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# ÁLAMO DE OLIVEIRA

### **1.1. CHRISTMAS STORY**

Gustavo was unusually excited throughout the whole morning. Without a single complaint, he got up early, doing promptly what, on any other given day, was to be done with extreme laziness. He decorated the Christmas tree with the help from his mother, and set up a beautiful crèche, resplendent with its pebbles and moss, small sand paths, cardboard houses and clay people. He barraged with questions his mother to identify properly the characters with the live ones, to understand once for all, the thousand tribulations that led the Child Jesus to his birth at the old shed on the outskirts of Bethlehem. Although he was only five years old, whenever his curiosity sprang up not every answer would quell it and his brown eyes became even bigger.

It was not a matter of mistrust for his mother’s answers but he would listen and question because he wanted to understand all the details and wipe out any contradiction. It intrigued him the prepotent Census imposed against nature by that the Roman Emperor, who was a powerful lawbreaker of the will of small and defenseless people, such as those of Judaea. With naïve repulsion, he often compared them to those of the United States, Russia and Indonesia in their repeated and legitimized international violations. He could not fathom his mother – pregnant with his new baby brother or sister – going to the city merely to provide a name. In such a condition, this would cause her enormous upset and he knew this should be avoided. On her mother’s womb, was already growing his most desired dream amidst the sharing of his affection. It did not matter to him whether it was a boy or a girl. He just hoped that rapidly time went by for the birth to occur.

He could envisage, through his mother’s voice, the long stony dust roads, bodies and souls muddied by the December rainfall, the lengthy and dark nights slept outdoors between Nazareth and Bethlehem. What is more, he could imagine how apprehensive were St. Joseph and Our Lady when facing the imminent danger of assault and other hazards. That included the imprecations they had to swallow against whom had signed the edict that so upset them. Only to have the luxury of knowing upon how many hapless souls he imposed his power.

“Why couldn’t they catch a bus?” enquired Gustavo, before learning that, in those distant and almost legendary times, coaches were simply too unpredictable. For those enough well off to afford it, riding a donkey was already a privilege. Many others, women, young and old, would have gone on foot, without any further consideration. He could not believe that people, such as his grandparents, could be forced out of their homes and face the fear of journeying through tracks fraught with robbers, only to satisfy a whim of the emperor who sat in the splendor of his palace in a large and remote city, filled with both troops and slaves.

Then, there also was the contempt for the wounded freedom. There was a mute and unsleeping hatred from all those who were subjected to a foreign power which did not respect the soul, culture and religion or their right to be people.

”Bethlehem had its houses and streets filled with people, noises and smells in those days ...”

"As in a bullfight?" questioned Gustavo.

“More than in a bullfight," confided the mother. It must have been atrocious to reach Bethlehem after days of such a turbulent journey, and to dive into a sea of swarming people, in a huge ruckus, trampling each other at the entrance check-in of tavern doors, eateries, inns and improvised shelters. People shouted at the always-impassive guards to report a theft, to share a seat at the table or a corner where to sleep.

The consequences of drunkenness showed up in fights, insults and disgusting loutish leering. Loose and easy women were easily groped by occasional passers-by, amidst laughter and in exchange for a few coins. An excruciating smell of nauseating food leftovers, excrements and unwashed bodies was pervasive. The whole city was an immense dustbin.

It was getting dark by the time St Joseph and Our Lady got to Bethlehem. They went through the streets amidst imprecations, stumbles and the whinny of the surprised donkey.

There were people lying on ditches with their bodies writhing in a twirl of promiscuity. Some windows let out the feeble light of oil lamps...

"Was there no electric light?" Gustavo interrupted.

"No, my son! Electricity is quite recent ..."

"Poor little things! Therefore, they could not set the Christmas trees alight. "

“Of course not. Baby Jesus was not yet born ...”

“Oh, yes!” Gustavo smiled at his own childishness.

Exhausted and breathing with difficulty Our Lady arrived at last. She started having pains like knife cuts to her lower belly. She was in labor.  St. Joseph led the way knocking at every door in a desperate race. However, at every single one, he got the same answer "There is no place here for you to stay, not even standing!"

Utterly dismayed, he returned to Our Lady. His anguish came up his throat mixed with tears, at the thought of his child being born on any given street of Bethlehem, surrounded by shameless and unknown people.

