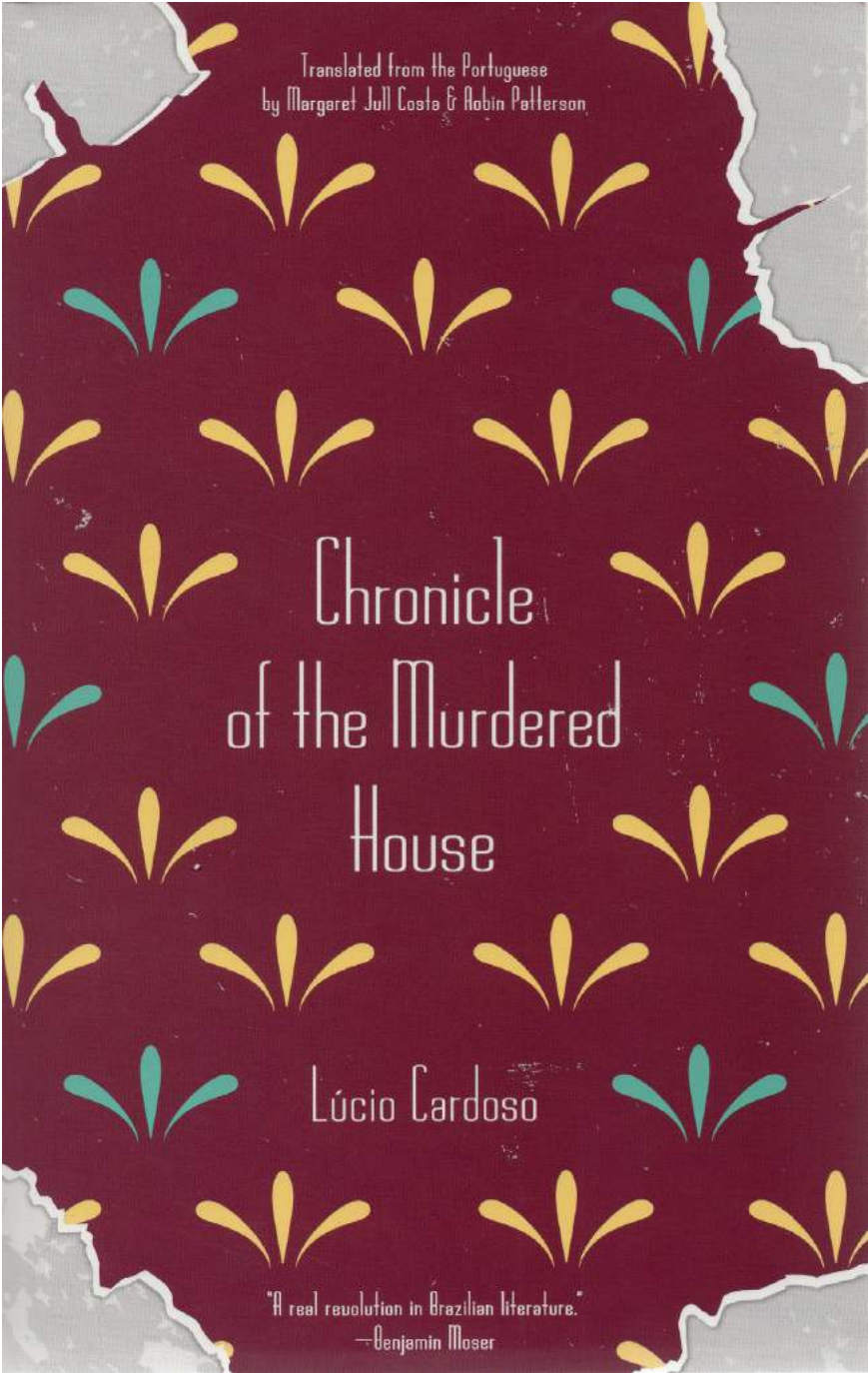
Miss Dollar

*Stories by
Machado de Assis*

Bilingual Edition



translated by
Greicy Pinto Bellin and Ana Lessa-Schmidt



Translated from the Portuguese
by Margaret Jull Costa & Robin Patterson

Chronicle
of the Murdered
House

Lúcio Cardoso

"A real revolution in Brazilian literature."
—Benjamin Moser

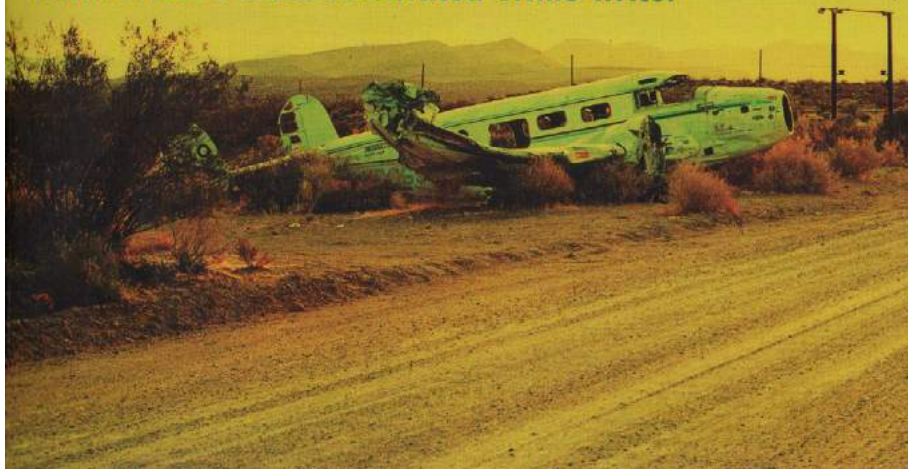
'MELO'S PROSE IS RAZOR SHARP AND PARED TO THE BONE.'

