

**Costa, Hipólito José. *Diário da Minha Viagem a Filadélfia, 1798-1799*. Ed. Alcino Pedrosa. Lisboa: Imprensa de Ciências Sociais, 2007.**

Em sua “Introdução” aos diários escritos por Hipólito José da Costa durante sua viagem aos Estados Unidos no fim do século XVIII, Alcino Pedrosa lembra que, por carregar o “estigma” de “mero relato de viagem” (28), o texto fora empurrado por mais de cem anos para a seção de manuscritos da Biblioteca Pública de Évora, até que Alceu Amoroso Lima o descobrisse e publicasse em 1955. Depois, outras poucas edições se fariam no Brasil, até que o Instituto de Ciências Sociais de Lisboa o trouxesse novamente à luz, nesta que é uma cuidadosa re-edição do *Diário da Minha Viagem a Filadélfia, 1798-1799*.

Entretanto, é exatamente no plano dos relatos de viagem que o texto de Hipólito da Costa pode e deve ser compreendido, desde que se perceba, é claro, o alcance político de sua jornada norteamericana, pautada não apenas pela curiosidade anedótica do viajante—sempre em busca do pitoresco da paisagem social e natural—mas também e principalmente pelo firme empenho em relatar aquilo que seria de utilidade para o Reino português, sob cuja chancela se dá sua viagem de dois anos à América do Norte.

Bacharel por Coimbra, apaixonado pela botânica e pela agricultura, o ilustrado Hipólito José da Costa, nascido na colônia de Sacramento em 1774, viria a celebrar-se como o autor do *Correio Braziliense*, jornal liberal publicado entre 1808 e 1823 (ano de sua morte) na Inglaterra, onde ele se exilaria depois da perseguição sofrida em Portugal, motivada especialmente por suas atividades maçônicas. Visto muitas vezes como uma espécie de precursor do espírito nacional brasileiro na imprensa, o Hipólito da Costa que se pode encontrar neste belo livro que aqui se resenha é anterior e, em certo sentido, ainda mais interessante que aquele.

É curioso acompanhar o jovem ilustrado (ele tinha apenas 24 anos de idade quando foi apontado por D. Rodrigo de Sousa Coutinho para a viagem de observação aos Estados Unidos) em seu deslocamento, desde a difícil saída pelo Tejo

até a chegada em Filadélfia e, depois, a viagem por terra a Nova York, através de Jersey, e até Providence e Boston por mar. São descrições miúdas, em que se mesclam o espírito científico do jovem observador, maravilhado pela vegetação, que vai classificando infatigavelmente pelo sistema de Linné, e seu esforço por descrever os costumes, a religião, a etiqueta, bem como as questões políticas e diplomáticas em que se envolve ao longo dos dois anos baseado em Filadélfia.

Sendo um livro de tantos e tão curiosos detalhes, não há, é claro, como listá-los aqui. Sirva apenas como exemplo o seu interesse pela “prisão hospital” (71) que os Quakers de Filadélfia dirigiam. A observação aguda do sistema penitenciário, e a impressão que lhe causam a rígida disciplina, a limpeza e a correção moral que ali reinavam, fariam a delícia de um moderno pesquisador foucaultiano. A discussão das penas, e da “morte civil” (expressão que reapareceria quase um século depois, no contexto do abolicionismo brasileiro, na pena de Joaquim Nabuco) dos presos, pode revelar muito dos quadros morais que informam a mentalidade das elites luso-brasileiras, a que pertence, afinal, Hipólito da Costa.

Destaque-se ainda o prazer (não será pecado senti-lo diante de um texto com pretensões sérias) que é acompanhar certas descrições de costumes, nas quais se revela, não poucas vezes, um estranhamento e quase um despeito. De fato, não são poucos os momentos em que a paisagem e as gentes se afiguram ridículas para o jovem ilustrado—momentos em que a balança da comparação pende invariavelmente para a Europa, e para Portugal em especial. Os Estados Unidos são para Hipólito da Costa um experimento social a despertar sensações fortes, que vão do desprezo à mais profunda admiração.

É ainda notável a presença, na paisagem que se descortina diante de seus olhos curiosos, dos resquícios da guerra da Independência, e o caldeirão das etnias que iam transformando os Estados Unidos. A questão feminina e a questão negra (negros elegantes, negros que votam, mulheres que se deslocam desacompanhadas dos maridos, etc.) vão se desenrolando diante do jovem viajante, cujo espírito aristocrático (é

sintomática sua relação conflituosa com o criado, ao longo da viagem), temperado porém por princípios políticos que se radicalizariam mais tarde, o faz recuar muitas vezes diante da raridade e da novidade do que vê.