Deep inside, a voice shouted, "My son cannot be born here. He will freeze to death.” Holding the donkey by its reins, he pushed people aside not knowing which direction to go. Writhing in pain and distress, Our Lady, sought an impossible serenity.

“They should have gone to the hospital, Mom!"

“There was no hospital, either!"

“And when they became sick? How were they treated? ”

"Probably, treating themselves at home. Unless they were lepers – a nasty disease that kept them at bay from relatives and friends …”

"Like AIDS?” But Gustavo did not wait for the reply. He was impatient having left St. Joseph and Our Lady stranded on the streets of Bethlehem with Baby Jesus close to being born.

Fortunately, an old woman came to their rescue referring to a small thatched shed just outside the city gates. They wasted no time thanking her for the prized information and ran therewith the donkey trotting behind. That is when the miracle happened.

A squad of angels descended down from the heavens and just outside Bethlehem carried the donkey with Our Lady and St Joseph to the shed. The angels were flapping their magnificent wings and their heavenly voices were singing melodies that only angels can sing. They sang Holy Night played along by mandolins, fiddles, guitars and an accordion. The smallest – a chubby blond angel with blue eyes –annoyed the chorus and the musical troupe with his arrhythmic drum: boom, boom, boom - followed by four beats of the drums. Nobody saw but it was very beautiful.

Once arrived, the angels picked up brooms and shovels and set out to clean the cattle pen, sweeping the shed and scaring a cow that also waited to give birth. Then, they prepared a straw bed for Our Lady, while St Joseph used some abandoned tools and planks from the bay to build a comfortable cot. They lit two lanterns that hung over the bed where Our Lady was groaning. Then, they all quieted down in sweet anticipation. Suddenly, from the cattle pen, they heard a scream followed by a deep and hearty cry. A few angels came running. The little one fell into a mud puddle dirtying his dress and wings, piercing the drumhead in the process. He put on the world's most desolate face. The head of the angels started berated and threatened him with an early return to the heavens, altogether with a novena of banned recreation in the playground and a lock up in a cloud. Nonetheless, St. Joseph took up the little angel in his arms and after patiently cleaning, carried him inside. He was so scared that he peed on his diapers.

Gustavo smiled. His mother was trying to avoid the details of childbirth. Her modesty was taking her into descriptive reveries that Gustavo did not share. He suspended from rods the chorus angels and the musical troupe, placing them in an acrobatic balance. He made them play Holy Night again, very softly. In the meantime, Baby Jesus was born. It was midnight on the dot. St. Joseph went to the trouble of checking the time on the clock.

"Was it was a birth by Caesarean section or vaginal delivery?” asked Gustavo.

"Natural childbirth!" replied his mother who rushed pushing the contentment-filled angels, out of the shed. They went flying over the shepherds of the whole world to awake them with the hymn “Gloria in Excelsis Deo." It was an intensely soft noise illuminated by shooting stars. Carelessly, some of these even came down. However, another, cleverer and more aware, diverted from that luminous mess towards east, to guide the Four Magi who came from Tarsus, Africa, Persia and Sheba to the Bethlehem shed.

Three of them came laden with Gold, Frankincense and Myrrh, offerings with little practical value. Later on, but in vain, the interpreters of the Gospels have sought to decode its value.

However, the fourth king got lost. He only arrived thirty-three years later, with nothing to offer. By then, Jesus no longer needed him. Nailed to the cross, he only felt like dying.

“Mother, you are changing the subject…,” said Gustavo.

Indeed she was. Christmas was Christmas and only Baby Jesus mattered. They returned to the shed, which was almost empty by then. The little angel insisted that Infant Jesus had to play drums. However, he suckled heartily, without paying him any attention, aware of his most urgent tasks.

The night chilled down. The snow had fallen on the mountains and a crooked wind brought cold to the shed. Baby Jesus could freeze. Then, the cow and the donkey came closer, warming him with their hot and humid breath. Our Lady and St Joseph smiled, while tenderly kissed the child, who fell asleep as soon as he finished nursing. They placed him on the crib and the angel with the drum started rocking him.

“This is why your crèche has an angel, a donkey and a cow,” said the mother. Gustavo looked at it to confirm. Then, unable to hold himself, he asked, "Mom, did Baby Jesus, have any siblings? “ No, my son. He is always the Baby Jesus. Then, affectionately hugging his mother’s belly, he concluded: "He does not know what he has lost!”

