



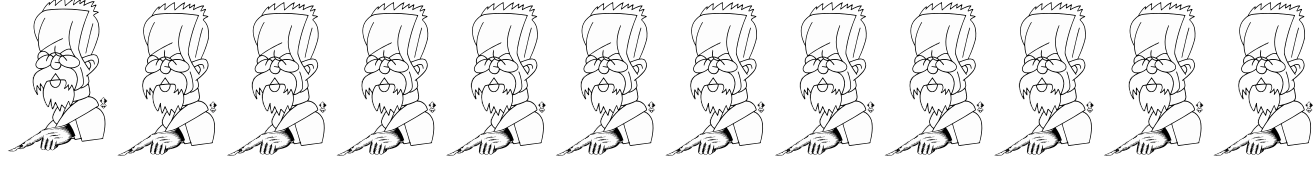
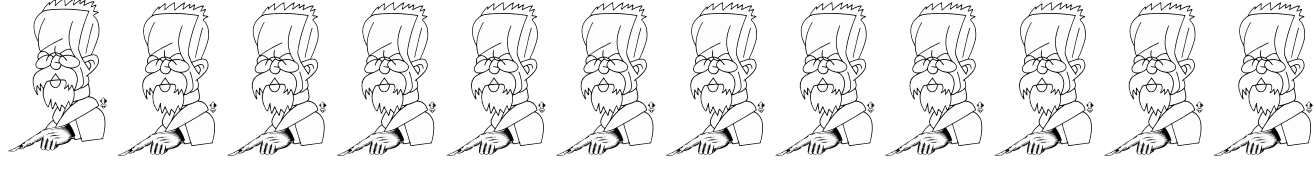
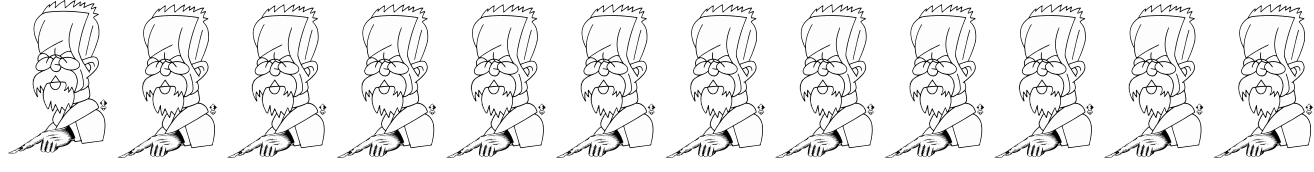
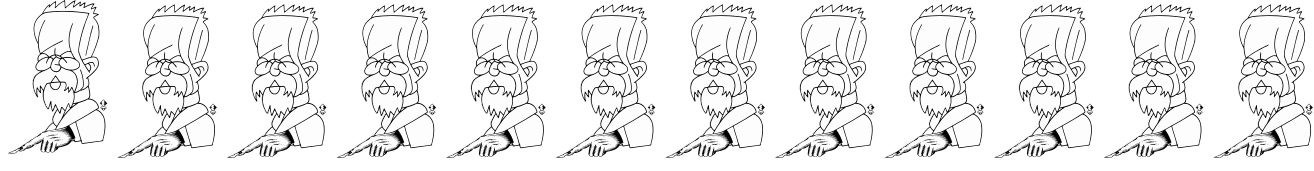
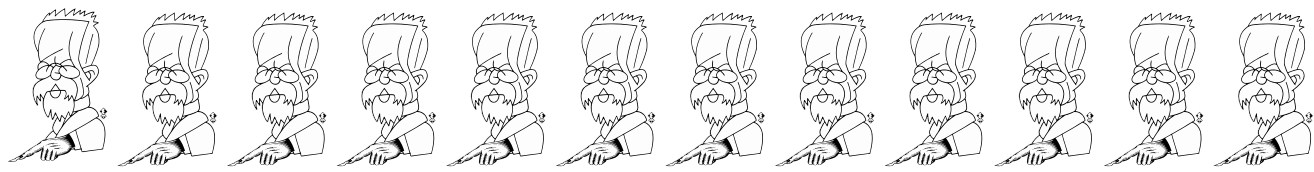
MACHADO DE ASSIS **MAGAZINE**

BRAZILIAN **LITERATURE** IN TRANSLATION

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

#2

SÃO PAULO
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THE CHALLENGE OF PRESENTING BRAZILIAN LITERATURE TO THE WORLD

This second edition of *Machado de Assis Magazine - Brazilian Literature in Translation* received 50% more submissions than the first, which was launched at the 2012 Frankfurt Book Fair in the presence of foreign agents and editors. The increase in demand is a clear sign of growing confidence in the project on the part of Brazilian writers, which is a great honour to the Brazilian National Library Foundation. All eyes will be on Brazilian literature in 2013, when Brazil is the country of honour at the Frankfurt Book Fair. It will undoubtedly be the beginning of a new phase in the dissemination of our writers' work abroad, as well as increasing the presence of Brazilian culture internationally.

In this year in which the attention of the international literary community will be focused on Brazil, the National Library's International Book Centre, which publishes *Machado de Assis Magazine*, is diversifying its activities. As well as keeping its Support Program for the Translation and Publication of Brazilian Authors Abroad - aimed at foreign publishers - open all year round, the Centre has also introduced a translator residency program in Brazil and a travel grant program for Brazilian writers, both of which have met with great demand.

I would like to thank the magazine's editorial committee, which is comprised of a number of highly-respected critics and professors of literature. If choosing 20 texts for the first edition was difficult, this time the task was even more challenging, with 147 submissions. Last, but not least, I thank the National Library's partners in this project for their professionalism, which has been fundamental to the magazine's excellent reception. They are: Itaú Cultural, our co-publisher; Itamaraty, Brazil's Ministry of External Relations, which distributes it internationally; and the São Paulo State Press, our printer.

Happy reading.

Galeno Amorim

President of the National Library Foundation

EL DESAFÍO DE PRESENTAR AL MUNDO LA LITERATURA BRASILEÑA

El segundo número de la *Revista Machado de Assis - Literatura Brasileña en Traducción* recibió un 50% más de inscripciones que el primero, lanzado en la Feria del Libro de Frankfurt de 2012 con la presencia de importantes agentes y editores internacionales. El mayor interés demuestra la confianza creciente depositada en el proyecto por los autores brasileños, lo que en mucho honra a la Fundación Biblioteca Nacional (FBN). En 2013, la literatura del país obtendrá una importante visibilidad internacional con el homenaje al Brasil en la Feria del Libro de Frankfurt. Sin duda, será el inicio de una nueva etapa para hacer más conocida en el exterior la obra de nuestros escritores y, claro, profundizar internacionalmente la presencia de la cultura brasileña.

Este año en que las atenciones del mundo literario internacional estarán volcadas hacia el Brasil, el Centro Internacional del Libro (CIL), órgano de FBN responsable por la *Revista Machado de Assis*, diversifica su actuación. Además de mantener continuamente abierto su Programa de Apoyo a la Traducción y a la Publicación de Autores Brasileños en el Exterior, dirigido para editoras extranjeras, fue creado por CIL un inédito y requisitado programa de residencia de traductores de portugués en el país y otro de intercambio de autores brasileños en el exterior. Así, la Revista consolida su importancia como ventana para presentar internacionalmente a nuestros autores.

Es imprescindible, aún, agradecer el empeño del Consejo Editorial de la publicación, que cuenta con importantes y respetados críticos y profesores. Si escoger los 20 seleccionados fue difícil en el primer número, ahora la tarea del Consejo Editorial se puso aún más desafiadora frente a las 147 inscripciones. Por fin, no menos importante, se debe destacar que el profesionalismo de los partícipes de FBN en este proyecto es factor fundamental para la óptima acogida de la publicación: el Itaú Cultural, coeditor, el Itamaraty, que realiza la distribución internacional, y la Imprensa Oficial do Estado de São Paulo, responsable por la impresión.

Buenas lecturas.

Galeno Amorim

Presidente de la Fundación Biblioteca Nacional

ABOUT THE MAGAZINE

M*achado de Assis Magazine – Brazilian Literature in Translation* is an initiative of Brazil's National Library Foundation (FBN), in conjunction with Itaú Cultural, São Paulo State Press and the Ministry of External Relations. The rules and conditions of the publication are set forth in the new public notice regarding the institution's co-editions, published in May 2012.

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. Periodically, the FBN posts calls in its portal for Brazilian authors to submit excerpts of works of Brazilian fiction and poetry, with the condition that they have already been published in book form in Brazil. Each edition presents twenty new translations, chosen by the magazine's editorial board, which is nominated by the president of the FBN, Galeno Amorim.

Machado de Assis Magazine – Brazilian Literature in Translation also hopes to offer a panorama of Brazil's most recent literary production, by both experienced and up-and-coming writers. Authors, editors, scouts and literary agents may download texts from the online edition, along with information about the different writers and right holders.

The online edition will be issued quarterly, and there will be two print editions a year. To meet the needs of specific sectors of the industry, some of these editions will be organized around themes, showcasing Brazilian literature in genres such as children's literature, young adult fiction and poetry.

The links to press reviews and personal webpages were provided by, and are the responsibility of, the authors or their agents.

SOBRE LA REVISTA

Machado de Assis Magazine - Literatura Brasileña en Traducción es una iniciativa de la Fundación Biblioteca Nacional, con la coedición de Itaú Cultural, Prensa Oficial del Estado de São Paulo y Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores de Brasil. La publicación se realiza con base en nuevo bando de coediciones de la institución, lanzado en mayo de 2012.

El objetivo de la revista es divulgar en el mercado editorial internacional textos traducidos de autores brasileños. Periodicamente se hacen convocatorias en el portal de FBN para que autores brasileños inscriban trozos de obras de ficción brasileña o de poesía, desde que esos textos ya tengan sido publicados en libro en el Brasil. Cada edición presenta veinte nuevas traducciones seleccionados por el Consejo editorial de la revista, indicado por el presidente de FBN, Galeno Amorim. 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.

Es también objetivo de la *Machado de Assis Magazine - Literatura Brasileira em Traducción* ofrecer un panorama de las más recientes creaciones literarias de autores brasileños, tanto de autores con mayor experiencia cuanto de integrantes de las nuevas generaciones. Su edición online permite que autores, editores, scouts y agentes internacionales hagan el download de cada texto, con las respectivas informaciones sobre los autores y detenedores de derechos.

La periodicidad de la publicación es trimestral en sus ediciones online, y habrá dos ediciones impresas por año. Para atender a las necesidades de segmentos específicos del mercado editorial, algunas ediciones serán temáticas, mostrando al mercado internacional la producción brasileña en géneros como la literatura para niños y jóvenes, y poesía.

Los links para reseñas y las páginas web personales fueron enviados por los autores o sus agentes y son de entera responsabilidad.

A WORD FROM THE EDITOR

Machado de Assis Magazine - Brazilian Literature in Translation is proud to launch its second edition, this time in a purely online edition, containing a selection of Brazilian prose and poetry for the consideration of the international publishing industry. We also considered texts in German for this edition as part of our preparation for Brazil's participation in the next Frankfurt Book Fair, in October.

This edition of *Machado de Assis Magazine* received 147 submissions in Spanish, English and German. Narrowing them down to only twenty texts (just over 13% of the total) was not an easy task and was only possible thanks to the hard work and dedication of members of the editorial committee.

Machado de Assis Magazine seeks to facilitate negotiations between Brazilian writers, editors and agents, and the international publishing industry. Because Portuguese is an insular language - with the greatest concentration of its speakers in Brazil - excerpts of translations in more widely-spoken languages are necessary.

These excerpts are, therefore, working tools for the development of public policy regarding the dissemination of our literature abroad.

We at *Machado de Assis Magazine* feel it is important to showcase a broad slice of our literary production, giving space to writers from a variety of literary generations and geographical locations and working in different genres.

A PDF version of the full content of each edition is also available. Thus, in addition to being able to read the full content on tablets and computers, editors, agents and the general public can also download only the texts of interest to them.

EDITORIAL

Machado de Assis Magazine – Literatura Brasileña en Traducción lanza su segundo número – ahora en edición apenas online – con una selección de autores brasileños, de prosa y poesía, para apreciación por el mercado editorial internacional. Para este número se aceptaron sumisiones de textos en alemán, como parte del esfuerzo de preparación para la participación de Brasil en la próxima Feria del Libro de Frankfurt, en octubre.

La segunda edición de *Machado de Assis Magazine* recibió 147 sumisiones, en español, inglés y alemán. Elegir poco más del 13% de ese total para componer los veinte textos del número no fue tarea fácil, y solo se logró gracias al empeño y participación de miembros del Consejo Editorial.

Machado de Assis Magazine es una publicación que busca facilitar las negociaciones entre escritores brasileños, sus editores y agentes, con el mercado editorial internacional. Como el portugués es una lengua insular – el mayor número de sus hablantes está precisamente en Brasil – los extractos de traducciones en idiomas que tengan un mayor alcance en el mercado editorial internacional se hacen necesarios.

Esos extractos, por lo tanto, son instrumentos de trabajo para el desarrollo de la política pública de divulgación de nuestra literatura en el exterior.

Es importante dar cobijo en *Machado de Assis Magazine* a autores que expresen una amplia muestra de nuestra producción literaria, considerando a generaciones literarias, la dispersión geográfica y la variedad de géneros.

Para aumentar el alcance de la divulgación de *Machado de Assis Magazine*, fué creada una versión adicional en PDF del contenido integral de cada número. Así, además de poder hacer el download apenas de los textos de autores que les interesen, editores, agentes y el público en general podrán acceder al contenido integral en tablets y desktops.

**DAS
INHALTSVERZEICHNIS**

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DEUTSCH

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Cíntia Moscovich

Flávio Carneiro

José Castello

DAS MÄDCHEN MIT DEN SCHWEFELHÖLZERN

ADRIANA LUNARDI

Übersetzung von Magdalena Nowinska

Die Nachricht, dass meine Schwester ins Krankenhaus eingeliefert wurde, erreichte mich an einem Februarnachmittag, in der Karnevalswoche, während ich gerade Bücher abstaubte. Auf dem Tisch gestapelte oder auf dem Boden verstreute Romane und Essays warteten darauf, sauber und geordnet für ein weiteres Schuljahr in die Regale zurückzukehren. Ich würde mich von einigen trennen oder ein neues Regal besorgen müssen, das ist ein Problem, das mich seit Jahren begleitet, aus verschiedenen Gründen, aufgrund von einem enormen Mangel an Entscheidungsfähigkeit beispielsweise, und aufgrund von einigen kleineren Mängeln, wie dem des Geldes. Titel, die ich für nicht mehr brauchbar hielt oder solche, die meiner Meinung nach in einer öffentlichen Bibliothek besseren Nutzen finden könnten, hatte ich zur Seite gelegt. Bei jedem Umzug machte ich das, meine einzige Wohltätigkeitsgeste.

Bis zur Kaffeepause hatte der Stapel, der zum Verschenken gedacht war, bereits einen beträchtlichen Umfang erreicht und war groß genug, um eine kleine, aber gut sortierte Handbibliothek zu bilden. Während ich am Kaffee nippte, öffnete ich eine Robinson-Crusoe-Ausgabe, die ganz oben drauf lag. Die Ausgabe, gedruckt auf Zeitungspapier und mit didaktischen Anmerkungen, war nicht gerade berauschend. Beim Blättern entdeckte ich mit einem Bleistift unterstrichene Sätze und meinen Namen, geschrieben mit den kleinen, noch kindlichen Buchstaben aus der Zeit der siebten Klasse. Es schien mir, dass der alte Schmöker nur für mich irgendeine sentimentale Bedeutung haben konnte, und ich nahm das Buch vom Stapel. Darunter kam eine Ausgabe der Zeitschrift *Revista Sur* zum Vorschein, die ich von einem Freund aus Argentinien bekommen hatte. Auch sie legte ich zur Seite, ich hatte nicht den Mut, mich von Victoria Ocampo zu trennen. Langsam wurde mir aber klar, dass meine philanthropische Haltung zu schwinden begann. Der Wunsch, anonymen, bedürftigen Lesern gute Literatur zukommen zu lassen gab einem viel stärkeren Sammelbedürfnis Platz, welches mich dazu zwang, einen Rückzieher nach dem anderen zu machen und meine großzügigen Absichten fahren zu lassen. Wenn es so weiter gegangen wäre, wäre der ganze Spendenstapel auf die Regale zurückgekehrt, so als ob nichts geschehen wäre.

Wiederholtes Niesen und Rückenschmerzen erinnerten mich daran, warum ich eigentlich diese Tätigkeit so vor mir hergeschoben hatte. Warum aber heute?, fragte ich den Staubwedel, und bereute, dass ich meine Ferien für eine so ermüdende und letztendlich überhaupt nicht dringende Aufgabe verschwendete. Ich hätte damit bis zum Herbst warten können, oder aber die Putzfrau mit dem Abstauben

beauftragen können, während mir dann nur die alphabetische Anordnung der Bücher vorbehalten geblieben wäre. Noch war ich jedoch, an jenem von der Sommerzeit in die Länge gezogenen Tag, weit vom tiefen Bereuen entfernt, als ich den Anrufbeantworter hörte.

Ich gehe nie ans Telefon ohne vorher festzustellen, wer mich anruft, und daher hielt ich kurz inne und hörte mir die Nachricht, die gerade aufgenommen wurde, an. An den scharfen R-s und S-s und der Sprachmelodie erkannte ich den südlichen Akzent der jungen Frau, die sich vorstellte (ich solle bitte ihren Anruf entschuldigen) und erklärte, dass sie mich durch die Vermittlung eines alten Studienfreundes (Marcelo C. da Cunha), zu dem sie Kontakt hatte, ausfindig gemacht hatte.

Eine Freundesfreundin kommt wohl nach Rio und braucht Tipps zum Ausgehen oder ein Sofa zum Schlafen für ein paar Tage, deduzierte ich irritiert.

Das ist eben der Preis dafür, dass man in einer touristisch beliebten Stadt wohnt. Alle halten dich für einen kostenlosen Reiseleiter mit einer jugendlichen Aufgeschlossenheit für neue Freundschaften und einer Bereitschaft, Backpacker unterzubringen. Ich war froh, dass ich nicht ans Telefon gegangen war, bis ich merkte, dass es in der Nachricht um etwas ganz anderes ging.

Nach den anfänglichen Formalitäten (ich bin eine Freundin deiner Schwester), wurde die Stimme nach einer verlegenen Präambel (es tut mir sehr Leid, diese Nachricht zu übermitteln) besorgt, und fuhr mit vielen Unterbrechungen (sie hatte eine Krise) und Verzögerungen (einen Anfall) fort. Sie würde eine Nummer hinterlassen, falls ich anrufen und mehr Informationen wollte. In dem Moment hob ich den Hörer ab und bat sie zu sprechen, ich würde zuhören.

Zu dem langen Gespräch, das folgte, trug ich nur mit Halbwörtern bei. Ich fühlte mich, als ob ich gegen meinen Willen an einen dekadenten Ort zurück versetzt worden wäre, den aufzuräumen mich viel Kraft gekostet hatte; ein Zimmer, das nach dem Einrichten verschlossen worden war und auch so bleiben sollte, wie ich mit meinem Psychoanalytiker abgemacht hatte.

Die junge Frau, deren Namen ich auf einen Zettel notierte, auf dem ich während des Gesprächs kritzelte, eine Unbekannte, hatte die Dämmerung in der hellsten Jahreszeit vorzeitig einsetzen lassen. Der Helligkeitsregler, der bis dahin darauf eingestellt gewesen war, die Intensität der Erinnerungen abzuschwächen, ging nun gegen den Uhrzeigersinn, voller Ungeduld, um am Anfang der Zeiten anzukommen, noch bevor das "Es werde Licht!" Tag und Nacht voneinander getrennt hatte, beim kosmischen Nebel, zu dem ich, zugegeben, eine recht perverse Nähe unterhielt, solche, mit der man schwer fertig wird, wenn man sie erst einmal ausprobiert hatte.

Die einzige Vergangenheit jedoch, die mich wirklich interessierte, war die, die vor hundert, zweihundert, fünfhundert Jahren in Büchern niedergeschrieben worden war, welche ich respektiere, weil sie zu den unveränderlichen Dingen gehören, solchen, die sich nicht zu verändern brauchen. Ansonsten zählte für mich nur die Gegenwart. Und die Gegenwart, das war eine Bibliothek, die aufgeräumt werden sollte, die Aufgabe, Buch für Buch vom Regal zu nehmen, den Buchdeckel aufzuschlagen und ein wenig auf die Bindung zu pusten. Die Gegenwart, das war

das Kopfzerbrechen, wie man *Don Quijote* und *Den letzten Leser*¹ auf dem gleichen, 2,70 mal 2,30 m großen Raum unterbringen sollte, in dem neben einem Teil des westlichen Literaturkanons auch noch Bücher von Freunden und orientalische Autoren passen sollten – meine Anordnung, muss ich nämlich hinzufügen, pfeift auf Staatsangehörigkeiten. Die Gegenwart bestand einzig darin, den Sieg der Bücherwürmer und Pilze zu verzögern, die aber am Ende doch siegen würden. Das war die Gegenwart.

Nachdem ich aufgelegt hatte, war der Tag zu einen Anderen geworden. Ich hätte ihn nicht mehr durch eine häusliche Szene beschreiben können, ihn zu einem liebevollen Abbild eines Putznachmittags machen können, mit Staubwedeln und Möbelpoliermitteln und Gegenwartsdichtern, die nach dem richtigen Platz für sich auf dem Regal fragen. Ein Foto hätte jedoch die Veränderung, die im Raum vor sich gegangen war, nicht erfassen können und würde auch nicht registrieren können, wo ich jetzt bin.

Alles geschieht hinter meinem inneren Auge.

Es sieht weder einen bestimmten Ort, noch eine bestimmte Zeit, und doch ist das Bild aus irgendeinem Grund dem chaotischen Szenario der gestapelten Romane, die den Boden bedecken, nicht unähnlich.

Welche Farbe hat das graue Zimmer?
(Schweigen)

Welche Farbe? drängte ich.

Die Farbe von Hulk, antwortete meine Schwester mit jener depressiven Stimme, die bei anderen Gelegenheiten lediglich eine Variante des absoluten Schweigens war. Nur konnte man diesmal den Grund nachvollziehen.

Es war schon mal weiß, rosa, lila, sandgelb gewesen, und nun dieses fenchelstichige Grün. Von der Eingangstür aus dachte ich, dass es einfacher wäre, es das Mädchenzimmer zu nennen, anstatt auf dem ursprünglichen Namen zu beharren. Farbwechsel waren jedoch noch nie Grund genug für Änderungen der Nomenklatur, und schon gar nicht von einem Schlafzimmer.

Hast du die erste gesehen?

Die erste und die letzte. Es läuft aufs Gleiche hinaus. Grau zu Grau.

Meine Schwester wurde in solchen Momenten besonders abstrakt. Sie wiederholte Wörter oder wechselte die Reihenfolge der Satzglieder und ordnete sie verkehrt an, um zu sehen, ob sie so einen Sinn entdecken könnte. Ich habe dem so oft zugehört, dass ich aufwuchs im Glauben, dass der Sinn ein Schlüssel war, der in einem abgeschlossenen Köfferchen vergessen worden war: man konnte zwar sein Rattern hören, ihn selbst aber nicht sehen.

Stunden später und auf der noch nackten Matratze liegend las ich die Broschüren, die Papa mitgebracht hatte. Sie besagten, dass die Stadt über

1. Der Verweis bezieht sich auf Ricardo Piglias Essayband *El ultimo lector*. Deutsche Ausgabe: Ricardo Piglia, *Der letzte Leser: Essays*, übers. von Leopold Federmair, Wien: Klever, 2010 (A.d.Ü.).

einem Vulkankrater erbaut worden war – einem immer noch aktiven, hätte ich hinzuzufügen wollen, wenn nicht gerade Januar gewesen wäre, der Monat, in dem jeder Ort dieses Landes von den Ausdunstungen einer flüssigen Lavamasse umhüllt zu sein scheint, die direkt unter dem Asphalt kocht. Die Knochen des ersten brasilianischen Dinosauriers, des Estauricosauriers, wurden hier gefunden, und auch die Rincosaurier, eine Art zähnestarrer Echten aus dem Trias, sind hier umhergezogen. Platz hatten sie jedenfalls gehabt. Aus dem Fenster konnte man die Ebene sehen, die die Stadt umgab und die sich ohne Hindernisse bis zur Grenze Brasiliens hinzog, wo sich ein schüchterner Haufen bläulicher Berge nur erhob, um den Augen eine Ruhepause zu gönnen, die das Ausmaß jenes Hinterhofes, der Pampa genannt wird, nie erfassen können.

Ausgestorbene Tiere, Vulkane, Krater. Der Ort schien eine Kampfarena zu sein, auf der die Kräfte der Natur aufeinander prallten. Solange ich dort wohnte, hatte ich immer davon geträumt, vor einem Vulkanausbruch zu flüchten, wie in Pompeji, oder an einer Ecke einem wieder erweckten Dino zu begegnen, was, metaphorisch, Jahre später tatsächlich geschehen sollte.

Papa hatte die Stadt wegen der guten Schulen ausgewählt. Behauptete er zumindest – und nur ich, wie es scheint, habe daran geglaubt. Meine Geschwister fingen immer andere Mitteilungen ab. Sie hatten sogar eine Art Code aufgestellt, ein Lexikon, um die Geheimsprache unseres Vaters zu übersetzen.

Wenn du so etwas wie Wir müssen uns weiterentwickeln, oder Varianten davon, wie zum Beispiel Wir müssen vorwärts schauen, hörst, lehrte mich meine Schwester, während sie die Sätze in einem linierten Heft schrieb, dann will er damit eigentlich sagen Ich habe mal wieder falsch gelegen. Jedes Mal wenn er den Spruch Nur das Neue zählt anbringt, ersetze ihn durch Ich habe viele Schulden zurückgelassen, fügte mein Bruder hinzu, indem er die Stimme und den erhobenen Finger nachahmte, die Papa bei Familienversammlungen aufsetzte.

Ich wehrte mich dagegen, zu akzeptieren, dass das Versprechen einer guten Schule mit unserem Geldbeutel nicht vereinbar war. Obwohl wir zur sozialen Klasse der Abgebrannten gehörten, glaubte ich an das Gerede von der Zukunft der Kinder. Laut meiner Geschwister war das jedoch alles nur eine Ausrede, um zu rechtfertigen, dass in der anderen Stadt Kunden zurückgelassen wurden. Oder dass man vor Gläubigern floh, was ziemlich häufig vorkam.

So oder so stand jedoch fest, dass wir nach Antares gezogen waren und dass ich an eine erstklassige Schule kommen würde. Nichts hätte wichtiger sein können.

Das Beste am Umzug von einer Stadt zur anderen war, die Möbel neu angeordnet sehen zu können. Auf den Sesseln, auf denen man sich früher gegenseitig die Knie drückte, konnten nun Riesen problemlos ihre langen Beine ausstrecken. Das Sofa wirkte nicht mehr wie ein ungeschlachter Grobian, der mit seinen Armen die zarten Seitentische zerdrückte, sondern hatte sich in einen einsamen Walross ohne Stoßzähne verwandelt. Der Teppich schien beim Waschen leider eingegangen zu sein. Da wir viel umzogen, taten wir gut daran, alles zu vermeiden, was Nägel und

Hammer erforderte. Eine glatte, unberührte Wand gehört zum häuslichen Ideal einer Wanderfamilie. Blumenvasen und Stehrahmen für Fotos stellten unsere einzigen Raumdekorationen dar. Für Pflanzen galt das Gleiche wie für Tiere: es geht besser ohne. Erfahrungen waren gemacht und wiederholt worden und nun war man sich sicher. Niemand kann sich vorstellen, welchen Schaden eine Zwergschildkröte anrichten kann, wenn am Ende einer Reise, beim Ausräumen des Wagens, ihre Abwesenheit bemerkt wird. Projiziere man nun das Drama auf warme und haarige Wesen: sie verbieten sich von selbst. Ein Maskottchen zurück zu lassen verletzt das Herz von Erwachsenen und Kindern gleichermaßen, auch wenn das Zurücklassen erst im Nachhinein und viel später wirksam wird, als Vorwürfe und Verletzungen, deren Ursprung unbekannt zu sein scheint. Hingegen Gegenstände, ja, die sind die besten Freunde, die man haben kann; sie sollten nach Möglichkeit tragbar und zusammenklappbar sein, und in einen Koffer passen, oder, besser noch, in eine Hand. Ein Garfield-Schlüsselanhänger war für mich jahrelang das vollkommenste Wesen des Universums gewesen. Er ruht in Frieden in einer Schuhkiste, die ich immer noch mit mir herumschleppe. Wenige Menschen können das Gleiche über ihre jeweiligen Lieben sagen.

Mama, die sich selten zu einem Kommentar hinreißen ließ oder mit Nachdruck Meinungen von sich gab, ging an jenem Tag zwischen den Möbeln hin und her, und nahm Handbreit für Handbreit die Anordnung unter Augenschein, die wir mit Hilfe der Möbelträger erstellt hatten.

Im Esszimmer kann ein Butler locker um den Tisch herum gehen, sagte sie entzückt, während sie mit den Fingern die Rückenlehnen der Stühle tastete.

Diese Art von Reaktionen kannten wir bereits. Mamas Freuden waren zu persönlich, um sie zu verstehen. Nicht einmal die banale Bemerkung – die aber natürlich niemand machen würde – dass wir doch gar keinen Butler hatten, hätte dieser Zufriedenheit auch nur irgendeinen Abbruch tun können. Es war nicht wichtig, ob der Grund des Glücks unwirklich oder wirklich war. Allein die Tatsache, dass sie aus ihrer üblichen Gleichgültigkeit erwachte und etwas, und wenn es noch so verwirrend war, mit uns teilte, war Grund genug, um auf die Mystik der Vernunft zu verzichten.

Zur Feier des Tages gab es Hamburger, die Papa wie ein französischer Kellner auf den Tellern des Feiertagsgeschirrs servierte.

Nur wir können den Grund unseres Glücks verstehen, dachte ich, als ich Mama lachen und das Eis im Coca-Cola-Glas schwenken sah, und nur durch Zufall, schlussfolgerte ich, durch spärlichen, puren und hirnverbrannten Zufall können wir bewirken, dass es jemandem Anderen zuteilwird.



THE BOOK



Das Mädchen mit den Schwefelhölzern

Adriana Lunardi

• **Original title:**

A vendedora de fósforos

• **ISBN:** 978-85-325-2688-5

• **Publication year:** 2011

• **Original publishing house:** Rocco

• **Number of pages:** 192

• **Total printing in Brazil:** 3.036 copies

SYNOPSIS

After years of separation the narrator of A vendedora de fósforos who lives as a writer in Rio de Janeiro receives the news of her sisters suicide attempt. Long suppressed memories are promptly revived. The journey to her sister in a small town in Southern Brazil, where her father had settled down with his wife and three children after numerous relocations, also becomes a voyage back to childhood. The nomadic life of the father who cannot establish himself as a bookkeeper and who is always on the run from debts, makes it impossible for his children to develop a bond to other family members, friends or even places. The mother lives in her own phantasy world and accepts a subordinate role to her husband, the

older brother jumps at the first chance to escape his family. Adriana Lunardi portrays the conflict between a never-ending childhood and the borders experienced by the characters who struggle for an identity as they come of age. It remains unclear which of the two sisters is the first-person narrator or whether they take turns in an artful game of reflection. A vendedora de fósforos is a gripping, poetic and dense mosaic of a relationship between two sisters, who share the dream of being a writer, rival each other but also share numerous secrets.

Nach Jahren der Trennung erhält die als Schriftstellerin in Rio de Janeiro lebende Erzählerin von A vendedora de fósforos die Nachricht vom Selbstmordversuch ihrer Schwester. Längst verdrängte Erinnerungen werden wieder lebendig. Die Reise zu ihrer Schwester in die kleine südbrasilianische Stadt, in die sich ihr Vater mit seiner Frau und seinen drei Kindern nach vielen Umzügen niedergelassen hatte, wird auch zu einer Reise zurück in die Kindheit. Das Nomadenleben des Vaters, der sich als Buchhalter beruflich nicht etablieren kann und stets vor den Schulden auf der Flucht ist, macht es den Kindern unmöglich, Bindungen zu anderen Familienangehörigen, Freunden oder Orten aufzubauen. Die Mutter lebt in einer Phantasiewelt und ordnet sich dem Vater unter, der ältere Bruder ergreift die erstbeste Gelegenheit, der Familie zu entkommen. Adriana Lunardi beschreibt den Konflikt zwischen einer nicht enden wollenden Kindheit und den Grenzen, die die

um eine eigene Identität ringenden Schwestern beim Erwachsenwerden erfahren. Es bleibt offen, welche der beiden die Ich-Erzählerin ist, oder ob sie sich in einem kunstvollen Spiel mit Spiegelungen beim Erzählen abwechseln. *A vendedora de fósforos* ist ein packendes, poetisches Mosaik der Beziehung zweier Schwestern, die den Traum haben, Schriftstellerinnen zu werden, miteinander rivalisieren, aber auch zahlreiche Geheimnisse teilen.

PRESS REVIEWS

1. In her novel *Adriana Lunardi* intricately deals with the clash between reality and imagination. The fight for an identity becomes a soundless struggle with death. (Valor Econômico) <http://www.valor.com.br/impreso/livros/adriana-lunardi-explora-o-duplo>

In ihrem Roman beschreibt Adriana Lunardi kunstvoll den Zusammenprall zwischen Realität und Imagination. Das Ringen um eine eigene Identität verwandelt sich in einen lautlosen Todeskampf. (Valor Econômico) <http://www.valor.com.br/impreso/livros/adriana-lunardi-explora-o-duplo>

2. With *A vendedora de fósforos* Adriana Lunardi once again pursues a literary project, which not only stands out due to the undeniable skill of her prose, but moreover investigates the borders of what literature is able to relate. (O Globo) <http://clipping.vrc.puc-rio.br/cgi/cgilua.exe/sys/start.htm?inford=26186&sid=24>

Adriana Lunardi verfolgt in *A vendedora de fósforos* erneut ein

literarisches Projekt, das sich nicht nur durch die unbestreitbare Meisterschaft ihrer Prosa auszeichnet, sondern insbesondere auch die Grenzen dessen, was die Literatur zu erzählen in der Lage ist, ausforscht. (O Globo) <http://clipping.vrc.puc-rio.br/cgi/cgilua.exe/sys/start.htm?inford=26186&sid=24>

3. The reading is furthermore made more agreeable and arresting due to the authors' precision in creating beautiful and perfect images. (...) thereby lending her novel with its short and piercing sentences and its waltz-like rhythm a certain magnitude. (*Adriana Lunardi*) is about to begin one of the most brilliant literary careers in our day. (Rascunho) <http://www.rascunho.gazetadopovo.com.br/autor/adriana-lunardi/>

Die Genauigkeit, mit der die Autorin schöne und perfekte Bilder konstruiert, fesselt den Leser. (...) Und damit verleiht sie ihrem Roman mit seinen kurzen, schneidenden Sätzen, mit seinem an einen Walzer erinnernden Rhythmus, Größe. (*Adriana Lunardi*) ist dabei, eine der brilliantesten literarischen Karrieren von heute zu starten. (Rascunho) <http://www.rascunho.gazetadopovo.com.br/autor/adriana-lunardi/>

4. I have always been an impulsive and anxious reader and have often interrupted (...) not so with this beautiful novel by Adriana Lunardi. The ending, no matter from which point of view, causes bafflement and makes you think for days about what life can harbour. That's how it is. Here

is a book that deserves attention.
(Zero Hora) <http://wp.clicrbs.com.br/mundolivro/2011/10/20/duas-irmas/>

Seit jeher bin ich ein impulsiver und unruhiger Leser und unterbreche oft die Lektüre (...) Aber dies geschah nicht bei dem wunderschönen Roman von Adriana Lunardi. Das Romanende, egal unter welchem Blickwinkel man es betrachtet, ruft Verblüffung hervor und lässt den Leser noch Tage darüber nachdenken, was das Leben alles verbergen kann. So ist es. Hier ist ein Buch, das Aufmerksamkeit verdient.
(Zero Hora) <http://wp.clicrbs.com.br/mundolivro/2011/10/20/duas-irmas/>

THE AUTHOR



Adriana Brasília Lunardi

- **Pen name:** Adriana Lunardi
- **Other books by the author**

Corpo estranho (Rocco, 2006),
Vésperas (Rocco, 2002)
As meninas da Torre Helsingue
(MA, 1996).

• Author's webpage:

www.adrianalunardi.com.br

THE TRANSLATOR

Magdalena Nowinska

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SEX

ANDRÉ SANT'ANNA

Übersetzung von Michael Kegler

Die Lautsprecher an der Decke des Aufzugs spielten Musik von Ray Conniff. Der Schwarze vor der Gittertür stank. Die Dicke, die dem Schwarzen in die Hacken trampelte, stank. Der Schwarze stank nach Schweiß. Die Dicke roch nach Avon-Parfüm. Der schnurrbärtige Aufzugführer war eingeknickt. Der Businessmann mit Ray-Ban-Brille unterhielt sich mit dem Businessmann mit der weinroten Krawatte mit orangenen Streifen. Die beiden Businessmänner waren weiß. Die Dicke die nach Avon-Parfüm roch, war weiß.

Der Businessmann mit der Ray-Ban-Brille sagte zu dem Businessmann mit der weinroten Krawatte mit orangenen Streifen:

„Das Hotel war von the best. Wenn du das nächste Mal in Frank-reich bist, musst du unbedingt ein paar Tage in der Normandie dranhängen.“

Im vierten Stock stieg die blonde, sonnengebräunte Sekretärin in den Aufzug. Der Businessmann in der weinroten Krawatte mit orangenen Streifen schaute der sonnengebräunten blonden Sekretärin auf den Hintern. Der Schwarze stank immer noch. Die blonde, sonnengebräunte Sekretärin stank nicht. Der Businessmann in der weinroten Krawatte mit orangenen Streifen berührte mit seiner Schulter den Businessmann mit der Ray-Ban-Brille. Der Businessmann mit der Ray-Ban-Brille schaute ebenfalls auf den Hintern der blonden, sonnengebräunten Sekretärin. Die blonde, sonnengebräunte Sekretärin bemerkte, dass der Businessmann mit der Ray-Ban-Brille und der Businessmann mit der weinroten Krawatte mit orangenen Streifen ihr auf den Hintern schauten. Die blonde, sonnengebräunte Sekretärin tat so, als merkte sie nicht, dass der Businessmann mit der Ray-Ban-Brille und der Businessmann mit der weinroten Krawatte mit orangenen Streifen ihr auf den Hintern schauten. Der Schwarze, der stank, streifte mit dem Ellenbogen die eine Brust der blonden, sonnengebräunten Sekretärin. Die blonde, sonnengebräunte Sekretärin entfernte ihre Brust von dem Ellenbogen des Schwarzen. Die Dicke, die nach Avon-Parfüm stank, berührte mit ihrem Arm leicht einen Arm des Schwarzen, der stank. Die Dicke, die nach Avon-Parfüm stank, hatte Schweißperlen auf dem Arm. Der Schwarze, der stank, war völlig verschwitzt. Die Dicke, die nach Avon-Parfüm stank, ekelte sich vor dem Schweiß des Schwarzen, der stank.

Im zweiten Stock betrat eine junge Mutter mit ihrem Baby den Aufzug. Das Baby sabberte, der Sabber lief ihm über das Kinn. Die junge Mutter stand mit dem Rücken zum Schwarzen, der stank. Der Schwanz des Schwarzen der stank, berührte den Hintern der jungen Mutter. Der Schwarze, der stank, wollte den Hintern der jungen Mutter gar nicht mit seinem Schwanz berühren. Doch der Aufzug war überfüllt, und es war kein Platz mehr für den Schwanz des Schwarzen,

der stank. Der Schwarze, der stank, hatte Achtung vor Müttern. Dem Schwarzen, der stank, war nicht wohl bei dem Gedanken, dass sein Schwanz den Hintern der jungen Mutter berührte. Die junge Mutter tat so, als merkte sie nicht, dass der Schwanz des Schwarzen, der stank, ihren Hintern berührte. Die Dicke, die nach Avon-Parfüm roch, berührte, vom Ellenbogen des Businessmann mit der Ray-Ban-Brille verdrängt, mit ihren Brüsten den Rücken des Schwarzen, der stank. Das Baby sabberte weiter im Arm der jungen Mutter. Ohne die Augen zu öffnen, sagte der Aufzugführer „Erdgeschoss“, als der Aufzug im Erdgeschoss angelangt war.

Die junge Mutter mit dem sabbernden Baby stieg hastig aus und löste sich von dem Schwanz des Schwarzen, der stank. Der Schwarze, der stank, streifte noch einmal mit seinem Ellenbogen die Brust der blonden, sonnengebräunten Sekretärin, die beim Verlassen des Aufzugs verstohlen einen Blick auf den Businessmann mit der Ray-Ban-Brille warf und auf den Businessmann mit der weinroten Krawatte mit orangenen Streifen. Der Businessmann mit der weinroten Krawatte mit orangenen Streifen war jung. Der Businessmann mit der Ray-Ban-Brille sagte zum Businessmann mit der weinroten Krawatte mit orangenen Streifen:

„Was für ein Hintern, was?“

Als er die Bemerkung des Businessmann mit der Ray-Ban-Brille hörte, hob der schnurrbärtige Aufzugführer den Kopf und grinste. Der schnurrbärtige Aufzugführer war aus dem Nordosten. Der schnurrbärtige Aufzugführer hatte noch nie Sex mit einer blonden, sonnengebräunten Sekretärin gehabt. Der Businessmann mit der Ray-Ban-Brille hatte immer Sex mit blonden, sonnengebräunten Sekretä-rinnen. Der junge Businessmann mit der weinroten Krawatte mit orangenen Streifen hatte noch nie Sex mit Sekretärinnen gehabt. Allerdings war die Braut des jungen Businessmann mit der weinroten Krawatte blond und sonnengebräunt. Der junge Businessmann mit der weinroten Krawatte mit orangenen Streifen hatte Sex mit seiner blonden, sonnengebräunten Verlobten immer am Wochenende, wenn die Eltern seiner blonden, sonnengebräunten Verlobten im Strandhaus in Nähe von Ubatuba waren.