É fundamental que o leitor deste livro, entretanto, o leia até o final, para compreender o balanço que rege a prosa de Hipólito da Costa. De um lado, o diário privado, que ocupa as mais de cem páginas iniciais, revela um enredo aparentemente simples: um viajante a cargo da Coroa portuguesa, interessado em relatar o que vê, em colher amostras da flora e da fauna e observar soluções técnicas e científicas que poderiam auxiliar o Reino. Mas, de outro lado, as cartas enviadas insistentemente a Portugal, e que ocupam as quarenta páginas finais do livro, revelam como que um enredo paralelo: o jovem que se queixa da penúria em que se encontra, da falta de instruções e respostas, e dos percalços que tem que enfrentar para fazer chegar às possessões portuguesas o material vivo (entre sementes e insetos) que ele tenta muitas vezes em vão recolher e preservar, antes de fazê-lo chegar a seu destino (o Brasil, principalmente). Enfim, nas cartas enviadas a D. Rodrigo Coutinho, revelam-se os planos mirabolantes para a circulação de saberes e a aquisição de sementes, ao mesmo tempo em que se pode notar o incômodo surdo do súdito que, obediente embora, nem sempre encontra na burocracia real o eco ao seu espírito dinâmico e expedito. Há como que dois textos aí: o relato da viagem (“Diário da Minha Viagem para Filadélfia”) e a relação dos seus bastidores políticos (“Copiador e Registro das Cartas de Ofício”), que permitem ademais compreender o antigo mecanismo colonial português naquilo que a historiografia moderna identificaria, justamente, como a sua crise sistêmica.

Trata-se de texto, enfim, indispensável, seja pela qualidade e curiosidade da prosa, seja pela história colonial que ali se colhe, em detalhes, no contraste com o cenário da nação americana então recém-fundada.

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**Sá, Lúcia. *Life in the Megalopolis: Mexico City and São Paulo*. London and New York: Routledge, 2007.**

At the start of her latest book, Lúcia Sá explains the intellectual trajectory that led her to a study of the Latin American megacities of Mexico City and São Paulo by way of Mário de Andrade's *Macunaíma*: "in order to recover his *muiraquitã*, the eponymous Mário de Andrade traveled from one end of Brazil to the other, the Amazon to São Paulo, and in a sense, having completed *Rain Forest Literatures* (2004), this is what I have attempted to do in this study" (x). Such a work, following one on the literatures of the Amazon, underscores Sá's admirable commitment to exploring the literary and cultural extremes of her native Brazil, while at the same time incorporating other materials that make a more comparative discussion with internal indigenous cultural elements or other Latin American societies possible.

In setting up the thematic framework for this work, Sá remarks on how her first visit to Mexico City "provoked a certain sensation of *déjà vu*" (1); after all, these are Latin America's two largest cities and for that reason alone they merit this sort of comparative cultural analysis. From the outset, Sá is quick to point out that such an extended comparison will necessarily uncover as many divergences as it does similarities. In fact, it might be unfair to other urban spaces in the region to attribute to these two cities what might be called a form of megalopolitan exceptionalism, as there are of course other urban conglomerations that would easily qualify within any strict definition of a Latin American megalopolis. Buenos Aires, one of the world's largest cities with over 12 million inhabitants, is the most obvious example of what must be set aside in order to privilege the Mexico City-São Paulo axis in this study. Rio de Janeiro, given its traditional rivalry with São Paulo, is a bit more difficult to ignore, and Sá does well to recognize it as part of her introduction. In contrast to the Brazilian case of interurban rivalry, however, she states that "the main difference here is that Mexico City has no plausible rival in the national

scene” (16). Yes, perhaps not in a strictly national framework, but in the context of present transnational realities one might do well to mention that other Mexican(-American) megalopolis of Los Angeles-San Diego-Tijuana (something that perhaps could have been explored fruitfully in Sá’s later discussion of González Iñarritu’s 2006 film *Babel*). Moreover, as populations in other cities continue to grow and understandings of the often porous borders of Latin America and what qualifies as a megacity within this cultural context shift accordingly, so will the ways in which the single factor of sheer size predicates our understandings of cultural importance and centrality in and beyond the boundaries of “Latin America’s *two* megalopolitan cities” (15; emphasis mine).

According to Sá, the materials that form the primary corpus of this work were collected *in situ*: “for the most part, books were acquired on location, at bookstores in Mexico City and São Paulo, most often in fact at Ghandi (sic) in Mexico and Livraria Cultura in São Paulo” (8). For this reason, it might seem contradictory to some to follow such an assertion with a discussion of urban *flânerie* accompanied by a quote from Walter Benjamin. The idea that any metropolitan academic’s sources are acquired primarily “on the ground” is a difficult claim; those closely linked to an Anglo-American academic institutional network are never far from its common points of reference and personal contacts, a fact evinced in the book’s often parallel strategic politics of quotation and acknowledgement. Such textual material is not merely supplementary, but an equally primary body of text that we, as North American and European-based academics, would do well to acknowledge explicitly as central to the development of our critical discourse.

With this in mind, the question of what it truly means to be an urban “outsider” today, whether in a presumably foreign city like Mexico City or one’s own hometown of São Paulo, is perhaps the most provocative question raised by this study. Not only the aforementioned separation of academic background, but also those conditioned by constructions of “race,” ethnicity and socioeconomic background, all func-

## Reviews

tion to ensure that no space called “home” is completely familiar, nor, for that matter, the privileged spaces of other cities are ever completely foreign. Sá selects excellent illustrative examples that encourage this kind of discussion: Mexican intellectual Carlos Monsiváis’s urban chronicles, Eduardo Emílio Fenianos’s “radical adventure” through the unexplored areas of his native São Paulo, *paulista* hip-hop artists such as Racionais or the oral narratives of Mexican street vendor Chata Aguayo. While there is something to be said for anthropologist Néstor García Canclini’s contention that citizenship is defined increasingly by patterns of consumption (101), Sá’s examples of segregation in these two Latin American urban environments underscore the persistent role of “race” and ethnicity in the construction of citizenship and national identity.