**COM PERFUME E COM VENENO, LISBOA, EDITORA SALAMANDRA, 1997, PP. 25-31**

**WITH PERFUME AND WITH POISON. LISBON, SALAMANDRA PUBLISHERS, 1997, PP. 25-31**

# **CAETANO VALADÃO SERPA**

### **2.1. SON OF LOVE AND JEALOUSY**

Albeit she was almost thirty years old and twice a mother, she hadn’t lost the charm of her still solid, firm, fresh and healthy body. She was uniquely beautiful. A chisel of natural inspiration molded her legs and arms. Her vibrant breasts were full of life. Her face was seamed with simplicity and grace. Her deep eyes, as melancholic and black as the dark night, were a mystery of seduction and intimacy and her sensual lips had an irresistible attraction. She was a true miracle of nature, worth an aesthetics pedestal in the Athenian Acropolis or at the Roman Forum, for a beauty parade of all times. Surely, God must have consulted with the Florentine genius, Michelangelo, before putting His hand on the fruitful lava of the Azores, when deciding to give it shape.

Having lived longer in the United States than in the Azores, she spoke English without any linguistic command beyond the level of current communication and had limited fluency in Portuguese with an accent from the island where she was born. Having arrived here at thirteen, she left school just three years later to dive into a factory full time job, seeking the desired wealth of the dollar. Naive, youthful and spontaneous, quickly, she became the coveted lure of the bosses, the unbridled ambition of single men and even the dream of unspoken hopes of married men, always ready to break marital ties in exchange for the favors of this young girl without a High School diploma.

She decided to stick around contemplating her sweet sixteen and enjoying the graces of her original adolescent captivating and exuberant beauty. At eighteen, however, things changed. Simply, her presence could no longer be ignored. That was when people with laden wallets and purposes started making direct approaches to her. She could choose from the trivial invitations to dinners and movies, to weekend journeys to Cape Cod or costly travel and exotic vacations in Miami, Virgin Islands or the Bahamas ... Here, the scorching sun, hot sands and the beat of music to the rhythm of drums and the shade of palm trees, would be an easy bed of love. Even alfresco at high tide, in the sea, the cradle of all origins. One just had to unfurl the sails and let the boat adrift on the voluptuous shuttle of the distance, in horizons of immeasurable delight.

However, it was more for reasons of family structure and due to her quick learning that she did not let herself go on that tightrope of delirium. She knew that most of these adventurers of easy allurements sailed on weekly checks that never reached the bank. They were only interested in satisfying their hungry sex at the fountain of pleasure that her beautiful and youthful body provided. She could anticipate being seedily expurgated by them as if they were thieves of pearls, reveling in the cupidity of caressing her face, massaging her legs, squeezing her breasts and measuring her waist with their rough hands. They would do it in the same manner in which they masturbated on nights of frustration or in the way they did the 'piece work' shoes, counting the dollars that would pay for the delectable pleasures of her body.

**GENTE SEM NOME – ESTÓRIAS DE MIGRAÇÕES. PONTA DELGADA, JORNAL DE CULTURA, 1994, PP. 38**

**PEOPLE WITH NO NAME) - STORIES OF MIGRATION. PONTA DELGADA, JOURNAL OF CULTURE, 1994, PP. 38**

### **2.2. THE LOVE TO THE ISLAND**

The love to the island is large, almost limitless, transcending the actual dimensions of the archipelago and going forward through the seven corners of the world. They even discovered the tenth island, and there are still many others, anchored somewhere, almost everywhere. Most of what they left behind, never to be forgotten, lies in the middle of the Atlantic. The sense of belonging is stronger for all those, still there, owning a few feet of solid ground and miles and miles of endless seas. All other souls who left without a scrap of land for burial, aspire to acquire it at any price, even if one has to sacrifice the best times of their lives, in anticipation of a visit of longing or for a final return, at a later date.

From here is born a dream and ambition for a summerhouse or, for the last years of life, a dwelling between the two worlds. The Azorean people feed their great love for the island that saw them come to life. It is a cycle of leaving without forgetting or departing to return later. If they want to go there to die, they do not take it lightly if one deprives them of their return to the motherland. Even when success knocks at their door, they do not squander the insular love for their origins. It is only there that the mountains embrace the seas so that one can see and touch them. One only needs eyes and hands and be capable of enjoying things in the transparent blue of happiness without the need for any further evidence.