Nachdem die Dicke, die nach Avon-Parfüm roch, den Schwarzen, der stank, aus dem Aufzug geschoben hatte, begann sie zu laufen, die Beine weit auseinander, in Richtung der Apotheke des Shopping-Centers. Unterwegs schob sie sie sich durch ein irgendwie hippie-mäßiges Pärchen hindurch, das Hand in Hand ging. Das irgendwie hippiemäßige Mädchen ärgerte sich über die Dicke, die nach Avon-Parfüm roch und sagte:

„Hey, verdammt!“

Der irgendwie hippiemäßige Junge sagte zu dem irgendwie hip-piemäßigen Mädchen:

„Mach dir nix draus. Sie ist hässlich und fett.“

Das irgendwie hippiemäßige Mädchen trug keinen BH, und ihre rosigen Brustwarzen waren durch den dünnen Stoff ihres T-Shirts zu sehen. Der irgendwie hippiemäßige Junge war schlank und hatte ein paar flaumige Barthaare am Kinn. Das irgendwie hippiemäßige Pärchen war im Shopping-Center um einen Campingkocher zu kaufen. Das irgendwie hippiemäßige Pärchen wollte zelten

gehen in Trindade, bei Parati, wo sie zum ersten Mal Sex haben wollten. Die zwei irgendwie hippiemäßigen Jugendlichen hatten noch nie Sex gehabt und fanden, es sei Zeit, ihre Jungfräulichkeit aufzugeben. Das irgendwie hippiemäßige Mädchen hatte Angst, dass es weh tun könnte, wenn der irgendwie hippiemäßige Junge mit seinem Penis in ihre Vagina drang. Der irgendwie hippiemäßige Junge hatte Angst, dass das irgendwie hippiemäßige Mädchen seinen Schwanz zu klein finden würde. Das irgendwie hippiemäßige Mädchen war sechzehn Jahre alt. Der irgendwie hippiemäßige Junge war vierzehn.

Die Dicke, die nach Avon-Parfüm roch, ging in die Apotheke, um Diet Shake, o.b. und Aspirin aus dem Ausland zu kaufen. Die Dicke, die nach Avon-Parfüm roch, litt unter einer schrecklichen, chronischen Migräne. Die Migräne der Dicken, die nach Avon-Parfüm roch, ging nur weg, wenn die Dicke, die nach Avon-Parfüm roch, Aspirin aus den Vereinigten Staaten nahm.

Der Schwarze, der stank, traf auch auf das irgendwie hippiemäßige Pärchen. Der Schwarze, der stank, schaute dem irgendwie hippiemäßigen Mädchen auf ihre rosigen Brustwarzen, die durch den dünnen Stoff ihres T-Shirts zu sehen waren. Der Schwarze, der stank, hatte gerade noch Geld für die Omnibuskarte am Nachmittag. Der Schwarze, der stank, war Reinigungskraft und putzte täglich die Männertoiletten des Shopping-Centers. Der Schwarze, der stank, war befreundet mit dem Verkäufer des Zeitungskiosks vor dem Shopping-Center. Der Schwarze, der stank, ging, nachdem er an dem irgendwie hippiemäßigen Pärchen vorbeigekommen war, zu dem Zeitungskiosk vor dem Shopping-Center und bat den Verkäufer des Zeitungskiosks vor dem Shoppingcenter, ihm eine Zeitschrift mit dem Titel „Anal Sex“ zu leihen. Der Verkäufer des Zeitungskiosks vor dem Shopping-Center lieh dem Schwarzen, der stank, die Zeitschrift „Anal Sex“. Der Schwarze, der stank, setzte sich auf das Mäuerchen neben dem Zeitungskiosk, vor dem Shopping-Center. Der Schwarze, der stank, bekam einen Steifen, als er die Zeitschrift „Anal Sex“ durchblät-terte.

Die junge Mutter mit dem sabbernden Baby auf dem Arm verließ das Shopping-Center und sah den Schwarzen, der stank, wie er in der Zeitschrift „Anal Sex“ blät-terte. Die junge Mutter hatte noch nie Analsex mit ihrem jungen Ehemann gehabt. Der Schwarze, der stank, hatte noch nie Analsex gehabt. Die junge Frau hatte andere Arten von Sex mit ihrem jungen Ehemann. Der Schwarze, der stank, hatte schon lang keinen Sex mehr. Aber der Schwarze, der stank, war dabei, die Omnibuskassiererin des Omnibusses, in dem er, der Schwarze, der stank, jeden Abend um sechs Uhr nach Hause fuhr, herumzukriegen. Das Baby, das sabberte, wusste gar nicht was Sex ist, spürte aber schon unbewusstes sexuelles Verlangen nach seiner Mutter. Der Schwarze, der stank, wusste gar nicht was eine Mutter ist und spürte deswegen unbewusstes sexuelles Verlangen nach seiner älteren Schwester, die ihn erzogen hatte. Die ältere Schwester des Schwarzen, der stank, war schon eine Prostituierte gewesen, und sie verlangte ein wenig mehr Geld von ihren Freiern, die fast alle Schwarze waren, wenn sie Analsex haben wollten. Der Schwarze, der stank, wollte mit der Omnibuskassiererin, aus dem Omnibus, mit

dem er, der Schwarze, der stank, jeden Abend um sechs Uhr nach Hause fuhr, sehr gerne analsex haben.

Die Dicke, die nach Avon-Parfüm roch, mochte analsex. Die Dicke, die nach Avon-Parfüm roch, mochte Sex überhaupt, doch die Dicke, die nach Avon-Parfüm roch, hatte nur selten Sex, weil die meisten Männer nicht gern Sex mit dicken Frauen haben.

Nachdem sie den Aufzug verlassen hatten, gingen der Businessmann mit der Ray-Ban-Brille und der junge Businessmann mit der weinroten Krawatte mit orangenen Streifen in ein japanisches Restaurant im Tiefgeschoss des Shopping-Centers, in dem sie sich mit dem Marketingchef des Weltkonzerns, der Kondome herstellte, trafen. Der Weltkonzern, der Kondome herstellte, machte gute Profite, da die neuen Fernsehspots, die als Teil der gesellschaftlichen Bemühungen, die Verbreitung von Aids einzudämmen, kostenlos produziert und verbreitet wurden, obwohl sie die Marke des Weltkonzerns, der Kondome herstellte, nicht explizit nannten, zu einem großen Anstieg der Verkaufszahlen von Kondomen geführt hatten. Die von dem Weltkonzern, der Kondome herstellte, hergestellten Kondome waren die bekanntesten auf dem Markt. Die Fernsehspots, die Teil der gesellschaftlichen Bemühungen zur Eindämmung der Verbreitung von Aids waren, wurden kostenlos produziert und verbreitet und verfolgten keinerlei kommerzielle Gewinnabsicht. Die Werbeagentur, in der der Businessmann mit der Ray-Ban-Brille und der Businessmann mit der weinroten Krawatte mit orangenen Streifen arbeiteten, hatte kein Geld an der Kampagne zur Aids-Prävention verdient, die kostenlos produziert und verbreitet wurde. Doch das Kreativteam der Werbeagentur, in der der Businessmann mit der Ray-Ban-Brille und der junge Businessmann mit der weinroten Krawatte mit den orangenen Streifen arbeiteten, hatte einen Silbernen Löwen in Cannes mit der Kampagne zur Aidsprävention gewonnen, die kostenlos produziert und verbreitet wurde. Und das Beste war, dass der Weltkonzern, der Kondome herstellte, nun durch den Marketingchef des Weltkonzerns der Kondome herstellte, der Agentur, in der der Businessmann mit der Ray-Ban-Brille und der junge Businessmann mit der weinroten Krawatte mit orangenen Streifen arbeiteten, den Auftrag für eine Werbekampagne für Kindershampoo übertragen hatte. Der Weltkonzern, der Kondome herstellte, stellte auch Shampoo her.

Nachdem sie an dem Schwarzen, der stank und in einer Zeitschrift namens „Anal Sex“ blätterte, vorbeigekommen war, fiel der jungen Mutter mit dem sabbernden Baby auf dem Arm ein anderer Schwarzer auf, der nicht stank und eine bedruckte Tunika trug und eine bunte Mütze. Der jungen Mutter mit dem sabbernden Baby fielen auch die fünf schwarzen Frauen auf, die nicht stanken und den schwarzen

Mann, der nicht stand, umringten. Auch die schwarzen Frauen, die nicht stanken, trugen bedruckte Tuniken. Die fünf schwarzen Frauen, die nicht stanken, trugen farbige Perlen im sorgsam geflochtenen Haar. Die junge Mutter mit dem sabbernden Baby fand, dass der Schwarze, der nicht stank, und die fünf schwarzen Frauen, die nicht stanken, sehr interessant aussahen. Der Schwarze, der nicht stank, und die fünf schwarzen Frauen, die nicht stanken, betraten, nachdem sie an der jungen Mutter mit dem sabbernden Baby vorbeigezogen waren, das Shopping Center. Alle Leute im Shopping Center drehten sich um nach dem Schwarzen, der nicht stank und den fünf schwarzen Frauen, die nicht stanken. Der Schwarze, der nicht stank, war ein Reggae-Musiker, der zu einem Konzert in São Paulo war. Die fünf schwarzen Frauen, die nicht stanken, waren die Frauen des Schwarzen, der nicht stank. Der Schwarze, der nicht stank, hatte Sex mit allen fünf schwarzen Frauen, die nicht stanken. Der irgendwie hippiemäßige Junge und das irgendwie hippiemäßige Mädchen waren Fans des Schwarzen Mannes, der nicht stank. Der irgendwie hippiemäßige Junge, der Saxofon lernte, träumte davon, in Jamaika zu leben, Marihuana zu rauchen, Reggae zu spielen und Sex mit fünf irgendwie hippiemäßigen Mädchen zu haben, die nicht stanken. Eines der fünf hippiemäßigen Mädchen, die nicht stanken, und Sex mit dem irgendwie hippiemäßigen Jungen hatte, wäre das irgendwie hippiemäßige Mädchen. Der irgendwie hippiemäßige Junge und das irgendwie hippiemäßige Mädchen wollten nur nicht auf das Konzert des Schwarzen, der nicht stank, gehen, weil sie am Tag darauf zum ersten Mal Sex haben würden, in einem Zelt am Strand von Trindade in der Nähe von Parati, und deshalb früh schlafen gehen wollten.

Die blonde, sonnengebräunte Sekretärin fand die Kleidung des Schwarzen, der nicht stank, lächerlich. Die blonde, sonnengebräunte Sekretärin fand Schwarze nicht sexuell anziehend. Die blonde, sonnengebräunte Sekretärin mochte keinen Reggae. Die blonde, son-nengebräunte Sekretärin wäre lieber tot, als Sex mit einem Schwarzen zu haben. Die blonde, sonnengebräunte Sekretärin machte es dem Businessmann mit der Ray-Ban-Brille ohne Probleme mit dem Mund. Die blonde Sonnengebräunte Sekretärin fände es schön, wenn der Bu-sinessmann mit der Ray-Ban-Brille ihr dabei zusehen würde, wenn sie es ihm, dem Businessmann mit der Ray-Ban-Brille mit dem Mund machte.

Die ältere Schwester des Schwarzen, der stank, hätte, wäre sie noch am Leben, den Schwarzen, der nicht stank, anziehend gefunden. Die ältere Schwester des Schwarzen, der stank, war ermordet worden von einem weißen Kunden, der stank. Der stinkende weiße Kunde der älteren Schwester des Schwarzen, der stank, hatte der älteren Schwester des Schwarzen, der stank, die Kehle mit einem Rasiermesser durchtrennt. Der stinkende weiße Kunde der älteren Schwester des Schwarzen, der stank, hatte sich geärgert, weil die ältere Schwester des Schwarzen, der stank, keinen Analsex mit dem weißen Kunden, der stank, machen wollte. Die ältere Schwester des Schwarzen der stank, ekelte sich vor dem Geruch des weißen Kunden, der stank. Nachdem der weiße Kunde, der stank, die ältere Schwester des Schwarzen, der stank, getötet hatte, sagte der stinkende weiße Kunde der älteren Schwester des Schwarzen, der stank:

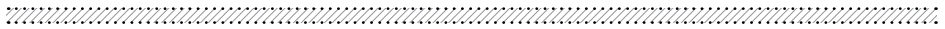
„Verdammte Nutte!“

Durch die Scheibe des japanischen Restaurants im Shopping-Center sah der Businessmann mit der Ray-Ban-Brille den Schwarzen, der nicht stank, und die fünf schwarzen Frauen, die nicht stanken. Der Businessmann mit der Ray-Ban-Brille sagte zu dem jungen Businessmann mit der weinroten Krawatte mit orangenen Streifen und zu dem Marketingchef des Weltkonzerns, der Kondome herstellte:

„Was für ein aufgeblasener Schwarzer!“

Der Marketingchef des Weltkonzerns, der Kondome herstellte, sagte zu dem Businessmann mit der Ray-Ban-Brille und zu dem jungen Businessmann mit der weinroten Krawatte mit orangenen Streifen:

„Aber so eine schwarze Frau würde ich durchaus mal vernaschen.“



THE BOOK



Sex

André Sant'Anna

- **Original title:** Sexo e amizade
- **ISBN:** 978-85-359-1127-5
- **Publication year:** 2007
- **Original publishing house:** Companhia das Letras
- **Number of pages:** 286
- **Total printing in Brazil:** 3.000 copies

SYNOPSIS

23 brief narratives and an almost romance, provocatively entitled "Sex", make up this hard to classify volume. There is a lot of sex (or at least the oppressive desire of it) and some friendship – but a lot less. The short stories of the first part, "Friendship", are almost always true monologues, in which each character's logic is reduced to the absurd. The second part, "Sex", features an omniscient narrator, who follows the fate of various characters that occasionally meet in the big city. With words both simple and strong, in his own form of poetry of the vulgar, André Sant'Anna delves into the human soul, where everything revolves on a single thing – and actually, a thousand others.

23 Kurzgeschichten sowie fast ein Roman mit dem griffigen Titel „Sex“

enthält dieses - wie immer bei André Sant'Anna scher zu kategorisierende Buch, in dem es um Sex (oder zumindest den Wunsch danach) geht, und ein bisschen auch um Freundschaft, aber eher weniger ... Die Kurzgeschichten geben fast immer wirklich Monologe wider, in denen die eigene Logik der Protagonisten ins Absurde überhöht wird. Im zweiten Teil (Sex) begleitet ein allwissender Erzähler die Wege der unterschiedlichsten Personen, die sich zufällig in der Großstadt über den Weg laufen. Sant'Anna taucht dabei mit einfachen, plakativen Worten und der ihm eigenen Poesie des Vulgären tief in die Abgründe der menschlichen Seele ein, in denen es immer und letztendlich doch nicht nur um das „eine“ geht.

TRANSLATIONS

Sexo; Edições Cotovia, 2000, Portugal

PRESS REVIEWS

<http://www1.folha.uol.com.br/fsp/ilustrad/fq0902200817.htm>

THE AUTHOR



André Sant'Anna

- **Pen name:** André Sant'Anna
- **Other books:** O paraíso é bem bacana - Companhia

das Letras; 3.000
Inverdades - Editora 7 Letras
Sexo - Editora 7 Letras
Amor - Edições Dubolso

THE TRANSLATOR

Michael Kegler

Michael Kegler was born in 1967 in Gießen (Germany) and lived in Liberia and Brazil. Since 1999 he works as translator of lusophone literature by Paulina Chiziane, José Eduardo Agualusa, Fernando Molica, J.P. Cuenca, Luiz Ruffato, Michel Laub

and others. He is editor of the website www.novacultura.com on Portuguese language literature.

Michael Kegler wurde 1967 in Gießen geboren, lebte in Liberia und Brasilien und arbeitet seit Ende der 1990er Jahre als Literaturübersetzer aus der portugiesischen Sprache. Er übersetzte unter anderen Paulina Chiziane, José Eduardo Agualusa, Fernando Molica, J.P. Cuenca, Luiz Ruffato und Michel Laub. Er ist Herausgeber der Website www.novacultura.de über Literatur aus dem portugiesischen Sprachraum.

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DAS DACH UND DER GEIGER

CÍNTIA MOSCOVICH

Übersetzung von Enno Petermann

*Für Rosa Soirefman und
Rosa Moscovich, Großmütter*

Wir müssen an den freien Willen glauben.

Wir haben keine Wahl.

I.B. Singer

„Schmutzige Jüdin.“

Ich, die ich nie ernsthaft erlebt hatte, was es hieß zu sein, was ich war - denn ein Mädchen von neun Jahren ist eben nur neun Jahre alt -, war von einem Augenblick zum anderen eine Jüdin und auch noch schmutzig - der Hass in Paulas Mund machte die beiden Wörter gleichwertig. Hilflos blieb ich stehen, stand da wie angewurzelt und sah das Mädchen an, dessen Stimme plötzlich so mächtig dröhnte, als verkündete sie die Wahrheit. Ohne es zu ahnen, weder sie noch ich, gehorchten wir alten Überlieferungen - ein Wissen, mit dem die Bösen schon zur Welt kommen. Vor Hass Funken sprühend, dass man ihn fast in ihren schwarzen Augen knistern hören konnte, wiederholte Paula die Beleidigung, wobei sie sie schleppend skandierte:

schmut-zi-ge-Jü-din.

Da brach in mir zum ersten Mal eine tiefe, blutige Wunde auf, ein Blutsturz aus Wut und Schmerz, zu groß für den Geist eines kleinen Mädchens. Und das Kind, das ich war, fand noch den Mut zur frechen Pose, beide Hände in die Seiten gestemmt, und fand noch die Eingebung zu erwidern:

„Und du bist eine Idiotin. Und eine Ziege.“

Rasch gehorchte auch ich, wie sie, alten Überlieferungen - nach meinem Rechtsgefühl war es schlimmer, eine Idiotin zu sein und obendrein eine Ziege als schmutzig zu sein. Und die Inbrunst, mit der ich sie beschimpfte, erweckte in mir einen neuen Sinn für die Wahrheit, eine Wahrheit, deren Schöpferin letztlich auch ich sein konnte. Ich hob die Puppe vom Boden auf, kämmte mit den Fingerspitzen den sehr blonden, sehr symmetrischen und jetzt zerwühlten Schopf: Es betrübte mich, dass meine Suzi der unschuldige Grund der Auseinandersetzung gewesen war. Dann drehte ich Paula und ihrem schäbigen Puppenhaus aus blau bemaltem Holz den Rücken zu und stieg mit großen Schritten die Stufen des Gebäudes hoch. Wütend stieß ich die Tür zum Wirtschaftsbereich unserer Wohnung, die stets unverschlossen war, auf.

Schmutzig, das war sie. Und ihre ganze Familie. Und die Kinder, Enkel und Urenkel, die sie haben würde.

Seit dem Tod meines Großvaters und seit sie bei uns lebte, nahm meine Großmutter, was auch um sie her geschehen mochte, die immergleiche Haltung ein: auf der Sofakante sitzend, die Füße nebeneinander, den Ellbogen auf das Knie gestützt, ließ sie das Kinn in der Handfläche ruhen. In diesen Stunden verlor sich ihr Blick in einer von blauen Blitzen durchzuckten Ferne, starr in der Unbestimmtheit desjenigen, der in einer Nische der Zeit verborgene Erinnerungen zu Tage fördert. Die Reglosigkeit jener Momente wurde stets von einem langen - ach, so langen - Seufzer beendet, der in einem oj, weh is mir gipfelte, dem Klage lied der Juden auf der ganzen Welt. „Ich Arme“, bemitleidete sie sich. Wie traurig war das.

Im Wohnzimmer traf ich sie in der üblichen Stellung an, als sie ihre Reglosigkeit gerade mit einer Klage unterbrach, die in recht weit entfernte Epochen zurückreichte. Ich setzte mich neben sie auf das Sofa, zog einen Schmolmund und erzählte:

„Großmutter, man hat mich eine schmutzige Jüdin genannt.“

Sie, der nie das Mindestmaß an Takt gefehlt hatte, sah mich verdutzt an:

„Wer?“

„Wer?“, war eine Frage mit breitem Spektrum. Sie konnte auch bedeuten, „warum?“ Noch immer gekränkt, antwortete ich, Paula, das Mädchen, das in der dreihundertvier wohne, wolle, dass meine Suzi beim Spiel mit dem Puppenhaus die Angestellte sei. Großmutter, die schon von weitem witterte, wenn solche hierarchischen Einteilungen böse gemeint waren, murmelte ein Schimpfwort auf Jiddisch. Dann sprach sie langsam, damit ich es begriff:

„Du bist das sauberste Mädchen auf dieser Erde. Sie aber ist meschugge. Hast du verstanden?“

Paula war nach Aussage meiner Großmutter verrückt - im alten Dialekt ausgesprochen, wog die Beleidigung viel schwerer. Die Welt hatte sich wieder geordnet, die furchtbaren Geschichten, die ich immer hörte, hatten einen umfassenden Sinn angenommen. Meine Suzi im Arm, legte ich den Kopf auf Großmutter's Beine und atmete den Duft der Jasminblüte - ein Geschenk, das die Nachbarin ihr jeden Morgen machte und das sie kokett stets im Büstenhalter trug. Sie schob die knotigen Finger in mein Haar, das gelockt war wie ihres: aus einer sorgfältig geteilten Strähne flocht sie ein und denselben Zopf immer wieder neu. Durch ihre wiederholten Seufzer wusste ich, dass sie besorgt war - so sehr, dass sie jene Geschichte von Kosaken mit Säbeln auf ihren Pferden wach zu rufen begann. Besser, ich hätte ihr nicht von dem Streit erzählt: in der Ärmsten lebte ein großer Schmerz wieder auf. Ich wollte nicht, dass sie litt.

Und auch ich flocht und löste einen Zopf in Suzis Haar. Ein Seufzer, der meine Liebkosungen unterbrach, machte mich meiner Großmutter gleich: Ich hasste Paula genauso, wie sie die Kosaken hasste.

Am Abend, als Vater und Mutter gekommen waren, versammelten die Erwachsenen sich zu einer aufgeregten Beratung im Esszimmer: die Großmutter

berichtete von meiner ersten Auseinandersetzung, während ich auf dem Stuhl neben Vater Suzi schützend an die Brust presste. Meine beiden Brüder, die vom Fußball kamen und mit Freudengeheul durch den Hintereingang hereinstürmten, wurden zu der Sitzung hinzugerufen - und sie sollten mit dem Radau aufhören, es handele sich um eine ernste Angelegenheit. Die geröteten Gesichter schweißbedeckt, nahmen sie Platz: sie waren ganz ernüchterte Fröhlichkeit.

Vater strich mit beiden Händen über das Holz der Tischplatte, seine Augen glühten vor Empörung. Abermals erinnerte er an jene Geschichte, die unser ererbter Schrecken war: der Hass, die Verfolgungen, die sinnlosen Toten und - Schrecken aller Schrecken - wie das Haus und die Familie der Großmutter bei einem Pogrom zerstört wurden, einem von denen mit Kosaken auf ihren Pferden. Unser Großmütterchen gab einen weiteren Seufzer von sich, die Augen verloren sich wieder in bläulichem Geflacker. Vater verlieh seiner Stimme einen feierlichen Ton:

„Ab heute spricht keiner von uns mehr mit dieser kleinen Antisemitin“, bemühte er sich, seine Patriarchenrolle auszufüllen. Während er mich mit zärtlicher Zustimmung ansah, streichelte er mein Haar und das meiner Puppe.

„Es war richtig, dass du diese Ziege eine Ziege genannt hast. Man darf sich nicht beugen oder gar schämen.“

Mutter erläuterte:

„Wenn du dich zu tief bückst, sieht man den Schlüpfer.“

Großmutter machte pü-pü-pü, eine Andeutung des dreimaligen Ausspuckens, das die Anwesenheit des Teufels vertreiben sollte.

Von diesem Moment an wurden wir Kinder uns bewusst, welche Schmach es war, gedemütigt zu werden. Es war genauso würdelos, wie den Hintern zu zeigen.

Wenn wir uns zum Schlafen fertig machten, sagte Vater immer, das Leben werde am nächsten Tag beginnen. Der Satz wurde auf Italienisch vorgetragen, was, da er von einem Sohn jüdisch-russischer Einwanderer ausging, seinen ungewöhnlichen Charakter noch unterstrich - ohne dass er je aufhörte, wahr zu sein. Und so kamen bessere Tage. Bis die Zeit des Jom-Kippur-Festes angebrochen war. Wie es alljährlich um den Versöhnungstag herum geschah, brachte meine Großmutter eines schönen Nachmittags vom Markt ein Huhn mit.

Lebend.

Den Ablaufplan, dem von nun an zu folgen war, kannte ich auswendig, Grund genug, weshalb ich mich stets geweigert hatte, das Fleisch irgendeines Geflügels zu essen. Ein einziges Grauen: Das Tier würde mit einem seiner Füße an den Waschtrog gefesselt und bliebe etwa drei Tage im Wirtschaftsbereich gefangen, der Boden mit Zeitungspapier ausgelegt, um ihn vor dem Kot zu schützen. Dort würde es in einem Holznapf nach dicken, gelben Maiskörnern scharren. Für mich war das Schauspiel mehr als schrecklich: die Henkersmahlzeit der Verurteilten, hervorgescharrt in einem groben hölzernen Behältnis. Ich, die ich die Wohnung ausgerechnet durch den Hintereingang zu betreten pflegte, würde mehrmals an ihr vorübergehen, den Blick mit dem ohnmächtigen Schuldgefühl abgewendet, sie

in ihrem Entsetzen als Gefangene ihrer eigenen Natur und ihres Hühnerschicksals allein zu lassen - ihr Sarg wäre eine Bratpfanne, der Leib mit den kurzen Flügeln und den gespreizten Beinen umgeben von im goldfarbenen Fett glänzenden Kartoffeln und Zwiebeln. Am Vorabend des Essens, das die Fastenzeit beenden würde, bräche ein Gezeter in der Küche los: Großmutter oj-oj-oj rufend, das Huhn verzweifelt gackernd, beide sich in einer ungleichen Schlacht beschimpfend. Die Ohren mit den flachen Händen bedeckt, würde ich vor dem Gefecht fliehen und beten, dass das Ganze vorbei wäre, vorbei wäre, vorbei wäre. In dem Kampf, der von einem ekelhaften Geruch nach Verbranntem begleitet würde, gäbe es nur einen Sieger. Das war, meinem Vater zufolge, das Gesetz des Stärkeren: die Umkehrung der Geschichte von David und dem Riesen Goliath.

Schließlich würde Grabesruhe herrschen - auf diese Weise lernte ich die ersten Trauerfälle meines Lebens durchzustehen. Großmutter rief mich bei meinem jiddischen Namen, eine sehr ernste Angelegenheit. Ich ginge in die Küche, voller Beklommenheit die tragische Szene schon vor Augen, das Huhn, wie es mit den Füßen am Wasserhahn hing, während das Blut aus dem Schnitt in der Kehle auf das weiße Steingut des Spülbeckens troff. Eine Welle von Übelkeit, und ich blieb dort mitten auf dem Fliesenboden stehen, angespannt vor Gehorsam, damit Großmutter das tote Tier siebenmal über meinem Kopf kreisen lassen und irgendeinen merkwürdigen Segensspruch aufsagen könnte. Fertig: das unreine Blut des Vogels wäre durch den Ausguss abgeflossen, und ich hätte an einem weiteren seltsamen Ritual der Vorfahren teilgenommen. Der Tod des Huhns, sagte Großmutter mit ihrem unbeholfenen Akzent, habe alle mich umgebenden Schlechtigkeiten fortgetragen. Armes Tier.

Dank des wachen Instinkts, an den ich mich zu gewöhnen begann, ging ich an jenem Abend, noch bevor der finstere Moment gekommen war, in die Küche. Das Huhn gackerte wild: die grauen Federn gesträubt, den Fuß mit einer Schnur an den Waschtrog gefesselt, schwindlig angesichts seiner tierischen Bestimmung. Ohne Verständnis für das Unausweichliche der Situation versuchte es, der Opferung zu entrinnen. Gedankenverloren vor sich hin trällernd, scheuerte die Großmutter den Reistopf mit einem Stück Sapólio aus. Es war unmenschlich: wie konnte sie, gerade sie, gleichgültig gegenüber dem Entsetzen dort neben sich sein?

Und da geschah es: das Huhn blickte mich an. Ein Blick voller Hoffnung, als besäße ich eine messianische Macht. Die schwarzen Pupillen des Huhns, einen wächsernen Schrecken zwischen den mandelförmigen Lidern gebannt, erlebten eine erlösende Tat von dem Kind, das ich war. Rettende Liebe war eigentlich Sache der Erwachsenen. Doch es gab einen Moment, in dem die Güte mich überkam: weil ich eines Tages Mutter sein würde und weil ich Tochter und Enkelin und Schwester und Nichte war. Nachdem ich mich hingekauert hatte, liebte ich es eine Weile, strich ihm über den zarten dunkelroten Kamm, und das Huhn ließ sich streicheln, als wäre es eine Katze oder ein Hündchen. Als wäre es kein Huhn. Irgendetwas geschah, in mir und in ihm, etwas, das ich nicht gleich verstehen konnte. Heute weiß ich, dass das Huhn von einer schwachen, unklaren Hoffnung ergriffen wurde, in jedem Fall aber von Hoffnung.

Herrin eines Lebens, Schöpferin einer Wahrheit, sagte ich im Vollbesitz meiner erlösenden Macht:

„Dieses Huhn wird nicht sterben“, und um die Einhaltung meines Gebots zu gewährleisten, machte ich das Tier zum Menschen: „Sein Name soll Hortênsia sein.“

Beim Essen zu Jom Kippur stand weit mehr auf dem Tisch, als nötig gewesen wäre, um den Hunger zu stillen: es gab Kartoffel-Bagels, deren geröstete Krusten krachten, mit Käse gefüllte Teigtaschen, weich geformt aus Fett und Mehl, Salate aus in einer dicken süßsauren Sahne schwimmenden Mangos und Melonen, eine Torte mit Auberginen und Zwiebeln, die im Licht des silbernen Leuchters glänzten. Zu den Fischbällchen wurde Kren mit der intensiven Farbe der roten Rüben serviert: wir aßen gefüllte fisch in einer Soße aus Gurkenscheiben, Pfefferschoten und Tomaten. Satt und zufrieden, befanden wir uns in froher Erwartung des neuen Jahres, aber trotzdem beschwerten sich meine Brüder. Es war das erste Jom Kippur, bei dem kein Streit um die Hühnerschenkel aufkam. Denn es gab kein Huhn.

Das Gute hatte gesiegt.

Ich aß nicht einmal richtig zu Ende und bat um Erlaubnis, nach Hortênsia sehen zu dürfen, die im Wirtschaftsbereich bequem in einem Tage zuvor aufgestellten Strohkörbchen saß. Da es der höchste Feiertag war, fiel der Kommentar meines Vaters an der Stirnseite des Tisches gemäßigt aus:

„Nein, so was.“

Im Morgengrauen wurde die Wohnung von einem wahren Weltuntergangsgeschrei erschüttert: Hortênsia rang unter Gegacker und Flügelschlagen mit dem Tod. Ich sprang aus dem Bett. Mutter trat aus dem Schlafzimmer und knöpfte sich den Morgenmantel zu, mit nacktem Oberkörper kam Vater hinterher. Im Wirtschaftsbereich brannte Licht. Ich erkannte Großmutter's Gestalt, wie sie vor Hortênsia stand, die sich ihrerseits im Nest erhoben hatte. Die Arme unseres Großmütterchens hingen an den Seiten herab, Hortênsia hörte nicht auf, mit den Flügeln zu schlagen. Vater bohrte den Zeigefinger durch die Luft und deutete auf die Überraschung.

„Ein Ei“, rief er schrill vor Erstaunen, „das Huhn hat ein Ei gelegt.“

Großmutter's Gesicht leuchtete auf. Sie sagte, was man in solchen Augenblicken zu sagen pflegt, auf Jiddisch natürlich und auf Portugiesisch:

„Mazel tov“, lautete die Weissagung künftigen Glücks. „Möge es uns willkommen sein.“

Mutter, die Babys immer geliebt hatte, war gerührt:

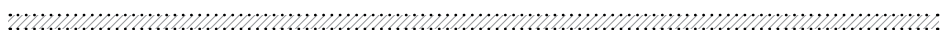
„Wie reizend!“

Noch schlaftrunken, brauchte ich eine Weile, um zu begreifen. Dann ließ Mutter die Jungen wecken, alle sollten kommen, weil das Huhn jetzt ebenfalls Mutter sei. Mein Bruder merkte als erster, worum es ging:

„In dem Ei ist ein Küken?“

Vater blickte von einem zum anderen. Seine Miene war niedergeschmettert:

„Mir passieren aber auch die unmöglichsten Dinge.“



THE BOOK



“Das Dach und der Geiger”

Cíntia Moscovich

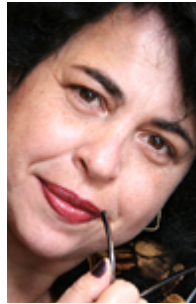
- **Original title:** Arquitetura do arco-íris (“O telhado e o violinista”)
- **ISBN:** 8501069167
- **Publication year:** 2004
- **Original publishing house:** Record
- **Number of pages:** 176
- **Total printing in Brazil:** 3000 copies

SYNOPSIS

Rainbow's Architecture comprises ten short-stories that occur in the Jewish neighborhood of Porto Alegre, a Brazilian city with a recognized Jewish immigrant community since the early 1900's. Divided in two parts, the stories have a large sense of humor with much irony, qualities that distinguish Cíntia Moscovich's writings. Touching life's extreme situations, the stories also find a young girl suddenly facing evil and antisemitism along with a teenager desiring to become a writer while defying her parents' life choice. Rainbow's Architecture is coloured with vivid eroticism, sensuality and tenderness. This work has been nominated for several literary prizes in Brazil and has been published in Portugal and Spain.

Die Architektur des Regenbogens umfasst zehn Kurzgeschichten, die im Jüdischen Viertel von Porto Alegre spielen, einer brasilianischen Stadt mit einer seit den früher 1990er Jahren anerkannten jüdischen Immigrantengemeinde. Das Buch ist in zwei Teile geteilt und mit viel Humor und Ironie geschrieben, eine der besonderen Charakteristiken Cíntia Moscovichs. Die Geschichten geben Extremsituationen im Leben wieder und gehen an die Substanz: Ein junges Mädchen findet sich auf einmal mit den Auswirkungen von Antisemitismus konfrontiert, während ein Teenager mit der Lebensform ihrer Eltern hadert und Schriftsteller werden möchte. Die Architektur des Regenbogens ist ein schillernder Erzählband voll Erotik, Sinnlichkeit und Zärtlichkeit. Er wurde in Brasilien bereits für zahlreiche Literaturpreise nominiert und in Portugal und Spanien veröffentlicht.

THE AUTHOR



Cíntia Moscovich

- **Pen name:** Cíntia Moscovich
- **Other books:** Duas iguais, Rio de Janeiro: Record 2004; 3000 copies

Por que sou gorda, mamãe?, Rio de Janeiro: Record 2006; 3000 copies
Mais ou Menos Normal (juvenil), São Paulo: Publifolha 2007; 3000 copies
O reino das cebolas, Rio de Janeiro: L&PM 1996; 3000 copies
Anotações durante o incêndio, Rio de Janeiro: Record 2000, 2006; 3000 copies
Essa Coisa brilhante que é a chuva, Rio de Janeiro: Record 2012; 3000 copies

• **Author Webpage:**

www.cintiamoscovich.com

THE TRANSLATOR

Enno Petermann

Enno Petermann was born in 1964 in Berlin. He studied Portuguese, Spanish and Comparative Literature at the universities of Rostock, Havana and Berlin. In 1995, he graduated as a M.A. of the Free University Berlin. Today he lives in Potsdam. In 2008, for his translation of the story Fitaverde by

João Guimarães Rosa, he won the Prémio Guimarães Rosa awarded by the Sociedade Brasil-Alemanha. In 2011, as the only translator from Portuguese, he was invited to the annual Translator's Workshop, organized by the Literarisches Colloquium Berlin.

Enno Petermann, geboren 1964 in Berlin, studierte an den Universitäten von Rostock, Havanna und Berlin Portugiesisch, Spanisch und Vergleichende Literaturwissenschaft. 1995 schloss er sein Studium als Magister Artium an der Freien Universität Berlin ab. Heute lebt er in Potsdam. 2008 erhielt er für seine Übersetzung der Erzählung "Fitaverde" von Joao Guimaraes Rosa den von der Deutsch-Brasilianischen Gesellschaft verliehene Guimaraes-Rosa-Preis. 2011 wurde er als einziger Portugiesisch-Übersetzer zur jährlichen Übersetzer-Werkstatt des Literarischen Colloquiums Berlin eingeladen.

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DIE MEISTERSCHAFT

FLÁVIO CARNEIRO

Übersetzung von Wolf-Dieter Schmidt

1

Als der Direktor mich rufen ließ, wusste ich schon, worum es ging. "Sie können hereinkommen", sagte er. Ich war schon halb im Zimmer, die Tür stand zur Hälfte offen. Ich ging ganz hinein und wartete im Stehen. Er zeigte mit einer fast unmerklichen Kopfbewegung und ohne die Augen von dem Papier zu wenden, auf das er irgendwas schrieb, auf den Stuhl. Ich wartete.

Zu sitzen, ohne etwas zu tun, wenn auch nur für kurze Zeit, machte mich unruhig. Vor allem, da ich wusste, dass in meiner mir unentbehrlichen Tasche ein Buch steckte. Eben jenes Buch, das ich gerade ruhig in meiner Ecke las, als mir die Sekretärin mitteilte, dass mich der Direktor zu sprechen wünschte. Ich hasse es, wenn man mich bei meiner Lektüre stört, aber es war immerhin Dr. Camargo, der mich rufen ließ. Ich musste gehen.

Ich war zwar anwesend, aber meine Gedanken waren bei dem Roman, den ich gerade gelesen hatte, einem Krimi. Ich steckte die Hand in die Tasche und hielt das kleine Buch fest. Ich schaute auf die Uhr an der Wand: Vier Minuten, ich saß schon vier lange Minuten auf diesem Stuhl.

"Das ist eine Folter", dachte ich, "der will mich foltern". Als ich begonnen hatte, in der Bibliothek zu arbeiten, war das Erste, was der Direktor mir sagte, noch bevor er mich begrüßte, das heißt, er begrüßte mich eigentlich gar nicht: "Es ist verboten, während der Arbeitszeit zu lesen".

"Natürlich, Dr. Camargo", sagte ich. Aber ich war angepisst. In einer Bibliothek arbeiten, aber nicht lesen dürfen? Schweinerei.

Ich dachte an die Folgen, wenn ich das Buch aus der Tasche herausholte und zu lesen begänne, direkt vor den Augen des Direktors. "Er kann mich fertig machen", dachte ich, "aber das wird er ja eh irgendwie tun. Entweder, er zieht mir was von meinem letzten Gehalt ab, oder er ruft meinen Bruder an, den Ärmsten, der mir als Freund von Dr. Camargo diesen Job verschafft hatte". Der würde sagen: "Da hast du mir ja einen tollen Idioten angeschleppt." Das letzte, das ich im Leben wollte, war, meinem Bruder Unannehmlichkeiten zu bereiten.

Ich rutschte ein bisschen mit meinem Stuhl, wobei ein Geräusch entstand. Dr. Camargo war ein unerträglicher Kerl. Er ließ sich gerne mit dem Doktor vor seinem Namen ansprechen. Er hatte mit Ach und Krach die Uni beendet und nie mehr

in seinem Leben studiert, hatte sich sein Leben eingerichtet, indem er sich bei anderen eingeschleimt hatte, war in die Politik gegangen, und jetzt war er Doktor. Große Scheiße. Ich schaute auf die Uhr: Fünf Minuten.

Es gefiel ihm nicht, dass ich Lärm gemacht hatte. Er hob ein wenig die Augen, ohne den Kopf zu bewegen, und schaute über den Rand seiner kleinen Brille. So eine mit einem Kettchen um den Hals. Er schrieb weiter.

Ich hatte meine Tasche auf dem Schoß und ohne, dass es mir bewusst geworden war, hatten meine Hände das Buch schon in eine Position gebracht, die es mir ermöglichte, zu lesen, ohne es aus der Tasche zu holen. Es genügte, das Buch da zu lassen, wo es war, die zuletzt gelesene Seite aufgeschlagen und nur die Augen ein bisschen nach unten zu wenden und in Richtung meiner Knie zu schauen.

Wenn der Direktor noch dreißig Sekunden so weiter machte, wusste ich schon, was passieren würde. Ich würde die Kontrolle verlieren. Ich spürte, dass das Buch jeden Augenblick wie ein Fisch aus der Tasche springen würde. Ich musste etwas tun, also sagte ich:

„Dr. Camargo, ich weiß, dass Sie ...“

„Was wissen Sie?“ fragte er und schaute mir ins Gesicht, wobei er die Brille mit einer brüsken Bewegung abnahm.

„Nichts.“

„Senhor André“, er nannte mich zum ersten Mal Senhor, und meine Beine zitterten, „sagen Sie mir eins: Haben Sie ein Diplom als Bibliothekar?“

Ich legte mir gerade eine Antwort zurecht, aber er antwortete selbst:

„Nein, haben Sie nicht. Haben Sie irgendwelche Erfahrungen, haben Sie schon mal ein Praktikum oder etwas Ähnliches gemacht? Nein, keinerlei Erfahrung. Haben Sie wenigstens vorher schon mal eine öffentliche Bibliothek betreten? Niemals. Aber wie kommt es dann, dass Sie hier sind? Wie, Senhor André? Sie wissen es nicht. Dann werde ich Ihnen antworten: Glück, pures Glück. Sie sind in der glücklichen Lage, einen Bruder zu haben, der der Freund des Direktors einer Bibliothek wie dieser ist und der Ihnen ein gutes Gehalt bieten kann, selbst wenn Sie das sind, was Sie sind, ein Niemand!“

Es war schwierig, dennoch gelang es mir, fast einen ganzen Absatz zu lesen, während Dr. Camargo mich derart fertig machte. Ich hielt die Augen gesenkt, als ob ich mich für etwas schämte. Meine Hände befanden sich in der Tasche und ich schaute auch nicht auf meine Füße, wie Dr. Camargo vielleicht meinte, sondern auf die Seite, auf der ich beim Lesen unterbrochen worden war. Wenn er noch ein bisschen so weiter redete, wer weiß, ich käme vielleicht noch bis zum Ende der Seite.

„Was habe ich Ihnen gesagt, als Sie hierhergekommen sind?“

Ich schwieg, wartete und las. Zum Glück machte er eine riesen Pause – er genoss wahrscheinlich meine Erniedrigung, das Schwein – eine Pause, lange genug, um den Absatz zu Ende zu lesen. Ich hob ein wenig den Blick: Ob es wohl möglich war umzublättern? Ich hatte Pech, denn als Dr. Camargo meine Augen

sah, schöpfte er wohl neue Energie und erhob die Stimme derart, dass ich erschrak und unmöglich die Seite umblättern konnte. Aber ich ließ das Buch geöffnet.

Er sprach schon nicht mehr, sondern knurrte von oben herab:

„Sie wissen es. Nun, es ist das dritte Mal, wohlgemerkt, nicht das erste und nicht das zweite Mal, es ist das dritte Mal, dass ich Sie während der Arbeitszeit beim Lesen erwische. Habe ich Recht?“

Ich schwieg. Ich hatte beschlossen, kein Wort mehr zu sagen.

„Ich komme an den Tresen und was sehe ich? Ein Benutzer wartet darauf, bedient zu werden, die anderen Angestellten sind beschäftigt und Sie lesen einfach.“

In einer Bibliothek zu arbeiten, war definitiv keine gute Idee.

Der Direktor machte eine kleine Pause. Er holte tief Luft, sein Gesicht war immer noch rot, knallrot. Etwas ruhiger sagte er mit fast unbewegter Stimme:

„Sie sind entlassen“.