Nowhere is this more apparent than in the final chapter, which ends with a discussion of how the rich of these two cities “hardly ever serve as subjects *per se* of cultural representations” (154). As a counterexample, Sá concludes with a series of photographs from Daniela Fossell’s 2003 exhibition *Ricas y famosas*. The female subjects are photographed in their opulent homes in gated communities, which Sá accurately describes as “strange and highly exoticized” (154)—but might the recurrent discussions of race (to say nothing of taste) that intervene in the analysis of other works in this study also be applied here? Is not the “whiteness” of these women as visible as the “blackness” of a hip-hop artist or the “indigenous” ethnic background of a street vendor? After all, if the rich are truly more capable of controlling their own image, as Sá asserts here, how might intellectual critique serve to dismantle that advantage? Her book takes an important step in pointing us in that direction.

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**Wasserman, Renata R. Mautner. *Central at the Margin: Five Brazilian Women Writers*. Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 2007.**

Bucknell University Press continues to show valuable support for Luso-Brazilian studies by publishing another title that will be helpful to both students and researchers. In the wake of such studies as M. Elizabeth Ginway's *Brazilian Science Fiction* (2004) and Hilary Owen's *Mother Africa, Father Marx* (2007), among others, Renata R. Mautner Wasserman's *Central at the Margin* is a useful contribution to the field of literary criticism on works written in Portuguese, making them more visible, and therefore accessible, to an Anglophone readership. Following on from Susan Quinlan's *The Female Voice in Contemporary Brazilian Narrative* (Peter Lang, 1991), Darlene Sadlier's pioneering anthology *One Hundred Years After Tomorrow* (Indiana UP, 1992), which is curiously not mentioned here, and Cristina Ferreira Pinto's *Gender, Discourse and Desire in Twentieth-Century Brazilian Women's Literature* (Purdue UP, 2004), not to mention Brazilian researchers of women's writing like Heloísa Buarque de Hollanda and Zahidê Muzart, the volume under review foregrounds the role of women in Brazil's literary history.

Wasserman's series of essays is exactly what it says on the cover: five chapters devoted to five women writers from Brazil, always discussed with an awareness of how they can be seen as "marginal" through, for example, their gender, their background, their ethnic origin, the language in which they write or wrote, and their cultural impact in Brazil and abroad. The essays, on Júlia Lopes de Almeida, Rachel de Queiroz, Lygia Fagundes Telles, Clarice Lispector and Carolina Maria de Jesus, are preceded by a lengthy introductory chapter which explains how the author wishes to bring her subjects together "to establish a series of conversations" (11) among them: "They form an assortment, at this point, rather than a community: what they do not have in common makes their juxtaposition noteworthy, what they do have in common makes it plausible" (24). What they do have in common

is that they are or were all read avidly at some time by an appreciative public, even if they are out of fashion now.

The author is careful not to generalize about these writers and stresses that she has chosen them “to show variety rather than comprehensiveness” (16). She is conscious throughout of the dangers of reductive analysis. In Chapter 5, she uses Gayatri Spivak’s theories on the subaltern, as well as the debates about Latin American testimonial literature (quoting John Beverley and Doris Sommer) to articulate the importance of reading Carolina’s diaries as a unique case. Furthermore, Wasserman is aware of the risks of exoticizing Brazilian writing (she cites Roberto Schwarz’s theory about how ideas from outside can be “misplaced” in Brazil) and also of oversimplifying discussions of gender in her subjects, making it absolutely clear that these women were from diverse backgrounds and were writing in different contexts. At the same time, she is an experienced professor of Comparative Literature and one senses that she is keen to present these authors and their works to a wider public, encouraging comparisons and “conversations” across time and space: Almeida’s *A Intrusa* and *A Silveirinha* are discussed with reference to *Jane Eyre* and *The House of Mirth*, respectively; Queiroz’s *Dôra*, *Doralina* with Isabel Allende’s *The House of the Spirits*; and Lispector’s reworking of autobiographical material with the technique of Thomas Mann. Indeed, one of the benefits of this volume is that it stresses the potential for comparative work.

In terms of structure, the introductory chapter sets the scene in order to show the obstacles faced by Brazilian women writers over time, using the history of reading and writing in Brazil as developed by Antonio Candido, Marisa Lajolo and Regina Zilberman. The longest chapter is devoted to Lispector and analyses several texts and aspects of her work. The “Very Short Conclusion” is indeed only two pages long and could have been used to discuss other interesting women writers, maybe contemporary ones, and to suggest new directions and projects.

Wasserman does not provide a thorough introduction to every work of each of the five writers, nor does she claim to

## Reviews

do so. Indeed, as all quotes have been translated into English, but not all the works discussed have, the curious reader may be forced to learn Portuguese, which can only be a good thing. She focuses on a select choice of works using a different critical framework in each chapter and produces some fascinating readings of well-known and little-known works alike: the neglected nineteenth-century novels of Almeida (and her tactics for equalizing the relationship between the sexes), the major works of Queiroz (avoiding categorizing her as a regionalist but contextualizing her “feminism”), the subtle subversiveness of Telles’s novels (rather than her short stories), Jesus’s famous diary and, surprisingly and refreshingly, two of Lispector’s children’s stories alongside *A Paixão Segundo G.H.* Most of these chapters are reworked versions of published articles, which could explain the occasional errors (no note 33 on page 79; a couple of references to Queiroz, who died in 2003, in the present tense; a sprinkling of spelling mistakes; disparities in the bibliography—was *Cadernos da Literatura Brasileira* 4 published in 1977 or 1997?) and the repetition of material in both the main text and the often extensive and rather unwieldy, if interesting, endnotes.