Thus, conscious that nothing replaces the simplicity of being born from the hot entrails of the motherly cosmos, these people live on the passion for the island and the availability of the seas. In contrast to the lack of time and absence, this love even grows up in the distance. It becomes an indispensable part of a postulated inheritance. They need to preserve it as a precious identity, amidst the wandering crowds. There, more than anywhere else, it becomes part of the character of its inhabitants. Sometimes, even leads to an exaggeration of parochialism and divisiveness. It blurs the landscape out of focus in myopia of the reality. It comes close to fanaticism and self-proclamation of each one. Then, the most common sins become a complex of superiority / inferiority of being the largest and richest, the most historic and longest, the tallest and most typical or of the smaller and more beautiful.

**GENTE SEM NOME – ESTÓRIAS DE MIGRAÇÕES. PONTA DELGADA, JORNAL DE CULTURA**

**PEOPLE WITH NO NAME - STORIES OF MIGRATION. PONTA DELGADA, JOURNAL OF CULTURE 1994, P. 51**.

### **2.3. SWEET MEMORY OF THE PAST**

There were eight of them, counting the father, the mother, three boys and three girls. They were all healthy, happy, had abundant food on the table, clean clothes and joie de vivre.

The father personified calm and moderation. Hardly would he be inconvenienced with anyone or anything, and when this happened, it was never someone else’s responsibility.

The mother was as simple and spontaneous as the environment where she was born and lived - the rocky mountain that shadowed them where aromatic fine herbs grew, and the plains that provided for their sustenance. It was a tree-lined and fertile rocky land; from there the earthly, crystalline and pure waters flowed down to the valley, singing an impromptu with the waters from the sea.

Part of the family had blue eyes and blond hair; the others had dark skin and black hair. This intriguing variety might provide anthropologists and historians with some investigative leads for a better understanding of the settlement on the island.

They inhabited a solid stone and mortar house built right at the foot of the mountain that, almost upright, rose up to the clouds. As everybody else in the village, they lived on cows and sheep, chickens and pigs, fish and limpets and from agriculture, cultivation of corn, wheat, vegetables and fruit.

He was a good rock angler on his spare time from toiling the land, and on Sundays when menial jobs were banned. In turn, when the tide went down, she took a stroll to the rocky shoreline to supplement the meal with a plate of limpets, often served as a bread soup with potato, onion, garlic and a small pinch of mint. What a delight to eat them! Worth dying for. The farm next to the house supplied all year round bananas, winter oranges, summer apples and autumn guavas.

Even before the arrival of spring and without the slightest need for care or attention, the flowers, particularly the hydrangeas, grew almost everywhere. They were born from spontaneous generation and multiplied by the free grace of nature, virtue of the sun and the never-ending water. Just like an Eden of fertility, they grew on stony 'marouços'[[1]](#footnote-1) by the edge of narrow lanes, on the banks of clear water creeks or any spot where they could find fertile dust, transplanted by the winds of spring and by hard working happy birds.

These people were pleasurable, self-sufficient and carefree, with no ambition of producing wealth, and a delight for common joy, living and growing up. They waited their turn to continue the species in the footsteps of their parents. They bred annually according to family tradition. In this mission and lineage, they avenged six offspring, the most robust, in accordance with the pure laws of selection and rejection. Seven of them had failed to meet this rigorous natural survival ordeal, at a time when everything happened in bed, from gestation to birth, illness and death. There was no hospital and most of the time there was no medical assistance. Only the local midwife, graduated from the college of experience and good will.

As for the professional organization of the village, the men were in charge of land and animals. They sowed corn, wheat, potatoes and beans, planted the cabbage and onions, weeded the cornfield crops and milked the cows. Women took care of the house and were in charge of the discipline of children with right of appeal to parental authority. In emergency cases, this functioned as a court of appeal. Occasionally, the women gave a hand to toil the fields.

In common wasteland, the 'bush', where the clean air purified the lungs and wild roses spoke of love without sin, an idyllic and festive event took place: the annual sheep shearing. At that time, all parishioners who could walk climbed the mountain to revere nature and worship the sun and light. It was one of the few happy moments in the entrails of the earthly humus, out of sight of the seas. However, as far as the eyes could reach, there was an ocean of ​​ blue and pink hydrangeas, laced with dainty green leaves. Here was an ideal place to enjoy the various tones of the cloudless skies. The earth strolled facing the sun before fareweling it on the horizon, at a distance, while waiting for one more night that is silent.