Ich schloss meine Tasche und erhob mich ohne etwas zu sagen. Ich drehte mich um und marschierte zur Tür.

„Sie können ins Personalbüro gehen und Ihre Papiere holen“, sagte er, als ich schon die Klinke in der Hand hatte. Ich tat so, als hätte ich nichts gehört, noch hatte ich ein kleines bisschen Würde.

In der Personalabteilung gab mir eine ältere Frau einen Scheck.

„Sie haben Glück“, sagte sie und schaute auf die Uhr, „halb vier, es ist genug Zeit, ihn heute noch einzulösen“.

Sie war an diesem Tag schon die zweite Person, die mir sagte, ich hätte Glück. Das gefiel mir nicht. Ich lief im Eilschritt die Treppen hinunter. Ich nahm den Bus, stieg vor der Bank aus, ging hinein und löste den Scheck ein. Es war eine fürchterliche Hitze und ich dachte nur an eins: Bier.

Ich blieb an der ersten Bar stehen, einer Spelunke im Stadtzentrum. Es gab nur zwei Stühle drin und drei auf dem Gehsteig. Leute gingen vorbei, Busse, Qualm, Lärm, mir war alles egal. Ein Tisch war noch frei. Mein Gott, was wird in dieser Stadt getrunken ... Es war vier Uhr nachmittags und diese Kneipe hatte nur noch einen einzigen freien Tisch.

Ich setzte mich, bestellte ein kaltes Bier und holte das Buch aus der Tasche. Es war nicht der beste Ort, um ein Buch zu lesen, aber ich war nicht wählerisch. Ich machte es mir auf dem Stuhl bequem, füllte mein Glas und nahm einen großen Schluck. Bevor ich meinen Roman öffnete, sagte ich noch ganz laut, fast schreiend: „Scher dich zum Teufel, Dr. Camargo!“

Niemand verstand etwas.

„Weißt du, wie man so was nennt, weißt du, wie man so was nennt?“ Raquel war wütend. Wenn sie so die Dinge wiederholt, ist sie wütend, das weiß ich schon. „Besessenheit, kennst du dieses Wort: Besessenheit. Du bist besessen, André.“ Ich ließ sie reden. Frauen müssen viel reden. Das ist wie atmen. Sie fühlen sich schlecht, wenn sie nicht viel reden können. Das ist was Organisches, glaube ich.

Bevor sie weitermachte, ging Raquel zum Nachttischchen, nahm eine Packung Zigaretten, zündete eine daraus an, machte nur einen Zug und drückte die Zigarette voller Wut wieder im Aschenbecher aus. Dabei machte sie die gleiche Bewegung wie das Mädchen im Film, den wir letzte Nacht gesehen hatten. Ich fand es lustig.

"Über was lachst du? Worüber lachst du, André?"

Raquel hatte verstanden, ich merkte, dass sie es nicht lustig fand und wurde wieder ernst.

"Wusstest du, André, dass es Leute gibt, die ihr ganzes Leben lang arbeiten, ohne jemals entlassen zu werden, wusstest du das? Du bist sechsundzwanzig, André, du arbeitest erst seit zwei Jahren und es ist das dritte Mal, dass sie dich heimschicken! Okay, in der Bibliothek hat es ein bisschen länger gedauert, das ist schon ein Fortschritt, aber ist es normal, wenn jemand drei Arbeitsstellen verliert? Antworte mir, ist das normal?"

Ich musste nicht antworten.

"Nein, es ist nicht normal. Wenn du bei der Arbeit trinken würdest, okay, das wäre ein Grund. Du würdest entlassen, weil du zuviel trinkst. Wir würden zu den Anonymen Alkoholikern gehen, du würdest dich behandeln lassen. Aber nein, das ist nicht das Problem. Drogen? Nein. Schlaflosigkeit. Jemand, der dich nicht kennt, könnte sagen: Er leidet in der Nacht unter Schlaflosigkeit und bei der Arbeit schläft er. Auch nicht. Er ist ein Streithahn, Frauenheld, Gauner. Nichts davon. Was ist es dann? würde ein normaler Mensch fragen. Das Problem, mein Herr ..."

Ich liebte es, wenn Raquel so tat, als ob sie mit jemandem sprechen würde und die antwortende Person imitierte. Sie änderte ihre Stimme, ihren Gesichtsausdruck. Ich amüsierte mich köstlich und vergaß dabei ganz, dass ich es war, der hier zusammengestaucht wurde.

"Das Problem ist, dass dieser Mitbürger während seiner Arbeitszeit liest. Das, nur das. Er ist ein Zwangsleser."

Sie begann zu weinen. Raquel war meine Freundin, wir wollten heiraten, sobald ich irgendeine feste Arbeit hatte. Aber es war schwierig. Alles nur wegen der Bücher.

"Du, André, du ..."

Sie sprach und weinte gleichzeitig. Es war furchtbar traurig.

"Es ist nicht meine Schuld, dass ich gerne lese", riskierte ich einzuwenden.

Sie schaltete exzellent ein:

"Du liest nicht gern. Wer gern liest, liest zu Hause, oder am Strand, oder in der Metro, oder in der ..." Beinahe hätte sie Bibliothek gesagt. "Wer gern liest, hört deswegen nicht auf zu arbeiten. Dein Problem, André, dein Problem ist, dass du abhängig bist, verstehst du, du bist krank!"

Das tat weh. Raquel merkte, dass sie etwas zu weit gegangen war. Sie kam herüber, setzte sich neben mich, wischte ihre Tränen ab und streichelte mein Gesicht.

"Morgen, Liebling", sagte sie, "du brauchst gar nichts einwenden, weil ich es schon festgemacht habe, morgen gehen wir zu Doktor Epifânio de Morais Netto."

Noch ein Doktor in meinem Leben, dachte ich, sagte aber nichts.

Das Erste, was mir in der Praxis auffiel, war die Reinlichkeit. Meine Wohnung sah nach dem Tod meiner Eltern wie ein Schweinestall aus. Ich ließ alles herumliegen, Geschirr in der Spüle, der Abfall verstopfte die Mülleimer in Küche und Bad, schmutzige Wäsche lag überall herum, Essensreste auf dem Sofa und im Bett, Kaffeeflecken und Bierdosen überall.

Raquel kümmerte sich um mich. Wir wohnten nicht zusammen, aber sie schlief unter der Woche an einigen Tagen bei mir und sorgte für Ordnung. Sie wusch die Teller und sagte immer wieder, dass ich eine Putzfrau einstellen sollte. Als ob ich Geld übrig hätte.

Dennoch kam es immer wieder zu der einen oder anderen erniedrigenden Szene, wie zum Beispiel der Anblick des halben Glases mit Erdbeerjoghurt. Raquel war verreist und das halbe Glas Joghurt wurde auf dem Wohnzimmertisch zwei Wochen lang vergessen. Es produzierte die höchste Anzahl von Pilzen und Bakterien, die je in einem bewohnten Haus registriert wurde.

Bei allem guten Willen von Raquel dachte ich manchmal, dass doch alles sehr schmutzig war: Meine Wohnung, meine Kleider, meine Haare, mein Leben.

In der Praxis standen helle Möbel, das Sofa hatte einen blauen, durchsichtigen Überzug, die Klimaanlage machte nicht das geringste Geräusch, die Teppiche, die Wände, die Kleidung der Empfangsdame, ihre hochgesteckte Frisur, das Telefon, die Decke, die Bilder an den Wänden, alles strahlte Sauberkeit aus. Jedes Insekt, jede armselige Mikrobe würde sich schämen, hier zu sein. Ich wusste nicht, was mit mir passieren würde, als ich die Praxis von Dr. Epifânio de Morais Netto betrat, aber auf dem weichen Sofa zu sitzen, war wie im Paradies. Ich hätte auf diesem Sofa sterben können. Sterben und dabei in die grünen Augen der Sekretärin schauen.

Es waren diese Augen, die ich anstarrte, als das Haustelefon auf dem Tisch läutete und sie abnahm.

„Ja, Doktor. Sie können eintreten, bitteschön.“

Als ich an ihr vorbeiging, versuchte ich einen anderen Blick hinzukriegen, einen verführerischen Ausdruck, was aber nicht leicht war, weil ich mich im Grunde lächerlich fühlte. Ich war hier in dieser Praxis mit meiner Freundin, wie ein Kind, das mit seiner Mutter zum Doktor geht. Die Sekretärin dachte bestimmt: was für ein Schwächling. Ein verrückter Schwächling!

Doktor Epifânio de Morais Netto war ein kompletter, perfekter, absoluter Schmierendarsteller. „Gestern war ein Foto von ihm in der Zeitung“, hatte Raquel erzählt und sie war ganz angespannt, als wir am Haus des Schmierendarstellers ankamen. Er hatte Interviews im Fernsehen gegeben, war auf den Titelseiten der Illustrierten, er war der Therapeut, der zurzeit in Mode war.

Dieser Termin hatte ein Vermögen gekostet, aber mein Bruder hatte zugestimmt, die Behandlung zu bezahlen. Ich war mir sicher, dass ich keinerlei Behandlung mit Medikamenten brauchte, ich war nicht krank. Ich war nur einer, dem das Arbeiten nicht gefiel und der Routinen hasste, gar nichts Abnormes. Ich war nur wegen Raquel da. Liebe heißt Opfer bringen.

Er empfing uns an der Tür mit strahlendem Lächeln, elegant und parfümiert.

Er zeigte auf zwei Sessel und bot Kaffee, kaltes Wasser und Saft an. Raquel nahm einen Kaffee, ich wollte nichts. Der Doktor setzte sich auf seinen Platz und ließ eine Menge Fragen vom Stapel. Am Anfang antwortete ich noch selbst, erklärte meinen Fall und nannte Einzelheiten. Er hörte zu, nickte zustimmend mit dem Kopf, machte "aha" und setzte ein idiotisches Lächeln auf.

Er fragte, welche Art von Büchern ich zu lesen pflegte. Ich antwortete, dass ich immer gerne Romane las oder auch mal Gedichte. Journale und Zeitschriften waren nicht mein Ding und vor allem hasste ich Selbsthilfe-Bücher. Er hatte schon fünfzehn Selbsthilfebücher veröffentlicht und fragte, warum ich sie nicht mochte. Ich sagte, dass mich das reale Leben nicht interessiere.

"Ganz so ist es nicht, Doktor", unterbrach Raquel und erklärte, dass ich übertrieben hätte. Ganz so verrückt, wie es schien, sei ich nicht.

Doktor Epifânio kratzte sich nachdenklich am Kinn.

Es war in der Tat nicht ganz so, ich wollte den Schmierendarsteller provozieren, aber ein Quântchen Wahrheit war schon dran an dem, was ich gesagt hatte. Manchmal las ich die Sportseiten irgendeiner Zeitung, aber mein Laster war die Literatur. Und in den letzten zwei Jahren hatte ich eine andere Manie entwickelt. Eine Art spezieller Manie innerhalb der allgemeinen Manie: Ich las nur noch Kriminalgeschichten.

"Nur Kriminalgeschichten? Wird das nicht einmal Zuviel?"

Ich betrachtete sein dickes Gesicht. Ich hatte mich maximal beherrscht, um nicht grob zu dem Kerl zu sein. Ich wollte Raquel nicht widersprechen, aber dieses Mal war es unmöglich und ich sagte:

"Wenn es mir Zuviel geworden wäre, wäre ich nicht hier."

Der Doktor starrte mich eine Zeit lang an, ohne etwas zu sagen. Zwei Schweigende saßen sich gegenüber. Dann sagte er: "Klar" und schrieb etwas auf einen Zettel.

Er fuhr fort, zu fragen und ich antwortete. Er hörte zu, wackelte mit dem Kopf und zeigte jenes Lächeln, als ob er sagen wollte: "Ich kenne schon diesen Typen". Ich war nervös.

Als die Befragung beendet war, kommentierte Dr. Epifânio mit allgemeinen Worten, wie er betonte, meinen Fall. Nach jedem zweiten Wort sagte er "also". Wenn es etwas auf der Welt gibt, dass ich hasse, dann sind es Leute, die "also" sagen. Er sagte: "Weil, sehen Sie, ihr Fall, wie soll ich sagen ... also." Also was? Er hatte vor dem "also" nichts gesagt!

Er sagte "also" noch zweihundertmal, dann begann er wieder, Fragen zu stellen. Dieser Unsinn begann, mich zu ermüden. Er hängte eine Reihe von Fachbegriffen aneinander, einige abgedroschene Kommentare, auswendig gelernte Sachen. Sogar ein Laie wie ich konnte sehen, dass alles nur leeres Geschwätz war und ich schaltete ab. Er fragte und ich antwortete mit "ha?" Raquel hasste dieses "ha?" von mir. Man konnte es verstehen als: Ich habe überhaupt nichts gehört von dem, was du gesagt hast.

Raquel übernahm die Führung, sie beantwortete nun die Fragen an meiner Stelle und da änderte auch Dr. Epifânio seinen Ton, die Kanaille. Raquel war eine schöne Frau, sie war blond, groß, mit perfektem Körper. Sie zog die Blicke auf sich,

wo sie auftauchte. Ich hatte immer Pech mit den Frauen, ich bekam immer nur die hässlichen ab, aber mit Raquel hatte ich verdammtes Glück.

Dr. Epifânio sprach mit Honig auf der Zunge und während der Sätze warf er jene schmutzigen Blicke eines alten Schweinehundes auf Raquel. Sie redete einfach weiter. Vielleicht hatte sie gar nichts bemerkt, oder hielt es für lächerlich. Sie sprach weiter über mich, während ich nur den Lump mit seinen Grimassen und seinen glatten Worten beobachtete. Als er zu Raquel "Meine Liebe" sagte, stand ich auf und sagte: "Für heute reicht's".

Er erschrak. Ich glaube, er hatte ganz vergessen, dass ich auch da war. Dann sagte er zynisch: "Wie Sie möchten. Die Stunde ist sowieso gleich beendet".

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THE BOOK



Die Meisterschaft

Flávio Carneiro

- **Original title:** O Campeonato
- **ISBN:** 978-85-325-24737-7
- **Publication year:** 2009
- **Original publishing house:** Editora Rocco
- **Number of pages:** 382
- **Total printing in Brazil:** 12.000 copies

SYNOPSIS

André, a young man, has an uncontrollable compulsion for reading crime fiction. Inspired by characters like Sherlock Holmes and Sam Spade, he decides to take detective lessons by mail, which will put him in a weird investigation named The Championship. Going through the streets and bars of Rio de Janeiro, André is Flávio Carneiro's tribute to the city, to mystery novels and to its most accomplished authors. The main character, after all, is the crime novel itself, the object of passion for heroes and thugs.

Der junge Mann André steht unter dem unkontrollierbaren Zwang, Kriminalromane zu lesen. Von Charakteren wie Sherlock Holmes und Sam Spade inspiriert, entschließt

er sich, den Beruf des Detektivs per Fernkurs zu erlernen. Dadurch gerät er in eigenartige Ermittlungen über "Die Meisterschaft". Mit seinen Streifzügen durch die Straßen und Bars von Rio de Janeiro, wird André zu Flávio Carneiros Hommage an die Stadt, an Kriminalromane und ihre versiertesten Autoren. Die Hauptrolle nimmt allerdings der Kriminalroman selbst ein, das Objekt der Leidenschaft für Helden und Verbrecher.

PRESS REVIEWS

Jogo Perigoso, por José Castello, in: O Globo. <http://www.flaviocarneiro.com.br/comentarios/jogoperigoso.html>

Uma boa jogada literária, por Beatriz Resende, in: Jornal do Brasil. <http://www.flaviocarneiro.com.br/comentarios/umaboajogadaliteraria.html>

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A ficção policial de Flávio Carneiro, por Gismair Martins Teixeira, in: O Popular <http://www.flaviocarneiro.com.br/comentarios/aficcaopolicial.html>

THE AUTHOR

Flávio Martins Carneiro

- **Pen name:** Flávio Carneiro
- **Other books:**

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O leitor fingido (Essays/Essays) -



Editora Rocco, 2010 - 2.500 copies.
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(Short stories/Kurzgeschichten) -
Editora Rocco, 2009 - 3.000 copies.
A distância das coisas (Novel/Roman)
- Editora SM, 2008 - 18.000 copies.
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Rocco, 2006 - 11.000 copies.
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Editora SM, 2006 - 8.000 copies.
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Editora Global, 2003 - 3.000 copies.
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Global, 2000 - 8.000 copies.

• **Author's webpage:**

www.flaviocarneiro.com.br

THE TRANSLATOR

Wolf-Dieter Schmidt

Wolf Schmidt was born in 1949 in Erlangen, Germany. Certified and sworn translator for English/German. He was director of a language school in Erlangen. Besides other languages he taught German for Brazilians in Germany and Rio de Janeiro. Certified by RIOTUR as tourist guide for Rio de Janeiro. He translated from English, German, Portuguese for various magazines and journals and made translations for lecturers of UERJ (University of the State of Rio de Janeiro).

Wolf Schmidt, geboren 1949 in Erlangen, Deutschland. Vereidigter Übersetzer für die englische Sprache. War Direktor einer Sprachschule in Erlangen. Er hat u. a. in Deutschland und Rio de Janeiro Deutsch für Brasilianer unterrichtet. Abschluss von RIOTUR als Reiseleiter in Rio de Janeiro. Übersetzungen aus und in Englisch und Portugiesisch für diverse Zeitschriften. Übersetzungen für Professoren der UERJ (Staatliche Universität Rio de Janeiro).

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RIBAMAR

JOSÉ CASTELLO

Übersetzung von Michael Kegler

1

Mein Leiden hat einen genauen Ursprung: Ich bin besessen von Franz Kafka. Ich beneide ihn nicht und will auch nicht so sein wie er. Noch weniger hasse ich ihn, und mit etwas Mühe erkenne ich auch seine Größe an. Mein Problem ist, dass mir Franz Kafka nicht aus dem Kopf geht.

Dies begann, als ich noch ein Kind war. Irgendwo entdeckte ich ein Foto mit diesem unruhigen Blick wie dem meinen. Er war stets dunkel gekleidet wie ich. Ein Schatten umgibt ihn, und ich spüre, wie mir ein Schauer den Rücken hinabläuft.

Und nicht nur an Franz muss ich denken, sondern auch an seinen Vater, Hermann Kafka, und immer wenn mir die beiden in den Sinn kommen, denke ich auch an dich, Papa. Eingezwängt zwischen diesen drei kämpfe ich um mein Leben.

Ein Nachbar von mir, Professor Jobi, dem ich von meiner Absicht erzählte, das Verhältnis von Franz Kafka zu seinem Vater zu nutzen, um über das schwierige Verhältnis von uns beiden zu reflektieren, warnte mich vor den Risiken dieses Projekts. „Gib acht, dass du daraus kein Instrument deiner Rache machst.“

Er war es auch, der mich darauf brachte, dass „Kafka“ übersetzt eine Art Krähe sei, und diese harmlose Verbindung ein schlechtes Vorzeichen sein könne.

Ich glaube dem Professor nicht und übernehme seine Übersetzung nur, weil ich sie brauchen kann. Das sind die Vorteile der Fiktion: Hier darf ich alles.

Ich habe Dir noch nicht gesagt, Vater, dass ich an einem Roman schreibe. Ich weiß nicht, ob er je fertig wird. Korrekter wäre, ich würde es Aufzeichnungen nennen für ein Buch, das ich irgendwann einmal schreiben werde. Es wird Ribamar heißen. Und ich werde es Dir widmen.

Zurück zur Übersetzung von Professor Jobi. Kafka, die Krähe. Mir gefallen solche kruden Verbindungen zwischen Wörtern. Sie führen zu groben Fehlern, die unterschwellig doch Wahrheiten transportieren.

Seit ich mit diesen Notizen begonnen habe, träumte ich tatsächlich immerzu von Vögeln. Kleinen, rundlichen, schwarzen Vögeln. Sie umkreisen mich und diktieren mir schauerliche Sätze. Für mich ist klar: Ich habe von Krähen geträumt. Und gehe ein Stückchen weiter: Ich träumte von Franz Kafka.

Die angenommene Existenz eines Franz Kafka eröffnet mir einen Weg. Krähen werden auch mit Geschwätzigkeit assoziiert. Krähen reißen ihren Schnabel auf wie die Schwätzer und die Hysterischen. Kafka war ein sehr stiller Mann, dessen Stille allerdings einherging mit einer brodelnden inneren Geschwätzigkeit.

Ich komme zu dem Schluss, dass zwischen Kafka und mir eine Verbindung besteht: nicht das Aussehen oder irgend eine andere Äußerlichkeit, auch nicht in Stil oder Intention, und schon gar nicht seine Größe.

Wir sind verbunden - wie zwei Marionetten am selben Strang - durch eine Art inneren Brodelns, das ich beschlie-ße, das Moment der Krähe zu nennen.

2

Vor der rauen Nacht erscheinen - wie riesige Raben - die letzten Bilder, die ich von dir im Kopf habe, Vater.

Ich komme zu spät. Der Pfleger sagt: „Ein schnelles Bad, das geht schnell“. Seine pfeifende Stimme erinnert mich an den Klang eines Grammofons: „Ich will kein Bad, ich will hinuntergehen“.

Seine Füße mit den hervorspringenden Knochen sind Kral-len. Trotz der Erregung stehst du aufrecht. „Ich will hin-untergehen“. Ich frage, wohin du gehen willst. Um diese Uhrzeit schlafen alle Patienten schon - außer den zwei oder drei, die sich selbst nicht ertragen und stöhnen. „Ich will hinuntergehen, ich will hinuntergehen“, sagst du mit Nach-druck.

Ich umklammere ihn von hinten und gebe ihm einen Kuss. Sein Bart kratzt an meinen Lippen. „Wenn du mich wäschst, bade ich“. Er wedelt angewidert mit den Händen, um damit zu sagen, dass ihn der Fernseher stört. Wir schweigen. Wie schnelle, aber tiefe Messerstiche schneiden einige Seufzer durch den Raum.

Ich knöpfe sein Hemd auf. Du bist abgemagert, und doch sind noch Reste von Muskeln zu erkennen, sie stechen ins Auge wie Schuppen. Die Körperhaare sind fester. Sie wachsen aus Nase und Ohren. Ich nehme eine kleine Schere und beginne damit, sie zu schneiden.

Das hat nichts mit Hygiene zu tun und auch nicht mit Ästhetik. Es ist eine Art Zärtlichkeit. Du gibst dich den Liebkosungen der Schere hin. Du folgst mit den Augen der Bewegung. Zitterst ein wenig.

Plötzlich sagst du: „Ich will deine Mutter sehen“. Vor ein paar Minuten ist sie hastig, getrieben von irgendeiner alltäglichen Verspätung, gegangen. Wir können ihr Kölnisch Wasser noch riechen.

Deine ans Kopfende geklammerten Hände (Krallen am Käfig) machen dich zu einem Vogel. Riesig, mit gestutzten Flügeln, die Nase in einen Schnabel verwandelt, die Haare hart wie eine Krone. Zum Abflug bereit. Zum Schlag.

„Vater“, und mehr kann ich nicht sagen. „Los, zieh schon die Hose aus“. Du willst dich nicht hinsetzen, so dass die Hose, als ich das Band löse, zu Boden gleitet.

Als ich mich bücke, um deinen Fuß anzuheben, befindet sich direkt vor meinen Augen dein welches Geschlecht. Ein Kinderpenis zwischen unverhältnismäßig großen Hoden. Dieses tote Geschlecht, aus dem ich entstanden bin.

Die Ablehnung lässt mich wieder aufstehen. Vergessen, dass ich ihm beim Sterben helfe und nicht beim zur Welt kommen, pfeife ich ein Lied. Dieses Lied, das mich bis heute belastet.

3

Beklemmung steigt mir den Hals hinauf. Ein unwillkürlicher Schwall, der sich Bahn bricht - als müsse sich eine andere Person anstatt meiner übergeben -, ergießt sich über uns beide. Eine Dusche des Ekels, Überreste meiner selbst, meines Schmerzes. „Vater“, stammle ich. Stoße auch diese Worte aus mir heraus.

Zwei Putzleute kommen. Einer führt ihn direkt unter die Dusche. Während sie ihn einseifen, höre ich: „Ich will nicht duschen, ich will hinuntergehen“. Dann wirst du energischer: „Ich will meinen Sohn. Ich will, dass er mir hilft beim Hinuntergehen.“

Ich frage den Pfleger, was unten ist. „Nichts. Nur der Empfang, die Garagen und ein Lager.“ Und dann, als sehe er endlich eine Art Sinn in all dem, sagte er: „Vielleicht hat ihr Vater die Absicht zu fliehen.“

Das ist eine Anmaßung. „Besser, Sie sprechen nicht an seiner Stelle“, sage ich, und meine Stimme klingt fester als beabsichtigt, aber es ist zu spät, daran etwas zu ändern. Mein Krähenblick gleitet über den schmutzigen Boden.

Dunkelheit ist um mich herum. Plötzlich hält der Bus auf offener Straße. Ohne jede Hast steht der Fahrer auf, greift sich eine Art Peitsche mit Strohfäden und öffnet die Tür. Die Nacht bläst einen Hauch ohne Bedeutung. Ich kauere mich zusammen.

„Chh, chh“. Der Fahrer scheucht Tiere vom Weg. Sein Fauchen ist lang und verstörend. Er ist klein und führt die Peitsche wie ein Maestro. Ich sitze ganz vorne. Als er zurückkehrt, sagt er: „Jede Nacht dasselbe. Viecher, die nicht wissen wohin. Wann hört das endlich auf?“

Und wieder sehe ich ihn, meinen Vater. Unter der Dusche, die Beine angewinkelt, um nicht zu fallen, die Hände um den Handlauf gekrallt. Sogar unter dem warmen Wasser zitterst du. Ohne den Schwamm loszulassen, fragt der Pfleger: „Sind Sie sicher, dass alles in Ordnung ist?“ Die Antwort kommt prompt: „Ich stehe auf eigenen Beinen. Genügt ihnen das nicht?“ Gekränkt überlässt der junge Mann ihn meinen Händen.

Du wirkst (bitte verzeih) wie ein Affe. Aus dem weißen Schaum taucht ein spitzes Gesicht auf, überzogen von lede-riger, künstlich aussehender Haut. Ich will nichts beschö-nigen: Dein Körper, so welk und unförmig, ekelt mich an.

Und wieder steigt bitterer Geschmack auf, drängt nach außen, doch ich beherrsche mich. Ich muss das Wenige, das ich bin, beherrschen, sonst kann ich nicht standhalten. Das bin ich: Ein Mann, der sich auflöst. Und du schaust mir da-bei zu.

5

Absender und Empfänger gibt es nur bei der Post. Das erfuhr ich, als A., ein Bekannter, mich aus Rio de Janeiro anrief, um mich etwas zu fragen.

A. ist Schriftsteller und weiß um das Gewicht der Worte: „Erinnerst du dich, deinem Vater zum Vatertag 1973 Kafkas „Brief an den Vater“ geschenkt zu haben?“

Wir waren uns nie sehr nahe gewesen, hatten uns erst in den neunziger Jahren etwas besser kennengelernt. Wie konnte er wissen?

Ohne meine Antwort abzuwarten, las er die Widmung: „Dem geliebten Papa. Dein Sohn José“. Darunter: „Vatertag 1973.“ Weiter nichts.

Es stimmt: Zum Vatertag 1973 schenkte ich dir Kafkas „Brief an den Vater“. Ich erinnere mich genau – an den Fehlschlag.

In dem Geschenk steckte eine Absicht. Damals sprachen wir kaum miteinander. Nicht einmal über die Schwierigkeit zu sprechen, konnte ich reden. Ich kaufte das Buch von Franz Kafka eher zufällig in einem Schreibwarenladen in Co-pacabana. Der schwarze Umschlag hatte mich mehr interessiert als der Titel, der mich abstieß. Ich las es mit Mühe aber mit wachsendem Erstaunen.

In seinen Worten an den Vater Hermann Kafka, bediente sich Franz nicht nur meiner eigenen Worte, sondern nahm regelrecht meine eigene Position als Sohn ein. Die selben Worte, die in meiner Kehle Schmerzen bereiteten und mich am Sprechen hinderten, setzten, von Franz Kafka gesagt, Wahrheiten frei.

Ich brauchte nicht mehr nach Worten suchen für das, was ich sagen wollte. Sie waren schon da, auch wenn sie mir zum großen Teil noch entglitten. Von einem großen Autor ausgesprochen, wurden sie nicht nur überhöht, sondern geradezu glaubwürdig. Zweiundneunzig Seiten, in denen zusammengefasst war, was ich all die Jahre vergeblich zu sagen versucht hatte.

Ich nahm das Buch, schrieb die Widmung hinein und legte es Dir auf den Nachttisch. Mit dieser Geste erwiderte ich die Worte, die Franz von Hermann zu hören bekommen hatte, als er ihm das erste Exemplar des „Landarzt“ geschenkt hatte, das einzige Buch, das er seinem Vater je widmete.

Als Hermann das Buch in Empfang nahm, sagte er nur: „Leg es auf die Kommode“. Ich weiß nicht, ob Franz dies getan hat oder nicht, doch ich tat es an seiner Stelle, mit einem anderen Buch. Und damit zahlte ich es ihm heim.

Franz erfuhr nie, ob sein Vater den „Landarzt“ gelesen hat. Wir wissen jedoch, dass Hermann Kafka nie den „Brief an den Vater“ gelesen hat, ein Buch, das Franz als Gefangener seiner Angst lieber der Mutter Julie gab und nicht seinem Vater. Und seine Mutter hat es, um ihn zu schützen, nie ihrem Mann gezeigt.

Franz war ein einsamer Mann. Schüchternheit war die Kehrseite seiner Medaille: Die Angst, entlarvt zu werden. Als hätte er ein Verbrechen begangen, und jeden Moment könnte man kommen und ihn festnehmen. Diesem Schicksal zu-vorkommend handelte er wie ein Gefangener. Er war schlauer als seine Häscher. Und grausamer.

Ich weiß nicht, ob du „Brief an den Vater“, je gelesen hast, jenes Buch, das ich dir 1973 geschenkt habe – 54 Jahre nachdem Franz es schrieb. Sollte meine Mutter es Julie Löwy nachgemacht, sich zwischen uns geworfen und das Buch an sich genommen haben?

Auch wenn ich mich nicht direkt an dich gewandt habe, war ich immerhin mutiger als Franz. Ich habe einen Schritt mehr getan: Ich bin in dein Zimmer eingedrungen. Was nicht wenig ist. Es war eine männliche Geste, die mir Mut gemacht hat.

Mein Freund A. war so freundlich, jenes Exemplar des „Brief an den Vater“ für mich zu kaufen. Welchen Weg mag dieses Buch genommen haben in den vergangenen vierzig Jahren, bevor es zu mir zurückkehrte? Er schickte es mir mit der Post und bot sich somit als Dein Stellvertreter an.

Vielleicht erklärt dies die Probleme, die ich mit unse-rer Freundschaft habe. Vielleicht sehe ich in A. nicht un-bedingt Dich, aber einen Platzhalter – einen Diener, stelle ich mir vor, um ihn zu demütigen. Einen einfachen Überbrin-ger, der, wie ein argloser Briefträger, keine Ahnung hat von der Brisanz des Umschlages, den er übergibt.

Das Buch wurde mir nicht überbracht, sondern zurückge-geben – in einer verächtlichen, unhöflichen Geste. Ich zit-terte, als ich nach 33 Jahren den „Brief an den Vater“ in Händen hielt, in dem Du einmal geblättert hast. Es zumindest hättest tun können. Oder nicht einmal das?

Die Blätter sind vergilbt und die Seiten ein wenig schief, aber intakt. Oben auf dem Schmutzblatt, über der Widmung, prangt der matte Stempel des Antiquariats in Rio de Janeiro, aus dem mein Freund dich gerettet hat. A. gab mir kein Buch zurück, sondern ein Stück meiner Geschichte. Ich weiß nicht, ob ihm die Bedeutung seiner Geste bewusst war.

7

Beim Schreiben überkommt mich Beklemmung. Der gleiche namenlose Schmerz, der Gregor Samsa in „Die Verwandlung“ zerstört. So zu tun, als sei ich Gregor Samsa, so tun, als sei all dies wahr, könnte es mir beim Schreiben behilflich sein? Es ist wie immer: Die Bücher, die ich schreibe, er-schlagen mich. Wie die Pantoffelhiebe, mit denen wir uns der Kakerlaken entledigen.

Ich sehe mich in einem kleinen, lichtlosen Raum, umgeben von unbekanntem Dingen. Der Raum verengt sich, die Bewegung ist eingeschränkt oder nutzlos, die Atmung geht langsam. Schriftsteller sind einsam. Ich stecke in der Vereinsamung.

Auch deine Anwesenheit hat mir stets Beklemmung verursacht und mich erschlagen. Und dir war gleichgültig, dass aus mir ein Insekt (Samsa) wurde. Meine kleine Metamorphose.

Beklemmung entsteht aus Kleinigkeiten, dringt in Details, steckt in Zwischenräumen. Morgens konnte ich nie ins Bad gehen, wenn du, wie immer in Eile, deinen Pyjama auf der Ablage oder deine Pantoffeln vor dem Waschtisch vergessen hattest. Deiner Kleidung entströmte der Geruch nach Verrat. Umgeben von kalten Fliesen ging von ihnen eine Atmosphäre der Lüge aus.

Also ging ich immer hastig hinein, wie ein Vertreter, (ein Samsa), der nur auf der Durchreise ist durch ein Terrain, das ihm nicht gehört und ihm feindlich gesonnen ist. Nur getrieben von der Notwendigkeit - mich zu waschen, zu urinieren. Getrieben.

Wie Samsa hatte auch ich einen Chef, der mir keinen Augenblick Ruhe ließ. Der nur lebte, um mich zu überwachen. Heute bist du dieser Chef. Bis heute bist du das.

Auf dem Boden des Badezimmers sah ich deine zusammengeknüllten Kleidungsstücke. Dieser Geruch zwischen Potenz und Blut unterdrückte mich. Mein Körper öffnete sich wie eine Wunde. Zu leben bedeutete, der Gewalt dieses Geruchs nachzugeben.

Die Unterdrückung, die mich schmerzte, ließ mich auch sehen, dass mir nichts übrig blieb, als zu kämpfen. Doch erfolglos in meinem Fall. Ich klammerte mich, wie ein Schiffbrüchiger (Robinson) an Trümmer. Und blieb dort.

Inmitten des Unglücks trieb dein Pyjama. Hülle der Nacht, Überreste vergangener Stunden zwischen Alpträumen und Lust, Überrest eines Vaters, der in diesem Augenblick schon geduscht, gut gekleidet, gut genährt, durch die Welt zog, weit fort von mir.

ENDE

Es ist Zeit, Koffer zu packen, Rechnungen zu begleichen und nach Hause zurückzukehren. Die Sätze einwickeln, Hoffnungen zusammenfalten, Illusionen zurücklassen. Man sucht nicht nach dem, was man bei sich trägt.

Bevor ich die Straße nehme, muss ich noch zur Post. Ich habe einen Brief aufzugeben. Diesen Brief an Dich, Ribamar, meinen Vater. Die Frau hinter dem Schalter schaut mich ungläubig an: „Hier fehlt die Anschrift“. Ich antworte: „Schicken Sie ihn irgendwo hin.“

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THE BOOK



Ribamar

José Castello

- **Original title:** Ribamar
- **ISBN:** 978-85-286-1443-5
- **Publication year:** 2010
- **Original publishing house:** Bertrand Brasil, Rio de Janeiro
- **Number of pages:** 278
- **Total printing in Brazil:** 5.000 copies

SYNOPSIS

Ribamar tells the story of the first person narrator José and his attempt to reconcile with his deceased father, who to him seemed overpowering and standoffish. The feeble and overanxious son identifies with Kafka's "Letter to My Father" to which he frequently refers. Curious about his father's origin, he travels to the latter's birthplace Parnaíba. Yet even here his questions remain unanswered. The conflict with his father, whom the narrator visits at the nursing home in the beginning of the book, the disturbing incidents and dreams that he describes in a highly poetic and precise language, reveal the ambivalence between power and powerlessness, between strength and weakness. Ribamar is therefore above all an impressive reflection on the failure, frailty and transitoriness of mankind.

In einer Mischung aus Roman und fiktiven Erinnerungen schildert Ribamar den Versuch des Ich-Erzählers José, sich mit seinem als übermächtig und distanziert empfundenen und bereits verstorbenen Vater zu versöhnen. Der schwächliche und überängstige Sohn erkennt sich wieder in Kafkas "Brief an den Vater", auf den er sich immer wieder bezieht. Auf der Spurensuche nach der Herkunft des Vaters begibt er sich in dessen Geburtsort Parnaíba, findet dort aber nicht die erhofften Antworten auf seine Fragen. Die Auseinandersetzung mit dem Vater, den der Erzähler zu Beginn des Buches im Altersheim besucht, die verstörenden Begebenheiten und Träume, die er in einer sehr poetischen und präzisen Sprache beschreibt, lassen die Ambivalenz zwischen Macht und Ohnmacht, zwischen Stärke und Schwäche erkennen. Ribamar ist somit vor allem eine beeindruckende Reflexion über das Scheitern, die Gebrechlichkeit und Vergänglichkeit des Menschen.

TRANSLATIONS

Italy: Urogallo

Portugal: Dom Quixote, 2012

PRESS REVIEWS

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THE AUTHOR



José Guimarães Castello Branco

• **Pen name:** José Castello

• **Other books:**

Fantasma, Rio de Janeiro: Record 2001;
3000 copies

• **Author's webpage:**

www.oglobo.com.br/blogs/literatura

THE TRANSLATOR

Michael Kegler

Michael Kegler was born in 1967 in Gießen (Germany) and lived in Liberia and Brazil. Since 1999 he works as translator of lusophone literature by Paulina Chiziane, José Eduardo Agualusa, Fernando Molica, J.P. Cuenca, Luiz Ruffato, Michel Laub and others. He is editor of the website www.novacultura.de on portuguese language literature.

Michael Kegler wurde 1967 in Gießen geboren, lebte in Liberia und Brasilien und arbeitet seit Ende der 1990er Jahre als Literaturübersetzer aus der portugiesischen Sprache. Er übersetzte unter anderen Paulina Chiziane, José Eduardo Agualusa, Fernando Molica, J.P. Cuenca, Luiz Ruffato und Michel Laub. Seit 2001 betreibt er die Website www.novacultura.de über Literatur aus dem portugiesischen Sprachraum.

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EXILE

AMILCAR BETTEGA BARBOSA

Translated by Brian Gould

I'll close down the shop and leave town.' How often that thought haunted me! Not that I disliked the city, but the shop didn't pay its way there. It's quite strange that I should be saying this, because I've never had a shop anywhere else. And look, I'm no youngster! In other words, one way or another, I've kept the shop open all this time, though at what cost nobody knows but me.

The shop never attracted many customers, which I regard as a normal state of affairs. People are perfectly capable of living their normal lives without ever needing to come to the shop. It's even quite possible that the number of customers is the same today as it was when I first opened the shop, and, after all, perhaps I've only broached the question now that I'm looking for an excuse to close the place down. But nobody can deny that a shop needs customers. Not just to buy its products, but also, and mainly, to give it an airing. A shop like mine, so turned in upon itself, ends up creating a dangerous atmosphere within itself. Of course the hot weather here helps to increase the feeling of suffocation. It leaves you inert. Sometimes I get the impression that the air in the shop is solidifying into a kind of gel that is gradually filling up all the available space, which obviously makes it difficult to move around in here. Every morning, as soon as I've opened the shop, I take up my post behind the counter waiting for the customers. At about midday, when I walk to the door to stretch my legs, I can already feel the gelatinous air swishing around my legs, slowing me down. Of course, the heat is partly to blame as well, it has to be. And I'll make sure when I move that the new place will be cooler. I even installed a ceiling fan to move the air around a little, but it's a very high ceiling, and the fan is too far away. Down here I can hardly feel the effect; all I can hear is the whirr of the blades slowly grinding away up there, which at least is reassuring as it conveys the feeling that the shop isn't quite so empty. But then arises the problem of the electricity consumption, which has gone up a lot and now forces me to leave the fan switched off most of the time. If the shop attracts no customers, if it doesn't manage to sell its products, if my income is insignificant, I have to cut my expenditure to the bone—that's basic, it's in all the retail trade handbooks. I don't even switch the light on anymore, I put up with a few hours of semi-darkness in the early part of the morning, but I don't switch the light on. In the afternoon there's no problem, because the sun sets directly opposite the shop and shines in brightly through the door and both windows, which I always leave wide open. That's when this placid and gelatinous quality of the air becomes more visible. The inside of the shop becomes yellowed and the air grows thick, with an aged look about it. Sometimes I have to shrink back behind the counter so

as not to have the sun directly in my eyes. The sunlight becomes opaque, filtered through the dense air in the shop, but it shines in my eyes with undiminished force. Huddled up behind the counter, I don't leave my refuge until six o'clock, six o'clock on the dot, to lock up the shop and rest after my day's work.

In the beginning I used to close the shop at lunchtime as well, I crossed the square in front and went to have lunch at a hotel on the other side. Then the hotel closed down and I decided to have my lunch in the shop, keeping it open all day, more in accordance, therefore, with modern practice. I used to have my lunch behind the counter, in the darkest corner, hastily, so that if a customer came in I would be ready to serve him, preferably without any food scraps stuck between my teeth—in fact I asked the girl who prepared my lunch not to use beans, precisely to avoid problems of that kind.

Nobody ever came into the shop at lunchtime.

But the worst time of day was after lunch, with the heat and my digestion; even though I restricted myself to a most frugal meal, I felt so sleepy that I had to rest behind the counter. I slept, or dozed in a state of permanent alert. Sometimes I would wake up startled by the uproar of the kids running into the shop, playing a game that to this day I still haven't been able to understand properly. They usually came in a gang of six or seven, as if they were all a single wave of noise and movement. They shouted a lot, pulling one another and laughing. Every one of them seemed to be trying all the time to pull the others, as if they were playing a game of catch in a very confined space—precisely that space occupied by the wave which was constantly on the move all over town and which, from time to time, came crashing into my shop. In time I learnt to detect the first sound of their approach: as soon as they turned the corner of the street, I would position myself behind the door so as to be ready to drive them away the moment they appeared. I stamped my feet on the floor, letting out cries of 'shoo!' like someone chasing dogs away. Once I chased them as far as the pavement, where I was surprised to see, while they were turning the corner, that, at least on that occasion, it really was a pack of dogs making a racket. They are all very much alike.