The critical material quoted offers non-Portuguese readers access to contemporary feminist thought from Brazil, because all quotations are translated. Occasionally there are inconsistencies of presentation: some quotes appear in the original Portuguese as endnotes, others are included as translations within the text; some titles are translated, others not; it is strange that the text mentions Italian translations of Lispector’s works, but not the English versions of *A Descoberta do Mundo* and *Laços de Família*, despite referring to *crônicas* and stories from both collections. But these are minor quibbles. The volume as a whole features engaging readings of five writers who are undoubtedly “necessary stopovers in a tour of Brazilian literature by women” (30) and it could easily be used as the structure for a module or course on this very topic.

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**Duke, Dawn. *Literary Passion, Ideological Commitment: Toward a Legacy of Afro-Cuban and Afro-Brazilian Women Writers*. Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 2008.**

Studies of the literature of women writers of African descent in the Americas have highlighted issues of objectification and subjectivity, silencing and voice, and individual development and collective mobilization within histories of colonialism, slavery and the African diaspora. Increasingly, while exploring these themes, scholars have noted the importance of poetry as the genre in which women writers of African descent have historically been the most productive. Such is the focus of Dawn Duke's study, which takes a comparative look at Afro-Cuban and Afro-Brazilian women's poetic production in order to chart their development from written object to writing subject. By tracing the progression of the poetic voice and identifying common thematic approaches in the process of women's empowerment, Duke emphasizes what she terms a "woman-centered aesthetic" (11). The choice of Cuba and Brazil allows the author to draw on common textual approaches by women of African descent, as well as compare and contrast their responses to and engagement with social movements, national political discourses and black female activism in both countries, particularly during significant moments of political development. While Duke's study of the Brazilian case particularly highlights a close engagement with black activism and what she calls "a politicized aesthetic of Negritude" (14), the Cuban case examines the spaces where a black female agenda has developed and its navigation of the revolutionary discourse. As such, Duke's analysis complements comparative works like Jerome Branche's *Colonialism and Race in Luso-Hispanic Literature* and anthologies like Miriam DeCosta-Willis's *Daughters of the Diaspora: Afro-Hispanic Writers*.

The study presents a history of the female poetic voice from colonial times to the present in three stages, through a timeline which chronologically maps important socio-histo-

ric and political moments impacting women of African descent in the Americas and their literary development from marginalized object to writing subject. The first stage focuses on complex gendered and racialized representations of black women in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries by male writers who represent the black female figure as voiceless, dependent, sexually promiscuous, and ultimately limited to three recurring models that determine her place in social and race relations: the tragic mulatta, the sensual mulatta and the black mammy. Duke's analysis of seminal texts ranging from *Francisco* (1839) to *Biografía de un Cimarrón* (1966) demonstrates the social and racial subordination of Afro-Cuban and Afro-Brazilian women in accordance with the ideological tenets of the time, and in this way it dialogues with Claudette Williams's *Charcoal and Cinnamon: The Politics of Color in Spanish Caribbean Literature*.

The following chapter presents the second stage of "female literary voicing" (55) by analyzing the works of Afro-Brazilian writer Maria Firmina dos Reis and Afro-Cuban writer María Dámasa Jova Baró to demonstrate their contestation of social and economic hierarchies and their importance as precursors to the legacy of autonomy demonstrated in later literary texts discussed by Duke. As she notes, Dos Reis's still understudied novel *Ursula* (1859) counters Romantic prose representations of the subordinate black female by creating an African character who in subtle ways breaks out of the limiting representations of the enslaved women of the time and lays the foundation for "Afro-Brazilian female literary consciousness" (59) that would follow. Similarly, Duke emphasizes the ways in which Jova Baró's representations of gender issues (especially motherhood), nationalism, the motherland, and the social oppression of blacks break out of the objectifying representations of black and mulatta women in *negrista* verse.

Chapter Three's comparative studies of Nancy Morejón, Georgina Herrera and Excilia Saldaña further the articulation of a woman-centered poetics by emphasizing the complicated scenarios that affect Afro-Cuban female literary positio-

nality: relationship of the Afro-Cuban artists to the state, tensions of the personal and the political, the engagement with African legacy, and the role of Afro-Cuban women in the development of Cuban society. The second part of the chapter explores the existence of an Afro-Brazilian female poetics through the placement of more studied writers, like Miriam Alves, Conceição Evaristo and Carolina Maria de Jesus, alongside lesser-known authors like Geni Guimarães and Alva Rufino. By contrast with the Cuban case, Afro-Brazilian female poetic expression is tied to more overt critique of racial and gender marginalization and to social development of black activism, as evidenced by the creation of the journal *Cadernos Negros* and the organization Quilombhoje. In particular, Duke's analysis of the role of *Cadernos Negros* and black activist organizations for Afro-Brazilian women writers dialogues with Emanuelle Oliveira's book *Writing Identity: The Politics of Contemporary Afro-Brazilian Literature*.