However, the most revered forest vegetation of the island was the aromatic twisted cedar (Azores Juniper) and the crawling *Juniperus turbinate. Having* witnessed the first week of the creation of the island, they were allowed to grow only at the whim of the winds.

The sheep were trapped, sheared and the geep (their offspring) clipped. A sumptuous lunch was prepared and served up there, on the rocky mountain. It had chicken soup, sausage baked in the coals, boiled eggs, seasoned bread, cow’s milk milked at the time, wine and fresh crystal clear water, emanating from within the generous earth.  Appetite was double, there.

In the valley by the sea, when descending from the mountain, everybody regained the relaxed form of life. There was no great hurry to get anywhere, no concern of time for anything; no one spoke of minutes or seconds. It was enough to have the sunrise and sunset as reference and, up on the hill, the twelve chimes of church bells at noon. Nevertheless, time was well defined. The hours were defined for work and rest, to lie down and to get up. There was a well-established routine for meals, lunch, dinner and supper, with no snacks, meals or any confusion between morning and afternoon.

The sun was a valuable reference, the great pendulum swinging between light and darkness in the immense celestial sphere. Just like a clock without hands, one only had the shade of trees, of walls, of buildings and especially of the mountainous rock to pinpoint, with an almost electronic precision, the time of day and the proximity of the night. So, with little to choose from, there remained time for everything. There was time for mutual aid and friendly conversations. Sometimes, there was even time for gossip and intrigue.

Sunday Mass was by far the busiest, striking and significant weekly event. It served not only to comply with the religious precepts, but also constituted a unique opportunity to bring together all the people. They had their faces freshly washed and their bodies were perfumed. They wear their Sunday dresses and suits, which are painstakingly reserved only for these occasions. After the celebration, no one hurried to return home. Especially men who let themselves be, by the churchyard, updating news of the land, discussing business planning and farm chores. The young ones took advantage to start their dating adventures, experiencing the first feelings of affection and love and idealizing future weddings. These, were ruled by traditional, rigorous and demanding norms, under the supervision of the entire parish.

On Sundays and holy days no one worked. It was a sin to do so. People strolled up, talked, made courtesy or condolence visits on the event of births, baptisms, weddings or funerals. The women went straight home. It was unacceptable for them to be on the street. It was believed that their place was there, at home. The men spent most of the day outdoors, playing cards, smoking, arguing and emptying glasses in taverns. Only when the stomach made them feel hungry would they return home.

**GENTE SEM NOME – ESTÓRIAS DE MIGRAÇÕES. PONTA DELGADA, JORNAL DE CULTURA**

**PEOPLE WITH NO NAME - STORIES OF MIGRATION. PONTA DELGADA, JOURNAL OF CULTURE, 1994, PP. 112-114.**

# DANIEL DE SÁ

### **3.1. MARIA DA GRAÇA**

When the old man was as weak that he could no longer get up from the bed, Manuel Cordovão willingly made himself available to care for him as if he was his own son. They had been helping each other since they became the last three inhabitants of the village. At least, once a week, he went down to the valley to buy groceries and help Torre Velha to get some wood for the fireplace and oven. Maria da Graça baked the bread and ironed his clothes.

Electricity did not arrive in time to prevent the village from losing its soul. Anyhow, it could never avert it and did not stop Cordovão and his habit of reading as much as if he were a literary critic. When the itinerant Gulbenkian Library stopped going to Aldeia Nova do Vale, he started buying most of the books he read. The sentences he enjoyed most he wrote on a loose-leaf book. He also took down all the words he did not understand and were not in the dictionary so that he could ask about them to anyone who knew. At times, that task took some months.

He was able to study until Year 4, since he was the youngest in the family. Maria da Graça only reached Year 2 and it was thanks to him...