Although I say these things about dogs and children, it doesn't mean I don't like them. On the contrary, I have a particular admiration for this capacity they have for constant activity. But what I need here in the shop is not kids or dogs, but people coming in to buy my goods. The shelves that cover every wall of the shop are full, and I know that my goods are first-rate. I cannot deny that the complete absence of customers sometimes fills my head with doubts. I also recognise that the look of the shop could do with a bit of modernising—the dark unsightly atmosphere is no great attraction for customers and ends up leaving the merchandise stacked on the shelves even more concealed. But I know for certain that my goods are first-rate. The problem is that there are no more customers in this town. Sometimes I even get the suspicion that the town is starting to disappear. It's as though it were being rubbed out by an enormous eraser, especially the inhabitants, the customers, so that the place looks more and more like a ghost town. Whenever I get tired

of standing behind the counter waiting for customers, I walk to the window and stand there for hours, staring into space. Hours and hours and not a single person walks by, either along the street itself, or in the square opposite. And the silence, made even heavier by the heat, descends upon the city like a great solid mass of nothing—a solid white nothing-coloured silence. Nothing but a few dark silent house fronts that seem to be watching me. Nowadays, the silence is only broken when the pack of dogs comes along the street making that racket which might be fighting or playing games, there's no way of telling. They pass by, crazy, noisy, and immediately vanish round the corner of the street—and the silence falls upon the city once again. When the whirlwind of barking threatens to come inside the shop I stamp hard on the floor and shoo them away, which at least keeps me amused. Sometimes one of the dogs breaks away from the pack and comes inside the shop on its own, running round in circles, lost and not knowing where to go, bumping into the counter and shelves until it finds the doorway and leaves. And I stand there enthralled, watching the undulations produced by the sudden passage of that movement inside the shop, the eddies that form in the yellow gelatinous air, like clouds disturbed in the imminence of a storm.

But it must have been the girl who brings my lunch that spread gossip about the closure of the shop. I know that she meant no harm, and perhaps it was only a desperate attempt to save her sole source of income. I had told her she no longer needed to bring my lunch and I had to explain why. It can only be for that reason that, quite suddenly, some people have started coming here, after all this time. Some of them come in silently, with an extremely respectful air, and they look at the shelves a lot. They slyly glance at me as well, behind the counter. They seem quite impressed, but when I try to approach them they go away, thinking who knows what. Others have a certain jaded air, even a somewhat blasé look, and stay only a few moments, leaving me with the impression that they are customers whom nothing can surprise. They have seen everything that exists in every shop in the world, they know everything, and perhaps that's why they have such a sad look about them. They come in and leave again, conveying a sense that they have only come inside in performance of a duty. Some of them wear identification badges, but I've never been able to read what they say.

Only yesterday a particularly interesting couple came in, the man very fat and tired-looking, the woman young and talkative. I was just finishing my lunch behind the counter and I stayed where I was, watching them through a crack in the woodwork and listening to what they were saying. She picked up the goods, handled them and showed them to the fat man, who kept his hands in his pockets and even took a step backwards whenever she approached with the merchandise. 'There's nothing like this anywhere else in town,' she said, thrusting the product at the fat man's chest, at which he grimaced in disgust and moved away. 'In your position, you need to look at this,' she insisted, giving the impression that she was very annoyed. The fat man looked wearily at the doorway. Then she gave her full attention to the merchandise in her hand, turning it over and over. She was about to say something else to the

fat man, but changed her mind when she noticed that he was almost at the door, with an air of impatience. Still holding the product in her hand, she went up to the fat man, they exchanged a few words that I couldn't overhear and a moment later they were smiling, arm in arm. On stepping through the doorway, she slipped the merchandise into her handbag. I would have had time to catch up with them and demand payment for what she had taken, but I thought that if I did that, she would only return it to me and I would have to bring it back into the shop.

And, after all, it was all decided. Even if from one moment to the next the shop were to fill up with customers. Even if the shop should become the top-selling shop in the whole world. The next day the girl wouldn't even be bringing me my lunch any more. The truth is that I really felt very, very tired. I left everything just as it was and closed the shop at six o'clock exactly.

I left the city the same evening, because you should always leave a place under cover of darkness. And I left it by train because that, too, is the best way to go away.

When the train began to move a great feeling of relief and joy came over me. I could already imagine what it would be like doing business in the new place. It was a new life that was unfurling at the end of those rails that stretched away into the darkness of the night. I leant my head back against the headrest and sat there watching the city flow past outside my window, sensing—through the movement of the landscape and lights outside—the train slicing its way through the city. The lights rolled away in the wake of the train, in the landscape that it was carrying me away from. I went so far as to imagine that they were fizzling out in the air like bubbles bursting as soon as the train had gone by. With my face glued to the window and my body twisted round to try and see the bubbles of lights dissolving in the air and leaving only the absolute blackness of night behind me.

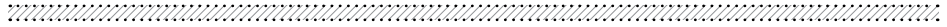
It must have been while I was thinking of the light-bubbles bursting and fizzling out in a shower of sparks that I dropped off to sleep. I woke up almost immediately, and outside my window the city was still rolling past. The train was taking a long time to shake itself free from that pale landscape of empty streets, empty houses, empty lights. I dozed off again and woke up again, several times over, and the train was still going through the city. It was only then that I realised what a big city I was leaving. Empty, in darkness, with its sparse lights evaporating in the wake of the train, but always out there, where I could see it through my window. It was unending.

I turned to face the other way, but I could no longer manage to doze off. And after a long time restraining myself, forcing myself not to look out of the window, I couldn't hold out any longer and once again glued my face to the window. And there it was, in the scene made hazy by my breath on the glass, there it still was, the city with its dry house fronts, its cold street lights, ceaselessly streaming past. Again I looked at the lights popping off as the train went by, and my mind was filled with the memory of that gang of kids, that pack of dogs, sweeping like a wave of noise through the city and in and out of my shop. I shut my eyes and they swallowed something.

It wasn't giving up. Neither was it resignation. It simply dawned on me that

the best thing I could do was to get off at the next station. That's what I did. And I crossed the rails to the other side, ignoring the footbridge linking the two platforms. I caught the first train that came in the opposite direction, going back to town.

I hadn't the slightest idea of the time, but the night was dense and starless. I still had a long night ahead of me, a long journey, but it was almost certain that I would be back in time to open the shop in the morning.



THE BOOK



Leave the room as it is

Amílcar Bettega Barbosa

• **Original title:**

Deixe o quarto como está

• **ISBN:** 978-85-359-0239-6

• **Publication year:** 2002

• **Original publishing house:**

Companhia das Letras

• **Number of pages:** 128

• **Total printing in Brazil:** 2.000 copies

SYNOPSIS

A man closes down his shop because there are no more customers and catches a train, determined to leave town for good. But, no matter how many miles it travels, the train never gets outside the city limits. Another character wakes up one morning in his room with a crocodile clinging to his back and finds that this unprecedented symbiosis is something he can learn to live with. It would be an understatement to describe the ground beneath Bettega Barbosa's characters' feet as 'shifting'. The very space surrounding them is malleable and threatening—as in 'The Face', a story about a house that silently grows new rooms and redesigns its own ground plan. Similarly, time acquires an almost bodily density, drawing individuals into other dimensions, at the borderline

between wakefulness, sleep and delirium. Once the fantastic event has taken place, the action and the characters' behaviour, governed by the rules of this new logic, take on an irresistible air of verisimilitude, as in the stories of Kafka and the films of Buñuel. The reader is induced to feel a kind of dizziness, being forced to reexamine his own notions of space, time, affection, and morality.

TRANSLATIONS

Os lados do círculo; Editorial Caminho, 2009, Portugal

Los lados del círculo; Ediciones Baile del Sol; 2011; Espanha

PRESS REVIEWS

Roso, L. Abrem-se as portas do absurdo. Zero Hora, 20 de maio de 2002

"Deixe o quarto como está (...) reúne histórias fantásticas contadas com tanta naturalidade que leva o leitor a não questionar a possibilidade de alguém andar com um jacaré nas costas"

Revista Época, 27 de maio de 2002

"O escritor gaúcho surpreende com um livro de contos que tem muito de Kafka e Cortázar, mas preserva a originalidade ao descrever o espaço onde se movem criaturas solitárias e insones."

Graieb, C. Revista VEJA, 05 de junho de 2002

"Todas [as histórias] comportam várias interpretações: políticas, existenciais, psicológicas. Coisa rara, trata-se de um livro sem pontos baixos"

Pen, M. 'O amor dessa mulher' e 'Deixe o quarto como está': Contos

gaúchos espelham imobilismo de personagens. Folha de S. Paulo, 08 de junho de 2002

“Dois autores dão mais um passo com o propósito de firmar-se na seara dos bons da literatura brasileira”; “Revelam que têm armas poderosas, capazes de lhes permitir voos mais altos.”

Pereira, R. O golpe no queixo derruba, Jornal do Estado, 17 de junho de 2002

“O conto deve ser um golpe na ponta do queixo, levar o opositor à lona, como desejava o gigante Julio Cortázar. (...) Deixe o quarto como está é um golpe certo de Amílcar”

Contos novos, Folha de S. Paulo, 10 de agosto de 2002

“Jovens autores têm enveredado pela narrativa fantástica, com ótimos resultados. É o caso de Amílcar, que se firma como um dos melhores contistas brasileiros surgidos na década passada”

THE AUTHOR

Amílcar Bettega Barbosa

- **Pen name:** Amílcar Bettega Barbosa



• **Other books:**

Os lados do círculo; Companhia das Letras; 3.000 copies

O voo da trapezista; Instituto Estadual do Livro; 2.000 copies

THE TRANSLATOR

Brian Gould

Brian Gould is a bilingual journalist. He has been a staff correspondent for Brazilian newspapers, based in Brussels and in London, his home town, and has worked in São Paulo as the correspondent for British publications. For many years he was the editor of a weekly English-language newsletter published in São Paulo. As a translator his work has ranged from poetry and novels to nonfiction and journalism.

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THE DEAD, THE TIDE, AND US

ANTONIO CARLOS VIANA

Translated by John Gledson

Funerals were the best. The night was full of singing, the old people howling out their pain, in a long-suffering voice, only interrupted by the singing of some relative of the deceased. It was a day of celebration for people who had nothing better on the face of the earth. Only the adults could go along the next day; the children couldn't, for they soon tired. That's why we all wanted to grow up fast. Those who could go put their best clothes on and got distressed for when the coffin appeared at the doorway full of people. It was our chance to go somewhere beyond that place with its humble houses, where the health inspectors only came once a year. There was no set time for the funeral to leave; it depended on the tide. When it went down, whatever time it was, we set off, always under a sun that burnt your brains out. Beforehand, we went to look for stones, and filled our pockets with them. The rounder the better. The moment of leave-taking was always the hardest; the relatives lay on the coffin as if they didn't want it to go. The shouts sent you crazy, and even affected those who had nothing to do with the matter. It was impossible not to feel a lump in your throat, at least. Everyone got their own water, because it was a long journey. When cashews were in season, we took cashew-fruit; when it was guavas, guavas. The women opened their faded parasols, the men wore hats, and the younger ones tied a shirt round their heads.

The road to the cemetery went through the middle of the mangrove- swamp, where little crabs called gorés scampered about – there were thousands of them there. When the tide rose, the poor things were exposed in the trails in the mud where the water didn't reach. The cortège proceeded in total silence, only broken by the splashing of the water and our feet squashing the little gorés without the least pity. You felt heartache inside. We counted under our breath, to see who could squash most. The houses slowly dropped out of sight, until there was nothing but the tide-flats, us and the dead body. The mangroves were an endless watery waste, just water, water and more water. Sometimes the wind blew, a light breeze that felt good, bringing us a smell of green leaves mixed with salt. When the funeral was in the afternoon, we had to push onwards; in no time, daylight quickly began to fade.

Along the way, when the men found a bit of open space, they let the coffin down to relieve themselves of the heavy weight and the fatigue. They wiped their brows and said we had to hurry because there was still a way to go. It seemed as if the body weighed more than when it was alive. Our greatest fear was that the cemetery would be shut and then they would have to go back with the coffin. It didn't happen often, but when it did we had to burn cashew nuts all night, and a lot of spurge, to keep the bad smell coming out between the rough planks. Only

that way the body wouldn't be alone. It was good because the smoke kept the mosquitoes off too.

After the rest, we set off again. When we got further on, the men lowered the coffin again and stopped, as if they were lost. We looked around us and saw only mud, water, and lots and lots of sky. An empty space, terrifying in case there was a downpour. A good thing there wasn't.

After we'd come a long way, we got to a little hump with a cross on it, the only thing to guide ourselves by. It marked the place where a man had been murdered, a long time ago, when many of us hadn't even been born. This was what we'd been waiting for. We took the stones out of our pockets and threw them at the cross. They said it was to frighten the dead man's ghost, so that he'd never come back to frighten the living.

When we got to the cemetery, luckily the grave was already open.

There was no priest, nothing, just a lot of sand and clay around the hole.

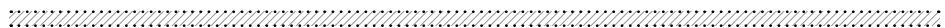
The gravedigger was expecting us, as if we were his enemies. He always complained about the delay, it was no joke waiting in this bleak place, under such a hot sun. He only had a small hut where he kept his tools, spades and hoes, and a little wheelbarrow, where children's coffins were put to keep them off the ground. Above the graves, only a cross with the name of the deceased; the older tombs were covered with a lot of weeds, only the odd one had a glass with a plastic flower bleached by the sun.

The men crossed themselves, and we followed them, a woman's voice began an ave Maria, mother of God, hope of the world, while the coffin slowly went down. A sob or two maybe, but that was unusual. Those who really cried stayed at home, not to get in the way. Then it was only the pounding of the clay balls, everyone chose the best clod he could find, and flung it hard at the coffin, as if taking vengeance on the deceased.

Lucky that when you're dead you don't feel anything, noise, sadness, longing, nothing. A blessing, as they say.

The return was always harder, not because of the body we left behind, but because of the tide. Our flip-flops hanging from our fingers, a step here, another there, so as not to slip or fall into the quicksand. That was why we always took a dog to go in front of us. When the tide had gone right down, then we had to struggle through the mud, any false step and we would slip and get home covered in muck, as filthy as a crabgatherer.

At high tide, it was better. The women rolled up their skirts, it was a sight to behold, the patches of flesh glittered next to the shining water. When any of them got stuck, we burst out laughing and everyone got together to pull her out of the hole. We got back home very late at night, all of us tired and dirty, but no longer sad. We'd already forgotten the deceased.



THE BOOK



Adult Cinema (The dead, the tide, and us)

Antonio Carlos Viana

- **Original title:** Cine privê
(Nós, a maré e o morto)
- **ISBN:** 978-85-359-1440-5
- **Publication year:** 2009
- **Original publishing house:**
Companhia das Letras
- **Number of pages:** 128
- **Total printing in Brazil:** 3.000 copies

SYNOPSIS

Antonio Carlos Viana is a master of the technique of throwing the reader into the story, as if the involvement with what is being read were itself an event in each person's life. Suddenly, we come face to face with a youth who has just killed his mother; or a decrepit man whose job is cleaning out the private booths of a porn cinema. These and other abuses of human life are the author's preferred subjects in Adult Cinema. Frequently adopting the first-person viewpoint, Viana takes on the attitudes of characters normally condemned to invisibility. Here, he takes the tense, mordant style of his earlier books to new depths. Fiction illuminates life, even if it can't mend it: "Lucidity isn't always a remedy", one narrator realises. At its bottom,

Viana's real themes are the defeats and the struggles of ordinary people's lives – above all, the loss of personal dignity or the struggle to preserve it, even in the grimmest of conditions.

PRESS REVIEWS

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THE AUTHOR



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- **Pen name:** Antonio Carlos Viana
- **Other books:**
Aberto está o inferno -
Companhia das Letras - 3.000 copies
O meio do mundo e outros contos -
Companhia das Letras - 3.000 copies
O palhaço e a bailarina -
Editora Edelbra
Este seu olhar - Editora Moderna
Brincar de manja - Cátedra - 1974
Em pleno castigo - Hucitec - 1981
O meio do mundo - Libra & Libra -
1993

Roteiro de redação: lendo e argumentando – Scipione - 1997

THE TRANSLATOR

John Gledson

John Gledson is an Emeritus Professor of Brazilian Studies at the University of Liverpool. He has published three books about Machado de Assis and two about Carlos Drummond de Andrade. He has translated several Brazilian works: two volumes by Machado de Assis, the novel Dom Casmurro and a collection of short stories A Chapter of Hats; three volumes of criticism by Roberto Schwarz; and several works by the Amazonian novelist Milton Hatoum, notably Two Brothers and Ashes of the Amazon.

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UNDERWATER SNOOKER

CAROL BENSIMON

Translated by Anthony Doyle

It's like taking your skates off after hours rolling about and finding that your feet and the ground no longer understand each other. You want to glide, float past people and things, but you can't. So you think, Okay, let's get on with it, walking it is, one foot after the other please, but even so it takes a while to come together, because you've still got your skates on, in a sense. The brain says Walk, the feet say Skate. And if someone should come across you on the street they'd probably think: poor lad's got a big problem! Which is why I am increasingly less fond of people and more of Antônia, who used to say that the world was like a crowd fresh out of the opticians, still under the effects of the dilating drops: the eyes filled with more light than they can take, and so all we see is a haze. More light, more darkness. I know what it's like, because I take my annual shot at reading those tiny letters that tell me my myopia is advancing symmetrically, though one eye seems much worse than the other to me (Antônia puts her hand over my left eye and asks if I can see the boat over the other side of the lake). But the true purpose of my glasses is to be incessantly taken off and wiped clean with the end of my T-shirt, as I don't smoke and have to have something to do with my hands, always, like plucking leaves from trees as I walk by or picking up pebbles from the street and throwing them somewhere else, or pulling the plastic labels off water bottles, or even folding up receipts, ATM slips, or tickets like the one in my hand, right now, which I would fold a thousand times, if I could, to the edge of oblivion.

One night, two months ago, Camilo rolled a piece of paper into a ball and threw it out the window, but given my dazed state at the time, more so than the myopia, I didn't see exactly where it landed. That's why I took so long rummaging about on the sidewalk, one of those with irregularly shaped paving stones and moss growing in between, the kind you find in all neighborhoods where few feet ever walk, and I remember feeling that the stone was cold and damp, and I remember hearing birdsong, and thinking that there must be some bird specialized in nocturnal singing, and it gave me the willies. But as I thought that, for the first time, right at that very moment, a doubt arose. Had they always given me the willies? I couldn't say for sure. Sometimes they sang and I barely even noticed. They must have done so on countless nights. What an animal does one day, it generally does all the rest. Birds provide our background music.

So there was this chirping, a sonorous signal, almost an alarm call with all the startling regularity of nature, and then I found the paper ball. I opened it in a hurry and read: drop by when you can. I looked up and was about to nod that, sure, I'd drop by (when I could), but there was no-one in the window. That was the last

time I came here, before now. I didn't know what to say to Camilo, with whom I'd never exchanged more than a half-dozen sentences, and anyway, when-you-can is a little vague as a notion of time. Did it mean: when I'm not busy doing something else? In which case, I never really was particularly busy. But if it meant when I was psychologically ready, then that was different, because I suspect two months isn't long enough, and here I am holding this ticket folded to breaking point, folded until it looks like a little shack. They say the maximum you can fold a piece of paper in half is six times, but I saw this TV show that proved that wasn't exactly true. That is, they tested the theory with a sheet of paper the size of a football pitch, which somewhat strained the bounds of good sense, and if I'm not mistaken they only stopped folding because they were tired walking from one end to the other, taking special care not to tear I'm not sure how many kilos worth of paper. And they probably had to move on to the next myth to be tested and debunked, given all the crap we tend to believe in.

It's a beautiful sunny day, with boats here and there, but I turn away from the lake toward a salmon-colored house. I see that it's falling apart. I can almost sense the layers of grime building up on the walls, the result of a chain of events: torrential rain one day, a cat that dislodges a roof tile the next, which falls, taking a wedge of plaster with it, tumbling into some tall, uncut grass, which attracts insects, whose remains now litter the bottom of the swimming pool. It's like seeing a flower open and close in ten seconds of sped-up footage. But I think when-you-can doesn't have to be today, or at least not necessarily now. I cross a carless street and head for Polaco's bar. There's no-one in this part of town at this time of a weekday afternoon, except for the guys in their boats, some nearby, hanging around the boathouse, others farther away, but never many, because the lake isn't exactly the prettiest thing in the world. I mean, we'd all like it to be at least a little bluer. Lakes are supposed to be blue, not brown, and people love blue, it's most people's favorite color, because of the sky and water (not this water, obviously), and I saw that in a documentary too, which is what I usually watch before bed. Anyway, the bar is only opening, a bar I've been in a million times, sitting and chatting as I tear up beer labels or try to make roses out of napkins, or standing out in the street with wine in a plastic cup, or playing snooker down the back in what you could say is a parlor literally built in the water, continuously pissing the council off for the last twenty years. But it's beautiful as hell. From the outside, I see the water lapping against the concrete walls, the sun shimmering in the small blue and green windows or streaming through holes that once held blue or green glass.

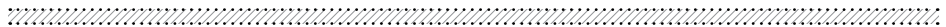
Polaco is setting out the last table on the sidewalk. It's a cramped space, only big enough for three. I approach, and he looks at me, but seems none too happy to see me. In fact, I get the impression that seeing me is the last thing Polaco would have wanted this afternoon. I catch the discomfort in his eyes and note the wrinkles on his forehead, crumpled like paper. He says Bernardo, hi, which is very different to saying Hi, Bernardo. He probably thinks it's too soon. He goes on with the tables, folding out one chair, then fetching another. The grating of metal on

metal intersperses his hi and mine. When he comes back, I order a beer and go sit in front of the lake, which means with my back to the house. Two months ago I was intent on going in, but they were intent on not letting me. I wonder what kind of movement or reclusion Polaco has observed, with his red eyes, because he seemed to have really liked Antônia, as he carries his filthy white table rag, wiping away the wet rings left behind by the glass ends as they're shuffled about.

I move mine over and over, until I've left two Olympic symbols on the table, but even so Polaco doesn't come near. I see that he's behind the counter scraping the hot plate clean, and then I notice two verses of T. S. Eliot scribbled on my table in red CD marker. In the room the women come and go Talking of Michelangelo. Antônia reckoned they were fat ladies, though nothing of the kind is said in the poem, but she was sure they were fat women visiting the Louvre. And I feel like crying again.

I don't have to be here, because I live over the other side of town. In fact, I didn't even have to come down to the lake. Everything usually happens far from here, where there are lawyers, doctors, florists, Italian and Thai food, where there are roads with junctions, and sidewalks with trash cans and the apartments my friends like to rent. All kilometers away. It's the people from here who have to go there. In the room the women come and go Talking of Michelangelo is the same as saying that, before we cared less about looking as smart as we thought we were, even before we went rummaging through the second-hand bookstores for 50s pornos, we had to make a presentation at Literary Studies 1, and I was Mister Prose and she was Miss Poetry. We had to spend six and a half minutes destroying each other before classmates who didn't even like reading prose or poetry, and the professor sat there hiccupping with laughter during the presentation, which was as good as saying Nice try, but it all sounds ridiculous, which was the same as saying it was ingenious.

I would like to interject here: Antônia, remember when we were the ingenious Mister Prose and Miss Poetry? By which I mean I'm devastated. And also, most of all: did you forget you're supposed to slow down going downhill? Because it's on the hills that we feel life a little more than we should, and it can get us killed?



THE BOOK



Underwater Snooker

Carol Bensimon Cabral

- **Original title:** Sinuca embaixo d'água
- **ISBN:** 978-85-359-1514-3
- **Publication year:** 2009
- **Original publishing house:** Companhia das Letras
- **Number of pages:** 142
- **Total printing in Brazil:** 3.000 copies

SYNOPSIS:

Antônia used to believe songs were made for us to fit into, and that the soundtrack to her life was 90s rock, from the epic euphoria of the hard stuff to the melancholic disenchantment of grunge. The rhythm of this book, woven of multiple narratives, follows an analogous course, much like the transition from youth to adulthood. One night, Antônia, speeding alone down a steep slope, crashed her car into a lamppost. The sweet and shy Bernardo and restless Camilo, Antônia's elder brother, are those who feel the loss most sincerely and emotively. Antônia's death shows the characters in this novel that they have to reestablish connections amongst themselves and that the world they used to live in has assumed a whole other rhythm, set to a dissonant soundtrack.

Perhaps Bernardo is right, coming to terms with the emotional reorganization and the memory of what is lost is a slow and difficult process. It's like taking off roller skates and finding that "your feet and the ground no longer understand each other". It's like playing snooker under the water.

PRESS REVIEWS

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<http://rascunho.gazetadopovo.com.br/o-luto-e-a-solidao/>

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THE TRANSLATOR

Anthony Doyle

Anthony Doyle was born in Dublin, Ireland in 1973 and has been living and working in São Paulo, Brazil, since 2000. He holds a degree in literature and a master's degree in philosophy. He translates fiction and non-fiction in various fields, including architecture, art, design, fashion, film, history, literature, philosophy, photography, sociology and travel, as well as film scripts and treatments. He is the author of a forthcoming children's book.

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AMID THOSE HILLS, AFTER THE RAIN

EDIVAL LOURENÇO

Translated by Eric Becker

And, when the question was posed to the Indians where they'd found the gold leaf in which they were adorned, the chieftain replied: "Amid those hills, after the rain."

Captain Antonio Pires de Campos, comrade of Anhanguera

ONE

Anhanguera. The Old Devil. A living, breathing legend debating with himself, tumbling down on top of himself. A broad-rimmed logger's hat covering a head of evermore scarce hair, rifle exhausted by war, as if it were now a crutch, lending its support to his position more than providing the usual protection against a future enemy lacking in aim and shooting ability. Close by, bringing up the rear, with instructions from the family to not ever leave the old man's side, is his youngest son, at least among the legitimate offspring, the bastards are too numerous to count. Behind them, further up where the slope trails off, there still rests beneath the stubborn morning fog a row of small, decaying huts, nearly uninhabited, barely holding on despite the precarity of their palm leaves and mismatched bamboo. Any outsider looking from a distance, at first sight of the collection of huts, would, for a moment, necessarily become confused. He'd hardly know if what he saw were a village of relapsed Indians or an agglomeration of the abandoned nests of some species of giant bird whose existence the discoverers had not yet managed to spread word of. But in reality it's the decadent hamlet of Arraial da Barra, the first settlement erected by colonists in the land of Goyazes, under the guidance of improvisation during the first gold expeditions of Anhanguera and his allies there in the season neared during which the Rio Bugre delivers its waters unto the Rio Vermelho. In the preceding years, nearly everyone had moved to the Arraial de Nossa Senhora de Santana, which had also been founded by the very same Anhanguera, the so-called Old Devil, because in those parts the precious golden metal could be found more easily and plentifully. At that time, by lawful decree, Anhanguera became Intendant-Coronel of the mining province of Goyazes, drawing royal powers into his hands and applying them according to his whim as though the king himself had been present. But after falling victim to senility, to disorder, to general discredit and bureaucratic

demotion, he returned, completely dried up, to this old settlement, to his primitive hut, to his old toils, like an aged elephant that, grumpy and full of nostalgia, falls away from the rest of his group and purposely loses itself upon long-abandoned trails with an eye to fulfill the secret rituals of death.

His son—the poor kid. He acts as Anhanguera's page. The page of an elderly man, a son of little worth, it's said, a sickly and silly lad, already growing old himself, wobbly in the knees, bowed in body and soul, the bearer of a horrendous hump on one side of his back who goes by the nickname of Major. The Old Devil, rising to his feet, stands on the summit of the riverbank, pensive, like one who listens to funeral bells in the distance. With panoramic vision, dimmed by the travails of old age, he contemplates with a heavy heart the riverbank below, where the ground on each side had been noisy with the roar of the gold miners' fury only a few years ago. From between the heaps of earth, water dark like gangrenous blood, its free flow obstructed, slowly escapes beneath a dirty, immobile foam. For the Old Devil, mining is a miserable activity, more bluff than true adventure. Worse than a spell of bad luck, is the sensation that the little gold collected in the bottom of a gold pan begins to lose its worth after some time. The impression he now has of the world differs greatly from that which he'd had before in those same surroundings on the day that, seven decades earlier, walking alongside his old father who is now more alive than ever in his memory, he heard the benevolent chief, when it was inquired where one could find some gold leaf with which the Indians always adorned themselves, respond while pointing to an indistinct location that appeared to be Eldorado: "Amid those hills, after the rain."

It appears, however, to the decrepit adventurer and tamer of the backlands, a dramatic glimmer amid the cruel circumstances in which he lives, to he who as late has been cultivating nothing more than fields of misunderstanding and bad luck. All is gangue and waste beneath the crepuscular light of the autumn of his life, the light riddled with darkness at this hour of nostalgic rumination upon a glorious past of exceptional achievements. He moves like a wild beast inside a windowless cage, a sticky atmosphere dense with lucid nightmares. Now he speaks in whispers, to himself, like one who rehearses a speech so he might utter it loud and clear on a favorable occasion. Not because of any senility, for despite his extreme age, lucidity had not yet failed him, thank goodness. He merely rehearses for the moment when he finds himself before an interlocutor of stature. Perhaps for when he stands before the captain-general, who according to reports come from the Arraial de Santana, was making his way to seize the reins of the Mineral Province of Goyazes and to make cease the excesses that had so contravened the law and order which, incidentally, no one bothered any longer to obey. To be frank, for the poor Old Devil, in the solitude of this hour, the silence is more than sufficient and all that he desires.

Life. Life, my Lord, life! It's as if life threw a lasso around us then tugged with sufficient roughness to bring down a wild bull. Allowing only variations only of the setting and surrounding landscape, reality insists on resisting change since the most remote of times. Our dreams always have someone in the wings ready to achieve them in our absence. Even in another time and place, in the boldness of another generation.

On the other hand, our nightmares, like our marrow, cannot be taken from us without first grinding our bones. For this reason I say: no man of ambition elevated to the status of hero should ever survive his heroic destiny. Or so I suppose. Under the weight of his own heroism, in his downward slide, the hero is tossed, without the least pity, into the gorges of existence. Into the limbo of the catacombs. The whole thing seems a dirty trick spun by the devil's hands, in the shadows off stage. As if God, with finely honed aim, illuminated the target before the devil fires his arrow. Different from that of mere mortals, the life of a hero has a crystal clear, fatal purpose and a strict expiration date. Nothing in the world is more humiliating and grim than a life anointed with fame and triumph, whose time is already a memory, and the acidity of the soot produced by the heroic mechanism itself destroys and erases each of the superhuman feats duly noted in a manuscript of the hero's biography. The buttresses collapse, the moorings come undone and poof. From that moment on, all light becomes darkness, all greatness small, each glory converted to the misery of ruins and dust beneath an indifferent Heaven.

But before we occupy ourselves with these and still other questions, which we'll be obliged to address at another moment, when our time is greater, I must say that I'm filled with a gratitude larger than anything on earth that our gracious God, in his infinite charity, allowed me to witness so many feats of bravery and heroism and perhaps a greater number yet of infamy and villainy. Thus was I given the privilege of surprising people of all different walks of life, in the most disparate circumstances, as they lived and died in this harsh and brutal clime. Of the feats I was unable to witness, the Good Lord—Father, Son and Holy Spirit—saw fit that the most trustworthy reports reached me, so that I might give Your Excellency a full account of them. However, let me warn you from the start, so that no one might later allege he was duped, that those events at which I was not present or of which I received reports of the utmost credibility I've recreated in the most minute detail with the full exertion of my ideas and all the strength of my imagination, desirous that this concert of the facts with my ingenuity not stray, be it by a dot or a line, from that which may have indeed took place. Which ought not to meet with skepticism, for there's no demerit in this approach, seeing how the outer edges of facts, much like a cloth recently taken from the loom, always leaves scraps that, if woven with artisanal rigor, may be used to increase the size of the cloth, be with lengthwise or widthwise, while still maintaining the piece's texture and pattern. For this reason, I affirm with an apostle's conviction, to whomever it concerns, that should the facts related here by chance prove untrue in this case, they will remain, notwithstanding, possibilities. Provided that one doesn't leave the realm of said possibilities, I believe, without fear of appearing flippant, that the known version of a story proves more important than any version of which people have no knowledge. Especially because the version widely divulged takes the place of hidden facts entirely in importance and allows itself to be called, without the least bit of embarrassment, the truth. Let me clarify, however, that although no veil of doubt separates me from the innumerable facts I have witnessed or of which I obtained trustworthy information, I did not have the courage to give them the

adequate repairs, to remove any superfluous flaking, file the calluses or disguise the blemishes, prune, whittle, soften the irritations, smooth over any incidents of lost patience, give it the splendor of some varnish, which might with any luck have granted my story fit, proportion, coherence, harmony, an appreciable beauty. Certain facts, in their raw state, as elaborate and true as they present themselves, don't lend to the construction of a good story in which one can place his trust and experience with the full vigor of his heart, so much that it transcends his soul. A story that becomes a certified work of art, in which man can see and reflect himself. Exactly like a crude stump of Madeira mahogany or cabreuva, which to become a crucifix must undergo various interventions. Even that it keeps its knots, its crevices and the other wooden characteristics it previously held. Only now infused with other dimensions and transcendent meaning. Proceeding in this manner, upon taming the facts with ornate molds and adornment as if they themselves were objects of attainment but without, however, the deliberate purpose of excessively embellishing or dulling them, I'm careful not to betray the truth, but only to relate it like one who translates a rude, wooden stump into a refined object of adoration and respect. Such is my way of thinking. May it be so.

I want to tell Your Excellency something, and what I have to say from the start, and which I in fact am now saying, without feelings of resentment, for all my false prudence, which even so desiring I'm unable to avoid, is that I'm the emancipated bastard son of the discoverer of Minas dos Goyazes, Bartolomeu Bueno da Silva, the Anhanguera, the Old Devil by nickname, with a filthy cafuzo. A household slave is what she was. May God protect her and retain her in the comfort of His bosom, for every mother is deserving of divine deference. I'd like to put you at ease, too, that the fact that the Anhanguera is part, even if secondary, of the story I intend to tell and which, in fact, I now recount, does not create the risk of my coming and sparing him with the solicitude of a loving son, nor of my detracting from him with a bastard's fury. I shall seek to maintain him within the just measure of his acts and failings: neither larger nor smaller than a reasonable sense or a measuring tape could perceive him. Not that being the son of the discoverer of Minas dos Goyazes is unsavory for me, empty of meaning. I can attest to Your Excellency that it brings me more satisfaction than disappointment. What I mean to say, if indeed I've not already said it, is I'll seek to portray him with the proper distance, or with the same involvement, if you prefer, of the other persons mentioned over the course of tilling and cultivating this prosaic work of mine.

Thinking it over, until today I never understood why my father would have dragged his wings for my mother and have impregnated her with his descendance, seeing how black girls (my mother was cafuzo) are known to be the preferred servants, as much for the mistresses as for the masters of the house. Not for the same reasons, it's better we already clear that up. The mistresses prefer them for the well-known abilities of the women of their tribe in the kitchen: they possess a divine hand for the seasoning of tidbits and ambrosias, as well as for looking after the house with the cleanliness of an ant. The masters' preference also relates to

these women's heralded propensities. Only for their bedroom sorcery: it's said they possess devilish bodies primed for the voluptuous sway of lovemaking.

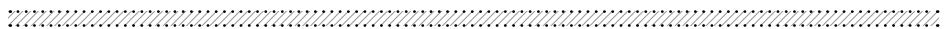
Ordinarily, bastards of infected blood, those same of my sort and ilk, are sold while still children as slaves or exploited for their whole lives by their own progenitors as such. Especially as giving up such livestock, so highly valued in the market for servile labor, is a luxury few can grant themselves, and those capable of doing so are nearly never so disposed. In such matters, financial necessity, real or many times invented, always has the last word. Not to mention that a bastard son beneath one's roof, or however close he might be, is a steady font of misunderstandings and vexation without end. The second Anhanguera, nevertheless, had this noble trait: he lacked the big eyes, so to say, to thrust his own son into the grind of slavery.

His own friends, at various periods and at different turns, censured him for this with severity.

Where have you ever seen such a thing? The way slaves are running scarce, with a value heaven-high, Your Excellency in this very unpleasant, precarious situation, nearly off to the poorhouse, and not making use of the opportunities you have. It's even a sin of pride, such a thing. Sell off this chum already, friend, some said, while others commented, behind closed doors, that what my father had in talent to discover gold he lacked in ability to manage the gold he'd already discovered.

It's like they say, others justify, bastards only give us two pleasures in life: one, when we make them; the other, when we sell them off. Sell this worthless good-for-nothing rascal, Coronel. That's what, and that's all, they're good for.

My father never lacked an interested buyer. They abounded, in fact, as far as I know. I even saw some of the more audacious ones, urged on by cupidity, taking gold dust from their packsacks, and running it between their fingers from one hand to another, in front of him, the gold glittering against the sun, in way of argument, a temptation to break his resistance, waving the means of instant payment, ready to be exchanged then and there, once the buyer had his livestock there on a rope, fettered and branded with the identifying mark of his new owner's dominion. As soon as the slave's Achilles tendons were cut or his big toes lopped off so as not to run the risk of his moving about more than the desired distance. He retreated into feigned misunderstanding, poor Anhanguera, every time he faced these temptations. I remained emancipated by this serene forbearance, this almost carelessness of my father, but mostly because of his compassion. Which, nevertheless, leaves me leagues and leagues away from being recognized as his legitimate, or even natural, son and from having the honor of carrying the legacy of his name. Of being an illustrious, respectable man of the Old Devil's venturesome and intrepid paulista dynasty. For that matter, there's no road, nor path, imaginable toward this end. I can beat my dead horse, saddle him up and give him new horseshoes, but I'm not part, nor will I be, of the flowing vein that directs this river. I'm merely a branch, nearly imperceptible kindling in the riverside countercurrent that churns and churns in infinite anxiety and that, even though part of the river, never moves from the same spot.



THE BOOK



Amid those hills, after the rain

Edival Lourenço

- **Original title:** Naqueles morros, depois da chuva
- **ISBN :** 978-85-7715-231-5
- **Publication year:** 2011
- **Original publishing house:** Editora Hedra
- **Number of pages:** 236
- **Total printing in Brazil:** 2000 copies

SYNOPSIS

Second-place winner of the 2012 Jabuti Prize for novels. In 1739, Portuguese nobleman Luís de Assis Mascarenhas, governor of the province of São Paulo and Minas dos Goyazes, travels to Arraial de Santana to prepare the gold mining region to become its own province. Amid Those Hills, After the Rain narrates the story of the arrival of Mascarenhas and his retinue in the inhospitable frontier of the present-day state of Goiás, home to the federal capital, Brasília.

The bastard son of Anhanguera--the discoverer of the gold mines in Minas dos Goyazes--travels as a sentinel's auxiliary in the governor's retinue, narrating the remarkable events along the way. With an irresistible rhythm punctuated by the rich historical

vernacular that lends the story geographic and historical veracity, Edival Lourenço's novel exudes poetic language that seeks to unearth the roots of Brazil's colonial past.

THE AUTHOR



Edival Lourenço

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 - Estação do cio - Edição do Autor, 1.000 copies - 1982;
 - Coisa incoesa - Editora Kelps - 1.000 copies - 1993;
 - As vias do voo- Instituto Goiano do Livro- 1.000 copies - 2004;
 - Pela alvorada dos nirvanas - RF Editora, 1.000 copies - 2009;
- **chronicles:**
 - O elefante do cego - Editora Kelps - 1.000 copies - 2009;
 - As Luzes do pântano - Editora Kelps - 1.000 copies - 2010;
 - Aqueles tiros de domingo - Editora Kelps - 1.000 copies - 2012;
- **Short stories:**
 - Mundocaia - Editora Kelps - 1.000 copies - 2003;
 - Os Carapinas do Sri Lanka - Editora

Kelps - 1.000 copies - 2005;

- **novels:**

A Centopeia de Neon - Criassã
Editora, Editora Kelps e RF Editora
(5th edition) - 15.000 copies - 1994.

THE TRANSLATOR

Eric M. B. Becker

Eric M. B. Becker is a writer, translator, and award-winning journalist from St. Paul, Minn. His translation interests include contemporary writers from Brazil and Lusophone Africa, as well as the Brazilian modernists. He is currently at work on a novel about the Brazilian dictatorship between 1964 and 1985. He lives in New York.

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THE ESTATE OF JULIO REIS

FERNANDO MOLICA

Translated by Jethro Soutar

Vigils

The heat bypassed barriers like the window, kept closed in an attempt to repel the invasion of yellow, almost incandescent light. Luminous threads poked in through cracks in the wooden walls, reaffirming the sun's victory - there was simply no escaping the stifling effect of the afternoon sun, as it imposed itself on the trench formed by the rows of houses. The noisy Electrolux fan became an enemy ally, spreading the heavy air about the atmosphere. That summer the heat seemed to isolate the room, occupy every inch of its space. Little managed to infiltrate besides the odd fragment of neighbourhood life, the street, the outside world. Isolated signals, distorted sounds that were hard to define; loose, disconnected words. Everything fused together, lost shape and mixed with other elements: the clash of pots against the marble sink, the gush of water from the tap, the percussion of the steel wool pads Lilina used to remove the remains of beans, rice and grease. The crackle of a neighbour's radio, blaring out pop songs. The odd scream of a child, a bark. Traces of arguments, jokes, shocks, a ball being kicked, a goal, a cut kite. Scattered echoes, confused, molten. It was impossible to determine the exact origin of every sound, of every part of the whole. Particles of dust danced suspended in golden beams reaching down to the wooden floor, to the chenille quilt, the formica wardrobe. Sitting on the bed, Frederico could feel the trail his sweat made as it ran down his head: little drops descending via the temples, bypassing his jawline and reaching his neck and scrawny chest. There was no point in mopping his brow. He preferred imagining he was somewhere else, somewhere far away, free of the hassles of summer and noisy afternoons. As if withdrawn to a field tent, Frederico doggedly blocked out the temperature, the shouting, the sound of the radio, the misunderstandings, the logic of a daily routine reaffirmed by the gush of water against pots. There built up around him a sort of bubble, such as one sees on TV, when a baby is kept in a special pod because its own organism can't protect itself from harmful micro-organisms in the air. Frederico's bubble wasn't physical, visible or palpable, but no one - not his children, grandchildren or neighbours - doubted its existence. It was but the latest in a series of bubbles that had protected him over the years. Bunkers which cultivated antibodies against poverty, vulgarity and the mediocrity of badly paid public service jobs. A barrier that guarded him against all the problems that

came with marriage, with having a wife and kids - endless problems, my God. The variety of obstacles that life had placed in his path, preventing him from furthering his studies, from becoming a pianist. He never managed to take regular classes, nor save enough to buy an upright piano of his own. He did manage to rent one once, for his father, who in old age moved in with them, into their house on Sousa Cerqueira. But when his father passed away, the piano went too, Lilina considering it a luxury, deeming it somehow offensive. Lilina, a woman with her feet nailed firmly to the ground, a magnet for every kind of fear and affliction, incapable of understanding the greatness of the melodies and chords he'd dragged from house to house in Piedade. Sousa Cerqueira street to Lima Barreto to Belmira; new addresses that merely created the illusion of change: he was always stuck in the same place, entrapped by the same boundaries. In old age, he could no longer escape on his motorbike and seek solace in a chorus girl or hostess. But the bubbles kept forming, just as he kept trying to build new bridges. He had at least to try and overcome the obstacles placed before him, though they were formidable, though they'd been built by powerful hands and minds and allowed no breaches, no unwanted guests. He felt ready to draft another letter, give it another try.