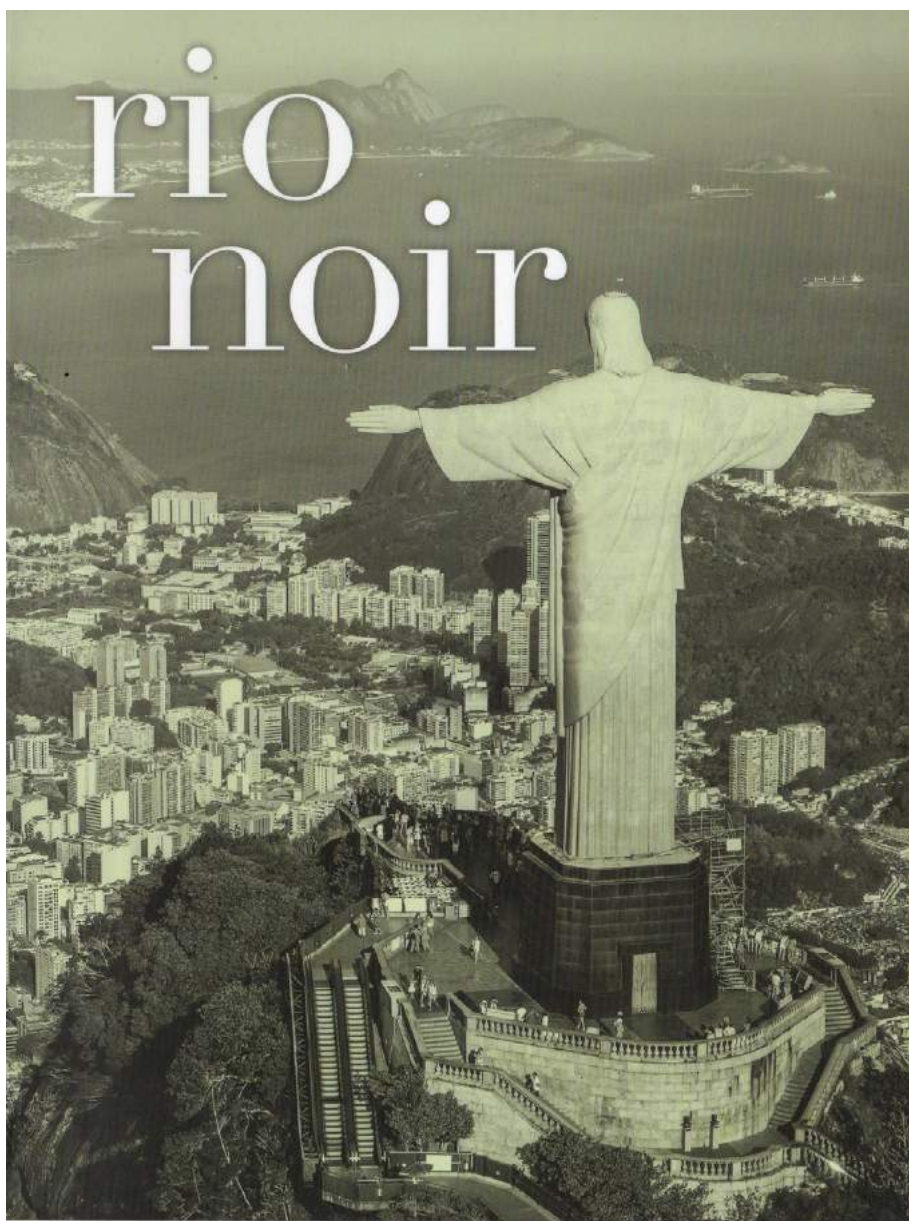
THE LIST

THE BODY SNATCHER

PATRÍCIA MELO

From Brazil's most celebrated crime writer





rio noir

EDITED BY **TONY BELLOTTO**

LUIZ ALFREDO GARCIA-ROZA ♦ MV BILL ♦ VICTORIA SARAMAGO

ADRIANA LISBOA ♦ ARTHUR DAPIEVE ♦ ARNALDO BLOCH ♦ AND OTHERS

Martha Batalha



THE



INVISIBLE LIFE

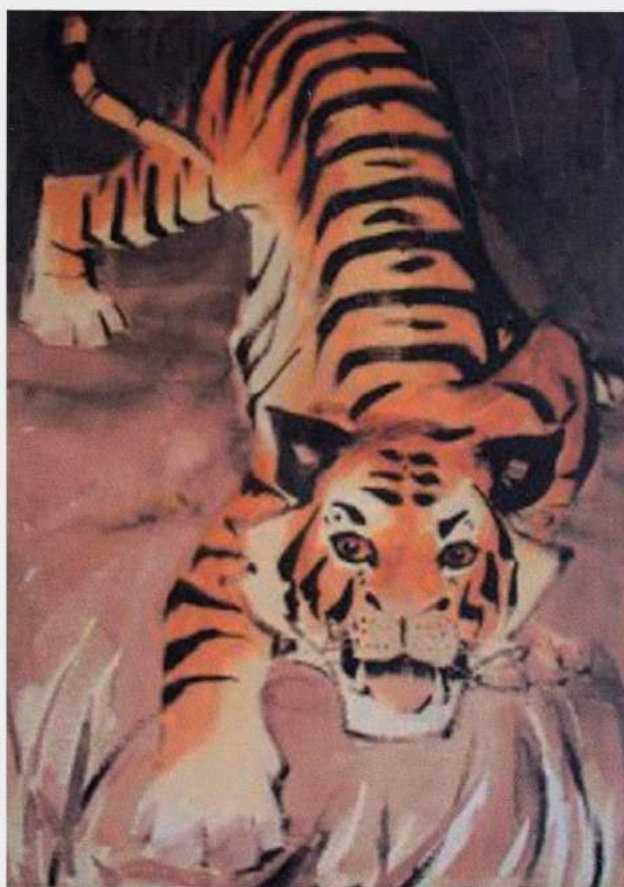


'EXTRAORDINARY.
YOU CAN'T PUT THIS
BOOK DOWN.'

VOGUE (BRAZIL)