Chapter Four sets the foundation of a woman-centered poetics through a study of specific poems by Morejón, Herrera, Esmeralda Ribeiro, Rufino, Guimarães, Evaristo and Alves. This female-centered discourse has several important elements: an emphasis on empowerment, leadership and participation; a shift to a celebration of achievement and black women's sexuality in all aspects; positing the central role of the black female subject in narratives of national identity; and an invocation of and dialogue with African-born voices that emphasize purpose and resistance to oppression. These strategies are illustrated through careful analysis that includes the female journey to Afro-Cuban subject in Morejón's "Mujer negra" alongside Saldaña's lesser-known poem "La noche" and in dialogue with the poetic representations of historic Afro-Brazilian figure Luiza Mahin by Rufino and Alves.

While the linking of the Afro-Cuban and Afro-Brazilian feminine poetics has set the stage for a crossing of national and linguistic boundaries from the start, in Chapter Five Duke expands the outward application of this counter-discourse to larger collectivities that include the Anglophone

## Reviews

Caribbean, as in Morejón's *Cuadernos de Grenada/Grenada Notebook*. The study further analyzes links to Africa in this poetics and places them alongside strategies that challenge hierarchical discourses of race, gender and the nation. Ultimately, Duke's articulation of Afro-Cuban and Afro-Brazilian women poets' shared strategies of empowerment, voice and subjectivity in dialogue with specific social, political and historical discourses contributes significantly to the understanding of Afro-Latin American women's literary production, contestation of literary silencing, and navigation of the personal and political dimensions of art.

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***Women in the Portuguese Colonial Empire: The Theatre of Shadows.* Ed. Clara Sarmiento. Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2008.**

This collection of essays provides a useful multidisciplinary approach to the retrieval of women's voices and experiences in the history of Portuguese colonialism. The analysis of women's life histories and cultural interventions remains an ongoing priority for the study of Portugal's empire and this volume is certainly a welcome contribution to the field. Its methodological approaches cover social and cultural history, literary studies, law and anthropology. The majority of essays deal with Brazil, but there are also pieces on Portugal, Mozambique, Angola, Macau, East Timor and Goa. The book is subdivided into three discipline-based sections.

Part One, covering "Female Slavery," is the strongest and most cogent. These authors have drawn, in the main, on original archive-based research to bring new data to light and conduct insightful analyses which will facilitate further scholarship. Maria Ângela de Faria Grillo explores the Pernambucan press to render a moving account of female slave trading and maltreatment in the late nineteenth century. Daniela Buono Calainho uses Portuguese Inquisition records to review the practices and uses of witchcraft among black

slave women in Portugal from the seventeenth to the eighteenth centuries. Eugénia Rodrigues discusses female slavery and the domestic economy in the *prazo* system of the Zambezi valley in eighteenth-century Mozambique. Leny Caselli Anzai makes a good case for the *Anais de Vila Bela* for the years 1734 to 1789 affording valuable data on slave practices and *quilombos* in Mato Grosso. Margarida Seixas reviews the legal conditions that governed slave women's children from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries. Selma Pantoja's article tellingly compares travellers' textual accounts with photographic representations to analyse the conflicting, "idyllic, exotic, primitive or disdained" (92) images of female African street vendors in late nineteenth-century Luandan markets. Zélia Bora concludes Part One with a subtle, complex reading of the roles played by food, culinary practices and religious tradition in the cultural memory, identity and resistance of nineteenth-century African Brazilian women.

Part Two, "Literature and Female Voices," unfortunately lacks the thematic cohesion of Part One. Of the eight articles here, three and a half cover male writers representing women, a decision which requires justification given the volume's stated aim "to reinstate women to their true dimension in History ... to restore to them their voice" (xx). The cases in point are: Dalila Silva Lopes's piece on António Lobo Antunes's *Esplendor de Portugal*; Luisa Langford Correia dos Santos's chapter on "Settlers and Slavery in Brazil," which relies mainly on male-voiced accounts of Portuguese migration to Brazil; Clara Sarmiento's work on Saint Francis Xavier; and Betina Ruiz's analysis of the seventeenth-century *Love Letters of a Portuguese Nun* (*Letras portuguesas*), where the disputed sex of the original author, now widely thought to have been Gabriel-Joseph Lavergne de Guilleragues rather than Mariana Alcoforado, is central to the modern reworking of the text in *Novas Cartas Portuguesas*.

Of the remaining four pieces, two deal with women writing in Portuguese. The articles by Cristina Pinto da Silva and Monica Rector provide welcome new resources on

lesser-known works: in the former case, the diary of Graciete Nogueira Batalha, a Portuguese language teacher in twentieth-century Macau; in the latter, Guiomar Torresão's play *O Fraco da Baronesa*, a nineteenth-century proto-feminist work of social satire. The two most thought-provoking analyses in the "Literature" section are Sarmiento's interpretation of gender representation in the sixteenth-century writings of St. Francis Xavier and Maria Helena Guimarães's comparison of *Ibicaba*, a twentieth-century German novel by Eveline Hasler about Swiss immigrant oppression in Brazil, with the novel's source text, Thomas Davatz's *As Memórias de um Colono no Brasil*, to show Hasler expanding the female perspective. The articles by Ruiz, on *Lettres portugaises* and its reworkings, and by Teresinha Gema Lins Brandão Chaves, on nineteenth-century women travellers to Brazil, are both rather schematic, having chosen subjects too large for in-depth discussion in these short pieces.