His most excellent Senhor João Baptista Figueiredo M.D., President of the Federal Republic of the United States of Brazil

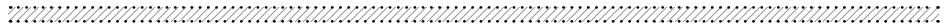
Having long been an admirer of the brilliant trajectory steered by His Excellency at the head of the Government, I fully subscribe, as do the majority of Brazilians, to the tax system's tremendous effectiveness in making Brazil ever stronger. One of the sectors where this effectiveness is most evident is, without doubt, in regards to education and the arts in general.

Given all of the above, I have taken it upon myself to trace out these lines to His Excellency so as to inform him of the following: I am the son of a Brazilian artist, the maestro Julio Reis, a man who dedicated his life, from childhood, to the development of music, having been a pianist, organist, composer and musical critic. He composed numerous pieces of music, throughout the course of his life, the most outstanding of which is the symphonic poem Vigil of Arms, a work inspired by the famous painting by Detaille, the renowned French artist.

Mr President, I am but a modest retired public servant, and so it has never been within my means to organise the performance of any of the artistic works left by my father, which is why I request His Excellency's sponsorship, in order that Vigil of Arms might be performed by an orchestra here in Brazil.

How many more letters would he have to write? How many more envelopes, how many more letters acknowledging receipt, how many more protocol replies, how many more lacks of even a protocol reply? Dear governors, presidents, ambassadors, newspaper editors - sitting down time and again in front of the portable Olympia, borrowed from his son-in-law, to demonstrate an agility acquired over several decades of public service. He could type without looking at the keys, type with his eyes shut, type without even thinking. The words, after all, repeated themselves; it was always the same story, the same request. All that changed was the heading, the form of address: His most excellent, most eminent, most worthy. Then came plentiful praise for the addressee, an introduction to the father and his work, the request for help and renewed displays of highest esteem and utmost respect. Letters, letters, letters. Letters that at least distracted him from the heat for a few hours, from the mediocrity, from the shouting of children and their mothers, the arguments that broke out and travelled through the walls of those eighteen houses, invaded the neighbourhood's public spaces. Letters, like the instructive programmes he listened to on Radio MEC, on his red, imitation-leather clad radio, brought him light relief, renewed hope; it was as if, for a few moments, he could float above life's difficulties, his lack of money and petty day-to-day worries. The prospect of a positive reply allowed him to put up with the vulgar music the radio spat out, meaningless noise devoid of any harmony or talent. Songs that brought glory and riches to long-haired illiterates who then got bookings at the auditorium, men who accumulated fortunes by crying out nonsensical verses lacking all meaning and inspiration. An insignificant fraction of the money they made would be enough to bring a whole orchestra of 42 masters to the stage, to perform a score that was busy gathering dust, along with so many others, in a little black box he himself had made. A gala concert that would unveil a treasure hidden for almost half a century, that would compensate for all the disappointments and failures. A show that would make up for a predictable and joyless life marked out only by a change in departments, countless new bosses, and one or two subordinates. Make up for all the lost time spent dreaming of following in his father's footsteps, of becoming a musician, enchanting audiences, sweeping singers and actresses off their feet. A night that would rehabilitate him in the eyes of his children, grandchildren, sons-in-law, daughters-in-law, neighbours and Lilina. They would all come to realise why he'd been so distant, so callous, why he'd found performing the role of father and husband so difficult. Children, sons-in-law, daughters-in-law, grandchildren, Lilina: now you'll understand, I could not steal myself away from what was a higher calling, my commitment to my father, to music, to art. Now you'll come to appreciate my distance, my absences, my dedication to the piano, my aversion to drumming and to carnival. It was all in the name of something greater, something which transcends this little, narrow life, these houses, this shouting, these radio songs, these drum rolls, this hysteria. You'll come with me to listen to my father's work: we'll get store cards at Exposição, at Mesbla, we'll buy new clothes and shoes, we'll take a taxi to the Municipal. All it needs is one reply, one letter, one Yes, one handshake.

Frederico couldn't read the intricate score of Vigil of Arms. His shaky grasp of music limited him to performing simpler pieces, trivialities. And even then, only when he had a piano to hand. But he was certain of the quality of the work left by Julio Reis. He'd heard it praised from the mouth of a famous maestro, whom he'd been taken to meet by one of his grandchildren. He'd never forget the man's verdict: "Your father's work is truly inspired, poetic and deserving of performance." That night he'd sensed the end of his struggle. He'd crossed the footbridge at Piedade station convinced the symphony would soon be heard in a theatre, or even a great open-air concert. The maestro was well known, famous, a headline name of a symphony orchestra. An inspired work, poetic - naturally the score would soon be available on music store book shelves. But the maestro vanished after their conversation, stopped answering phone calls, seemed not to get the many messages sent to him. Frederico would have to write more letters, make more requests. He'd also have to up the ante on his betting, watch more games, study the predictions, aim for the cherished 13 points. He'd guess the results right, predict the upsets, win the pools; he'd get the orchestra on stage. He wasn't interested in money, the payment of royalties. He simply wanted to be reintroduced to those notes, those chords which he'd heard as a young man in the audience at Lyrico, sunk into a front row seat, at a programme organised by the Society of Symphony Concerts. How he wanted to bring that jumble of notes, flats and sharps, quavers, semiquavers and demiquavers back to life. He wouldn't rest until he'd heard his father's music once more.



THE BOOK



The Estate of Julio Reis

Fernando Molica

- **Original title:** O inventário de Julio Reis
- **ISBN:** 978-85-01-09784-2
- **Publication year:** 2012
- **Original publishing house:** Record
- **Number of pages:** 191
- **Total printing in Brazil:** 2000 copies

SYNOPSIS

O inventário de Julio Reis is set in Rio de Janeiro at the beginning of the 20th century. Pianist and composer Julio Reis' greatest ambition is to become a respected musician. But without the necessary background, and with Brazil looking to Europe for inspiration, Julio has to content himself with a few lone admirers. His young wife Isabela breaks up with him, leaving with their son Frederico. Finally, it looks like his big chance has come: Julio wins an award for his new opera *Sóror Mariana*. But then the authorities deny Julio the money he so badly needs to stage his opera. With declining health and next to no money, he has to move in with his estranged son until his solitary death. Reading the notes his father made for him like an inventory, Frederico hopes

to regain a purpose in life by making it his aim to reenact Julio's operas and to ensure that *Sóror Mariana* finally debuts. But his attempts too fail – his father did not finish his masterpiece, and Frederico, who is not a musician, cannot provide the missing parts. Separated from his wife, he too dies a lonely death.

PRESS REVIEWS

www.fernandomolica.com.br/livros/inventariojulioreis/resenhas.php

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NxolWtlcvZw&feature=youtu.be>

THE AUTHOR



Fernando Molica

- **Pen name:** Fernando Molica
- **Other books:**

O ponto da partida, Rio de Janeiro: Record 2008.

Bandeira negra, amor, Rio de Janeiro: Objetiva 2005.

O homem que morreu três vezes, Rio de Janeiro: Record 2003.

Notícias do Mirandão, Rio de Janeiro: Record 2002.

- **Author webpage:** www.fernandomolica.com.br



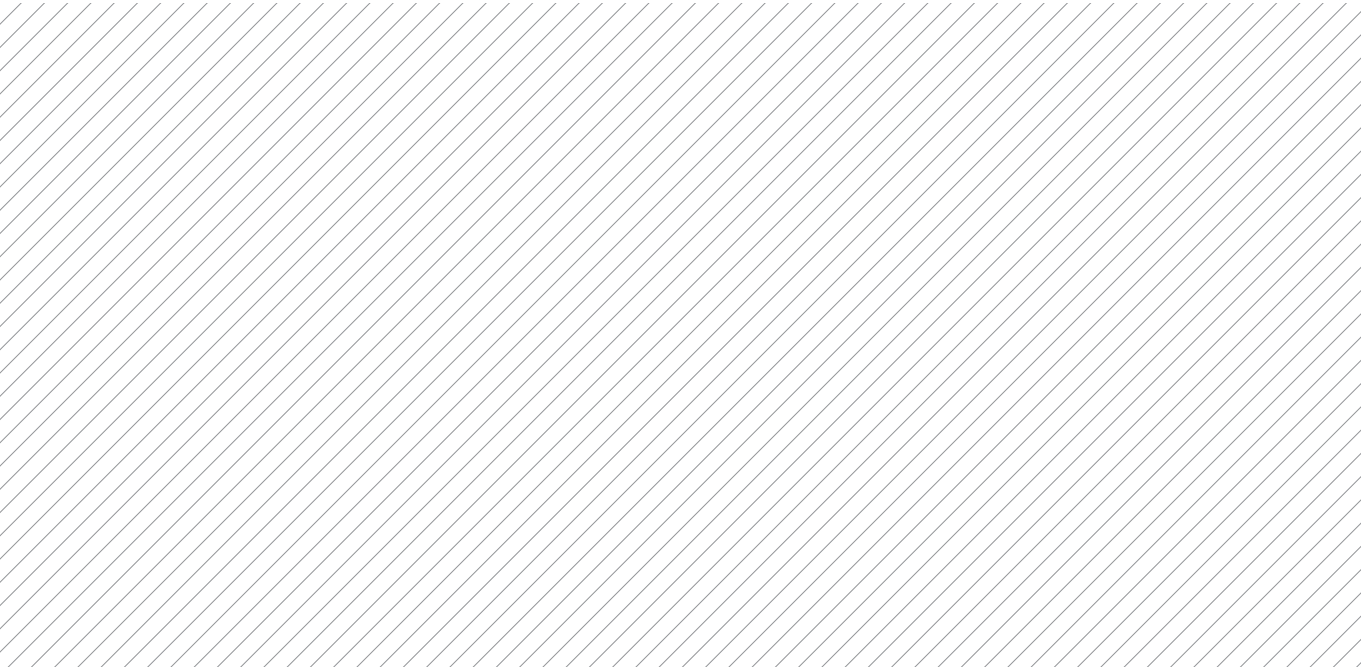
THE TRANSLATOR

Jethro Soutar

Jethro Soutar's Brazilian translations include works by Vinicius Jatobá and Javier Arancibia Contreras for Granta's "The Best of Young Brazilian Novelists", short stories by João Paulo Cuenca for "Words Without Borders " and "Litro", and a graphic novel by André Diniz for "SelfMadeHero". He has been nominated for an International Dagger as a translator and is the author of two non-fiction books ("Ronaldinho: Football's Flamboyant Maestro" and "Gael García Bernal and the Latin American New Wave"). He now lives in Lisbon having formerly lived in Florianópolis and São Paulo.

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27 POEMS TRANSLATED

GERALDO CARNEIRO

Translated by Charles A. (Andrew) Perrone

1. bazaar of wonderments

there are, for me, no words, except for two
or three, that through all time with me have stood
ever since my person turned out iffy,
the olden days when I was quite myself.
and now that I'm a sort of mimicry,
that I've been stripped of my divinatures.
I no longer dare ego sum qui sum.
I just keep in my bazaar of wonderments
the word for splendor, the word for fury,
at times the flare of risk the word for love,
even with my knowledge of its back plumes
the improbable semantics of misty fumes
the unfixable trail of one other verse
the syntax, who knows, of this universe.

2. mirage in abyss

I can't say what fabric being's made of.
my plans my dreams my strife
are woven in the factory of life
and unwoven in chaotic architectures.
and off I go creating newer buildings
to stay awhile
then leaping off in search of who-knows-what.
my being me is part of this mirage
in abyss
a mirror where I cannot see myself
and me unseen I light the flame of fire
to form indeed the full name of desire.

a pier perchance some other place exists.
I know a certain distance always dances
between me
and the circus of my circumstances

3. ballad of the impostor

I'm an impostor, one day they'll know
that I've simulated all I ever was.
I'm fiction, my blood is solely language
my breath an explosion that comes from within
in the form of words.
when I no longer am, I myself shall be.
during this delay, I'll be cheating time,
the machine that's devouring me,
and I keep pace as all things must pass
in search of grace to surpass
the circle of my circumstance
the mirror that's none other than the other
that inhabits me and spies on me
and, not being me, heeds for me what's frightful

4. principally

I've always been treated well as a prince
and I've grown attached to privileges
anthologies sojourns in the country
that befell to me in this ethereal
and deleterious reign, for to forget
is inevitable as life itself
and death is wholly made of mystery.
I try to hear my fortunes in my conchs
as Olavo Bilac heard his stars,
something I never heard, but comprehend
even not having a credible creed.
thus I kept constructing my edifice
on top of architectural chimeras,
whose architect was perchance a blindman,
or a genius, or just simply absent.

5. Final Judgement

he loved three or four mermaids, always
a sailor on his very first shipwreck;
he bore false witness and uttered half truths;
ambling he went in search of the sublime,
never to discover the Holy Grail;
he looked for a god who might offer terms;
but as that god did not put his spell on him,
he wooed the moon and other fickle goddesses;
wary of science, he suspects that the Sun
does revolve around the Earth
and that man is an animal to extravagance doomed;
at times he will suffer fits of grandeur,
self-fancied demiurge and pandemonium,
but the world always rebels
against his so poorly established hopes
and reduces him to distinguished insignificance.

6. in praise of soporifics

I cast soporifics at beasts that devour
the so solid nature of slumber in me.
solitude per se will not leave me appalled.
the others are inferno, purgatory
at times in addition they yield paradise.
I don't know of the winter which approaches
or not, for I have yet to form a judgment.
in fact, poor judgment I've never ever lacked
and thus shall it be till the end of my years
death, that chapter of natural history,
which, in my case, won't involve insurrection.
and metaphysical shields? I have none at all.
I envy the heavens, the dance of the spheres,
I'm dying of envy of Ptolemy,
still wandering safely through cosmologies
with God at the center, the rest all around.
I have no center, scepter, or direction.
the lone thing I don't lack is affection.

7. insurrection

I'm a beast in a burst of poetry
devoted to revolts of lyricism,
that madness that they've bequeathed to us
by clandestination and patrimony.
I know not who I am exposed thus in rows
in impostures by me self-imposed
or maybe decreed by some crazy god,
atheist, pharisee, or muslim prod.
my destiny is the finis mundi,
the precipice of this very spring
that's summer already, autumn almost.
I hope for minimal lucidity
in the dance of my winter winds here,
though that seems to be quite improbable,
for lack of an anchor, a vessel, a pier

8. After Fernando Pessoa

I don't know a thing.
I don't know where Abissinia is,
nor Bessarabia or Sri Lanka.
I don't know on what detours of History
I lost the Belgian Congo and Madagascar.
I know only the provinces of fiction
which are, I'm happy to say, immutable:
Shangri-la, Pandemonium, Xanadu
and other El Dorados of the imagination.
I'm mystified by semantics and diction,
I confuse bypass with bygones,
nenuphar and putiphar;
I know not by what twists&turns language
is a peacock or gets plucked;
in sum, I only admire words
like a savage admires a helicopter.
despite this solid ignorance
at times I find myself before
a scene, a gesture, a word
whose splendor awakens a wave of resonance.
and suddenly the insolence of the sun
illuminates my darkness
and I'm like a god giving birth to the world

9. the other voice

it's no use, nothing in this world
belongs to thee, not even the tiny part
it's up to thee to re-cypher in art.
thou hast only the circus of disillusion,
the song of the sirens, a shipwreck
in which were lost life, direction,
/the vessel,
the memory of the isle where thou livedest
the inaugural act of thy odyssey.
Penelope tore herself into many faces,
and even wars, with their hues and cries,
only survive in the versions of the bards.
there are no more isles, no more beginnings:
thy principality is only imaginary.

10. [no title I]

I adore Chekhov's petite bourgeois ladies
with their lives suspended,
as if coagulated, wandering back and forth
from crystal to nothing at all,
in the circus of circumvolution of the void
while hanging in the air there's always
an unrevealed secret, an unspoken word
the adventure eternally put off
the desire to go to Moscow
the echo of a ball in St. Petersburg
and those creatures ever confined
between naught and no thing at all
in their anxieties and insignificance
until after the end of the end of the world
when the probable deus ex-machina
decrees that there shall be a new beginning
and they go back to wandering like ghosts
in the midst of the mediocrity of infinity

11. eternity

for the Stoics time was not
the mere caravan of events and plot
that almost always hollow adventure
headed toward the anti-Canaan
the land with no Moses at all
beyond the signals of the Sinai Desert

thus there exists another time, immobile,
in which words wallow unsaid untaught,
myth, being all and being naught,
and ideas like flowers still waiting
for a new Era or just for spring
and deciphering to follow thereof

in sum, if the Stoics did not create
an irresistible solar system
capable of orienting the stars' orbit
and the ships of the conquistadors.
as a trade off perhaps they invented
the best metaphor for love

12. sinister pact (Strangers on a Train)

maybe life's romance fiction
a noir series
full of sound and fury etc.
or a B-movie sans verisimilitude
and god is the rival of Humphrey Bogart
sick and tired of the light on Martinique
& now under the moonlight
his task and caprice is to machinate
what's the next step
of the story
or
what's the next stop
of the starry
way to nowhere?

13. nevermore

we went on picnics in Xanadu
we wove Rocambolesque plots
on the most improbable shores.
ciphers griffins deep-sea dragons
spitting fire on our eros-diction
you were the light: I was the darkness
we were almost happy for ever and ever
before it was you to choose the day
the hour the grand finale of the show
(or not to choose: death is always
a pas-de-deux with divinities of chance)

14. [no title II]

clouds were invented in the XIXth cent.
to decorate the skies of the romantics.
before that, they were just instruments of rain
(except for the portal of the Parnassus)
and they did not hover like now over pleasures
of gazes never before.
in the future they may be banned
for the sake of the sanity of this sphere
in which we spin for sport & for ecstasy
(only a few scattered copies will remain
in the skies of the British Museum)

15. sad madrigal

I'm like the king of a sun-drenched land
and all the vagrants must be my vassals
as well as the butterflies, the mermaids
& the mollusks at the seashore
when I was 25 I decapitated
the bust of my grandpa the ex-monarch
and I inaugurated a new natural order
I abolished by decree reality itself
and I recused myself from certain pomp

the dreaded sloth
never allowed me to set
the limits of my kingdom
let's say I'm confined
to the east by the Atlantic Ocean
to the South by Paradise
to the west by the savage fictions
of one José de Alencar
and to the North by my own death

still that's not enough for me
(poor me) I so wanted to harvest
the plenary shouts of thy soul full of torment

(further information in Madrigal Triste
by Charles Baudelaire)

16. Six.

the timepiece is the machine where one keeps
death (against which logos turns rebellious)
fires flaying speech fictions the cabala
not knowing that this world will always be
redone and infinitely annihilated,
cf. Epicureus, the revolt of Zeus
against the insolence of the sun
capable of erasing the scene of Alcmena,
thus forging the fabrication of the infinite
and, by dint of love, the revoking
of timepieces)
where the music of the spheres echoes
& the rest drips away drop
by
drop

17. the semantics of roses

the sign rose signifies the rose
the rose itself resides in the world
and at bottom it's a flower of metaflowers
that only flourish in the hanging gardens
of Plato

(thus, if it is not known if a plume
is a plume or a plume-pity-pain
one never knows either if a rose
is a rose or only the insignia
the enigma or the sign or the metaphor
meaning some other rose)

in sum, every sign is a bridge
between the word, its empire
and every rose ever undeciphered
in its mystery

18. origin of the species

I'm homo sapiens more or less sapiens
I possess knowledge of my ignorance.
I know nothing of physics, or the stars,
of metaphysics or of scholastics,
in these my not-knowings so vast that tend
to extend their stretch to the infinite,
probable Shangri-la, parallel lines.
perhaps, at bottom, some sense there may be.
perhaps a God, or several, or not one.
perhaps just the tips of mysteries exist
or even desires well before the thoughts
that sometimes simply blow by like the wind.

19. fireworks display

the first time I saw Julia
my sword trembled at the gate of her castle
and I dreamt of shouts and serene tempests
and the towers crumbled into ruins
and nights put on displays of fireworks
and blind men deciphered moons

the second time I saw Julia
the rustling of animals in the park was gone
and the fountains unleashed mud and thunder
and ships wrecked in the mirror of the waters
and the seas aborted fishes

the third time I saw Julia
her car pulled up in front of the building
and the beggars opened up beneath the marquees
and the insects silenced the most prosaic rain
in the world

20. on nature

I never knew how to be civilized,
at most I might manage simulations.
in my breast the savannahs are savage
they're aflame and for names they have heart:
in pieces I hurl myself toward the sky
against any force that's oppressing me.
I'm my own solar system and sunflower.
in amorous matters I don't self-suffice
sphere of the heavens to which I aspire.
to be disconcerted is part of me now.
I renounce the art of taking life apart
everything that doesn't fit.
I've no idea who says my part for me
but yes that voice is similar to mine
and there I sometimes recognize myself
just like the moon goes spinning on its course

21. the non quixote

yes the human race has always pleased me,
however displeasing their customs may be.
I like human beings sans the armor
of concepts of how to proceed,
to sip the sky the salt one's beloved.
I'm at variance with all circumstances.
one breath leads me to inebriation
in the moonlight of the lamps they turn on
inside all the people.
when they don't turn them on, I am darkness
I dare to navigate the darkest seas
between dementia and melancholy
till I can dock at the berth of some verse,
I can choose some goddess to comfort me,
I'll rush to make utopia my own lance
to be able to rush all the windmills
even knowing that I will be undone
returned to the dust of the universe.

22. Plato's Anti-Heaven

a heaven exists where reside the beloved
whom the heart disinvented
a place where words of love wander
remainders of sun, solitude
echoes of speech made louder by passion
undone in the dust of time made ashen:

love is the greatest good that exists in me
love is the greatest evil that exists
love is of the greatest good
love is of loss, love is of gain

in this labyrinth-heaven, my beloved,
my shadow does wander forever
between ghosts of celebration and of pain

23. Summa Theologica

The only thing I learned was to seek
behind the rose the idea of the rose.
I found no signs of metaphysics
except in my graceful beloved
and in three or four enigmas,
insignias of an unrevealed mystery.
I know that buildings will crumble,
that hearts invent their own rubble
or, to the contrary, they lay bases
in flowers.
in sum, the world turns, flowers expand
and any old time comprehends the idea
 of what's fleeting
and of the eternal

24. the erosions of Eros

my face wearing away and effacing
to erosions of time goes conforming.
I'll not make poetic proclamations
of ignorance of the eternal stranger
facing me in the mirror's lamination.
it's surely no use to seek out angles
which show fewer marks of the journey:
fifty-two winters have already passed.
or springtimes? I don't know, I've lost count.
(I won't lose the tempo of the poem
just to remember the other seasons.)
perhaps I've approached crepuscular time,
there where chronos can no longer be invented.
but I feel an inner creeping, or a
a passion that blooms and has aims on the
 seas
a flower that dreams of spring and aspires
 to the skies
and yet seems the aurora

25. belle de toujours

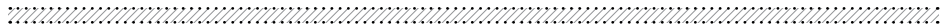
I loved you for so many light years
for clandestinations plotted perhaps
by some gods, if gods there are in the universe.
I know we shared so many farewells
that I can't say if there were five or six.
I stole from you my very best verse,
which I can remember as if it still
touched the very fleshiness of all words:
if it were mine, memory would not serve.
we would spend the mornings and afternoons
devouring each other in hanging gardens
of love, usually in the Hawaii Hotel.
then you departed, off to spin in the
other spheres of a bigger better world.
the taste of you remains here in my mouth
in the vain architecture of my heaven

26. conspiracies

something comes loose from my body
and takes flight
not fitting in the frame of my sky.
I'm shipwrecked in the firmament.
the winds of poetry lead me beyond my self
the sun does warm me
stars provide me support
Odysseus in the suburbs of the galaxy.
love is what knows me and what remains
another shipwrecked castle
as so many that the force of my dreams
wished to transform in cathedrals.
illusions? I've still got two plus half-a-score.
conspiracies of love, perhaps no more

27. the message of the goddess

she danced amongst the sequins in the sun
offering the heavens of her nudity,
and I, ever wanting to probe the improbable
and having a contradictory heart,
stood up from my own non-throne
and from my heights of what's always not-known
I stripped myself of all auroras
and I saw that life would like to live now
and that she was the answer to a dream
that I had never dreamed,
the maritime-matter in which I, navigator,
see myself converted in winds and sails,
I get up like a gust,
and my place to moor must be never more.



THE BOOK



27 poems translated

Geraldo Carneiro

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SYNOPSIS

collected poems of 1972-2006

THE AUTHOR



Geraldo Eduardo Ribeiro Carneiro

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Na Busca do Sete-estrela (Coleção

Frenesi), Mapa Editora, 1974
Verão Vagabundo, Editora Achiamê, 1980,
Piquenique em Xanadu, Editora Espaço & Tempo, 1988,
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THE RIGHTEOUS WILL BE MADE WHOLE

GODOFREDO DE OLIVEIRA NETO

Translated by Leslie Hawkins Damasceno

HOTEL LEVANT

São Paulo, 01/20/1981

The doctors give me six months, maximum. In my case, there's no cure for the disease. So, I'll die at 51. My parents also died relatively young. Even so, I had to come back to entrust this story, this history that I've been rewriting for the past ten years to my own country. I intend to leave the manuscript in the living room of our house on Avenida Paulista, in São Paulo. I left my apartment on East 93rd Street in New York just to do this. If somebody finds it, that's fine. If it gets mixed up in the rubbish and dust of the demolition, so be it! That'll be its fate. I would prefer that my relatives not find the text (Uncle Ludovico was the one who put the house up for auction). They might censure passages, change other. More to the point, they might just toss it in the trash.

If they read it, let it be once I'm already dead.

I hesitated about two matters. I should have given a title to the manuscript. No way not to. Also, I couldn't decide whether to give false names to my family. Finally, I decided to leave it as it was: with their real names, mine as well, Tecla. I'd given the title as The Rünnels. It's a fact that my whole life was largely determined by what happened in that family. I met the Rünnels when I was about twelve and we were living in Diamante, in the South of Brazil. The Second World War was raging in Europe. (Of course, we could feel the tension of the war in Diamante, right next to the region of the Contestado, even though it is far from the coast, towards the western part of Santa Catarina and Paraná. But what most struck a cord for us was how it brought to mind the messianic images, indelible in our collective memory, of the violent passions and copiously spilled blood that flooded the region during the Wars of the Contestado that tore our corner of Brazil apart from 1912-1916.) The whole environment reeked of denunciation, betrayal, torture and crime. Releases from Europe reported atrocities and barbarism, news that swiftly spread throughout the world. Death and blood were ever-present topics of conversation. Human virtues

were rarely to be found. This was the violent context in which the Rünnels - Rosa, Juta and Gerd - came into my life. "Invaded" is actually more accurate.

Rosa's enigma, her secret, the visions of a kingdom of justice that obsessed Gerd, and Juta's way of dealing with reality have always fascinated me. Particularly Rosa. The fixed stare that spoke for itself, a strategic distance from the world, how she constructed her own secret world. On rare occasions, she had to abandon her private universe and connect with the world outside. When she did, it was with sobs and wails. She suffered.

I scratched out *The Rünnels*, and wrote *In the The Righteous Will Be Made Whole* in its place, because this title, for some reason, made me complicitous with the image of the Rünnels, an image that still invades my dreams. I'll explain.

Toward the end of the 1960s, I belonged to a Trotskyist organization that was principally active in São Paulo. I was sent to Rio de Janeiro to set up a new political strategy. This action consisted mainly of writing sort of literary pamphlets and distributing them in bars and restaurants in the south zone of the city. We were careful not to toss them off any old way in a rush, like most sloppily mimeographed protest pamphlets of those days. Our pamphlets became very popular and were widely distributed. They denounced the military government's corruption and use of torture, and tried to raise people's consciousness with light, entertaining articles. I was put up in Joca's house, on Visconde de Pirajá Street in Ipanema, whose father owned a supermarket chain in Rio. Joca was one of our organization's contacts in the city. All in absolute secrecy: His parents had no idea of their youngest son's political activities. Supposedly, I was his girlfriend from São Paulo. Joca was gay.

My father had owned an enormous apartment on the Praia do Flamengo, not far from the Catete Palace. I remember my Mom saying it measured 870 square meters. Dad frequently invited members of the *Coordenação da Mobilizaçõ Econômica* to our house. Getúlio, our president at the time, set up *The Committee for Economic Coordination* right after Brazil had declared war against the Axis, and it was charged with regulating the control, distribution, circulation and consumption of basic goods. The committee had well-known politicians and public figures in its membership, such as Oswaldo Aranha, Gustavo Capanema, Salgado Filho, Henrique Guilhem, Apolônio Sales, and Dutra. I remember that the issue on the table at one of these meetings was the German invasion of the Brazilian diplomatic mission in Vichy, France, in November of 1942. Sousa Dantas, who was the Ambassador, had time to burn codes and documents, but he was detained along with 26 employees of the Consulate by the Germans in Badegodesber, near Bonn. I was just about to have my thirteenth birthday, so I was allowed to serve the whiskey that night of November 24 to our guests. Everybody praised the décor of the apartment, the spaciousness of the rooms, and the view of Guanabara Bay, splendid with Sugar Loaf Mountain off to the right. As one of our guests reflected: You end up having visions and dreams after seeing such a marvelous view.

It was decided that in order to gain authenticity, our organization's pamphlets should have an author. I thought about the *Righteous Visionary of the Contestado*,

and of his utopian visions. That was what people called Gerd. This reminded me of our old apartment in Flamengo, so the pamphlets ended up being signed by the Righteous Visionary of Flamengo. I had my particular universe and visions, too! This wasn't exclusive to the Rünnels! We also made our messianic predictions! We started a rumor that the Visionary of Flamengo was a Antônio Carlo Varginho, who lived in Encantado, a quiet, modest suburb in Rio's North Zone, to put the police on the wrong trail.

A while later, I had to go into exile along with other militants. We went to Stockholm, where I lived for two years. I thought that my Brazilian 'companheiros' were very young, almost like children, and I got the impression that they knew very little about politics, ideology, or about life. They displayed some real courage in some daring missions in Brazil, but it seemed like it was some kind of adolescent game for them. On the other hand, they evidently thought I was old, and I think, cranky and morose.

From Stockholm, I moved on to Aarhus, in Denmark, where I taught Latin American culture at the university, paid by the hour. In Aarhus, people thought I was a Polish woman whose family had immigrated to Brazil. Their version of my life story had nothing to do with my own. It was funny. I was the only person who thought I was Brazilian. That's also where I met Serge, a Moroccan Jew who held Belgian citizenship that I married. He ended up being the Advisor of something or another in the United Nations, and since I was now a Belgian citizen, I was able to accompany him when he was transferred to New York.

We rented an apartment in an old brown stone, on the East Side. In spring, I could walk up to Columbia University even though it was a considerable distance. I would proceed uptown, going into Harlem. I always liked to pass through the black neighborhood, defiant and complicitous, ally to the exploited. I can still feel myself walking through Harlem, with a book by Guimarães Rosa or Jorge Amado (but just in his first phase!) under my arm, calling attention to my Brazilianess, a matter of pride. At the first opportunity I let the blacks and latinos know that I am not American, that I speak Portuguese. I come from Brazil. I'm in exile. In reply I hear Bahia, Rio, samba, carnival. And, in fact, attitudes shift. I'm treated differently, right away. It's curious. It feels like the whole of Harlem sees me as some kind of ally. How many times did I think that this ghetto community could someday become independent! Like Canudos, the Contestado, or, at least like a Juliana Republic, all messianic "nations." But on the lines of my own image of a model political project. With equality and Portuguese as the official language! For a long time, this daydream, real and vivid, entertained and calmed me. I had the right to dream my own dreams! Nonetheless, whether in the United States, in Sweden, in Denmark.... I always felt like Lima Barreto's eternally dislocated character, Isaías Caminha: I had the sensation of being in a foreign land¹.

This is the degrading thing about exile: the feeling, down deep, of having been expelled, thrown out, because your countrymen don't accept your ideas. You need

1. Trans. note: The author makes references to Brazilian writers and very particular aspects of Brazilian life throughout the book which are essential to the text. The degree to which these will be clarified within the text or by footnotes will be decided once the whole text goes into translation.

someone to pull you up and say: no, no, it was the government that did it, not the people. The people can't do anything about it - they have no power! All right, OK, I believe you.

For Brazilians, exile was also the only opportunity to hear about latinidad. Almost without exception, my friends were Latin American. We even got to the point of suggesting that one day we would all meet up in Mérida, in the Venezuelan Andes, in the Plaza Simón Bolívar. Jaime, who was from that city, promised that since women all like flowers, to celebrate that happy day we would receive a bouquet of frailejones that he, himself, had picked in the Andes. (He whispered in my ear that I would get one just for myself, one with more blossoms, because frailejones wilted easily. They were prettier in the mountains. Jaime also gave me a photocopy of the final *Die Neue Zeit*, from 1917, which was edited by Kautsky.) Our meeting in Mérida would signify the reconstruction of a new America. Because there was among us a German journalist, Gudrun, who was always voluptuously head over heels in love with some Latin American, Jaime proposed that we would walk a block from the statue of Bolívar in the square, passing by the university, to place another bouquet on the small monument built to honor Humboldt and Bolívar by the German colony of Mérida, in the 1930s. Everybody applauded. Gudrun was pleased, but said that she could never figure out if Bolívar was a monarchist or a republican. One day, she gave me *The Magic Mountain*, by Thomas Mann, as a present, in the original, in German, that she had found in a used bookstore. I think that was her way to try to buy my indulgence for the way she imagined I judged her for her Latin lasciviousness. (In truth, I envied her.) In return, one day I presented her with Dostoevski's *Crime and Punishment*, in Portuguese.

I have decided to no longer see these people. I don't want them to pity me in the hospital. A decision that also grieves me, leaving me with some regret. We were planning a joint seminar on Frida Kahlo's painting and the mural art of Diego Rivera. I was also to coordinate a study series on Gonçalves Dias' *I-Juc-Pirama*, and Neruda's *Canto General*.

Today, here in São Paulo, I even thought about going down to Diamante. But I don't have the energy, I wouldn't make it. Would Rosa and Juta still be alive? Maybe it's better to let the past lie. Besides which, I don't have much time left to go back over it.

My world is finished. Passages from Chekov come to mind and that Brazilian music sung by Maysa, that begins "My world fell apart." I felt in my guts the free-fall of a society symbolized by the emptiness of the characters' lives, mired in social conventions, in *Three Sisters*. I'd seen it in New York just before I left for Brazil. In many ways, the play is identical to *The Cherry Orchard* and *The Seagull*. I feel like a character in Chekov, singing "My world fell apart."

I found out that Elsa, Dieter and Arcângelo, who had been companheiros in the struggle in São Paulo, were in exile in Paris. They opened up a bookstore on the Rue Monsieur le Prince, No^o 7, in the Latin Quarter, which became a kind of Headquarters for exiled Brazilians in Europe. I never wanted to set foot in it. Ten years older than I, those three had become involved in a support movement for Palestinians and in an international network opposed to the dictatorship in Chile, against General Pinochet. Elsa, Dieter and Arcângelo were the only ones from this

story that I had news of. Of my brother, also, it's true. Walter Kurt moved to Berlin. I saw him once, long ago. He made a living selling forged paintings and smuggling food and household appliances into East Berlin. Serge told me that he was part of a gang that received stolen cars. I never saw him again.

I tired to leave everything behind and set myself free like Paquequer and Peri in José de Alencar's *O Guarani*. To begin a new life. But the need to write won't let me forget.

Chapter 2

“I talked to Victor today, Juta. He told me that he wants to sell his land, set up a store in the center of town. But the boundaries are set up all wrong on his land. It's not done right. His son Arcângelo is going to study abroad. It seems he's going to study plants.”

“He must be needing money, Gerd. It's good that the boy's going to study. Someday Rosa will change. She'll learn to read. To help in the house. You'll see. We'll have to pay for her studies.”

“With what money, I'd like to know.”

“Victor himself can lend it to us, if it's not much.”

“I would never accept that, Juta! He comes around here mostly when I'm not at home. What's he got to talk to you so much about? It'd be better to ask Ademir, from the store. We'll pay him back later.”

“All right. You know that there's a war going on in Germany, Gerd? Bepi told me. He came by to offer to sell his horse.”

“That horse is blind in one eye. And lame in the hindquarters, you remember, Juta. Last night I dreamed again about Rodolfo in the Contestado. He was signaling with his left arm for me to come close, and holding a bloody machete in his right hand. There were twenty solders on the ground around him, all with their heads chopped off. Afterwards, he pointed in the direction of the mount with his finger. José Maria, the holy man, was up on the peak, surrounded by light. The saint smiled, his arms opened wide and said, come, come! I tried to go to him, but I when I walked I seemed to be stuck in the same place. After that, my mother appeared near him, calling me too. All of a sudden I woke up, Rosa was screaming in her bed, it seems that she always finds just the right moment to wake me up. That blind horse is worth nothing, and won't do for us, Juta!”

“Bepi also wanted me to tell you that from now on we all have to speak what they do here, talk in Portuguese. I want to see what's going to happen with *Frau Bertha*. She'll go mute, she always want to speak German.”

“Mute like Schultz's daughter, Juta. Or else, she'll kill herself like that old man.”

“He wasn't so old, Gerd.”

“What do you mean? Was his wood still hard? And is Victor's, too?”

“I'm going to see about Rosa. Better than listening to you spout such nonsense,

crazy things, just like that, out of the air.”

“Go ahead, you stupid bitch! You old cow! Bitch! Go get lost with your daughter once and for all. I’m still going to kill one of you! And then I’m taking out of here! Heading off to the Fields of Irani in the Contestado. I’ll find justice there!

Gerd’s tranquility sometimes broke into an unrecognizable rage that took hours, often days to abate once he disappeared into the forest. Like now, he crossed over the Diamond River and climbed up the steep hill shouting, cursing in German or in Portuguese with a heavy, exaggerated accent, exhorting the new Contestado. Machete in hand, a soggy, hand-rolled cigarette clenched in his teeth. A cloth bag that Juta had made him hanging from his shoulder. A liter of *cachaça* inside it. Swigging mightily from it every two minutes. With every gulp, heightened rage and a feeling of relief. Until he crashes down, dead drunk. His dog Vinegar always at his side, his muzzle scarred by a wild boar’s teeth, his left hind paw half cut off. From his mongrel beginnings, Vinegar had risen to be the best hunting dog in the area, and now was his owner’s best friend.

While Gerd was in this state, nobody dared to come near or speak to him. His roars could be heard hundreds of meters away. His brother, Alfonso Rünnel, had hung himself in a similar situation. After, however, killing his wife with a shotgun as well as a black farm worker who had gone after him into the forest with a scythe. The quadroom’s body was sliced in half. The head thrown far from it. Then Alfonso hung himself. His tongue hanging out! They only found his decomposing body seven days later. Only the ten-centimeter scar on his face was still intact.

Gerd’s enraged and fractious temper had already roared out of control on a number of occasions. When she could, Juta would pour a tonic based on Maraval solution down his throat, a treatment that had no effect on him whatsoever. Once when they were attending a wedding, during the *Polterabend*, the noisy party on the night before the wedding ceremony where traditionally friends of the bride and groom break a few plates to wish the couple luck, Gerd threw two plates against the wall with such force that Juta, embarrassed, pulled him out by the arm and they left the party right after. Later, she came back alone for the *Katerfrühstück*, the day after the wedding lunch, and apologized to the whole family.

After his rages in the forest, Gerd would return home around four o’clock in the morning, or the next day, scratched up, tired and filthy, his hands bruised or injured. Juta never commented on these fugues. What mattered to her was that her husband left his rage and rancor in the forest. If possible, tied, chained and burnt into the trunk of some *jebebraju* tree. He avoided speaking to her, a pact of guilty silence that was respected by both wife and daughter. He especially shied away from Rosa, and for several days would take his meals in the tool shed. His eyes turned somber, opaque, his gestures in slow motion. A repented rapist, desire spent, his pleasure ejaculated, spat out into the trash bin. To kill at this moment... only if he could sweep away everything in front of him forever! The *cachaça* that lit his hate and fed his yearnings, frustrations and anxieties gone, only a taste of gall

left in his mouth. A bitter taste. Then daily life would slowly and inexorably dilute those hours of blind rage. The Diamond River, so recently turbulent and somber, returned to flow in its transparent, crystalline and pacific bed.

When Gerd managed to speak to his family again, it was to tell Juta to seek out *Frau* Bertha. “A woman to be respected, and who has always been good to me,” he mumbled, looking down at the ground, a deep frown on his face. “One day, all of this will be transformed into the Fields of Irani in the Contestado, you’ll see!” he added, almost in a whisper.



THE BOOK



The Righteous Will Be Made Whole

Godofredo de Oliveira Neto

- **Original title:** O bruxo do contestado
- **ISBN:** 9788501098832
- **Publication year:** The book was released in 1996, and the second edition is 2012.
- **Original publishing house:** Editora Record
- **Number of pages:** 240
- **Total printing in Brazil:** 17.000 copies (first edition) 3.000 copies (2nd edition)

SYNOPSIS

Hailed as one of the landmarks of Brazilian literature of the turn of the century, *O Bruxo do Contestado* (first edition, 1996) revives the conflict of the Contestado, a regional war marked by Messianic movements that rocked Brazil from 1912-1916 with international repercussions for the young Brazilian Republic. Largely forgotten today, the historical event is focused through the dramatic story of the Runnel family, as narrated by Tecla Jonhasky. Terminally ill, Tecla leaves a complex testimony that interweaves her own history - she witnessed the Second World War as a child, fought against the military regime in Brazil during the '60s, and subsequently went into exile - with

that of the tormented Gerd Runnel. Tecla's fascination with the Contestado and with the consequences of Gerd's messianic fixation provide a rich tapestry of historical recuperation that goes far beyond the regional war to describe how World War II affected German immigrants in Southern Brazil, expanding to a contemporary perspective on the utopian ideals that motivate the book's main characters. The skillful recovery of the subjective experience of historical truth, coupled with an inventive narrative form, assure the novel of its place among the grand narratives of Brazilian literature.

Author's photo credits:

Mariana Carnaval.

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Godofredo de Oliveira Neto

- **Pen name:** Godofredo de Oliveira Neto
- **Other books:**
 - Faina Jurema* (1981, Editora Taurus): 1.000 copies
 - Pedaço de Santo* (1997, Editora Nova Fronteira): 3.000 copies
 - Oleg e os Clones* (1999, Editora Nova Fronteira): 2.000 copies
 - Marcelino Nanmbrá, O Manumisso* (2000, Editora Nova Fronteira): 2.000 copies
 - Ana e a margem e do rio* (2002, Editora Record): 20.000 copies

Menino Oculto (2005, Editora Record):
3.000 copies

Marcelino (2008, Editora Imago):
2.000 copies

Cruz e Sousa, o poeta alforriado (2010,
Editora Garamond): 3.000 copies

Amores exilados (2011, Editora
Record): 3.000 copies

A Ficcionista (2012, Imã Editorial):
1.000 copies

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SHORT STORIES

IVANA ARRUDA LEITE

Translated by Guilherme Henrique Miranda

RECIPE FOR EATING THE MAN YOU LOVE

Take the man that mistreats you, stretch him out over a chopping board and start battering him from behind. Then chop him finely and throw him in hot oil. Add eyes and onions. Stir it slowly until everything gilds. The finely chopped tongue must be put next, as well as the hands, feet, scallion, and parsley. When the meat gravy starts exhaling the odor of those who burn in hell, pour boiling water until the heart softens. Coat his cock with breadcrumbs and serve it as an aperitif. Devour everything with a silver spoon, wipe your mouth with a linen napkin and burp at large, so that it never happens again.