EURIDICE GUSMAO

Tiger Fur



Salgado Maranhão

Translated by Alexis Levitin

andr  sant'anna

amor

pr logo de juan pablo villalobos



***“el narrador m s radicalmente original
de las letras brasile as”***

juan pablo villalobos
premio herralde de novela 2016

EXPERIMENTAR LO EXPERIMENTAL

HÉLIO OITICICA

SELECCIÓN Y TRADUCCIÓN
TERESA ARIJÓN Y BÁRBARA BELLOC



FUNDAÇÃO BÓVEDA
BIENAL DE CUENCA



NELSON RODRIGUES

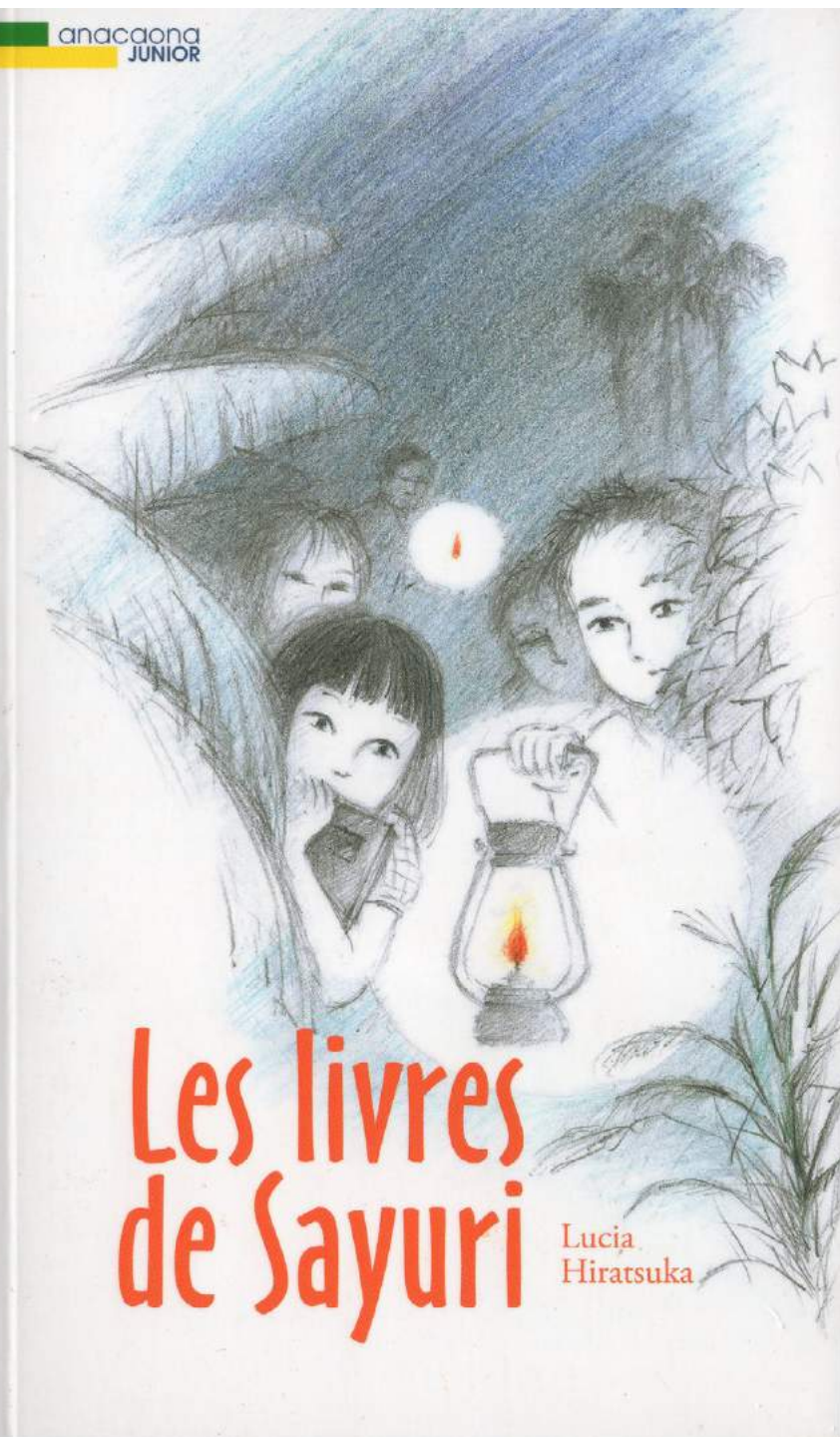
La Défunte

suivi de

**Pardonne-moi
de me trahir**

LES SOLITAIRES INTÉPESTIFS

anacard
JUNIOR



Les livres de Sayuri

Lucia
Hiratsuka

Fonte utilizada nesta publicação: Gotham HTF
Impressão e Acabamento: Tavares & Tavares
Miolo impresso em papel pólen soft 80 g/m²,
Caderno de imagens em papel couché matte 150 g/m²
Capa em cartão Duo Design 300 g/m²



Machado de Assis – Brazilian Literature in Translation is an initiative of Brazil's National Library. Our objective is to provide the international publishing industry with access to translated texts by Brazilian writers in an effort to boost their visibility abroad and foster the sale of foreign rights to their work. Each edition presents a new translations. The magazine is one of several National Library initiatives designed to make Brazilian literature more widely known, such as translation grants, translator residencies in Brazil and support for publications in other Portuguese-speaking countries.

Machado de Assis – Literatura Brasileira em Tradução es una iniciativa de la Fundación Biblioteca Nacional. El objetivo de la revista es divulgar en el mercado editorial internacional textos traducidos de autores brasileños. Cada edición presenta nuevas traducciones para acceso del público especializado, con el objetivo de colaborar con la visibilidad de comercialización internacional de derechos de publicación de escritores brasileños. De esta forma, la revista se suma a otras iniciativas de la Fundación Biblioteca Nacional de apoyo a la difusión de la literatura brasileña, como el programa de becas de traducción, el programa de residencia en Brasil para traductores y el apoyo a las publicaciones hechas en los países de habla portuguesa.



Fundação BIBLIOTECA NACIONAL

SECRETARIA ESPECIAL DA CULTURA MINISTÉRIO DO TURISMO