The exam for Year 3 became mandatory, only for boys, on that year. Although he was but ten, he attended Year 4 since he had started school at the age of six. The school subdivision of Aldeia Nova do Vale did not always start with thirty-two school-age pupils at the beginning of every school year. Thus, the Regent Teacher[[2]](#footnote-2), always asked a few children to anticipate their school registration. The girls who reached the school age limit but did not get a pass on the final exam (the so-called second-degree level) could keep on registered. As all parents required their children to work, they always agreed to anticipate their primary school registration, but would rarely allow them to keep up their studies past the age of nine or ten. As far as girls were concerned, it was difficult to get the ones from Aldeia Nova da Serra to register at six, due to the distance and the bad unsheltered itinerary they had to travel. By mere chance and due to the insistence of the Regent Teacher, Maria da Graça’s parents had consented. That year the school had only twenty-eight students registered and ran the risk of closing down. The nearest school was almost two kilometers further away, at Fonte Gralha, making it even more unbearable for all the mountain residents. Her father congregated half a dozen neighbors to build, along the way, something similar to shepherds’ huts where the children could shelter from the rain.

It was during May. For some weeks now, ever since he read “The Adventures of Tom Sawyer,” Manuel felt he loved Maria da Graça very much. Neither had he the guts to tell her nor was he even able to write her a note. That was what his colleagues did in order to reveal their childhood passions. He envied the freedom and daring of Mark Twain’s hero. As a love confession, he even attempted some walking in front of her home He dreaded her father’s ire, well capable of giving him some badly measured blow. Her mother’s viperine tongue was always ready to defend the girls’ honour. Some even said those girls would never marry. Measure is a merry mean. If other mothers kept their offspring gynoecia away from male lust contagion, her mother would not even allow strange eyes set on them, as if eyeing them was already a form of dishonor and an “ad vitam et mortem” condemnation. Finally, the greatest difficulty was to meet face to face, word to word, the girl who was the cause and motive of his shyness. If he didn’t make up his mind fairly quick, one of his bolder companions would get into his way, either by direct affirmation or through that little elusive note, which didn’t reveal red faces or heart tremors, unless the handwriting betrayed the strength of the feelings. In such case, Graça would disappear from his designs, even if he could not get her out of his mind.

Love has the impulses of ingeniousness and artistic creation that can benefit everyone, at any age. Then, one afternoon when he was near the desk with other Year 4 students answering a questionnaire on the meaning of words, his eyes met hers. She had just taken her eyes away from the copybook to dip the nib in the inkpot. Suddenly, he dared and sent her a furtive wink. In those days, to reciprocate a wink could be a commitment for an entire life, and the first and only case of passion could happen at eight or ten years of age. She could not wink with one eye only, so she used her hand to close her left eye and winked twice with her right eye.

“Manuel: foundation?”

The teacher’s voice brought his spirit back, closer to his body. His answer came from the tip of his tongue:

“Act or effect of founding, origin, principle, establishment.”

On their return home, they split into two groups as usual, with the boys slightly ahead of the girls. Every now and then, he glanced back, trying to understand whether his message was reciprocated by spite or by true consent. He noticed her smile coloring the group with a gleam he had never seen around those places. Graça was different that afternoon. No, his eyes were not mistaken; after all, they had been used to announce what his words could not.

When they were halfway, half distance between two of those shelter huts, it started to rain. Most of them started running straight ahead for the upper shelter, but Maria da Graça turned around downwards to the other shelter. Manuel followed her along. It was an impulse, a sudden inspiration, one does not think before acting. He had no time to imagine that the words or gestures he was unable to utter or make, face to face, would give him the jitters for not saying or doing them. When he came back to his senses, each second would become a long journey of hesitation for the faltering thoughts in his spirit. However, what really mattered was that he was able to turn around and run the risk of misfortune in the most desired of all adventures that he sought experiencing.

\* \* \*

One of the girls told Maria da Graça’s sister that they were alone in a shelter and that he had kissed her. The sister told her mother. The mother told the father. The father hit her, and both of them, father and mother, forbade her to go back to school.

O PASTOR DAS CASAS MORTAS, 2007 PONTA DELGADA, VERAÇOR PP. 15-17

DEAD HOUSES’ SHEPHERD, 2007, PONTA DELGADA, VERAÇOR PP. 15-17

### **3.2. THE MOUNTAIN**

Manuel Cordovão’s Reading Book for Year 2, contained a poem by Afonso Lopes Vieira called “The Shepherd,” that started this way:

Far from the land,

here on the mountain

alone,

neighbor of the blue skies,

I tend my flock,

play the flute and listen to the birds:

ding dong...