WOMEN ARE ALL THE SAME

Marieta Severo¹ and I have no time for solitude. She was married to Chico Buarque, and I was married to João Teodoro. Both of them have caused a lot of trouble to us. Teodoro was an alcoholic and beat me in the face. I've spent the worst moments of my life with him. As though it wasn't enough, the guy was rather a fag. He used to seduce boys around, bring them home and introduce them to me as coworkers. Well, see if I am stupid. He put the boys to sleep on my bed, "The poor has nowhere to go," and slept with me on the couch in the living. In the middle of the night João vanished.

When he got too drunk and started to raise a scandal, I said to him: "One of these days I will get my purse and go away without even saying goodbye." He never believed me. "Women are all the same," he said.

One day I was in the kitchen making lunch when João came in and saw me pouring half a liter of a good olive-oil in the blender. "Why so much oil?" he yelled. That's the recipe; pesto sauce is exactly like that, heaps of olive-oil. I don't know why my eyes filled with tears. I turned the blender on the maximum, and that hell of a racket, and all that basil being crushed in there, and those nuts being grinded, and all those green becoming a smelly sauce, all that made me feel some kind of novelty, a wish to start from the beginning, a bravery: I went to my room and took my purse. The blender kept turned on. After that I have found so many things to do, and so much fun, that I didn't have time for solitude. João Teodoro was right: women are all the same. One day, we all become Marieta.

1. Marieta Severo is a famous Brazilian actress who was married to one of the greatest Brazilian musicians, Chico Buarque, from 1966 to 1999.

RONDO

Luísa thought it was impossible to break up with Mário. One day, tender as newborn chick, she invited him to her house and asked him to never look after her again. He was reluctant, but left. She didn't even cry. She opened her purse, picked up her diary and made a note of her only obligation for the next weekend: be happy.

Luísa thought it was impossible to break up with Mário. She suffered from the anticipated failure syndrome; she had already tried a thousand times and never succeeded. One day, tender as a newborn chick, she invited him to her house and asked him to never look after her again. He was reluctant, but left. She didn't even cry. She opened her purse, picked up her diary and made a note of her only obligation for the next weekend: be happy.

Luísa thought it was impossible to break up with Mário. She suffered from the anticipated failure syndrome; she had already tried a thousand times and never succeeded. That love was more like a cancer or a hopeless addiction. She waited for miracles to happen. One day, tender as newborn chick, she invited him to her house and asked him to never look after her again. Before that, however, she sat down on his lap and said that maybe it was worth trying. Mário didn't say a word. She withstood and asked him to leave for good. He was reluctant, but left. She didn't even cry. She made coffee, sat down in the living room and lit a cigarette. She opened her purse, picked up her diary and made a note of her only obligation for the next weekend: be happy.

Luísa thought it was impossible to break up with Mário. She suffered from the anticipated failure syndrome; she had already tried a thousand times and never succeeded. They had been together for eight years, but Mário only promised to marry her when he got too drunk. That love was more like a cancer or a hopeless addiction. She waited for miracles to happen. One day, tender as newborn chick, she invited him to her house and asked him to never look after her again. Before that, however, she sat down on his lap and said that maybe it was worth trying. Mário didn't say a word. At that moment, the phone rang. It was Mário's wife saying that it was the last day to pay the credit card bill. Mário asked for Luísa's money and went to give it to his wife, who was waiting outside. With the checkbook on the table, Luísa looked at his eyes and said: "Don't you take pity on me?" "More than you think," he answered. That was an obvious cliché; he had never wished to change that situation. She withstood and asked him to leave for good. He was reluctant, but left. "I even paid his credit card bill!" She made coffee, sat down in the living room and lit a cigarette. She opened her purse, picked up her diary and made a note of her only obligation for the next weekend: be happy.

Luísa thought it was impossible to break up with Mário. She suffered from the anticipated failure syndrome; she had already tried a thousand times and never succeeded. They had been together for eight years, but Mário only promised to marry her when he got too drunk. The beginning was a passionate romance. They

believed that they were meant for each other. Nowadays, that love was more like a cancer or a hopeless addiction. She waited for miracles to happen. One day, tender as a newborn chick, she invited him to her house and asked him to never go after her again. Before that, however, she sat down on his lap and said that maybe it was worth trying. Mário didn't say a word. On that moment, the phone rang. It was Mário's wife saying that it was the last day to pay the credit card bill. Mario asked for Luísa's money and went to give it to his wife, who was waiting outside. With the checkbook on the table, Luísa looked at his eyes and said: "Don't you take pity on me?" "More than you think," he answered. That was an obvious cliché; he had never wished to change that situation. She withstood and asked him to leave for good. I don't know if he pretended not to listen or if he played dumb, but he suggested they should buy beer to calm down. Luísa said she wasn't in the mood for buying any goddamn beer and that she didn't want to prolong that hell any longer. He was reluctant, but left. "I even paid his credit card bill!" She made coffee, sat down in the living room and lit a cigarette. She opened her purse, picked up her diary and made a note of her only obligation for the next weekend: be happy.

My name is Luísa, I am 37 years old and I've always thought it would be impossible to break up with Mário. I've come to suffer from anticipated failure syndrome; I had already tried a thousand times and had never succeeded. We'd been together for more than eight years, but Mario only promised to marry me when he got too drunk. When sober, he always had a handful of reasons: his child, his dogs, his home, his wife, his parrot, his sick mom, money. At the beginning it was a passionate romance. We believed we were meant for each other. Nowadays, that love became more like a cancer or a hopeless addiction. I've always waited for a miracle to happen. One day, tender as a newborn chick, I called him up to my place and asked him to never come after me again. Before that, however, I sat on his lap and said maybe it was worth trying. Mário didn't say a word. Then, he laughed: "You've said that a thousand times." At that moment, the phone rang. It was Mário's wife saying that it was the last day to pay the credit card bill. Oh, and he was cynical enough to ask me to lend him money to take to his wife, who was waiting outside. When I asked: "What about us? What about our situation?" He said: "Today is the last day to pay the credit card bill and you want me to think about our situation?" When he came back, he found me standing still in the dining room. I took a look at his eyes and asked: "Don't you take pity on me?" "More than you think" he answered. That was an obvious cliché; Mário had never wished to change that situation. I withstood and asked him to leave for good. I don't know if he pretended not to listen or if he played dumb, but he suggested we should buy beer to calm down. I said that I wasn't in the mood to buy any goddamn beer and I didn't want to prolong that hell any longer. He was reluctant, but went away. I didn't even cry. And I even paid for the credit card bill! As soon as he left, I made coffee, sat down in the living room and lit a cigarette. I have never been happy again.

TONINHA'S CAR

Toninha wanted to buy a car, and so she did. The savings she had earned for cleaning houses were exactly enough to buy a 68-model Beetle. Red? Dark red? Purple? A little of each. It had a lot of colors, dents from collisions, capsizing, rust. Medals that were earned through many years. A car with a visible history, inscribed on its body.

Full of joy, Toninha went home with her new car. She on the passenger's seat, and her husband driving. Toninha never had patience to take her driver's license. Besides, she was illiterate. But she forced her husband to take her wherever she wanted. Supermarket, Santos beach, street market, mother-in-law's house, anywhere by car. Toninha showed the way, and her annoyed husband drove. But she was The Car's Owner, so she could command them both.

One day her husband vanished from home with Toninha's car. Three, four days and no word from him. At his job, they said he was on vacation. "I will kill that bastard, driving my car around, with some bitch on his side probably."

Toninha went to the police station and reported it. Not her husband's disappearance, but her car's. "It's easy to find a car like that," the police officer said. And so it was. On the next day, her husband was found at Praia Grande. Pissed off, he came back.

"You don't even fucking drive, why do you want this shitty car?"

"I don't drive, but I want my car by my door as decoration. I will stuff it with ferns."

Her husband went away on foot. Maria Luísa was waiting for him at the bus stop. The car was consumed by the ferns. It ended up rotting beneath them, like a fern trunk.

CHECKMATE

Whoever sees me with this crow on my head and this spangled mantle over my shoulders cannot imagine me naked under Felipe's body, the same one who kneels before me and vows loyalty as a common vassal. At night, in the royal apartment, he always seems a bit nervous when he sees me opening my legs. I get it. For it must not be easy to fuck a queen.

GILDA

There has never been a woman like Gilda. She was the devil. Her pleasure was to pester those around her. When she got to choose a career, she became manicurist. She used to hurt her clients on purpose just to startle them. One day she was called to polish Damião's toe nails. She found his feet so beautiful, so smooth that she didn't have the guts to hurt him. On the next morning, when he saw him naked over the bed, she said as it was by accident: "You know, I thought your dick was bigger."

THE REAL TRAGEDY

I will never forget that September 11. When I woke up, I found it strange that Hugo was still at home. Usually he would have already taken a shower, made coffee and gone to work. But instead, he was there, sitting in the living room, wearing his sport shirt.

"We need to talk," he said.

"Speak out," I said nervous.

"I'm leaving."

I didn't want to hear the rest, so I went to kitchen and bent myself over the sink, shivering all over my body. I thought about getting a knife.

"The key is on the table."

That was the last time I heard his voice. Later I learned that on the same day a terrible accident had happened in Tokyo or New York. An Egyptian plane had crashed against a tower and knocked down a television aerial. I don't know exactly what the tragedy was like, but I doubt it was worse than mine.



THE BOOKS



Short stories from two books: **Phallus of woman** and **The man who did not want me**

Ivana Arruda Leite

- **Original title:** Falo de mulher
- **ISBN:** 85-7480-111-9
- **Publication year:** 2002
- **Original printing house:** Ateliê Editorial
- **Number of pages:** 101
- **Total printing in Brazil:** 1000 copies
- **Original title:** Ao homem que não me quis
- **ISBN:** 85-220-0666-0-
- **Pubication year:** 2005
- **Original printing house:** Editora Agir
- **Number of pages :** 88
- **Total printing in Brazil:** 4000 copies

SYNOPSIS

With humour and irony, these short stories tell of everyday of ordinary women drowned in frustration, dissatisfied with the life they live, with the routine of a failed marriage, but always ready to drop everything and go after the dreams and desires that they carry in the depth of their bags.

TRANSLATIONS

Catalan - FA, L'US DE DONA?
Emboscall, Vic, Spain 2005

PRESS REVIEWS

http://books.google.com.br/books/about/Falo_de_mulher.html?id=B9UR-DZrjxwC&redir_esc=y

http://books.google.com.br/books/about/Ao_homem_que_n%C3%A3o_me_quis.html?hl=pt-BR&id=SKCCZ32yB7kC

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Ivana De Arruda Leite

- **Pen name:** Ivana Arruda Leite
- **Other books:**
 - Histórias da mulher do fim do século. Contos. Editora Hacker, 1997 – 1.000 copies
 - Eu te darei o céu – e outras promessas dos anos 60. Novela. Editora 34, 2004 – 6.000 copies
 - Hotel novo mundo – romance. Ed. 34, 2009. Short runner São Paulo Prize in 2010 – 3.000 copies
 - Alameda Santos – romance. Ed. Iluminuras, 2010 – 3.000 copies
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THE TRANSLATOR

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ANARCHIST LOVE

MIGUEL SANCHES NETO

Translated by John Whitlam

On a wooden stool beside my narrow, single bed, I placed a tin can with some wild flowers in it, so that Jean Gelèac would find pleasant surroundings. He has been with the group since mid 1891 and has never had a woman, refusing the easy affections of Narcisa, who had done more to sow discord among the married and single men than to ease the lack of female company. Shy and youthful, somewhat romantic as we always are at the age of twenty, Gelèac has been indulging in the vice of virtue, taking care of his needs by his own hand. His face is covered in pimples and, unlike the married men, or the older ones, who are used to the loneliness of the wilds, his skin is the colour of parchment and his eyes sunken, revealing a longing for love.

I had a serious talk with him, told him he needed a woman, and he said no, he could handle life in the Colony perfectly well, but you only had to look at that face to realize how much he was suffering. Even if they wanted to, and unfortunately they don't want to, the married women could not give him the loving he deserves. So I decided to open up my bed to him.

I also changed the sheets - it would be his first time with a real woman, and he deserved a treat for what he had done for the Colony, for his courage and self-denial. I was excited to be able to provide him with that moment of love.

Adele got there when the bed was made. She had come in one of her old dresses which was patched at the front and at the side of the waist, and flimsy from so much washing, revealing the slight, but shapely figure of a mature and healthy woman - that healthiness would be Gelèac's medicine. She was neither demonstrative nor self-conscious as she came over to kiss me on the lips in peaceful and silent surrender - I felt her cool skin and hair still damp from her evening bath. For a moment, I felt a desire to stay in the bedroom with her, to lock the door of our little house and invite her to lie down; I was also starved of love. I could stay with her till dawn, not allowing anyone to touch that body of hers, but the thought soon evaporated. I went over to the window and closed it to keep the mosquitoes out. She lit the lamp on the wall.

In order not to slip into a bourgeois way of thinking, I had to get on with the job of preparing the bedroom. The broom made a scraping sound as I swept the floorboards, while Adele arranged herself on the bed, watching the flame of the lamp which cast strange glints in her eyes.

"Do you think Gelèac is coming?" she inquired.

"He assured me he would. What about Anibal? Did you talk to him?"

"I said I was coming to your house. He was already a bit drunk and told me to give you plenty of loving, as you deserved it."

“Did you tell him about Gelèac?”

“Not yet. He may not even come, so why make Aníbal suffer before the fact?”

“He will accept it when other women follow your example.”

“He does accept it, but he still suffers. He can’t help it.”

“He’s a good socialist, he’ll find the strength eventually.”

Adele was not paying attention to my movements. Motionless, she was awaiting the moment when she would act out her role. That was how I regarded the encounter, a play with me as the scriptwriter, deciding what each of the characters should do or say, and being the scriptwriter exonerated me of the sadness distilled in Adele’s eyes by the flicker of the lamp.

The light brought out her good looks. I had not spotted that beauty when we met on my trip back to Italy. Here in the Colony, perhaps because of the tropical brightness or the green of the forest, or even because of the silence, she has acquired a beauty which increases by the day. She is the only one not to notice it as she does not even have a mirror. And that is a good thing. Her beauty belongs to all the free men who desire her, not as Adele, companion of Aníbal, but as a woman.

I realized that there was someone else in the house, but I could not hear a sound. I went to the kitchen and found Gelèac leaning against the wall. I asked him to come with me, and he, looking bashful, with his hands in his pockets close to his manhood, a place so familiar to his fingers, followed behind me. I told him to make himself comfortable on the bed next to Adele. He hesitated for a moment, but she carefully took hold of the young man’s hands and started drawing him towards her. And that strong body yielded to the pull of the woman’s slender arms, leaning over to the point of either sitting on the bed or kneeling down. He sat down and was given a kiss, I knew that from then on I was no longer needed, so I leaned down, kissed them both on the forehead and went out, closing the front door behind me, my heart racing as if it were my first time with a woman.

I walked across the field, avoiding the dining hall. Aníbal might see me and ask me about our companion. It was not the time to tell him that our anarchist marriage now included another partner, a young man full of life and ideals, one of us, an advocate of communal living, who deserved Adele maybe more than either of us because he was young and had traded his youth for this way of life.

Yet part of me missed her. It was my core of selfishness that I struggled with every day by reminding myself that the interests of the Colony were more important and my own woes were nothing more than the bearable feelings of an individual. I walked along the road, watching the moon rise on the horizon, a full moon pulsating with such intensity that it made me want to go back to my house, to my bed, to my woman. And suddenly I wanted those things to be mine. That was sad, sadder than loneliness.

I had met Adele in November 1891 in Italy, when I was speaking on free love, on the need for change in relationships. It was only when women no longer belonged to anyone and children did not belong to a single father, but to the community, that the notion of family would cease to exist. I spoke enthusiastically about it, giving details

of my vision, and at the end, when I was talking to a group of people and recounting the latest news from the Colony – it was going very well, but there was still a shortage of women, who are less adventurous than men – she came up and, taking me over to a corner of the room, said she agreed with me, a woman could not tie herself down to one man, she should feel love for all men; if you feel love for someone, sex is more legitimate than with a spouse; within marriage, a sense of obligation cancels out desire. She looked at me as she spoke, and then I asked her to tell me a little about herself, so she told me she was the widow of one of the comrades and was thinking of leaving for Brazil, that was why she had come to my lecture.

As is my wont, I asked her straight out, with no hint of lewdness in my voice, if the comrade had been the only man in her life.

“I’ve had others,” and after a brief pause: “I loved my sister’s husband.”

“And did she know about the two of you?” It was not a man asking these questions, but a professional. She understood that and replied as a patient would to her doctor.

“No, she didn’t.” Another pause. “Or at least, officially she didn’t. She may have suspected, especially after she fell ill and could no longer accommodate her husband, who would spend the nights with her and the rest of the time with me.”

“Do you feel guilty?”

“For loving my brother-in-law?”

“For not telling.”

“I’m not sure whether it’s guilt. I think it would have been easier for everyone, but with her being ill, I didn’t have the heart to say anything. She was going to die quite soon.”

“And did she?”

“While holding my hand. I felt sorry for her, but I was relieved.”

“Did you stay together with her husband?”

“Only for a few months, then he fell ill with tuberculosis like my sister, and it was over even quicker in his case.”

“Has love also been a joyful experience for you?”

“So far it has been about devotion.”

“Have you loved anyone else?”

“An anarchist who taught me the meaning of solidarity, we were persecuted, we went hungry, but with him love was something stronger.”

“And he left you?”

“In the most painful way possible, the only way that doesn’t hurt a woman’s pride even though it leaves her even more unprotected ... He died.”

“Of what?”

“I think it was the hard life we led, with hardly any food, not sleeping properly, always moving from one town to another, always driven out by the bosses.”

“And are you with anyone now?”

“I’ve been living with an anarchist for a little while now. I am as fond of him as I was of the others. As I said, for me, love has been more about companionship.”

“Love that is just is always about companionship.”

We said goodbye and I did not think about Adele again, her tiny eyes, always bright, despite the look of a woman who has known suffering.

When she arrived with her husband in November 1892, I was cool towards her. They had delayed in Curitiba for several days, unable to make up their minds about coming to the Colony because of the negative propaganda spread by the dissidents, who see us not as an anarchist colony, but as a band of lazy idealists.

The two of them arrived with a group of tradesmen, looking dejected and fearing what they would find here, and what they found was our poverty, this handful of wooden houses and the shortage of food. The married women do not like it when more people arrive, they think that it is them and their husbands who have done the work. Adele and Anibal did not bring much money, only seven hundred réis, which they put into the kitty, but even that was not enough to improve the mood of the others. Their initial hesitation had annoyed me, they should not have believed the lies of the former residents of the Colony whose presence here had been more of a hindrance than a help to building our anarchist family, and who were now intent on deterring new comrades.

It was only a few days later, once they were working - Anibal on the roads, Adele in the communal dining hall and the vegetable garden -, that I had the chance to get to know her better. One evening, after a meal of thin vegetable broth, she showed me the letter from Giannotta, a mutual friend. It was more of a note, recommending that she seek me out and become my friend. At the end, she asked Adele to give me her love.

“You haven’t done that yet,” I said, slightly suggestively.

“Maybe one day ...” she said, leaving me alone at the table and going over to Anibal, who was talking to a group of colonists.

Many days were to pass before Adele kept her promise. We often talked and I would ask her if she still agreed with free love, as someone should set an example and I was so miserably alone that for me it would be more than just a socialist experiment, it would be pure joy amid the deprivation. I had traded the security of a family for the friendship of the comrades, but I was in need of physical affection.

“We could try free love, this is an experimental colony intended to provide freedom for women.”

Adele agreed with everything I said, but did not take a decision.

“Are you afraid of what people will say about you?” I asked.

“You know me well enough to know that I don’t care what other people think.”

“Are you fearful of hurting Anibal?”

“It’s the least you might expect of an honest woman, don’t you think?”

“Then let’s tell him everything.”

My determination spurred on Adele, who spoke to him the same day. Anibal was already suspicious of our as yet innocent meetings. His eyes filled with tears, but he did not weep or protest. Adele asked him if he regarded her as a free woman or as her husband’s servant. Free, he said. She went on with her explanation. A free woman both could and should do as she pleased with her body and her affections.

He was forced to agree, while holding her hand in an attempt to keep her from going. We will be an example to these peasant women who no longer have a boss, but continue to do as they are told by their husbands, she said. Aníbal said nothing, but just gazed at the woman who sought the right to experience other bodies.

“Has anything happened between you yet?”

“We wouldn’t do anything without your approval. You’re not a bourgeois pig.”

“I don’t own you either. If you think that’s how things should be, then I agree.”

“But you agree grudgingly?”

“I agree although it pains me.”

“What are you afraid of?”

“That you’ll end up staying with him.”

“I’ll always be with both of you.”

That same night, after this talk, and after making love with raw emotion, Adele left her house, with Anibal’s consent, and came to my bed. She came in looking sad, but her sadness did not stop her doing what we both desired. Her demeanour was that of a nun answering the call of a dying man in the middle of the night, pure resignation, our encounter was causing another person to suffer, and thus caused us suffering, too.

“I’ve come to do what Giannotta asked me to,” she said, in a serious voice.

Then she pressed her lips against mine with no gesture of warmth. I embraced her slight frame - she was a small woman who under different circumstances may not have attracted me - and I felt a shiver run through me. Despite her fragile body, there was such firmness in her resolve! She had left behind the desire to be respected for her conduct, abandoned not only our sad homeland, but the entire past of Catholic Italy, everything to try a new form of love with me. Adele grew in my arms and soon we were kissing with youthful desperation. When we saw each other naked, it was as if our bodies had known each other for centuries.



THE BOOK



Anarchist Love

Miguel Sanches Neto

- **Original title:** Um amor anarquista.
- **ISBN:** 85-01-07258-3
- **Publication year:** 2005
- **Original publishing house:** Record
- **Number of pages:** 252
- **Total printing in Brazil:** 3.000 copies

SYNOPSIS

In the late nineteenth century, during the scientific wave in Western thought, a young Italian, Giovanni Rossi, decides to test the theories of anarchist communism. Counting on the opportunities of immigration to southern Brazil, he and a group of friends depart for a still somewhat undeveloped region to found a communist colony—to be named the Cecilia Colony, Latin America's first anarchist community. They purchase land over time from the Brazilian government and attempt to put their principles into practice. Among these is free love, which means children born in this new era will belong to all rather than a specific parent. In this quest for egalitarian relationships, the tensions of a life of hardships emerge, demonstrating the ideology's practical impossibility. Although the colony

doesn't last long, a greater love—that which moves the idealists—endures. Giovanni Rossi lives forever with a woman who gave birth to the children of several men. A novel that explores the tension between what we think and what we feel.

TRANSLATIONS

Spanish: Un amor anarquista, Rosário (Argentina): Beatriz Viterbo Editora, 2006.

PRESS REVIEWS

"The lyrical force of Miguel Sanches Neto's prose in *Um amor anarquista* resides not in an artificial stylistic exercise but in the writer's humanist stance, close to that of the Italian neorealists." Antonio Gonçalves Filho, *O Estado de São Paulo*

"The extraordinary adventure of the Cecilia Colony has finally found, in Miguel Sanches Neto, its preordained novelist, so to speak." Wilson Martins, *Jornal do Brasil*

THE AUTHOR



Miguel Sanches Neto

- **Pen name:** Miguel Sanches Neto
- **Other books:** *Chove sobre minha infância*, Record:

2000. Second edition: 2012.
A primeira mulher. Record: 2008.
Chá das cinco com o vampire,
Objetiva, 2010.
A máquina de Madeira, Companhia das
Letras, 2012.
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THE TRANSLATOR

John Whitlam

Born in London, England, John Whitlam graduated from the University of Cambridge with an MA in Modern and Medieval Languages. He later obtained a second MA, in Advanced Japanese Studies, from the University of Sheffield. After working for ten years as a staff translator for the EU, he moved to Brazil in 2004 and now works as a writer, editor, translator and university lecturer, specializing in lexicography and language teaching.

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THE SUICIDE'S HEAVEN

RICARDO LÍSIAS

Translated by Angel Gurría-Quintana

I specialise in collections, but gave away my stamps over ten years ago. I have a single watch, and from my grandparents I inherited a small amount of money and nothing else. I don't keep foreign coins, I don't have shoeboxes full of postcards and I don't catalogue mugs, cigarette packs or key rings. I have a toy Pan Am airplane, but a collection worthy of the name would require, at least, a small fleet.

The decision to give up collections and become a specialist was not made consciously. When I entered university, I had already rid myself of the bottle caps and most of the stamps collected over a few years. I got through my entire undergraduate degree without thinking about collections. Every now and then, a lecturer would say that historians love the dust on documents, and that he had himself spent many hours poring over all sorts of collections. In courses on the history of art, some collectors were always referred to. But beyond that, collections did not interest me much at the time.

It wasn't always like that: during my childhood and adolescence I amassed almost two thousand bottle caps. As for stamps, mandatory for almost anyone who has been obsessed by collecting, I managed to arrange two beautiful albums. I also gathered everything I could find about the football team I liked when I was twelve. In that case, however, I was driven only by passion, which could never be a key element of a serious collector's business.

Nowadays, I don't even watch Brazil's World Cup games.

As a teenager, I loved arranging my bottle caps. They were all grouped by their country of origin and then, in smaller groups, by the drink from which they originated. I basically divided them into soft drinks, which were plentiful, alcoholic drinks and water bottles.

I was proudest of a series of bottle caps with Arabic characters that I had managed to get through a distant relative. I tried to understand what was written on some of them, but since I couldn't I was forced to make an exception in my catalogue and was unable even to classify them by country. As for my three Japanese bottle caps, to this day I don't know if they were from a bottle of water or a soft drink. I never thought they came from beer bottles: a teetotaler gave me the lot.

Twenty-three bottle caps from India were unusual. They were a gift from an aunt who, despite being barely out of her twenties, had suffered an unbearable romantic heartbreak, and after spending a few weeks crying and screaming meaningless words, decided to go find herself in a small town three hours out of New Delhi.

I must have been around fourteen when she went there for the first time. My grandfather tried to maintain some kind of supportive poise and only managed to say over and over that she would change her mind and would come back soon to finish her law degree. The fact that he paid for his disillusioned daughter's airfare remains a sore point between him and my grandmother to this day. Looking back, I think my aunt was last in Brazil some ten years ago. As far as I know, she hardly calls even at Christmas.

About two years ago, I plucked up the courage to ask for the whereabouts of my disillusioned aunt. My grandmother started crying, my mother ate another spoonful of rice while signalling her disapproval with her left hand, and my uncle, always competing with his younger sister, said disdainfully that she was somewhere between southern Russia, Mongolia and Kazakhstan.

He said she spends her time wandering with a group headed by a monk who claims to be the reincarnation of the spirit that controls every living being's emotional side. Not only humans'. At that moment, choking with laughter, my sister almost spat out whatever she was chewing on. I had just ruined our Easter lunch.

I don't find the story funny. I don't believe that monk exists, of course, but I always liked my aunt. Her brother, the joker, unnerves me a bit. When she first returned, I think in 1990 (I can't remember the exact date because, since I started missing everything, I lost the notion of time), I was very impressed by the way in which she gave me the bottle caps she had brought.

For your collection, Ricardo. I can't forget that phrase: for your collection, Ricardo. She gave me the parcel with a far-away gaze. We were all waiting at the airport. She saw us as soon as the arrivals door opened, waved and walked towards us very slowly. My grandmother started crying. My aunt hugged us one by one. Later, if I'm not mistaken, I was the first to get a gift. For your collection, Ricardo.

For someone who loved riding his bicycle, and always felt very intense affections, her gestures seemed too vague. I examined the bottle caps on the way from the airport to my grandfather's house, where we would celebrate her visit.

If I'm not mistaken, my disillusioned aunt returned to Brazil eight years later. We were at the century's end. We didn't see each other: her visit coincided with a difficult post-graduate examination. I was very focused, and when I finally managed to return to São Paulo she had already left.

I never forgot my mother's look of desolation as she told me that her sister, who had become a nun, warned that the world would suffer a great catastrophe, if it did not in fact end at the start of the 21st century.

She never returned to Brazil. Always affectionate, during that second visit she

left me some more bottle caps. But I was already studying to become a specialist and, with the arrogance inherited from my uncle, I threw them out. To study their origin, as any good collector would do, did not even cross my mind.

Since all of that happened, I've come to understand that to feel a longing for the past means, in some ways, to have regrets. I try to remember a few things. Had I not thrown out the bottle caps, for instance, my aunt's phrase would make sense to me today. For your collection, Ricardo.

But I have no more collections.

Last week I went back to the rubbish bin into which I threw some of my bottle caps, the most valuable ones. The others, I left for the bin collector the following morning. I had no hope of finding them: after all, it's been almost twenty years. I think that's right: twenty years. I just looked at the people in the metro station and its environs. And sadly I found nothing that meant anything to me.

My bottle cap collection came to a sad end. The month after I finished secondary school, a little before Christmas, the class got together for a farewell party. It was one of those meetings at which every promises that they will always stay in touch.

I want to see my classmates again. I sought them out on three social networks on the Internet, but since I can't remember their names, I didn't find anyone.

At the party, we would start a new phase of our lives. Naturally, plenty of alcoholic beverages would be available. Today things are different, but back then it took us longer to start drinking.

Because the girls would be there, we anticipated that the evening would lead to the experiences we had fantasised about during our school years. For some reason, probably the last shred of my adolescent pride, I thought that taking my bottle caps would put me in a better position to conquer one of them. That was the plan: seduce them with the best part of my collection.

Today I think such pride demonstrates that I truly have a collector's soul. I will take my bottle caps, the girls will surely be impressed, and I will choose the one with whom to crown the end of my adolescence. I didn't have the slightest doubt.

It didn't work.

All this self-indulgence is making me uncomfortable. Before André's suicide, I had never wanted to look back. Now, I've started missing everything. Because I cannot help remembering an enormous number of episodes I lived through, it is inevitable that I should start to weigh them up. And so, I regret many of them.

When it all started, my first reaction was to hate André. I'm ashamed to say it: he had barely been buried and already I cursed him, speaking to myself as I walked down the street. The first crisis happened when I left the police station.

I had to make a statement. As far as I could tell, I was the last person contacted by André. It all went without a hitch. To be honest, I was surprised by the policemen's politeness. As I was leaving, one of them asked if I knew the legendary Manoel Camassa, a police commissioner who collects coins and election paraphernalia. He even owns several ballot boxes.

After I said goodbye to the lawyer I had hired as a precaution, I began feeling out of breath. The vertigo grew, so I sat down in a square, but a beggar came over and started bothering me. He called me a cry-baby. I think he called me a little cry-baby. I stood up to face him, but my sight darkened with anger and he disappeared. Then I ran away shouting. I must have cursed everyone, but it was certainly André that I cursed the loudest.

I had never shouted so much. I always dealt silently with my problems. I organise and reorganise them in my head, as if they were in a collection, until I find a solution. I react in the same way when making decisions. That graduation party I mentioned is a good case in point. Of course I didn't finish secondary school in the way I had planned.

I took around two hundred bottle caps. I was careful to wipe them with a cloth beforehand. I was a bit apprehensive about the Japanese specimens: if they stood out, my inability to explain whether they came from water or soft drink bottles might undermine my ability to charm the girls. Not to mention that, in such an environment, it would be disappointing to admit that a teetotaler had given them to me.

I decided I would start by showing them the three bottle caps of Polka, a beer made in the south of Brazil in the 1940s by a German descendent. Later, as far as I was able to investigate, it stopped being an artisanal brew and was bought out by a large conglomerate.

At the party I would add that in various places around the world the international drinks industry gobbled up small and local enterprises, leading to an obvious deterioration in flavour. If I finished my story by saying that the owner of Polka created some sort of beer fest, I was sure to captivate someone.

I captivated no one, of course. An hour into the party every one started feeling melancholy, and each time I decided to open my little plastic bag with the ten rare bottle caps, people said that perhaps we could get together again in February. When the atmosphere threatened to become too heavy, we shared each other's news.

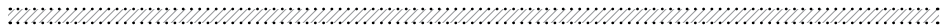
One guy would be helping his brother out at a little shop in Canada. Two of the girls had found jobs with a famous stylist and I, the collector, was burning the midnight oil to get into university to study history.

We agreed to leave early, to make the farewell easier. It wasn't, and to this day I dislike thinking about it.

Slightly drunk, I sat alone on the metro and studied the ten bottle caps all the way home. For your collection, Ricardo. For some reason, I no longer felt proud of my collection.

The carriage was empty, and in my mind the journey took a long time. I gave the best part of my collection to a guy who seemed very sad and was sitting close to me. Perhaps a friend of his had just killed himself. We mustn't ask about such things.

It wasn't like that: angry, sad and a little drunk, but excited about the new prospects, brimming with curiosity about what would come my way, therefore quite confused, I threw the bottle caps into a bin at the metro station near my house. They were no longer a part of my life.



THE BOOK



The Suicide's heaven

Ricardo Lísias

- **Original title:** O céu dos suicidas
- **ISBN:** 978-85-7962-125-3
- **Publication year:** 2012
- **Original publishing house:** Objetiva-Alfaguara
- **Number of pages:** 186
- **Total printing in Brazil:** 3000 copies

SYNOPSIS

The narrator of *The Suicide's Heaven*, a man in his early thirties, is one of the Brazilian specialists on the subject of collections. His best friend's suicide provokes a crisis, makes him question his choices, and causes him "to start missing everything".

A descendant of Lebanese migrants, the narrator ends up travelling to the Middle East while as he researches his grand-uncle's possible involvement in a terrorist group. World events, and Brazil's recent history, become the backdrop to his breakdown, as he queries such complex subjects as madness and suicide.

Gradually, readers will discover that the narrator's greatest concern is with what awaits his friend after committing suicide. According to almost all world religions, he has no right to Paradise, or

will suffer an even greater anguish than the one that drove him to kill himself.

PRESS REVIEWS

<http://oglobo.globo.com/blogs/prosa/posts/2012/04/28/ricardo-lisias-a-arte-de-perder-442383.asp>

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THE AUTHOR




Ricardo Lísias Aídar Fermíno

- **Pen name:** Ricardo Lísias
- **Other books:** *Coertor de estrelas* - Rocco 2000; *Duas praças* - Editora Globo - 2006; *O livro dos mandarins* - Objetiva/Alfaguara - 2009

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Angel Gurria

Ángel Gurría-Quintana is a historian, journalist and translator of Spanish and Portuguese. He has written for the *Financial Times* since 2003, specialising in literature in translation. His work has also appeared in *The Observer*, *The Paris Review*, *Brick*, *granta.com* and *The Guardian's books blog* and. A regular presence at the



Festa Literária Internacional de Paraty, his translations from Portuguese include the stories by Beatriz Bracher, Bernardo Carvalho, Milton Hatoum, Reinaldo Moraes and Cristovão Tezza in the compilation Dez/Ten (2012). He works at the University of Cambridge.

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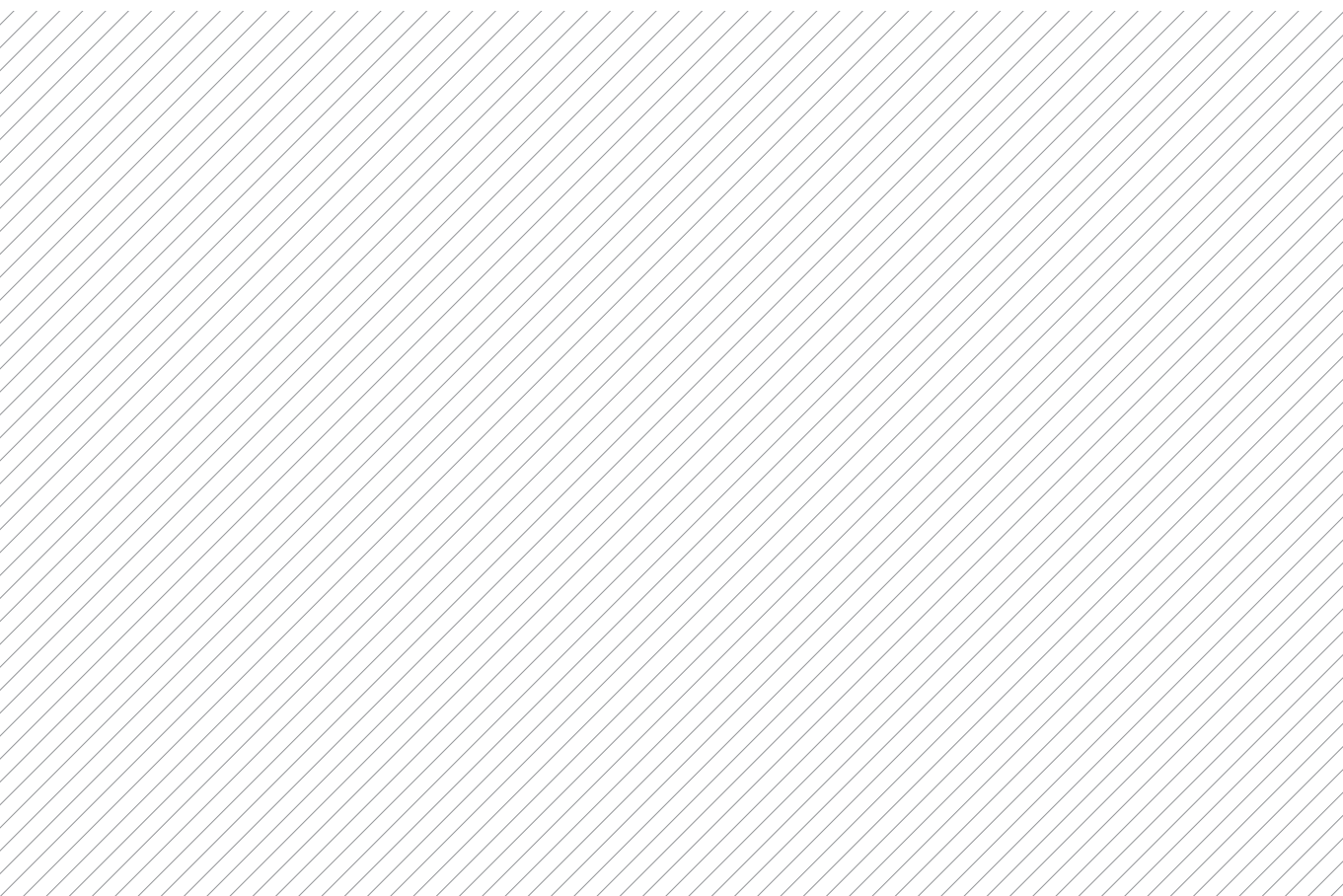

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POEMS

RODRIGO GARCIA LOPES

Translated by Chris Daniels

FLEETING

Passage through a landscape,
a place of where, yesterday, and when,
how many words are still missing
in a mouth full of images.

The other is the one left on the margin,
on the fright of a pronoun,
on the body of a slow wind,
the other is like a hunger,
a drifting feather, distant, or almost.

Lost in its own voyage,
a bottle with its message,
a stare enduring on a flower,
nameless, secreted, gone wild.

Exile, water one drank on a train,
a procrastinated party, a play over, vertigo,
the mind always on some one,
I other, I all, I none.

WRITTEN IN A HOTEL

What makes us write
Even while time, the mind's writing,
Denies that is there to entertain
Until time closes, until light abridges.

The first gesture that detonates it
Is the echo of the word that devours it,
Bones and stuffing on exhibit as it
Comes, of its own impulse the master.

To confuse the registers,
A light in a room announces itself.
And, to become even more lucid,
A distracted hand writes us. And stops.

ZEITGEIST

Knocking out celebrities disguised as penguins
Monitoring the hoard of transactions and the tricks of climbers
Snaking between stairways nailed with citations
Kicking twilight's bucket with dawn's baby inside
Stepping up strong to a showdown with lies, treading on calumny's corns
Accruing stocks in patience and pederast informers
Pinching salon-tanned folk made of fiberglass and ultra-high def pixels
Pulling marketers by the ear, taking the millionaire bishop by the scruff of the neck
Showing his catalog of kung-fu moves to web designers
Terrifying fashion editors with crucifixes made of shit
Heading for a knockdown brawl at the florist's
Shivving the morning and good intentions with her sharp dagger
Pulverizing manipulators of the genome and chip-injected models
Giving the third degree to the corrupted files of the justice department
Assaulting metaphysical popcorn vendors and weekend-artist bankers
Passing out acid lollipops to literary critics
Blowing up the mouth of reason with inconsequential denunciations
Sweetly choking the life out of the evening charged with video cameras & trance music
Preaching fiscal irresponsibility and anthrax for all
Rifling through the idées fixes-crammed mall with a cry of jihad
The human bomb walks into the poem.



THE BOOKS



Visibilia – Polivox – Nômada

Rodrigo Garcia Lopes

- **Original title:** Visibilia
- **ISBN:** 85-89485-40-4
- **Number of pages:** 95
- **Original publication house:** Travessa dos Editores
- **Publication year:** 2004

- **Original title:** Polivox
- **ISBN:** 9788588338081
- **Publication year:** 2002
- **Original publishing house:** Azougue Editorial
- **Number of pages:** 154
- **Total printing in Brazil:** 1.000 copies

- **Original title:** Nômada
- **ISBN:** 85-98271-09-8
- **Publication year:** 2004
- **Original publishing house:** Lamparina
- **Number of pages:** 166
- **Total printing in Brazil:** 2000 copies

SYNOPSIS

In *Visibilia*, **Polivox**, and **Nomad**, poet, composer, and translator Rodrigo Garcia Lopes expands the range of contemporary Brazilian poetry, practicing a polyphonic poetics, bringing a wide variety of styles, experiments, and establishing a critical dialogue with other cultures. Back in 1985, Brazilian poet Paulo Leminski (1944-1989) called Garcia Lopes “one of the most eminent poets from the new generation”. His poems have been widely published and anthologized, including in **Os Cem Melhores Poemas Brasileiros do Século 20** [The 100 Best Brazilian Poems of the Twentieth Century].

PRESS REVIEWS

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THE AUTHOR



Rodrigo Garcia Lopes

• **Other books:**

Solarium (Iluminuras, 1994);

1.000 copies

Poemas selecionados (Atrito, 2001);

1.000 copies

Poemas Escolhidos (Centro Cultural São Paulo, 2012); 1.000 copies

• **Author's webpages:**

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Chris Daniels lives in Berkeley, CA, USA. His translations include: The Collected Poems of Alberto Caeiro by Fernando Pessoa and The Collected Poems of Álvaro de Campos by Fernando Pessoa, vol. 2 (both published by Shearsman Books); On the Shining Screen of the Eyelids by Josely Vianna Baptista (Manifest Press).