Four of the six contributions in Part Three, "Cultural Behaviour," focus on women's identities in religion and charitable work. Célia Maia Borges and Leonor Seabra render informative accounts of, respectively, the role of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Iberian religious orders and mysticism in affording symbolic spaces for female affirmation, and the recourse of abandoned girls and orphans to the Macau Holy House of Mercy from the sixteenth century onwards. Charitable foundations similarly inspire Larissa Patron Chaves, who discusses the roles played by elite Portuguese immigrant women in nineteenth-century Brazilian Benevolent Societies, and Maria de Deus Beites Manso, who uses an individual case history of incarceration to explore women's shelters in eighteenth-century colonial Bahia. The two remaining articles turn to Asia: Isabel Pinto gives a brief overview of Portuguese marriages to native Asian women from the sixteenth to the twentieth centuries, while Daniel Schroeter Simão offers an excellent reading of the legal and social construction of female authority in East Timor.

The volume is certainly a treasure trove of new archival work and valuable data in specific historical fields, most

notably female slavery in Brazil. However, its desired scope as a statement on “Women in the Portuguese Colonial Empire” is over-ambitious. The representation of regions, time periods and specific phases of empire is very uneven, bringing a corresponding looseness of focus to the geographical and historical vectors that structure the book as a whole. Conspicuous by their almost total absence are the former Portuguese colonies in Africa during the Estado Novo, despite the enormous weight this history carries (including, increasingly, work by and about women) in contemporary Portuguese postcolonial discussion of empire. In this context, reducing twentieth-century female experience of colonial Africa to a single piece, however good, on António Lobo Antunes cannot be other than problematic. More specifically, direct engagement with previous work on gender and postcolonial theory, as well as women’s history, both in English and Portuguese, would have been helpful here. While it is undoubtedly an important and lasting contribution, Sarmiento’s book also testifies to the urgency of feminist and postcolonial researchers in Lusophone Studies overcoming historical isolation to create the institutional, textual and virtual settings from which more integrated, systematic approaches can emerge.

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**Moutinho, Isabel. *The Colonial Wars in Contemporary Portuguese Fiction*. Woodbridge, UK: Tamesis, 2008.**

When I read the table of contents of Isabel Moutinho’s *The Colonial Wars in Contemporary Portuguese Fiction*, my first thought was what is this book going to add to the field that other scholars, and particularly Margarida Calafate Ribeiro in her now seminal *Uma História de Regressos*, have not already covered extensively? The theme of a traumatic memory of the colonial war experience, and the authors and texts studied (particularly Lobo Antunes’s *Os Cus de Judas*, Lídia Jorge’s *A Costa dos Murmúrios*, João de

Melo's *Autópsia de um Mar de Ruínas*, and Manuel Alegre's *Jornada de África*) form the basis of Calafate Ribeiro's book too. Yet, Moutinho's work combines such an original approach to the subject with such rigorous and thoughtful referencing of secondary criticism that I cannot envision teaching or writing about any of these works again without drawing heavily on her contribution. Indeed, the book is structured perfectly so that readers can focus on only the particular close reading in which they are interested on any occasion, while following a logical, narrative flow that entices them to begin at the beginning and read right through to the end. Its usefulness, particularly in the anglophone university setting, is both as the first monograph in English to tackle the subject, and also because of the meticulous way in which Moutinho explains cultural references and intertextual allusions, revealing an immense erudition in Comparative Literature. Most importantly, Moutinho's readings illuminate the texts she scrutinizes. In the very best tradition of literary studies, she makes you want to reread the novels she broaches or to read them for the first time. After reading Moutinho's excellent chapter on Álvaro Oliveira's *Até Hoje (Memórias de Cão)*, a novel I am ashamed to admit to not having read previously, I am grateful to her for compelling me to read it by her deft analysis, which centers on writing as a breaking of silence that facilitates a transformation from "passivity to action" (52). A similar breaking of silence, through a registration of "the hushed memory of the colonial war" (77) informs Moutinho's reading of Lídia Jorge. In Melo's work, Moutinho sees the competing force of a national collective memory that, while it never manages to silence completely individual recollections of the colonial disaster, is both powerful and strangely brief, collectively attempting to erase the suffering and sacrifice of Portugal's unwilling soldiers.

Moutinho demonstrates in her reading of *Jornada de África* the ways in which Manuel Alegre tests our literary memory to the limit through quoting and misquoting an array of other work. What makes Moutinho's reading indis-

pensable is her referencing and interpretation of those allusions, a strong characteristic of her monograph.

The other work, besides those already mentioned, on which she focuses is Wanda Ramos's *Percursos*, offering an insightful reading of the text as a narrative of female development and liberation, in which resistance to subalternity is shared by both women and colonial subjects.

Moutinho's introduction contextualizes both the theoretical framework on which she ably draws and its relevance to what she carefully terms the postimperial novels she studies. For Moutinho, it is important to understand the "violence of the colonial fact" (11), a violence often elided in the references of postcolonial studies. Moutinho sees "an all-pervasive pessimism" in the novels she considers. They are "gloomy narratives of the end of empire" (12) that counteract the optimistic premises of much of the postcolonial endeavor. Yet, despite their gloom, Moutinho's book shows us why they continue to be important and powerful commentaries on the brutal reality of a deluded regime.