I live far from the village,

have to care for my flock,

we are close to the skies

my dogs, the mountain, me

and my flock...

On the series of chronicles Mythical Portugal, published at the time, and kept by Master Gil, the barber, the author narrates a visit to mountainous villages. None of the shepherds he spoke to was Manuel. However, every one of them would resemble him. Let us see an excerpt from the text:

An idyllic peace, as deep as the peak of these mountains, it spreads as far as the eyes can see, seeking to view everything at a glance and insisting on stopping at every detail. Dotting valleys and hillsides, villages of biblical houses, patriarchal, solid and immutable as the boulders that form them, they are an assertion of eternity in the vortex of time. From hillock to knoll, an unruffled harmony seems ready to either harbinger the perfection of the world or rule over chaos.

I start, on the way up, by closely following, two small herding dogs and their offspring. For sure, the animals must be conscious of their fate, since few livestock stop to gnaw at the sprouts that come within their range. My legs falter, the heart rattles begging for respite. I try not losing sight of the swift mountaineers who do not slow down and keep up with the herd’s rhythm; they still have the stamina to jump over mounds or hillocks chasing some adventurous she-goat, since there are always four or five following such peregrination.

The fewer mountains there are above us, the more landscape there is. Therefore, when the underframe begs for a halt, the spirit fills with delight. I am baffled by this immaculate beauty, full of contrasts between the roughness of the furze and the live softness of variegated flowers, the crude but serene arrogance of the hilltops and the sweet dainty of the new grass, barely dried from the benevolent dew. I am unable to comprehend whether the mountain is an acropolis of boulders, where the plants fight for space and life, or if it is, a forest and meadow hurt by the majestic rocks.

I reach the shepherds and cattle at the table set with greenly summits. I am slow to talk, since I cannot and do not know yet how to tell them about the purpose of this journey. Most certainly, they reckon I came for nothing and I foretell a difficult task explaining them that yes and no, in a manner they can understand without judging me foolish.

After all, they accept me as if I were a stone planted there thousands of years ago. I address myself to the youngest, a little boy that should be at school if it was not for the cattle. The other boy, seemingly slightly older, comes closer so he too can listen to what the stranger has to say. The stranger is barely greeting although he was well greeted and does not make a sound in front of these happy and pure pagans, due to the weariness that persist at this height, although he blithely inhales this air made up of pure oxygen – one could say – and never before breathed by animals or plants.

I enquire if they own the flock. Yes, it is theirs, but these are two flocks from another two owners. And can you distinguish the sheep that belong to you? “Indeed!” replies the eldest and immediately I sense that my question was foolish. “Of course, how could we not know our own sheep?” They both laugh, not in scorn, but maybe due to the pleasure of having encountered such ignorant townspeople. Do they have names, those sheep? Why shouldn’t they? Moreover, before asking them, didn’t I recall that a good shepherd knows any sheep by its name...? Even the dogs know who among those balls of cotton, needs no direction or guidance and will go straight to their sheep-pen, although I keep thinking nothing distinguishes them from one another

And do they like the life they have? I almost offend them just by raising the question.

I take their picture with half of the world as a background. They stay happy with a smile that so soon will not be erased.

I return with my soul purified. Better than a pilgrim’s trip to Cova da Iria[[3]](#footnote-3) or Sameiro. At any sanctuary, one gets the impression that God has to share Himself with crowds, and here we have Him all for ourselves in the immense temple he worked on as an architect and builder.

From Manuel’s Diary, Tuesday September 7, 1954:

My brother was conscripted into the army yesterday and now all I will see is sheep. It will be another ten years until I can go afar when I, too, go to the army.

DE SÁ, DANIEL, O PASTOR DAS CASAS MORTAS, 2007 PONTA DELGADA, VERAÇOR PP. 26-28

DE SÁ, DANIEL, DEAD HOUSES’ SHEPHERD, 2007, PONTA DELGADA, VERAÇOR PP. 26-28

# **EDUARDO BETTENCOURT PINTO**

### **4.1. CASI CIELO**

I drink the last sun of your mouth...

The chairs are empty.

I hear a whisper of guitar as a wild water horse

gallops over the sea.

Your shoulders were burning, I remember, the wind.

The dress was white, the sandals two shades of palm.

You had no name to collect my rivers,

and nostalgia looked at me like a dog.