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‘LA MUERTA VIVA’

ANTONIO XERXENESKY

Traducido por Julia Maciel

Conocí a Sofía en la fila de un cine de la calle Lavalle, una fila para ver una película de zombis que pasaban en el festival de cine fantástico de Buenos Aires. El número de personas, inmenso, fue una sorpresa para mí: no imaginaba que los muertos vivos estuvieran tan de moda. Entre ella y yo había una señora de unos setenta años que rápidamente se cansó de esperar y salió bufando que un lugar como ese debería tener un lugar preferencial para mayores. La escena, que tuvo su efecto cómico gracias al tipo físico de la señora, una figura esquelética con un peinado gigantesco mantenido en pie por litros de fijador, le dio risa a Sofía y me permitió entrar en conversación con una extraña, actitud que personas más cerradas como yo evitan al máximo.

“Me acuerdo de las épocas en las que una película de zombis era algo que se veía a escondidas, en videos olvidados en los estantes del videoclub”, le comenté.

Sofía sonrió y me dijo que también se acordaba de esas épocas. Que su novio de la adolescencia alquilaba esas películas para verlas juntos, pero que, hasta las más cómicas o extravagantes como *Una noche alucinante*, a ella le daban miedo y él tenía que bajar el volumen y poner un disco de alguna banda pop de los 80, como *Human League* o incluso *Pet Shop Boys*, algo animado y para bailar, que entonces así le quitaba la carga de violencia a la película y ella podía verla hasta el final.

Me reí y le dije que mi experiencia en la adolescencia había sido al revés: mi noviecita de entonces era la que tenía coraje y yo era el miedoso. Fue difícil resistir la tentación de suspirar y decir: “Ah, la adolescencia”, o “Ah, los 80”, o “Ah, New Order, Pet Shop Boys, Depeche Mode”. O cualquier tipo de comentario que supusiera que nuestro diálogo era el diálogo superficial que uno tiene con un taxista en una carrera de diez minutos o con una persona aleatoria en el ascensor. Porque cuando observé con un mínimo de atención a Sofía (todavía no sabía su nombre), su cabello despeinado y sus orejas, ya no quería que ese diálogo fuera simplemente un inofensivo intercambio de palabras en una fila. Pero flirtear, para un tipo como yo, pasados los treinta, empieza a hacerse difícil. Conozco tanto los rituales que me es imposible no parecer artificial. Ya no se tiene la misma ingenuidad: se adopta una cierta mirada, un cierto tono... tan esquematizado, tan consciente y al mismo tiempo tan falso que hay que forjarse una inconciencia. De lo contrario las ilusiones se rompen y el flirteo fracasa. Un flirt es un flirt justamente porque se encuentra en una zona gris, ambigua. Es un pacto en el que debo fingir que no estoy seduciéndola, y ella, a su vez, que tampoco sabe lo que está ocurriendo. Nunca es fácil.

Lo que importa es que ella entró en el juego, el engaño funcionó (era así como me sentía, un estafador) y durante los cinco minutos que nos quedaban en la fila

seguimos conversando entusiasmados, ahora sobre las canciones de los 80, sobre cómo eran tan bailables como tristes, sobre una de New Order extremadamente desesperada que podría tratarse tanto del amor como de su fin.

En el momento de elegir una butaca en la sala de cine, llegué a contemplar la posibilidad de que ella dijera un “bueno, nos vemos”, y entonces yo me sentaría en un lugar cualquiera, lejos. Pero ella me guió –sin tocarme un dedo, solamente usando una distancia calculada– hacia dos butacas vacías en el centro de la sala. La película en sí se reveló una olvidable estupidez que en nada aportaba al ya saturado género de terror con zombis. Había, sí, referencias a los clásicos, a todos. Sin embargo, la figura del muerto vivo era el símbolo de las mismas cosas de siempre: el individuo masificado en el capitalismo voraz y etcétera. La inocuidad de la película no nos impidió, claro, cenar juntos después. Yo ya había comido, pero le dije que le aceptaba unas empanadas. Sofía dijo que conocía un buen lugar. Allá fuimos.

En la cena conversamos sobre cine y música con entusiasmo creciente. Pedí una cerveza, y luego otra, y dos fabulosas empanadas de carne. El asunto retornó a la adolescencia, a nuestros noviecitos de entonces, y en un momento dado ella suspiró y dijo: “Ah, Rímini, qué personaje que era”. Yo esboqué una sonrisa, amarillo, incómodo, sin saber todavía cuál era el motivo de mi incomodidad, qué era lo extraño en ese nombre. De todas formas, algo perturbador se instaló en mí desde esa mención, algo extraño que llegó a impedirme que la invitara a tomar un café en casa o a un trago o a cualquier otra cosa que tendría la única y exclusiva función de enmascarar el objetivo “sexo”. Al contrario, solo intercambiamos números de teléfono y cada uno partió rumbo a su casa.

Cuando llegué me tiré en el sofá y me quedé mirando la biblioteca. Sofía y Rímini, dije en voz alta. Ella se llama Sofía y su ex novio se llama Rímini. Y entonces mis ojos vagaron sin rumbo por la sala, volvieron a la biblioteca y se detuvieron en el grueso volumen de *El pasado*, la novela de Alan Pauls. Saqué el libro del estante y al leer la solapa confirmé mis sospechas. Sí, el libro trataba de la enfermiza relación de una pareja, Sofía y Rímini, desde la adolescencia hasta la vida adulta. Sofía estaba descrita de manera terrible: incapaz de aceptar el fin del noviazgo, perseguía a su ex como una loca. Rímini, un sujeto cubierto de ambivalencias, tampoco se mostraba capaz de abandonar el pasado y seguir hacia adelante. Yo me reí sonoramente, y la carcajada se dispersó por el apartamento. Entonces, pensé, de allí venía mi perturbación. Una coincidencia estúpida. Sofía y Rímini. Rímini debe ser un nombre común, no solo en Buenos Aires. Quizás en otros lugares, quién sabe en el Brasil.

Fui a la computadora y busqué el nombre en Google. Rímini era una región de Italia. También había sido una noble medieval italiana, Francesca de Rímini. Una marca de colchas. Pero no el nombre de una persona, era extraño. Los primeros resultados como “nombre de alguien” aparecían en links relacionados con el libro de Pauls. Una coincidencia de hecho peculiar, todavía más porque la novela tiene lugar en Buenos Aires. Abrí una última cerveza. Cuando la terminé, me fui a dormir.

Me desperté al día siguiente, un sábado, con el sonido del teléfono. Era Sofía. Ella comenzó a hablar sin decir quién era, suponiendo que yo me acordaba bien de

ella y podría asociarla a su voz. La verdad es que realmente me acordaba de ella. “El día está lindo –dijo Sofía– ya son las diez de la mañana, no creo que estés todavía en la cama, salgamos, hagamos cualquier cosa, un picnic”. Yo, un tanto sin acción y somnoliento, acepté.

La última vez que había participado en un picnic fue en la infancia, le conté, ya sentado en el parque, sobre la lona extendida en el pasto, ella y yo juntos, compartiendo la estrecha sombra que ofrecía un árbol. Hablamos de lo tonto de las convenciones sociales de creer que los picnics son solo para las familias felices; que los amigos (fue así como nos definió: “amigos”) también podrían apreciar un lindo día de sol, una medialuna, un Malbec. Alrededor de nuestra lona, una fila de hormigas se iba formando poco a poco y pequeños insectos se nos pegaban a la piel.

La conversación irrelevante proseguía mientras mi mente solo se concentraba en una cosa: la oportunidad de introducir El pasado en la charla, hablar de la coincidencia Sofía-Rimini. En cuanto se hizo un primer momento de silencio, pregunté, de repente: “¿Cuál es tu escritor argentino favorito?”. Ella, tímida, respondió que no era una gran lectora, que prefería el cine y las artes plásticas (“¡Me encanta Klimt!”), pero que había leído algo de un escritor argentino, de un personaje que vomita conejos, aunque no recordaba. “¿Por qué esa pregunta? ¿Cuál es tu escritor favorito?”.

Fue entonces que mentí. Le dije que mi favorito era un tal Alan Pauls, que todavía vivía y que no había publicado muchos libros. Ella, sin demostrar ninguna sorpresa o reacción extraña, dijo que nunca había oído hablar de Alan Pauls. “¿Qué escribió de interesante?”, preguntó, sin parecer muy compenetrada en el asunto y sin embargo queriendo que hablara un poco, como dos personas que se están conociendo y todavía soportan al otro hablando sobre las mayores irrelevancias, con el supuesto objetivo de conocerse mejor, sea lo que sea que eso signifique.

Le conté, entonces, de El pasado, las líneas generales de la historia, describí la trama como “la historia de un amor obsesivo”, le mencioné que el autor pasó años escribiéndola. Ella dijo “Ah, parece bueno”, y antes de que el silencio forzara un cambio de tema, enmendé, con una voz que salió chillona: “Y lo curioso es que los personajes que forman la pareja central de la novela se llaman Sofía y Rimini”. Ella comentó que era una coincidencia curiosa, sí. Que un día leería el libro. Y cambió de tema.

Esa tarde hicimos el amor por primera vez, y a mí me gustaría decir que fue bueno, que fue maravilloso. No estaría mintiendo, solo que tampoco sería la verdad completa. En cada cambio de posición, cada gemido diferente, yo hacía un esfuerzo paralelo en la mente para recordar las escenas de sexo de El pasado. ¿Cómo era la Sofía personaje en la cama? ¿Contraía las piernas cuando se la chupaban? ¿Levantaba el culo como pidiendo con el cuerpo que la penetraran así? No lograba recordarlo... había leído el libro hacía bastante, y, al mismo tiempo, no podía relajarme y disfrutar el momento. Mi cuerpo actuaba mecánicamente, siguiendo las direcciones que ella apuntaba, mientras mi cerebro recorría la memoria atrás de algo que, en el fondo, estaba seguro de que no recordaría.

Sin aliento, Sofía se acostó en la cama y comentó que había sido increíble. El CD que sonaba en la sala paró y comenzó nuevamente. Ella había activado la

función de “repetir”, imaginando, quién sabe, horas y horas en la cama conmigo. Sofía recorrió levemente mi pecho con la punta de las uñas, como quien espera a que el hombre se recupere y, antes de que eso suceda, insiste en indicar que está preparada para una próxima. Sonreí sin mucha credibilidad y dije que tenía que irme. A ella le pareció extraño, preguntó si no quería quedarme a comer, un trago más, un café. Negué nuevamente y agregué que tenía un trabajo de traducción que terminar. Sofía me miró con desconfianza y se colocó de modo que su cuerpo quedara encima del mío, sus piernas reteniendo las mías. Repitió: “¿Seguro?”, acariciando con mayor fuerza mi pecho. Le confirmé que sí, y ella preguntó si era eso realmente, si no estaba inventándolo. Que si tenía algo que esconder, podría contarle, sin problemas, que detestaba los secretos. “No serás casado, ¿no?”. Rezongué que no era nada de eso, logré salirme y busqué los calzoncillos en el suelo. Cuando finalmente pude salir del apartamento y respirar intensamente el aire de Buenos Aires, pensé que esos celos, esa desconfianza, eso sí, eso era una marca innegable de la Sofía de los libros, la Sofía personaje.

Por la noche no pude dormir. Llamé a una amiga que era periodista cultural y le pedí, no sin cierto tono de imploración, que me diera el email de Alan Pauls. Ella lo dudó por dos minutos, trató de evitar una respuesta, me preguntó los motivos de mi repentino interés. No obstante, al final, cedió.

Escribí entonces el siguiente email:

*Estimado Sr. Pauls,
Soy un gran entusiasta de su obra. Releyendo El pasado, tuve curiosidad por el personaje de Sofía. ¡Qué bien construido que está! ¿Ella está basada en alguna persona real? ¿Alguna Sofía que andaba por las calles porteñas?*

Me pregunté si Pauls tendría el hábito de entrar en internet de madrugada. Mientras el indicador de nuevos emails no pestañeaba, decidí emprender una búsqueda sobre el libro. Descubrí, bien al comienzo, que Pauls tenía la intención de llamar a su libro La mujer zombi. La mujer zombi. Sofía, la que no acepta que el amor murió y persigue a su exmarido hasta el fin del universo y de los tiempos. Por lo menos desde su perspectiva, un punto de vista masculino, que es el único que nos da el novelista. La mujer zombi, la que no desiste, la que como una muerta viva sigue vagando, insistiendo, atrás del exnovio, atrás de la carne humana, de la sangre. Y entonces recordé que conocí a Sofía, mi Sofía (no el personaje, la que yo esperaba que no fuera el personaje) en la fila del cine, mientras esperábamos para ver una película de...

Cerré la página de internet y respiré hondo. Esto estaba rayando lo paranoico. Apagué la computadora. Me tomé un calmante, mientras me acomodaba en la cama, y dormí una noche sin sueños. Me desperté a las nueve de la mañana con el celular que sonaba. Por las hendiduras de los ojos todavía cerrados, tonto de la resaca en la que me habían dejado los somníferos, reconocí su nombre en el identificador de llamadas. Apreté el botón de rechazar y cerré los ojos nuevamente.

Cuando finalmente tuve coraje y me levanté de la cama, había doce llamadas no atendidas en el celular. Prendí la computadora y abrí con prisa el email, esperando una respuesta de Pauls. En lugar de eso, encontré un mensaje de Sofía preguntando por qué no atendía el celular, si no me había gustado lo de ayer, y avisando que había una muestra de Hitchcock en el cine, que hoy daban *Vértigo*.

Pensé: basta de tanta locura, y respondí cariñosamente que había sufrido de insomnio y me había ido a dormir tarde, que por eso no había atendido el teléfono, pero claro que aceptaba la invitación de ir al cine, hacía tiempo que había visto esa película y Hitchcock me gustaba mucho.

Ella respondió en media hora y arreglamos el encuentro. Me afeité, me bañé, tomé el voluminoso *El pasado*, lo cargué debajo del brazo y fui al encuentro de Sofía.

Le di el libro inmediatamente después de encontrarla en la entrada del cine. Le dije: “Deberías leerlo”, tal vez de una forma más agresiva de lo que me habría gustado. Ella miró el título y preguntó si era ese el libro del cual le había hablado, con una Sofía y un Rímini. Asentí con la cabeza y entré en un largo discurso sobre la belleza de la prosa de Pauls, la importancia de ese libro en mi vida, la curiosidad de que el libro se iba a llamar *La mujer zombi*, y bla, bla, bla, bla. Ella palpó el volumen, vio que tenía unas quinientas páginas. Entonces dijo: “¿Podrías prestármelo en otro momento? Ahora no tengo mucho tiempo, no voy a poder leer un libro tan largo”. Yo insistí, empujando el libro contra su cuerpo. “Es muy importante para mí que leas este libro”, le dije. La fila empezaba a formarse. Ella guardó el libro en la cartera, contrariada, y fuimos a comprar las entradas.

En el comienzo de la película yo trataba de recordar lo que sucedía en la trama. Tenía la impresión de que veía *Vértigo* por primera vez; pero no, imposible. Hice maratones de Hitchcock durante la adolescencia. Seguro que la vi. Allí desfilaba la bella Kim Novak, en su brillo artificial de Technicolor. James Stewart se enamora del personaje de ella, que muere trágicamente en una caída. Novak resurge con otro nombre, y el personaje de Stewart, un detective, sospecha. ¿Quién es esa mujer que se parece tanto al objeto de su pasión? ¿Cómo podía ella ser tan idéntica a aquella que había partido de forma tan trágica y que lo había sumergido en un luto tan doloroso? Stewart sospecha, cada vez con más fuerza, que la nueva mujer que conoció es la muerta. La similitud física es asombrosa (ambas son Kim Novak), pero ¿cómo probarlo?

Entonces, en un instante, recordé todo lo que sucedía en la película, toda la trama, el final sorpresa, y comencé a sentirme mal. La náusea me debilitó en el medio del cine y le dije a Sofía que necesitaba ir al baño. Me levanté de la butaca y luché con la oscuridad hasta salir de la sala, sin aire, evitando al máximo mirar hacia atrás, con miedo de encontrarme con la pantalla de cine, con miedo de encontrar la horrible escena en la que James Stewart presiona a la “nueva” Kim Novak para que confiese que ella no es ella, y sí la vieja, que la muerte fue montada, ficcionalizada. Y entonces, sin aire en los pulmones, con una sensación de vómito subiendo por el esófago, entendí por qué Sofía, la mía, no el personaje, me había llevado para ver esa película. Se trataba de un mensaje, un mensaje de que no debería presionarla acerca de su pasado, pero el mensaje –si fuera eso realmente, si no estuviera delirando,

pensando demasiado, analizando demasiado- era también una prueba de que estaba en lo cierto, que ella era la Sofía personaje, la Sofía de Pauls, perturbada, celosa, la mujer zombi, la muerta viva.

En vez de ir al baño, salí del cine sin aliento y corrí por la calle, sin rumbo. No iría a casa. El plan era solo correr para estar lo más lejos de allí. Sofía nunca me perdonaría haberla abandonado en el cine de esta forma; pero era mejor así, pues escapar de la muerta viva era la única prioridad en ese momento.

Apuré el paso y corrí, corrí. El sudor comenzó a brotar, primero en las axilas, después en el pecho. Correr es bueno para pensar. A medida que mi corazón se aceleraba, mi cerebro disminuía el ritmo. Pensé: ¿y si cometí una equivocación? Conozco a una mujer interesante, con buen gusto para el cine, bonita, y arruino todo con paranoias. Qué ridículo. Un personaje no sale de un libro así como si nada. Y eso de la película de zombis y *Vértigo* no son más que coincidencias. Pero se desata el caos porque un tipo obsesivo ve en esas coincidencias revelaciones absurdas. ¿Y si esa serie de interpretaciones desubicadas no fueran más que reflejos de un miedo mío, íntimo, al compromiso? Una reacción inconsciente, quién sabe, a todas las relaciones fracasadas en las que me vi envuelto, como si fuera mejor no comenzar de nuevo para no tener que soportar la molestia, el griterío y el lloriqueo que suelen acompañar a las separaciones.

Cuando me quedé sin aire, paré en medio de la calle, bañado en sudor y con la mano en el pecho. Miré hacia un lado. Un cibercafé. Mi tren de pensamiento frenó bruscamente. Entré.

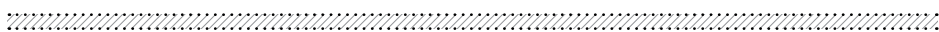
Fui directo a la primera computadora libre. Tamborileé los dedos sobre la mesa, nervioso, mientras se cargaban los emails.

Pauls había respondido.

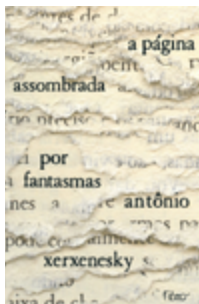
Agradecía mis elogios, decía que le alegraba que su libro me hubiera gustado tanto. En el final me respondió que no, que Sofía era una creación puramente de su cabeza, ¿no era esa a fin de cuentas la función de los escritores, inventar historias y personas?

El mozo preguntó si me gustaría un vaso de agua y si estaba todo bien. Me limpié las lágrimas que habían brotado sin aviso y le dije que sí, quería una botellita de agua helada para llevar. Pagué la cuenta y salí a la calle. Soplaban un viento incómodo en Buenos Aires en aquella parte del centro y la ciudad se veía sucia, desorganizada y gris. Había basura acumulándose en la calle.

Me sequé la cara, pero algunas lágrimas continuaban corriendo sin motivo. No me sentía triste, solo exhausto, las pantorrillas que latían, la mente hueca. Miré hacia el lugar desde donde había venido y pensé que podría volver al cine, la película no debía haber terminado. Podría sentarme al lado de Sofía nuevamente, explicarle todo lo que había sucedido y arreglar la situación. O mejor, no mencionar nada, solo decirle que no me sentía bien del estómago y que por eso había demorado tanto en el baño. Entonces miré hacia el otro lado de la calle y pensé que también podía seguir mi camino, volver a casa y bloquear su email y celular, y desear no encontrarla nunca más en las calles de la ciudad o en las filas de cine y esperar que, aunque fuera una muerta viva, desistiera tarde o temprano de mí.



EL LIBRO



La página hechizada por fantasmas, cuento “La muerta viva”

Antonio Xerxenesky

- **Título original:** A página assombrada por fantasmas, conto “A morta-viva”
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SINOPSIS

A Página assombrada por fantasmas reúne nueve cuentos conectados y conducidos por las lecturas y las maneras de leer de sus personajes. Un “detective literario” que sospecha que el autor del nuevo libro del norteamericano Thomas Pynchon es, en verdad, la tenista rusa Anna Kournikova y una estudiante brasileña de Letras que se depara con un supuesto manuscrito inédito de Borges en un viaje a la Argentina son algunos de los protagonistas creados por el autor y que se conectan con escritores reales o inventados.

En “La muerta viva”, un joven conoce en la fila del cine antes de la sesión de una película de zombies a una mujer

increíble llamada Sofia. Sin embargo, comienza a sentir que algo no está en su lugar. Poco a poco descubre que el motivo de su incomodidad son las semejanzas entre la Sofia que conoció y el personaje del mismo nombre de El pasado, de Alan Pauls. Tal coincidencia llevará al protagonista por una espiral de paranoia, hasta que sea incapaz de discernir si enloqueció o si, de hecho, un personaje de ficción salió del libro y se adentró en el mundo real. Xerxenesky usa la ficción para reflexionar de forma creativa y lejos del tufillo académico, sobre los muchos fantasmas que son, ellos mismos, la base de cualquier literatura contemporánea.

RESEÑAS EN PERIÓDICOS

O REVISTAS

O Globo, José Castello: <http://oglobo.globo.com/blogs/prosa/posts/2011/08/27/jose-castello-comenta-livro-de-antonio-xerxenesky-401470.asp>

Zero Hora, Mundo Livro: <http://wp.clicrbs.com.br/mundolivro/tag/a-pagina-assombrada-por-fantasmas/>

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• **Otros libros publicados:**

Areia nos dentes, Não editora (2008) /
Rocco (2010) – 3000 ejemplares

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PROCURA DE LA NOVELA

JULIÁN FUKS

Traducido por Julián Fuks

Capítulo 13

En el modo como rasga el pan al medio con las manos, deteriorándolo y diseminando las migas por la mesa en toda su extensión, solo para depositar las dos mitades fuera del cesto, al lado del plato, instaurando la irregularidad en el cuadro que se mostraba regular. En el modo como vuelca el aceite y observa cómo se va expandiendo circularmente por los márgenes del plato, en un proceso lento que nunca llega a terminar, y en el modo como agita el salero con golpes cortos y verticales estimando la densidad de partículas sólidas que flotan por la corriente. En el modo escrupuloso como vierte en la copa una escasa cantidad de vino, cantidad imprestable hasta para conocerle el sabor, pero que él sorbe de inmediato sintiendo nada más que los labios humedeciéndose. En el modo como, dejando la copa en que solo queda una tenue mácula rojiza, recoge al fin una de las mitades del pan que preparó y lo hace deslizarse por el arco de aceite y sal, en sentido contrario a la corriente, embebiéndolo al máximo con la rigurosa solución y llevándolo a la boca antes de que se escurra por los dedos.

¿Qué se oculta, qué subyace, qué música inaudible compasa el minucioso baile de brazos y manos sobre los utensilios, qué jeroglífica memoria dicta los gestos mínimos que esta vez no lo distraen? ¿Serán estos hábitos auténticamente suyos, la secuencia de actos que por años su cuerpo depuró para llegar al ritual más confortable en tales circunstancias, inicio vulgar de la comida, o estarán por entero demarcados por una cultura prestada, ni popular ni cortés, siendo síntesis de los hábitos de todos los que un día fueron sus comensales? Su padre, por ejemplo, con la solemnidad propia de la cabecera, cuánto no le habría conferido cierta rectitud de columna, una concisión de ademanes, una sobriedad que él imitara con sumisión o respeto. Ejemplo demasiado fácil. Cuánto de los amigos que quedaron para atrás, en las mesas turbulentas de su infancia, el bullicio contrastante de sus traqueteos peculiares con los cubiertos, sus costumbres extravagantes. O de las mujeres que alguna vez ocuparon la silla opuesta, la seducción en la gracilidad de los meneos, en la precisión delicada de los movimientos. Cada gesto una deuda, una apropiación imprevista, la repetición de un modelo perdido; cada movimiento una reverberación sibilina.

¿Podrá esa chica que acaba de servirle descifrar sus orígenes a partir de esta ínfima sucesión de procedimientos? Juzgando que las frases secas que Sebastián le proveyó hayan sido bastante reticentes, juzgando que sea poco lo que pueda desprender de la neutralidad de su apariencia, con este prolongamiento temporal del contacto con el cliente, ¿estaría ella en condiciones de evaluar su procedencia? Algo

de argentino, seguro, porque pudo verificarlo tantas otras veces, en la falta de aseo con el mantel (cuando haya terminado el almuerzo, más allá de las migas esparcidas, manchas amarillas y rojas testificarán su presencia). Pero cuánto de brasileño en la reverencia que dedica al vino, bebida de nobles o de ocasiones específicas, y cuánto de brasileño en mil minucias indiscernibles, minucias que nunca sabrá, quizás en el ángulo relajado de los codos, en la serenidad con que tritura los alimentos. No, si en nada de esto, en todo lo que disienta de alguna lógica estricta que él insiste en definir como argentina, y que se insiera así en una lógica opuesta, más incierta, que constituiría una hipotética categoría de brasileño.

Pensamientos inútiles mientras espera. Su mediocre aporte a una poética de los gestos y a discusiones fatigadas sobre el contenido de las nacionalidades, pautadas por caracterizaciones estériles, impresiones obtusas, generalidades. Nada de lo que pueda resumir una identidad individual o comunitaria se prestará a observaciones tan mezquinas, ilaciones tan pobres, símbolos forzosos. En la copa que ahora llena hasta la mitad el vino es argentino, pero ni su color matizado, ni la cantidad de corpúsculos que lo puntúan, ni su equilibrada proporción de transparencia y opacidad revelan este hecho. Si es posible arrogar a la bebida alguna líquida argentinidad, esta condición debería prescindir de todo atributo inmediato y acudir al historial de las uvas aplastadas para darle origen, la profundidad de sus raíces ya desenterradas. Pero después que la semilla clavada en el suelo se trasmutó en tronco, el tronco en rama, la rama en hoja, la hoja en flor, la flor en fruta, y después que se recogió a la fruta, se la amontonó junto a otras, se la trituró sin piedad, se la almacenó en barriles dispersos, se la embotelló y se la transportó a ciegas hasta una mesa distante en el espacio y en el tiempo, ¿no se habrá extinguido esa supuesta esencia relativa al pasado?

Levantar la copa de vino y escudriñarla bajo la luz pálida, como hace en este instante, implica someterla a un falso examen: se cree acceder con la visión a la substancia en su materialidad, pero lo que se presenta a los ojos son solo los rayos que en ella se reflejan, que en ella se refractan, que la traspasan. Tratar de saborearla producirá la misma falsedad, pues el sabor que se siente no será el de la bebida sino consecuencia de una serie de reacciones físicas y químicas mucho más concernientes al organismo que la ingiere, pero antes que Sebastián pueda someter a prueba esta ponderación improvisada, antes que pueda entregarse a la experiencia que acaba de proyectar sin un gran propósito, se ve interrumpido por una acción fortuita, un sujeto incógnito sentado a una mesa próxima que imita el gesto y levanta la copa a media altura, dirigiéndole a él, a Sebastián, una sonrisa al mismo tiempo burlona y retraída. Paralizado, indeciso entre opciones que no se perfilan, Sebastián se limita a acompañarlo en el trago insinuado por las manos suspensas y solo en seguida asimila haber brindado por algo que no se adivina.

Este sujeto incógnito, este sujeto cuyos pelos blancos sumados a la profusión de arrugas autorizan llamarle viejo, este viejo cuyos rasgos amenos permiten suponer que sea simpático, este viejo simpático que brindó con él por alguna causa insondable ¿tendrá una personalidad acorde con su figura agradable, podrá resumirse sin grandes pérdidas a una preponderante agradabilidad? Y si así es,

porque así lo quiere Sebastián para aplacar la soledad del almuerzo, ¿será viable conjeturar con algún fundamento sobre su índole? Se muestra comfortable, el viejo, desenvuelto en relación a las exigencias del escenario, en ningún movimiento revela cualquier de los desajustes abundantes en forasteros, de lo que se concluye que solo puede ser argentino. Viste ropas informales, aunque elegantes, se llena de aperitivos y entradas en un restaurante que se podría considerar caro, pero describe una simplicidad que sugiere algún cambio de clase, quizás una ascensión social tardía. No titubeó en burlarse de él en su postura compenetrada, se siente seguro a punto de arriesgar una eventual enemistad con el extraño más joven, parece confiar en alguna conexión ignorada y así transmite, curiosamente, una extraña confiabilidad.

Es fácil imaginarlo, hoy, inmune a la crisis que asola el país, caminando por las calles más pobres y distribuyéndose con generosidad, ocupando mansamente los lugares designados y extendiéndose en envestidas voluntarias, actuando con la libertad con que solo actúa quién está en paz con el pasado. Es fácil imaginarlo, en el límite de sus posibilidades, valiéndose de las sobras de su autosuficiencia para ayudar a los más débiles, los desvalidos, los que no tuvieron y no tienen su suerte. Pero por dónde habría caminado, ¿cabrá preguntar?, por dónde se habrá extendido en otro tiempo, en tiempos de asperezas políticas y posicionamientos necesarios, si su seguridad y su comodidad excesivas parecen indicar la ausencia absoluta de cualquier ruptura o trauma, parecen indicar que nunca haya sido subyugado, nunca forzado a luchar por sí mismo, nunca impelido a dejar la ciudad. Y si, siendo argentino, como ostenta en cada detalle, no tuvo que abdicar de su empleo o huir a toda prisa de su casa, no tuvo que esconderse en quintas remotas, no perdió el contacto con algún hijo más rebelde o no atestiguó la desaparición inexplicada del nieto que nunca vio nacer, ¿será posible que en el auge de sus facultades políticas, será posible que en el auge de su pequeño poder personal y de la demanda de bien aplicarlo, haya enmudecido y continuado su vida con tantas desgracias a su alrededor?

No, no se justifica este juicio duro y gratuito inmiscuido en la indagación, una indagación demasiado precipitada, es lo que Sebastián pondera cuando vuelve a mirarlo de reojo, su rostro pálido de rasgos finos, la tranquilidad derramada de sus maneras. Hace poco, y aún ahora, la presencia de este sujeto no le provocó ninguna desconfianza o rabia, ningún disgusto por la intromisión en sus procesos, nada más que el aprecio por su compañía inesperada. Por alguna razón de la cual prefiere privarse, la jocosa seña de aquél hombre hizo que él se desviara de maceraciones inoportunas y así ablandara su espíritu, se sintiera más cómodo, casi agradecido. Estando ambos solos, ambos en los preámbulos de la comida, hasta podrían juntar las mesas y cambiar frases directas, el viejo contándole los meandros de su historia, dilucidándose con calma, él devolviéndole la comprensión en la forma de sus propios trayectos.

Porque, claro, confesaría Sebastián del modo más leve que consiguiese, también él parece estar pasando incólume por la vida y escapando de sus pesares habituales. Tampoco ha sido oprimido, subyugado, obligado a luchar por sí mismo. Igual que al otro, que tan próspero se percibe, el destino lo viene tratando con la más amplia

benevolencia, pidiéndole solamente que se recueste y acepte lo que le ofrece. Cuando se despierta en el medio de la noche tomado por pesadillas, demorándose algunos segundos para secarse el sudor de la frente, no es capaz de acordarse de cualquier horror que lo afligía, cualquier miedo explícito, cualquier ser monstruoso que lo perseguía en su inconsciente. Como si también le faltara un trauma originario, un fardo propio del cual debiera descargarse. Si hay algo que lo persigue, en la mente o en la vida, ¿ese algo es el tedio? Un mal-estar impreciso, un vago tormento, sí puede ser sincero. ¿No lo siente, el viejo? ¿No siente el vacío que rige toda esta prosperidad, toda esta templanza?

No puede responder porque la pregunta no fue hecha, porque ahora el viejo se esmera en acoger a su real compañero, un señor que no modera la efusión del saludo, y porque el joven serio con quién brindó hace poco ya está absorto en la deglución del bife que le sirvieron. Con la mano derecha clava el cuchillo en la carne y fuerza a la grasa para que libere un pedazo grande, conduce el trozo a la boca cuidando que la sangre no gotee, mastica rápido y rápido traga, sintiendo el placer posible que se pierde por el esófago. Como si desde siempre viniese alimentándose inútilmente, tanta carne, tanta materia desperdiciada en la forja de un cuerpo infértil. Un cuerpo imponente, estable como tantos, habilitándolo a transitar con altivez en la muchedumbre, pero un cuerpo incompleto, desprovisto de la interioridad que los otros presienten, un cuerpo hueco que ninguna carne sabrá llenar. Un cuerpo devastado, piensa, por la inmaterialidad de los pensamientos.

¿Podría entenderlo, el viejo que lo abandonó y se retiró a un diálogo irrelevante? Y si lo entendiera, si Sebastián consiguiera exponerse en un discurso accesible y coherente, ¿podría el otro discernir de la garganta que modula la voz, o del pecho que la alienta, esta vacuidad inherente? Y si de hecho discerniera, ¿podría reconocer, quizás, en esta vacuidad alguna identidad precisa, alguna redentora esencia? Ese joven sentado ahí, susurraría el viejo a su compañero, ese pobre joven lleva consigo el secreto de su insignificancia. Quien lo ve así tan firme no lo sospecha, tal es el rigor con que disfraza sus incertezas, tal es la destreza con que emula comportamientos ajenos. Engaña a los otros tanto cuanto a sí mismo, en juegos lógicos e inconclusos proyectos, pero hace algunos días se viene deparando con sus límites tan modestos. Descubrió como es vano su pasado, como su historia es intrascendente. Descubrió lo que hay de más obvio, y su descubrimiento no es ni siquiera inédito: descubrió que nada tiene a descubrir en sí mismo, y que esta nada lo califica, que esta nada vive dentro de él. Y el joven sentado allí, él mismo el sujeto incógnito que desfila sus maneras, continuaría triturando su bife con toda morosidad y paciencia.

Pero si esto es verdad, Sebastián detiene el tenedor a medio camino para indagarse, si el viejo tiene razón cuando lo define así, y si de hecho él mismo ya concluyó por la inconclusión inevitable de su proyecto, ¿por qué permanece tanto tiempo en esta ciudad? ¿Por qué se hace llevar de un lado a otro como si buscara a alguien o alguna cosa, por qué se demora en las veredas mirando vidrieras que no le interesan, por qué atrasa sus pasos como si evitara la frialdad insensible de las suelas contra el cemento? ¿Por qué trata de hacer de las calles los pasillos que faltan a su

departamento cuando ya está claro que ni en las calles ni en el departamento podrá sentirse en casa? ¿Por qué mide tanto cada frase engullida o dispensada, por qué se esmera en reproducir usos, gestos y tonos de los bonaerenses, por qué escruta obstinadamente las mínimas reacciones de la gente a su presencia cuando toda esta obsesión ya lo condena a siempre saberse extranjero, a siempre sospechar que identificarán su impertinencia?

Que no venga a decir que pretende rescatar algún valor de sus ancestros, los abuelos de los retratos anacrónicos que ya empiezan a descascararse en las paredes, los seres anodinos que no se trasmataron en nada y no le prestaron cualquier parábola, cualquier paráfrasis. Que no se contradiga, que no venga a decir que desea integrarse a la ciudad abandonada por sus padres, la ciudad que fueron forzados a abandonar, recobrarlos en el escenario de su gran batalla, de su gran historia, reencontrarlos donde ya no están. Que no se exalte, que no venga a decir que quiere restituir este espacio a sus poses legales, hereditarias, apoderarse de este campo desolado del cual sus padres fueron arrancados si ni siquiera ellos, víctimas inmediatas de caquéuticos verdugos que ya se empiezan a morir de causas naturales, quisieron insistir en una tarea tan ignominiosa, tan abyecta. Que no se confunda, que no venga a decir que quiere instalarse por tiempo indeterminado, autoexiliarse en la migración contraria, dejarse quedar en su impoluta pasividad hasta que sienta que se hizo justicia, que alguien fue, o que fueron todos, tardía y ridículamente, vengados. Que no se ilusione, que no piense que en este aislamiento voluntario, en este tonto sacrificio, estará cumplida su misión tan precaria.

Sobre la mesa, el plato en que cuchillo y tenedor se alinean cruzando módicos detritos de papa y carne, la servilleta de tela, estrujada, devuelta a la superficie, el cesto de pan con la mayor concentración de migas, la media botella de vino ya consumida, la copa en que solo queda una tenue mancha que ya no será reforzada. Sobre los indicios incontestables de una indiscreta estadía se alza la mano de Sebastián con el pulgar y el índice en contacto, la mano impotente oscilando en movimientos laterales y pairando sobre la materia en desorden, convocando sin éxito la atención de alguien que le traiga la cuenta.



EL LIBRO



Procura de la novela

Julián Fuks

- **Título original:** Procura do romance
- **ISBN:** 978-85-01-09474-2
- **Año de publicación:** 2011
- **Editorial de la publicación original:**

Record

- **Número de páginas:** 144
- **Tirada total en Brasil:**

3 mil ejemplares

SINOPSIS

En Procura de la novela, Julián Fuks diseña a la literatura, explorando a la vez su historia personal y su propia experiencia de escritura. Sebastián, el protagonista, es un escritor en crisis que se instala en Buenos Aires para entregarse al penoso proceso de elaboración de una novela. Explora así su intimidad, sus reflexiones, sus inquietudes y angustias, al mismo tiempo en que revisa su propia infancia y sus orígenes argentinas, que se mezclan al duro pasado y al presente complejo del país. En una narrativa altamente sensorial, con un amplio espectro de emociones y gestos muy bien traducidos en palabras, Julián Fuks funde memoria y ficción para recomponer la historia de un viajero que investiga

sus antiguos lugares mientras se descubre, se extraña y se recubre, para más descubrir y recubrir. El libro fue finalista de los tres principales premios literarios brasileños: Portugal Telecom, Jabuti y São Paulo.

RESEÑAS

“En su calidad técnica impecable, y contando con un puñado de escenas excelentes, Fuks expone, articula y comenta, en una novela muy buena, algunos de los más vivos impases del género”. Luis Augusto Fischer, Folha de S. Paulo.

<http://www1.folha.uol.com.br/fsp/ilustrada/17589-livro-sobrepoe-eixos-narrativos-com-destreza.shtml>

“Procura de la novela es, en rigor, el relato de un retorno al pasado que se transforma en una desilusión. Y justamente por eso, porque fracasa y enfrenta ese fracaso, ¡es un gran libro!” José Castello, O Globo.

“Antinarrativa, antinovela, antipersonaje, es paradigmático de la actitud desconfiada ante la vida. (...) Fuks trabaja en pleno territorio onettiano”. Vinicius Jatobá, O Estado de S. Paulo.

“No se trata solo de literatura, en esta búsqueda. Julián Fuks hace de su libro un ejercicio literario pleno, pues coge los restos de todas las frustraciones, sean literarias, sociales o amorosas. Un libro moderno por ser amplio y multifacético.” Mauricio Melo Júnior, Rascunho, <http://rascunho.gazetadopovo.com.br/busca-infinda/>.

“Fuks trabaja en la construcción minuciosa de cada acto, de cada movimiento del cuerpo (...). Es una de las bellezas de su narrativa: una especie de mimetización de la memoria, donde todo sumerge en la oscuridad y a veces una escena viene a la superficie, con toda su carga posible de revelación.” Heitor Ferraz Melo, Valor Econômico,

<http://publicidade-valordigital.valor.com.br/cultura/2516316/literatura-como-centro-da-narrativa>

“Procura de la novela se propone como valerosa resistencia a la decadencia literaria (...) Un potencial renovador, una capacidad explosiva de reaccionar con la materia común produciendo, sin sobras, una energía limpia y elegante.” Abilio Godoy, Cronópios, <http://www.cronopios.com.br/site/critica.asp?id=5378>.

EL AUTOR



Julián Miguel Barbero Fuks

• **Nombre de pluma:** Julián Fuks

• **Otros libros:**

Histórias de literatura e cegueira, Record, 2007, 3 mil ejemplares
Fragmentos de Alberto, Ulisses, Carolina e eu, 7 Letras, 2004, 600 ejemplares.

EL TRADUCTOR

Julián Fuks

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NOCHEVIEJA

RAFAEL GALLO

Traducido por Sebastian Rodriguez

La cuenta regresiva era gritada por todos en la fiesta, menos por él y su hijo, que observaba, a cierta distancia, la sucesión de números decrecientes representados en sus viejas manos trémulas. A través del lenguaje de señas, el padre procuraba hacerlo participar del ritual colectivo, sin notar que el joven no necesitaba aquel código para comprender con precisión lo que pasaba a su alrededor, apenas lo acompañaba con bastante celo para que el padre también comulgase de la celebración. La traducción, sin embargo, fue interrumpida por la insurrección del propio evento que intentaba espejar: un grupo de primos entusiasmados cercó al muchacho a los gritos, empujones y saltos de conmemoración, cubriéndolo. Él sólo consiguió desenmarañarse del abrazo alborotado y volcar los ojos para el padre en el último segundo del conteaje. Como un hombre extraviado del tiempo, el viejo se encontraba suspenso, portando en su mano erguida un abandonado “tres” a envergarse lentamente, feneciendo en sus dedos. El grito de “Feliz año nuevo” explotó con los cohetes, pero tanto el hijo como el padre parecían ajenos al arroyo; uno, inmune a los sonidos, percibía apenas el embotamiento del otro, que a su vez ahora parecía inmune a cualquier paso del tiempo. El joven entendió con los gestos del padre su sufrimiento: además de la comunicación momentánea, estaba rompiéndose otra de las pocas líneas que aún lo ataban a la vida. Los sordos consiguen leer los labios incluso cuando están cerrados.

El hijo se dirigió al padre y lo abrazó; arrimó una de las manos en su pecho y, utilizando una técnica desarrollada por ellos años antes, deletreó “Feliz año nuevo”, como si digitara en el tronco del viejo cada una de las señas. El método ha sido creado justamente para momentos como ese, posibilitando que se comuniquen verbalmente sin interrumpir el contacto físico, que tuviesen el privilegio de poder decir algo mientras mantenían los rostros unidos. El uso de las señas ha sido aprendido por la familia por causa de la sordera del chico, pero visto las dificultades del padre para memorizar todos los nuevos signos y estructuras gramaticales, los dos decidieron despreciar, entre ambos, el uso de las expresiones y palabras listas, siempre engendrándolas letra por letra. Esa forma de comunicación era un poco más lenta y complicada, pero facilitaba a un señor la asimilación de un nuevo lenguaje. “Voy a sentir tu falta”, el padre respondió, sellando sobre el pecho del joven. La reciprocidad del sentimiento fue confirmada en otro código: el hijo se alejó un poco y colocó la mano abierta sobre el propio pecho mientras agitaba la cabeza positivamente. Aun conmovido por la declaración, el viejo tuvo la impresión de que los sentimientos, a pesar de recibir el mismo nombre por todos, probablemente son tan distintos en cada persona como cualesquier otros rasgos; la añoranza de uno y

de otro podría ser tan diferente entre sí como el gusto que cada uno siente al morder una manzana. El dolor precoz del vacío, causado por la inminente mudanza del hijo hacia otro país, parecía mucho más grave en el viejo, que jamás conseguiría optar por la separación como el joven lo hacía. El lazo entre los dos sería atravesado por un océano. La cesión de los cuidados y acompañamiento constantes representaba no solamente el alejamiento de su hijo, sino también la pérdida de uno de los últimos papeles que le restara: él sentiría falta de ser un padre. El muchacho tal vez no viera en su recolocación en la cadena familiar una pérdida tan aflictiva; el avance tiene gustos completamente diferentes en la juventud y en la vejez.