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**Simon, Robert. *Understanding the Portuguese Poet Joaquim Pessoa, 1942-2007: A Study in Iberian Cultural Hybridity*. Lewiston: Edwin Mellen Press, 2008.**

In the United States, the release of a book devoted exclusively to a Portuguese poet is always an infrequent, if welcome, event. The publication of a study on a marginally canonical poet—such as Joaquim Pessoa—constitutes an even more unusual occurrence.

For reasons that have intrigued me for years, some contemporary Portuguese poets are famous, paradoxically, for being "invisible." Such authors are widely recognized for being shunned (often unfairly) by both academic and non-academic communities of critics, although not necessarily by the general public: for example, Fernando Grade (a productive and notoriously eccentric author), as well as Pedro

## Reviews

Homem de Mello and José Carlos Ary dos Santos, two poets who are better known as lyricists and often excluded from the higher rungs of literary respectability. Joaquim Pessoa also belongs to this group and Robert Simon's book is the first in any language devoted exclusively to his work. In Portugal, as Simon states, critical reception of Pessoa's work has been practically nonexistent, with the exception of "some reviews," a "few prefaces" and "interviews" (17). However, just as Homem de Mello and Ary dos Santos, Pessoa—a frequent guest on Portuguese TV and radio—is familiar to the general public, i.e., to non-readers of poetry. Some of the songs for which he wrote lyrics are among the most recognizable in Portuguese popular music, made famous by such performers as Manuel Freire, Fernando Tordo, Paco Bandeira, Carlos do Carmo, Tonicha, Rui Veloso and Vitorino.

In the late 1970s, on a rare occasion when a respected critic, David Mourão-Ferreira, wrote about a "blacklisted" author (in Pessoa's *125 Poemas*), he stated that among his generation Pessoa was the poet most naturally able to communicate with a large readership, thus explaining the reasons for the critical silence that Mourão-Ferreira was then, exceptionally, breaking. (However, a few other prominent critics have also written about Pessoa's work, among them Maria Lúcia Lepecki, José Jorge Letria, António José Saraiva, Fernando Guimarães, Manuel Frias Martins, João Barrento, and José do Carmo Francisco.) Pessoa appears to have paid the price demanded in Portugal of those who are either associated with the music industry or authors of politically oriented poetry. When, during the 1980s and 1990s, he published what were thematically very different and significant texts dealing with more traditional subjects, it was too late to reverse the stigma of the "political," "popular" or shamelessly "non-elitist" poet.

It thus took an American-born scholar to engage in a very improbable and meritorious project: a book in English, published in an English-speaking country and for an English-speaking audience, on an unjustly obscure (or rather obscured) Portuguese author. Refreshingly, Simon, as an Ame-

rican academic, appears to lack the professional inhibitions that are deeply ingrained in Portuguese criticism. One curious symptom of his being a non-Portuguese scholar of Portuguese literature that I find particularly encouraging is the ease with which he often refers to Joaquim Pessoa as simply “Pessoa,” as if the work of the *other* “Pessoa” (Fernando) were so familiar to American readers that no confusion could possibly be generated by Simon’s omission of the poet’s given name.

In his book, Simon proceeds from several ambitious—although legitimate—premises. He claims that since the 1970s postmodernism has been one of the most defining (and unchanging) traits of the lyrical tradition of Portugal and Spain and, most interestingly, that both during the Portuguese and the Spanish dictatorships these postmodern characteristics constituted deconstructive and self-referential symptoms of subversive intentions behind apparently esoteric writings. A preference for the hermetic, according to Simon, can also be attributed to a loss of confidence in the power of words to effect social change (or to produce actual mimesis) amidst a politically harsh reality.

Simon states that during the 1980s and 1990s Pessoa’s poetry developed a tendency towards mysticism, particularly Sufi mysticism. In what is, according to Simon, a characteristically Iberian manner, this poetry resorts to an idealized and eroticized feminine figure as a means to achieve mystical illumination. This tendency has contradictory traits: on the one hand, Sufi mysticism is an obvious anachronism in a postmodern age, when language supposedly conveys no absolutes except perhaps the absolute of its own uncertainty; on the other, the “Sufi way” possesses an “anti-hegemonic nature” (132), which, as Simon contends, matches the deconstructive, anti-hegemonic tone of Pessoa’s “anti-censorship” work (123). The stronger aspects of Simon’s book reside, in my opinion, in the recognition of this mystical perspective, apparently incompatible with postmodernism, in a poet whose work has been the object of undeservedly few critical studies that never mentioned any such dimensions. This idea is particularly relevant in chapters III and IV, where mystical

## Reviews

importance of love in Pessoa's *Os Olhos de Isa, Amor Infinito* and *O Livro da Noite* is considered. Here Simon refers to a hypothetically intense Iberian affiliation with Islamic traditions by reminding the reader that "Isa" in *Os Olhos de Isa* is the Arabic word for Jesus: "I posit that, rather than loading the work with a Christian semiotic, the title *Os Olhos de Isa* refers to the search for a truth which is both Iberian and Arabic-speaking, thus non-Christian" (92).