Guiados por el más joven, los dos se encaminaron a una de las mesas, donde el hijo acomodó al viejo en una silla y se retiró, señalando que regresaría pronto. Sentado delante de un plato vacío, él se sintió solitario, cercado por extraños, de cierta forma. Sabía el nombre de la mayoría de los allí presentes, distinguía sus rostros y los vínculos en la familia, pero era sólo eso. Identificar en ellos apenas esas características extrínsecas - que no se alteraban ni tampoco dependían de la voluntad de cada uno, o sea, las que no interesaban - creaba un distanciamiento todavía mayor que el relativo a un completo desconocido, a quien al menos se le puede preguntar como se llama, para iniciar un diálogo. Sin saber lo que hacer o decir, el viejo, callado, apenas acompañaba a lo largo de las conversaciones ajenas, cuyos contenidos parecían pertenecer a otra era, otro mundo. ¿Qué le puede agregar a aquellos asuntos? Nada - lo cotidiano de esas personas era formado por experiencias tan distantes de él como un viaje espacial para un faraón. ¿Cómo pude participar de tantas fiestas como ésta, sin nunca sentir esta incomodidad? Miró hacia la silla vacía a su lado y comprendió.

Era su primera participación en algún evento social sin la esposa, el primer contacto directo con otras personas desprovisto del amparo de ella. Antes de esta fiesta de Nochevieja, la última reunión familiar fue justamente en su velorio y entierro, solemnidades en las cuales - a pesar de muerta - ella estaba allí. Su cuerpo, ya un monumento apenas, invocaba las atenciones; los pésames manifestados y las historias rememoradas rellenaban las interacciones sin esfuerzo. El propio luto, subsecuente, le proporcionó al viudo una especie de ocupación: subsistiría, entre las tareas del hogar, los cuidados con la esposa por los pesares de su partida. Si el fantasma de ella regresara algún día, preguntando de forma vulgar "¿Qué hiciste hoy?", probablemente él le respondería: "Miré tu retrato". Pero ahora, meses después del fallecimiento, nadie la mencionaría gratuitamente - sobre todo en una celebración de recomienzo -, y hacerlo, él sabía, sería un recurso vacío e infructífero. La propia ausencia de la mujer, antes tan sólida como el lado opuesto de su presencia, parecía estar deshaciéndose. Como una sábana blanca removida, la falta de ella finalmente cedía lugar a la aparición de sillas, días y lazos desocupados.

Frente al inmenso hueco revelado, él miró alrededor, buscando algo que lo confortara, o al menos que lo distrajese un poco, y se encontró, a través de la puerta de vidrio, con aquel otro señor anciano, solitario en el sofá del salón: su primo, el último pariente contemporáneo aún vivo. A pesar de haber crecido juntos y de las

tantas experiencias en común, las contingencias de la vida desunieron poco a poco su convivencia: de chicos jugando juntos por las calles de tierra, se convirtieron en muchachos combinando los pasos de baile en las fiestas, después maridos y padres centrados en sus propios núcleos familiares y entonces... ¿dos ancianos perdidos en sí mismos? Ahora que todo ha pasado, tal vez pudieran retornar el hilo de su historia, restaurar los cuadros de sus propias vidas. Tras un pedido de permiso que nadie en la mesa pareció haber escuchado, él caminó hasta el primo y se sentó a su lado.

Al verlo de cerca, sintió un pequeño malestar. Pensó que el alejamiento mutuo no ocurriese apenas por las transformaciones en las circunstancias familiares de cada uno, tal vez hubiera sido también una evitación de atestiguar uno en el otro la sordidez del tiempo. El primo, a su lado, no podía ser más reconocido; su imagen, callada, no contaba más quien era él; sus nutridos cabellos negros habían sido empalidecidos y deshechos, la sonrisa cautivante estaba enterrada sobre un rostro desmoronando y los músculos que lo movieron en tantos juegos y coreografías comunes estaban andrajosos. Encorvado por el tiempo, aquel hombre se tornó un completo extranjero ante sus ojos; apenas los recuerdos aún podrían atestar la existencia del guapo muchacho que lo ha acompañado en tantas vivencias y que ahora se encontraba eclipsado por un cuerpo desgastado, una piel craqueada. Restaba saber si, tan distante de su formato original, al menos compartiría de su revuelta contra ese exilio personal a que los años lo sometían cada vez más. Él procuró descubrir, de forma sencilla:

- ¿Tú te acuerdas cuando vinimos para esta ciudad? Veníamos recogiendo moras por el camino... - Pronunciada en voz alta, el recuerdo pareció ejercer un poder aún mayor sobre él: su piel se calentó bajo un sol amarillo y distante, y el jugo oscuro de los frutos remotos pareció volver a respingar en los rincones de su paladar... Él, entonces, dirigió la mirada hacia el primo, que apenas sacudía la cabeza debilitadamente. La nítida falta de conmoción del compañero de viaje lo ha hecho callare desesperanzado. ¿El otro no ansiaba tampoco un retorno de su individualidad? ¿De su marca en el mundo? El silencio fue interrumpido por el primo apenas un tiempo después, cuando él, apuntando su frágil brazo para la mesa del centro, preguntó con una irreconocible voz débil:

-¿Has visto qué salero diferente?

No había realmente salida. Incluso quien había compartido sus experiencias, quien todavía podría portar gran parte de ellas y reencenderlas, estaba completamente deteriorado. El cuerpo arruinado, el lazo deshecho, la memoria difusa... aquel hombre a su lado no poseía nada más que lo vinculara a su propia historia, que la demarcase. Ni siquiera parecía añorarse a sí mismo. ¿Hacia diferencia como había vivido? O eso era apenas tan relevante como... ¡¿La vida es tan estúpida como un salero?! Tal vez sea hasta más insignificante, dado que el objeto permanece sólido ahí, que al menos causa alguna reacción en el primo.

La fiesta proseguía indiferente a los dos ancianos en el sofá y a cualquier sentimiento de ellos. Él entonces vislumbró como las otras personas probablemente lo percibían en el momento: no era más un individuo con sus idiosincrasias y sus atractivos, era apenas

un viejo, una categoría. Una raza de hombres neutralizados; destituidos de singularidad, utilidad o fascinación. ¿Qué es un hombre incapaz de fascinar a otros? ¿Qué ha sido de esos dos primos? Se tornaron simples detritos presos en las orillas del río del tiempo, cuyo flujo apenas pasaba por ellos, sin llevarlos a ningún lugar. Solamente la muerte podría removerlos de esa condición. La fiesta proseguía.

Él se levantó, trastornado, y buscó a su hijo. Al encontrarlo, indicó que quería irse inmediatamente. El joven, todavía un poco decepcionado por dejar la fiesta tan temprano, concordó en acompañarlo; además de percibir la inquietud del padre, quería despedirse apropiadamente, al final partiría a la mañana siguiente. Llamaron un taxi para llevarlos. Durante el trayecto, el viejo, indispuesto, pensaba en la inutilidad de tantas Nocheviejas, de tantas conmemoraciones por el cambio de los años, que, al fin, representaban apenas una suma de días descartados en una pila de olvido cada vez mayor. Pensaba en la inutilidad de todo el árbol genealógico y sus ramas cada vez más distantes entre sí; en tantos miembros de la familia que aún existirían sin saber nada sobre él, y en tantos otros que también habían fallecido sin su conocimiento. Miró su rostro arrugado reflejado en el espejo retrovisor y vio en él apenas la cáscara de un fruto seco, a punto de caer en vano.

Llegaron a casa. En la sala, los muebles intactos desde el fallecimiento de la mujer parecían aguardar su retorno; sin embargo, el habitante restante descreía definitivamente, ahora, que eso pudiera ocurrir. Observaba de cerca la destrucción irremediable de las cosas, sea después de la muerte o antes de ella. ¿Y de que valdría una resurrección, al final de cuentas? Se dirigieron los dos hacia la cocina, donde el viejo, sintiéndose vacío de todas sus atribuciones y sus significados, le señaló al hijo: “Creo que llegué a mi fin.” El muchacho se consternó; sabía que parte de esa sensación autoapocalíptica estaba relacionada a su partida. “No me parece que sea tu fin, pero lo entiendo. Si lo es, quiero decir que me quedo feliz que hayas llegado hasta aquí.” Comprendía un poco de la angustia del padre y sabía que no tenía mucho que hacer, no podía compensarlo por todas las pérdidas. “Tú lo dices porque no es contigo.” El viejo estaba fastidioso. “Espero que mi vez, así como la tuya, llegue sólo al fin de todo.” “No me sobró nada”, él constató de forma demorada, con más tristeza que ira. “Es porque, felizmente, todo ha sido consumado.” Las declaraciones del hijo no parecían servir de gran consuelo, el estado melancólico del padre apenas cambió de dirección: “Yo quería que pudieras oír.” “Ningún hijo oye a su padre.” Bromeando, el joven intentó consolarlo nuevamente, igualándolo a todos. Frente a su silencio postrado, continuó: “A veces, me gustaría que tú fueras sordo también.” “¿Por qué?” El viejo finalmente pareció tocado. “Porque te enseñaría muchas cosas. No dejaría que las hablas te distraigan del lenguaje más profundo del mundo.” “¿Qué es cuál?” “No lo sé todo, pero mis ganas de que tú seas sordo acaban cuando te veo conversando conmigo por señas; creo que tiene que ver con eso.” “No entendí.” “Nosotros dos siempre nos comunicamos como nadie; siempre tuvimos un idioma que hablaba por intermedio de todo: de nuestras manos, miradas, palabras, todo el cuerpo. Todos nuestros gestos tenían el mismo valor, y creo que eso nos hizo comprender uno al otro casi enteramente.” “¿Tú crees

que una persona puede comprender a otra casi enteramente?” “No sé, solamente comprendí de que seas sordo, o no, no hizo diferencia. El hecho de que aprendas las señas me mostró amor y me dio proximidad. Tú has vivido de una forma más difícil para que yo viviera de una mejor.” El viejo se quedó sin mover las manos por un momento, lo que también era una forma de silencio. El hijo continuó: “Nunca voy a olvidarme cuando me enseñaste la primera palabra que has aprendido con señas: ‘amor’. Hacías letra por letra, y yo acompañaba tus gestos transcribiendo de a poco una palabra ya lista en mí.” El padre, finalmente, mostró una pequeña sonrisa, encantado por el recuerdo. El otro prosiguió: “Ese día, tú me has enseñado el verdadero amor. Amor no era el diseño del gesto, era el gesto por detrás del diseño.” “¿Me culpas por no aprender de la manera cierta?” “Aprendiste las señas para conversar conmigo, yo aprendí a usarlas letra por letra para conversar contigo.” “‘Amor’ es sólo una mano en el corazón, ¿no lo es?” “Amor es haber aprendido el idioma uno del otro; crear lo nuestro.” El silencio inmutable del viejo fue aún más extenso. “Tengo nostalgia de eso, de ser padre. De todo lo que pasamos y acabó.” “No acabó. El recuerdo es una forma de existencia.” “Yo sé. Lo que me deja triste es todo eso haber pasado.” “Haber pasado eso es justo lo que construyó mi felicidad.” “Creo que ‘pasar’ tiene significados diferentes para mí y para ti.” “Tal vez... Entonces es el caso típico en que un nombre molesta. Si no oyeras la palabra, sabrías lo que es pasar; lo que queda atrás de la palabra y ella esconde.” “Eres el mejor hijo que yo podía tener.” “Por ser hijo tuyo.” “Yo...” – La frase se interrumpió, tesa en la mano del viejo. ¿Qué ha pasado? Era como si un cable se rompiera dentro de sí. Su cuerpo, desactivado repentinamente, desmoronó sobre el piso. El hijo corrió en su dirección. “¿Estás bien?” El desfallecido respondió negativamente, apenas moviendo la cabeza. “¿Qué estás sintiendo?”, el joven deletreó rápidamente. Convaleciente, él respondió con manos epilépticas: “Estoy sordo.” “¿Qué?” “No oigo. Apenas...” Intentó pronunciar alguna cosa, para ver si conseguía escuchar al menos el sonido de la propia voz dentro del cráneo, pero las cuerdas vocales eran un pozo seco. “Voy a llamar a alguien.” “No; quédate...”, el padre suplicó, percibiendo que sus palabras se estaban agotando. Su visión, como si estuviese ofuscada por una luz inédita, se tornó cada vez más blanca. Prácticamente ciego, no conseguía ver más los gestos de su hijo; percibía apenas un sonido grave y profundo, que luego comprendió ser el de su propia sangre fluyendo lentamente por el cuerpo. Aun intentó ensayar algunos gestos, dejar un último mensaje para el hijo, pero, además de los sentidos, parecía estar perdiendo también parte de la cognición. Sus manos se movían con dificultad y, entorpecidas como en un sueño, flotaban entre “amor” y “pasar.” El hijo, entonces, lo abrazó con fuerza y digitó vigorosamente sobre su pecho. El cuerpo del viejo, sin embargo, ya no transmitía más las señas.

Súbitamente él comprendió. Al recibir los toques de una palabra cuyo significado no se formaba, él entró en contacto directo con el gesto por detrás del diseño, el fondo por detrás de la palabra. Accedía, probablemente, a lo que el hijo definiría como el lenguaje más profundo del mundo. El idioma que, libre de las cercanías de las palabras, se define apenas por él mismo y sus nombres impronunciados.

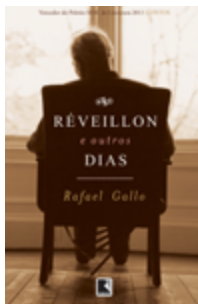
Entendió lo que era “amor” y lo que era “pasar.” En los brazos del hijo, vislumbró sus últimas líneas de la vida siendo desatadas con delicadeza y sintió que podría estar liberándose para una existencia más plena. ¿Habría, al contrario de lo que se imaginara, un espíritu en su interior, listo para la Nochevieja definitiva? Sintió algo escurriéndose de sí; algo que era, con certeza, el último pétalo a caer de su involucro carnal. Una lágrima se soltó de su ojo.

La pequeña gota ha sido la responsable del último contacto entre él y su hijo, que arrimó su rostro al de él. El joven nunca había visto a su padre llorar, y aquella demostración fue el último eslabón y más tocante entre los dos; la comprensión mutua alcanzada apenas en el umbral de la vida, por dos seres humanos extremadamente semejantes. El cuerpo del viejo entró en un silencio interior profundo y definitivo. Era el fin. Si pudiera decir aún alguna cosa, probablemente gesticularía para el hijo que aquel momento era el mejor “pasar” de su historia; estaba feliz que ese sea su fin. Probablemente, el hijo puede comprender parte de su paz, lo que era una redención para ambos. Una lágrima le es más útil a un hombre que un alma.

No despertaría más, y era mejor que sea así. Desveló, exactamente en el mismo momento, lo que es la vida y lo que es la muerte.



EL LIBRO



Nochevieja y otros días

Rafael Gallo

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2000 ejemplares

SINOPSIS

El libro trae diez cuentos, que tratan de las relaciones humanas con una visión crítica y desmitificadora. Las narrativas van de momentos más dramáticos – como en “Violentada”, en que una pareja se encuentra sola pela primera vez después de la novia haber sido estuprada – hasta los más bienhumorados, como por ejemplo, “El vendedor”, en que un muchacho decide ganar dinero vendiendo y cambiando sus propios órganos, lo que lo lleva a la degradación física y moral. En todas las historias, sin embargo, la construcción psicológica de los personajes y el rigor formal del autor se destacan, formando así una obra de relieve.

RESEÑAS EN PERIÓDICOS O REVISTAS

“Palabras y posibilidades no faltan, sin embargo, al autor en el camino para construir una obra literaria de notable sensibilidad.” (Marcelo Coelho, Revista Palavra de jul/12)

“Con un lenguaje literario de excelente nivel, y fuertes rasgos de empatía con el lector, son narrados diez cuentos (...) todos con una visión crítica y sagaz de las relaciones humanas.”(Roberto Santos, O fluminense, 27/11/12)

EL AUTOR



Rafael Eduardo Gallo

• **Nombre de pluma:** Rafael Gallo

• **Página web del autor:**

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EL TRADUCTOR

Sebastian Rodriguez

Sebastian Rodriguez nació en Buenos Aires, Argentina. Vive en Brasil desde el año 2001, dedicándose a la enseñanza de la lengua española. Ha trabajado en diferentes escuelas de lenguas y colegios. Además, se ha especializado en traducciones y revisiones del portugués para el español.



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FIESTA EN LA USINA NUCLEAR

RAFAEL SPERLING

Traducido por Augusto Nemitz Quenard

Amores y un siglo

Y el amor, ese amor enorme, ese amor lleno de gente, monstruosamente grande, amor que tapa las cañerías. Ese amor de gente loca y esquizofrénica, que le gusta golpearse la cabeza contra la pared y tirar dardos al estiércol. Amor con las piernas largas, usando botas de plástico amarillo, cocinando chuleta con papas fritas encima de la montaña. Debiendo dinero y cubierto con chocolate caliente. Temprano en la mañana y soñando con las personas del odio negro. Ejercitándose con el poste y escribiendo leyes lógicas. Dentro del disco de plata en el museo y con miedo de salir a la calle. Zapateando en el uniforme verde y sosteniéndose para no caer al abismo. Guardado en el pote de helado y tomando un avión a Francia. En el auricular metálico y en el ala del sombrero. En el medio del fuego del asador y dentro de los párpados. Tirándose al foso del ascensor y enroscando las tuercas. Masticando madera y verificando las facturas. En la arena del desierto y al lado del hilo dental. Saliendo por la fuente y arrastrando bolas de hierro. Diciendo “Los cuchillos son de buena calidad” y “Seguramente soy hermafrodita”. Vistiendo ropa de ballet y apaleando mendigos. Siendo usado como condimento y pintando las uñas con esmalte violeta. Usado para asesinar curas y como lubricante íntimo. Como jugando a los bolos lanzado a la cara de los presidentes de asociaciones de vecinos. Corriendo desnudo por la calle mientras se masturba frenéticamente. Intentando despedazar la pared del baño, ya que se acabó el papel higiénico. Chupando cables de electricidad y pateando almohadones blandos.

Amor de pata. Y de coza. Amor de mandarina podrida. Amor en cubos de vidrio derritiéndose. Amor que sabe a catarro. El amor que encontré dentro del sándwich. El amor que habló sobre los teléfonos incendiarios. Amor que se puso silicona en la barriga.

El amor llegó diciendo que quería cambiar de vida, que le gustaría pedir un consejo. Dijo que estaba molesto con las cosas. Yo le dije que debía evitar las cosas. Pero es difícil evitar las cosas, están por todos lados, dijo. ¿Qué cosas quieres evitar? Todas, respondió, todas las cosas que existen. ¿Cuál es el problema de las cosas? “El problema es que existen”. Pero claro, le dije. “Sí, pero yo no existo”.

El niño estaba caminando y se tropezó. Se golpeó la boca con una lata oxidada y se rompió los dientes. Lo llevaron al hospital. Algunos días después, tenía la cara toda infectada, podrida, llena de pus. Tuvieron que arrancarle todos los dientes,

pero no sirvió. “Vamos a tener que arrancarle la cabeza para no comprometer el resto del cuerpo”. Le pusieron la cabeza en la guillotina y le preguntaron si quería decir algo antes de que le cortaran la cabeza. Dijo: “Esto es AMOR”.

La mujer estaba en su casa. Entraron 15 ladrones. Rompieron todo, revisaron todas las habitaciones. Preguntaron por las joyas. La mujer dijo que no tenía. La amenazaron con matarla si no las entregaba. La mujer lloró y dijo que no mentía. Los hombres agarraron tubos de hierro para apalearla a la mujer. Mientras tanto, el marido llegaba. Desde afuera vio lo que estaba pasando. Entró armado con mucho amor y enfrentó a los ladrones. Despedazaron al marido y después violaron a la mujer antes de matarla. Con amor.

El niño fue hasta el retrete. Nunca había usado ese dispositivo uro-fecal. Se sentó con mucha dificultad y se deshizo de todo lo que tenía. Después llamó a la madre. “¿Qué es eso, hijo?”, “Es amor, mamá”.

El amor llegó temprano a la churrasquería, al principio de la tarde. Comenzó a comer. Comió mucho, durante varias horas. “¿El señor está bien? ¿No cree que ya comió demasiado?”, “No, todavía tengo hambre”. Y siguió comiendo. Después de algunas horas comenzó a gritar de dolor. En poco tiempo su cuerpo comenzó a rajarse. Pero no paró de comer. Pocos minutos más tarde, cuando falleció de tanto comer, alguien comentó: “El amor no es exactamente algo, es todo lo que no es”.

Y las personas continuaron siendo ellas mismas. Y yo aquí, siendo lo que no soy.

Cierto día, en algún lugar

Cierto día sucedió. Yo no existía y entonces pasé a existir. No existe una explicación muy clara. De la nada, aparecí. Pero creo que es lo normal. Las cosas aparecen en el mundo y después desaparecen, sin ninguna explicación. Ahora estoy aquí y después ya no. Dejo de existir y en algún momento vuelvo a existir otra vez.

De la nada, aparece mi padre. Dice “Hola” y después desaparece. Eso quiere decir que en determinado momento no tengo padre, ni nada, y que durante tres segundos paso a tener padre, que me mira y dice “Hola” y enseguida desaparece y las cosas vuelven a ser como antes.

A cada instante surge alguna otra cosa, como un árbol o un poste, pero desaparecen enseguida. Incluso el suelo hace eso; paso casi todo el tiempo cayendo en un espacio blanco vacío. Diría que es complicado saber si estoy cayendo para arriba o para abajo ya que no existe nada aquí, no se puede tener una noción clara de ese tipo de cosas. A cada instante, cuando surge algún objeto pienso algo como “Ah, viene de abajo, por lo tanto yo vengo de arriba”. Pero enseguida surge otro objeto “cayendo” en otra dirección, como si estuviera viniendo de derecha a

izquierda con respecto al objeto anterior, confundíendome nuevamente. Algunas pocas veces el suelo aparece. Caigo sobre él pero no me lastimo. Generalmente no hay nada, es un suelo blanco, aparentemente muy limpio. Camino un poco sobre él, aprovechando mientras hay suelo para andar. Hasta que de repente se deshace y empiezo a caer en alguna dirección indefinida otra vez.

No siento mucha hambre ya que casi no gasto energía. Me alimento de las comidas que esporádicamente surgen cerca de mí: frutas, carnes, huevos, dulces.

Sinceramente, a veces me pregunto cómo sé el nombre de las cosas y sus funciones. Desde que me conozco como persona estoy aquí en este espacio blanco, nunca nadie me enseñó nada; es más, nunca conversé de verdad con alguien, pues las personas surgen y desaparecen misteriosamente. No hay tiempo para tener algo de intimidad con ellas. Debo haber aprendido a hablar (y a pensar) con estos breves episodios de interacción humana, además de algunos pocos libros que llegaron por casualidad a mis manos. Tuve la oportunidad de leer algunas gramáticas y diccionarios, de modo que pude juntar todo y comenzar a formular pensamientos lógicos, pues antes de eso sólo pensaba en palabras e ideas mezcladas y en los objetos errantes, hasta entonces sin nombre, que pasaban cerca.

Me gustaría saber cómo viven las otras personas: qué hacen, qué piensan... ¿Será que viven como yo, desplazándose errantes en su solitaria dimensión, aisladas unas de otras?

Paso casi todo el tiempo pensando en cómo escapar de aquí. Alguien que pasó a mi lado cierta vez dijo que existían pasajes hacia otras dimensiones y que se debe estar atento para verlos. También escuché historias de cómo es vivir allí, de sus colores, olores, objetos, leyes. Existen algunas donde el suelo es constante, se puede caminar siempre en vez de estar cayendo en el vacío la mayor parte del tiempo, como en mi caso. Dicen que en esas dimensiones se puede edificar una sociedad –algo que nunca pude ver de cerca– donde conviven personas y juntas pueden construir sus vidas y progresar.

En otras, las personas nacen pegadas. Cada uno tiene a otra persona pegada en sus espaldas; no necesariamente se llevan bien. Se debe aprender a convivir en armonía. Las dos deben negociar a qué lugares ir y qué actividades realizar, ya que una tendrá que participar obligatoriamente de lo que la otra decida.

También existen las dimensiones saturadas. En la mía las cosas aparecen y desaparecen, de modo que existen, de hecho, pocos objetos físicos. En las saturadas, las cosas aparecen y nunca más desaparecen. Los objetos van surgiendo y amontonándose, haciendo que las dimensiones se transformen en un lugar de masas aglomeradas. En estas dimensiones sólo algunos seres microscópicos logran sobrevivir; lo más común en esos lugares es la completa extinción de la vida.

Me dijeron que existen dimensiones donde los seres nacen siempre dentro de otros. Algunos pudieron adaptarse, pero para los humanos eso no funciona. Cuando un ser humano surge, provoca la muerte de otro. De esa forma, la población humana de esas dimensiones es extremadamente reducida, algo como tres o cuatro personas solamente.

En mi dimensión es difícil decir la cantidad de habitantes. Las cosas son demasiado inconstantes por aquí. ¿Cómo se podrían obtener datos estadísticos de un lugar donde la existencia de las cosas es inestable? Algo que existe ahora podría no existir dentro de cinco minutos; donde vivo no se puede contar nada.

Me estoy acercando a un portal que atraviesa dimensiones. Me esfuerzo para aproximarme. Si ahora hubiera suelo, podría caminar hasta allí; estar nadando en el aire no sirve de mucho. Veo que atrás de mí alguien se aproxima a alta velocidad. Nos chocamos y el golpe me lanza bastante lejos del portal, mientras que a él lo aproxima; pero para su desgracia el portal desaparece frente a sus ojos. Se lo ve realmente triste y desesperado. Para mi sorpresa, enseguida desaparece.

Me pregunto a dónde vamos cuando no estamos aquí. Es un poco como si estuviéramos durmiendo o desmayados, no logro recordar qué sucede cuando desaparezco. ¿Será que aparezco en otra dimensión? Es bastante posible, pues leí en un libro que en algunas dimensiones no existe la memoria o por lo menos es muy corta, como el recuerdo de un sueño que olvidamos poco después de despertar. ¿De dónde vinieron esos libros? No sería posible fabricar un libro por aquí, seguramente vinieron de otro lugar. Probablemente esos libros desaparecieron en otras dimensiones y resurgieron aquí. A menos que alguien los haya cruzado por algún portal, lo que es muy improbable, ya que haciendo eso aparecemos desnudos en la otra dimensión; fue lo que leí cierta vez. El problema es que no conozco a nadie que haya cruzado un portal. Ni a nadie que haya conocido a otra persona que ya lo haya hecho. Siendo así, es posible que la historia de los portales sea sólo una leyenda, que no sirvan de verdad para nada y, quien sabe, que ni existan otras dimensiones; tal vez las personas necesiten creencias infundadas como esa para mantenerse sanas...

Los años pasan, nada me sucede. Y no puedo hacer nada para que pase algo. Pienso cuál será mi sentido de existir, considerando que todo lo que hago es sólo vagar en este espacio vacío. Ya estoy casi muerto; eternamente suelto.

Un hombre llamado Hombre

Había un hombre

Un hombre llamado Hombre

Hombre vivía en una ciudad que se llamaba Ciudad, localizada en el estado de Estado, al sudoeste de País.

-Amo País.

Hombre estaba casado con Mujer y se amaban mucho.

-Hombre es el hombre de mi vida.

La unión de Hombre y Mujer generó un descendiente, Niño. Niño era un niño muy feliz, le gustaba mucho jugar con su mascota, Perro.

Cierto día Niño le pidió a Hombre:

-Papá, quiero ir al Cine.

-Qué bueno. ¿Y qué están pasando en el Cine?

-La nueva película de Director. "Película".

-Me hablaron muy bien de esa película.

Entonces Hombre y Mujer decidieron salir a pasear con Hijo. Fueron al Shopping. Cuando llegaron, decidieron almorzar en el Restaurante.

-Es un excelente restaurante -dijo Hombre.

Ya adentro, se sentaron a la Mesa. Llamaron al empleado, Camarero:

-Nos gustaría hacer el Pedido. ¿Qué nos recomienda?

-Les recomiendo el Plato Grande. Es delicioso.

-¿Y para mi hijo?

-Le recomiendo nuestra última creación, el Plato Infantil; tiene Comida y Condimento.

-Entonces voy a querer un Plato Grande, ella va a querer un Plato Grande pequeño y él un Plato Infantil.

Después de salir del Restaurante, tomaron un helado Helado y se dirigieron al Cine. "Película" era una gran producción. Contaba la Historia de Protagonista, un hombre que se desentendía con Antagonista, pues siempre estaban luchando por el amor de Secundaria. Al final, todos se suicidaban ingiriendo altas dosis de Veneno, una sustancia muy venenosa.

Mujer no pudo contenerse:

-Estoy sintiendo muy fuerte la Emoción.

A la salida, Niño le pidió a Hombre que fueran a la Tienda de Cd's:

-Me gustaría mucho que me compraras el nuevo CD de la Banda. Se llama "CD".

Fueron a la tienda y compraron el debido producto. Niño se puso radiante:

-¡Gracias! Estoy sintiendo muy fuerte la Emoción.

Ya en casa, todos decidieron escuchar la obra musical adquirida. Eran lindas canciones, principalmente "Primer Track" y "Tercer Track". Como todos sentían la Emoción muy fuerte, decidieron hacer el Baile, que era la moda del momento. Se había popularizado gracias al show televisivo "Programa", en el cual Presentador siempre realizaba el Baile, para la alegría de todos los telespectadores de País.

Algunos días después, Niño estaba en la Discoteca y en el momento que DJ puso la canción "Primer Track", todos comenzaron a hacer el Baile. Fue cuando Niño vio a Niña. Nunca antes había visto a alguien así. Como Niño tenía mucha Timidez, solo siguió haciendo el Baile. Hasta que ella fue a hablarle:

-¡Hola! ¿Cómo te llamas?

-Niño. ¿Y tú?

-Niña.

-Caramba, es un lindo nombre.

Y Niña sonrió. Enseguida estaban realizando el Beso. Pero duró poco tiempo, pues Adolescente realizó la Separación:

-Si hacen el Beso otra vez, usaré la Fuerza. Niña es mi Novia.
-No soy más tu Novia. ¡Deja ya de realizarme la Persecución! -y se alejó.
-Quédate lejos de Niña -dijo Adolescente.
-Yo hago Lo Que Quiero. Igual que Niña.

Entonces Adolescente usó la Fuerza y tiró a Niño al suelo.

-Si los encuentro juntos otra vez, les aplicaré la Muerte.

Ya en su casa, Niño le contó a Hombre lo que había sucedido. Hombre lo instruyó para que le aplicara la Muerte a Adolescente. Le presenta el Arma:

-Si ves a Adolescente nuevamente, usa la Fuerza a través del Arma. Muéstrale que no se debe hacer eso con personas de la familia Familia.

Algunos días después, en la Escuela, Niño reencontró a Niña. Realizaron la Charla durante un tiempo, hasta que Adolescente surgió de la Hierba.

-Los estaba observando. Usaré la Fuerza para provocarles la Muerte.

Cuando Adolescente manifestó Violencia, Niño le aplicó la Fuerza. La Muerte se apoderó de Adolescente. Mirándola a los ojos a Niña, Niño sintió fuerte el Sentimiento, que fue recíproco. La Situación de Límite había creado un Lazo Fuerte Mutuo. Y el Sentimiento se vio impregnado por el Tiempo:

(...) (...) (...) (...) (...)
(...) Sentimiento (...)
(...) (...) (...) (...) (...)

Después de un Espacio de Tiempo
No había más una Niña
Había una Mujer
Y a su lado
Había un Hombre
Un hombre llamado Hombre.



EL LIBRO



Amores y un siglo, Cierta día, en algún lugar, Un hombre llamado Hombre

Rafael Sperling

- **Título original:** Festa na usina nuclear
- **ISBN:** 978-85-63883-02-5
- **Año de publicación:** 2011
- **Editorial de la publicación original:** Editora Oito e meio
- **Número de páginas:** 104 páginas
- **Tirada total en Brasil:** 500 ejemplares (impresión bajo demanda)

SINOPSIS

Cuentos cortos que conducen al lector a través de escenarios y situaciones surrealistas, componen el libro Fiesta en la Usina Nuclear. El autor es una de las apuestas de la editorial Oito e meio, creada en el 2010, cuya propuesta es descubrir y publicar talentos, mapeando la producción de la última generación de la Literatura Brasileña.

En Eternamente suyo, un hombre trastornado por la ausencia de su madre abandona a la esposa y algunos meses después la mujer abandonada descubre que está en embarazo y da a luz a su propio ex marido. Un Hombre Llamado Hombre es una reflexión bienhumorada sobre los nombres, significados y la clasificación

de objetos, personas y acciones en el día a día. En Amores efímeros, una pareja encomienda una serie de hijos de acuerdo con sus preferencias, pero mientras no corresponden a sus expectativas, los va descartando.

Fiesta en la Usina Nuclear libra las palabras y los instintos de la dictadura del pensamiento y capta con ferocidad las ideas del inconsciente social.

RESEÑAS EN PERIÓDICOS O REVISTAS

“En este primer libro, el joven carioca (que nació en 1985), muestra que tiene algo para decir y que sabe cómo hacerlo.” (Lourenço Cazarré, escritor, en el Jornal Rascunho)

“Creativo y osado, sin caer en una falsa experimentación, el autor hace uso de recursos narrativos que le propician a su prosa una singular plasticidad al hablar de un tiempo y de temas actuales y hasta desconcertantes” (Ronaldo Cagiano, en el periódico Diário da Manhã, de Goiânia)

EL AUTOR



Rafael Reed Sperling

- **Nombre de pluma:** Rafael Sperling
- **Otros libros publicados:** É assim que o mundo acaba [Así es

como el mundo se acaba], antología de cuentos publicada por la editorial Oito e Meio en 2012, donde se publicó el cuento de Sperling El árbitro que quería ser arista plástico. Impresión bajo demanda.

• **Página web del autor**

<http://somesentido.blogspot.com.br/>
http://www.shahid.com.br/escritores/rafael_sperling.html

EL TRADUCTOR

Augusto Nemitz Quenard

Augusto Nemitz nació en 1984, en Santa María, Brasil. Pasó su infancia y su adolescencia en Buenos Aires y volvió a Brasil para cursar la carrera de Letras de portugués y francés. Hoy reside en Porto Alegre y se dedica a la traducción.

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On the opposite page are some of our highlights titles, some in bilingual, English/Portuguese, edition.

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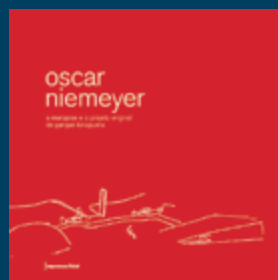
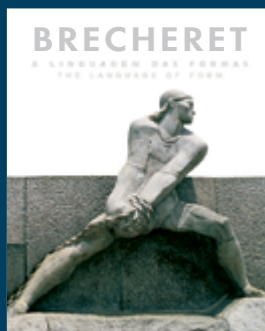
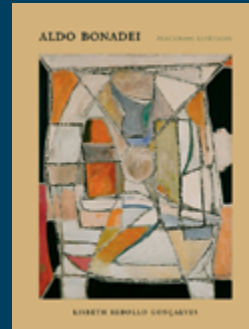
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01

SUPPORT PROGRAM FOR THE TRANSLATION AND PUBLICATION OF BRAZILIAN AUTHORS ABROAD

Foreign publishers interested in publishing Brazilian authors are eligible for this program. In order to apply for a grant, the publisher must present a project for translating or reissuing a translation of a Brazilian work. The final product may be a printed book, an e-book or both. A committee will evaluate each project. The maximum grant offered is US\$ 8.000.

02

SUPPORT PROGRAM FOR THE PUBLICATION OF BRAZILIAN AUTHORS IN THE COMMUNITY OF PORTUGUESE-SPEAKING COUNTRIES (CPLP)

Publishers from the CPLP member states who wish to publish Brazilian literary works or titles from the Humanities area are eligible for this program. The aim is to boost the presence of Brazilian literature in African countries where Portuguese is the official language (Angola, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, São Tomé and Príncipe), in East Timor and in Portugal.

03

RESIDENCY PROGRAM FOR FOREIGN TRANSLATORS IN BRAZIL

Foreign translators already working on the translation of a Brazilian book may apply for funding to cover the living expenses of residency periods in Brazil. Translators are invited for an immersion in Brazilian culture focusing on the needs of their specific work. They will also engage in workshops, lectures, courses and other activities organized by translation study centers associated with the program.

04

EXCHANGE PROGRAM FOR BRAZILIAN AUTHORS

Foreign publishers may apply for grants to cover the travel expenses of Brazilian authors who wish to promote their books abroad.



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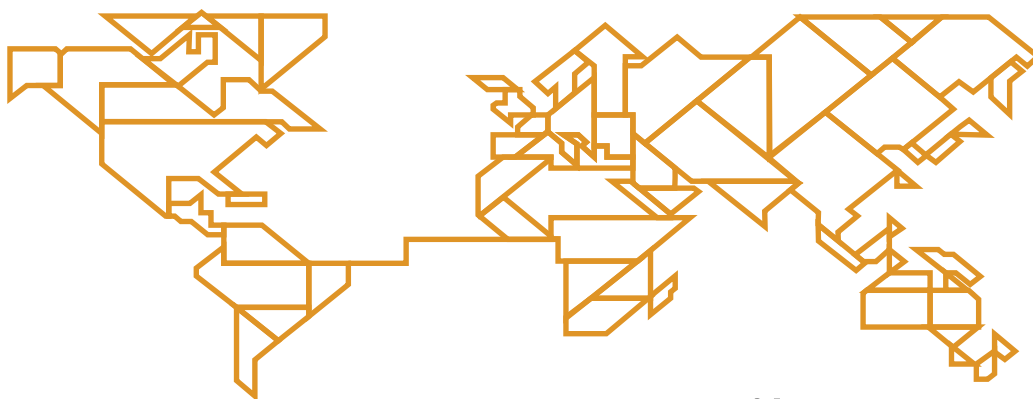


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ITAÚ CULTURAL IS CONNECTED WITH THE BRAZILIAN LITERATURE AROUND THE WORLD.



CONEXÕES Itaú Cultural

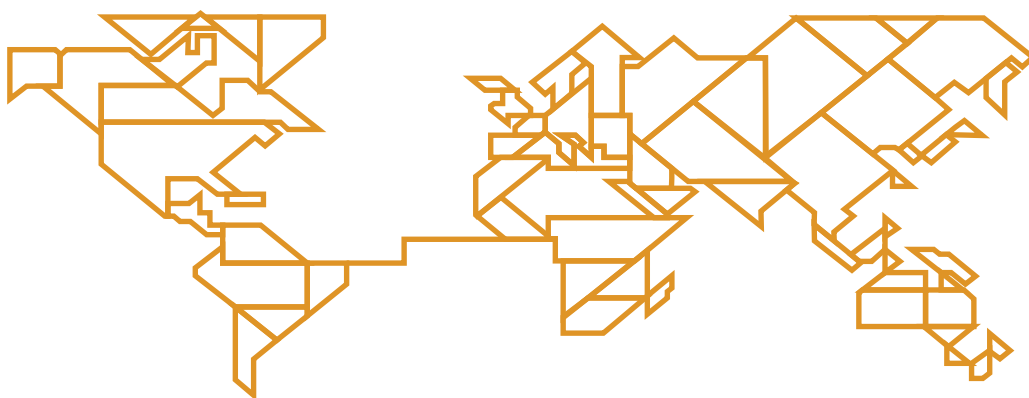
Conexões Itaú Cultural is the first program of reflection and mapping of the Brazilian literature in the world, focusing on the identification of teachers, researchers and universities.

It develops an online database (conexoeditaucultural.org.br) with the most relevant mapping results: information about both the profile and thought of those who are dedicated to the study of the Brazilian literature internationally.

In Brazil and other countries, Conexões Itaú Cultural, among other initiatives, promotes Brazilian literature abroad in meetings, with the production and distribution of reflective texts and the construction of an audiovisual memory of that work.

Learn more at conexoeditaucultural.org.br.

ITAÚ CULTURAL ESTÁ CONECTADO CON LA LITERATURA BRASILEÑA POR EL MUNDO.



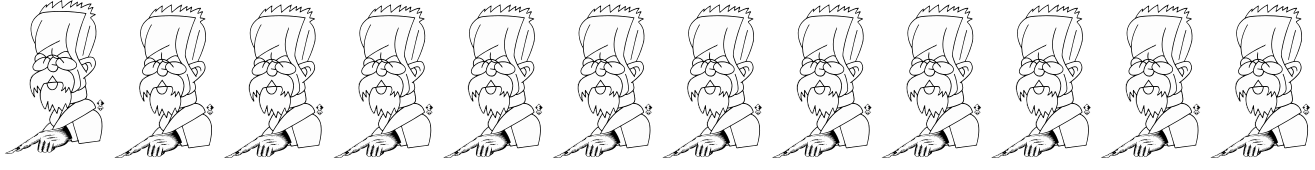
CONEXÕES Itaú Cultural

Conexões Itaú Cultural es el primer programa de reflexión, investigación y estudio de la literatura brasileña en el mundo, con eje en la identificación de profesores, investigadores y centros universitarios.

Desarrolla un banco de datos on-line (conexoesitaucultural.org.br) con los más relevantes resultados de este trabajo: informaciones tanto del perfil cuanto del pensamiento de quién se dedica al estudio de la literatura brasileña en el ámbito internacional.

En Brasil y en otros países, Conexões Itaú Cultural, entre otras acciones, promueve la literatura brasileña en el exterior en encuentros, con la producción y divulgación de textos reflexivos y la construcción de la memoria audiovisual de ese trabajo.

Conozca más en conexoesitaucultural.org.br.



Machado de Assis - Brazilian Literature in Translation is an initiative of Brazil's National Library, in conjunction with Itaú Cultural, São Paulo State Official Press and the Ministry of External Relations. 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 twenty 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 Traducción es una iniciativa de la Fundación Biblioteca Nacional, con la coedición de Itaú Cultural, Prensa Oficial del Estado de São Paulo y Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores de Brasil. El objetivo de la revista es divulgar en el mercado editorial internacional textos traducidos de autores brasileños. Cada edición presenta veinte 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.



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