The close readings Simon undertakes are often insightful and suggest new research directions that the author himself or others might pursue in future studies. (One such study could address, for example, the engagement with religion and the sublime in other Portuguese poets, such as Herberto Helder, Ruy Belo, António Ramos Rosa or José Tolentino Mendonça.) The most visible fragility of Simon's text resides in his association of Portugal's alleged semi-peripherality (a concept famously developed by Boaventura de Sousa Santos) with the surprisingly postmodern combination of the Christian and Sufi traditions in a poetic context. Simon's presentation of this stimulating but challenging argument is not (yet?) extensive enough or sufficiently convincing.

The book displays some non-negligible errors for which the author is not necessarily to blame: the misspelling of "Portuguese" (as "Portugese") in the title and the incorrect dates given for both Pessoa's birth (1942 instead of 1948) and his death. The latter can be explained by a rumor that has been circulating for some time in Portugal and in cyberspace. I understand that Simon attempted—vigorously if unsuccessfully—to contact Pessoa and his family as he sought this (not unimportant) clarification. I am happy to report that the poet Joaquim Pessoa is alive and well, and grateful that the publication of Simon's book compensates for some of the unjust silence to which his work has been subjected.

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**Wasserman, Bonnie S. *Cinema for Portuguese Conversation*. Newburyport, MA: Focus Publishing, 2009.**

It is always with excitement that we greet new resources for Portuguese language teaching and learning. *Cinema for Portuguese Conversation* is especially welcome, for it provides opportunities for language practice while inviting its users to appreciate Lusophone cinema.

*Cinema for Portuguese Conversation*, written in Brazilian Portuguese, presents a series of activities which lead to discussion and analysis (if somewhat superficial) of each movie. The textbook is designed for intermediate and advanced students, as explained in the Introduction. It presents a total of 14 movies grouped into five different sections that reflect themes such as urban violence, political transition, and the *sertão*. Most of the movies explored in the book hail from Brazil, one is a Portuguese production (*Capitães de Abril*) and another takes place in Cape Verde (*O Testamento do Senhor Napumoceno*).

The book contains a “Movie Vocabulary” section, which supplies learners with cinema-related lexical items. The section “How to Use This Book” lists exercises that appear in most of the chapters. Each chapter contains general information about the movie (“Informação geral”), which includes a brief presentation of the film, brief bios for the director(s) and main actors, and a vocabulary list. An “Antes do filme” section, also included in each chapter, briefly contextualizes the movie and proposes a few pre-viewing questions. Most exercises are, however, in the “Depois do filme” section, which contains several writing and speaking activities. Writing activities include true/false questions, multiple-choice exercises, correlations, cloze exercises, short answers, short essays, and comparisons with other movies. Speaking activities include questions to be answered in pairs or in groups. These questions are interspersed with cultural information in boxes (“Para saber”). An activity entitled “Canto dos Críticos” encourages learners to act as movie critics on a TV show and even suggests videotaping of their

discussions. Another speaking activity, “Análise de uma cena,” helps students dissect one particular scene in each movie. At the end of each chapter we find a reading passage preceded by a few pre-reading questions. Each of these texts is somehow related to the general theme of the movie. These passages can be long (some as long as five pages) and are followed by three to six post-reading questions.

Some of the activities proposed in *Cinema for Portuguese Conversation* are very good for vocabulary practice and for discussions. Multiple-choice and fill-in-the-blanks activities help learners apply new vocabulary. The essays and the movie comparison activities can lead to potentially exciting pieces produced by learners. Among the speaking activities, “Canto dos Críticos” seems to be the most appropriate for fruitful discussions. While some activities can be very productive, others follow typical “reading/viewing comprehension” patterns: what happens, who does what, how people and things are portrayed. These types of exercises, which are abundant in foreign language textbooks, do not lend themselves to critical analyses of texts (or movies). The questions included in the “Conversa” section, for example, lean toward mere recalling of the movie. The post-reading questions that accompany the “Atividade de leitura” also tend only to verify whether the learner has understood the text, without providing opportunities for questioning, critiquing or relating the text to broader contexts (or even to other points in the chapter).

The activities do not suggest that viewing be interrupted at any point. The teacher may certainly adapt that, if s/he so desires, and break up the movie, carrying out certain activities in between. The instructor may also have to pick and choose among the activities and even adapt some for best results in class. Some expansion is especially recommended for activities related to the reading passage. Attention is also needed to spelling and to sentence structure. Even though the publisher had to reprint the book because of errors in the first printing, some have remained. These errors go from mere spelling (among others, “Juazerio” for *Juazeiro* on p. 12; “pístola” for *pistola* on pp. 112-113; “esquence” for *esquece*

## Reviews

on p. 123; “ditadur” for *ditadura* on p. 153) to agreement (“o cigarros” on p. 13) to misnomers (“guineanos” for *guineenses* on p. 149). Interestingly, on page 149 we find both “cabo-verdianos” and “cabo-verdenses”—the latter, naturally, nonexistent in Portuguese. We also find sentences with missing words. On page 12, for example, a text about Corcovado states: “Corcovado significa corcunda, e refere-se ao de 710 metros de altura (ou 2.330 pés).” Given the errors that still permeate the textbook, instructors are advised to read everything carefully and call students’ attention to cases that merit it. The publisher would do well to have the whole book carefully reviewed for typos and other such mistakes.

In spite of a few problems, professionals in Portuguese language education now have one more resource at their disposal. Those of us who can teach conversation courses will be happy to use *Cinema for Portuguese Conversation*, for this tool would not only allow for language practice, but would also be very helpful in inviting students to learn more about certain aspects of Lusophone cultures.

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