One day we all leave.

But I always return to this pier,

word by word,

looking for you.

### **4.2. WINTER AND SOCIABILITY**

Diving on a dark Saturday morning while, slowly, dawn, becomes morning.

Winter gallops towards us. It has already brought a lot of snow upon us last Thursday, quite unusual in these parts of Canada in November. Suddenly, a white calamity came before us. Then, the daily trivial habits become challenges, thrills and neurosis.

Never before have I experienced these poor road conditions with “Cacilda,” my old Toyota truck. Vehicles with rear-wheel drive are unpredictable dancers on slippery roads. But she behaved like an elegant lady, dapper in her former dignity. Obviously, played a few pranks on me. However, it always led me to where I wanted without complaints or resentment.

The flowers, upon the unexpected impact of cold, withered in the vases at the doorway. Just like the arms of a somber man, peduncles pending and withering before our eyes. It's sad to see them, when they just had been shedding light and dazzling the hot days of summer.

Rocky, haggard as always, threw himself into the backyard lacking the astonishment and joy it had when, for the first time, discovered the snow. Even dogs hate routines.

On that day, Rocky abruptly stopped at the door, confronted with a mixture of awe and fright. Never saw so much white in its life. Moving carefully through the snow sniffed it with therapeutically dog’s nose. Licked it once, twice, thrice and ended up eating a bit. Shook the head (brr!) and unleashed a mad dash from one side to another in the yard until it could no run no more. It was frenzied.

I do not like winter. There is a dour isolation in people that smites me. A mandatory seasonal curfew that is not from introspection but of absent-mindless. When I think of it I remember this laconic passage from Jorge Luis Borges:

“My father built with him (the verb is excessive) one of those English friendships that begin by excluding confidences and very soon omit the dialogue.”

Well, the impressions of Borges.

I think the English are pragmatic, of course, and socially encumbered. However, who is not just like that in regards to strangers? Whom do we trust? If we count the fingers on our left hand, we will find the exact number of those who are our confidants. The right fingers are too busy making us reflect, or vice versa, if the person is left handed.

Confidentiality is the virtue of trust and mutual respect. Social codes do not necessarily hold formulations that show (and dignify) the most basic features of the smoothness of character. Subtle people throw stones in such an oblique manner that what sometimes seems clear is no more than a staged scenario.

Each one moves into the social scene the way one can. However, one thing is certain: almost nobody dares to show up naked, metaphorically speaking. (There are staged nut cases but these fall outside the rule). The artist's death would be inevitable but the public would exult. Also because the triumph of the cynical and the busybody, even frighteningly ephemeral, boils down to this: realizing that they manipulate others with their deceptive arts, they always end up drinking the poison of their own pompousness.

BLOGUE: PALAVRAS NO BRANCO / BLOG: WORDS ON WHITE [www.eduardobpinto.wordpress.com](http://www.eduardobpinto.wordpress.com)

### **4.3. THE SUNRISE FRIEND**

Valdemiro felt good about himself. He had given Cipriano all the money wagered, liberating himself from the acid guilt gnawing at his conscience. The evening lasted until after midnight, with Berto after the dramatic metamorphosis of character, revealing his skills as an inspirational storyteller, most of which directed at him, the implausible and delirious central character. The story of the ducks was simply a poor pretext to defame Cipriano, whom he never liked.

It was a dry September evening. Valdemiro walking down the lane noticed with quite warmth the moonlight that bleached the dark. Like a huge silvery mirror, it reflected the silence in the roofs, doors and windows, the mystery and the sublime presence of another reality. Suddenly, he felt the intimate connection with the island, a love torn by absences, the thousands of white handkerchiefs waving in memory. He knew he would never dare turning off that sea which spoke to him so intimately or those scents of land that received his footsteps as a god lost to the fate of the winds.

The only lit window was of Dona Filipa’s, a teacher who came from the mainland a few months ago. She taught at the village of Lagoa. The house belonged to the Medeiros family, lost in America a few years ago. They left it intact, hoping to return one day to rest for the remainder of their lives.

Valdemiro could clearly see her silhouette behind the curtain, the hand gesture combing her fallen straight hair. He slowed down. He felt dominated by an enormous temptation: to hide in the dark and spy on her movements. His desire was not tinged with lust, but a mere irresistible curiosity. Without further thoughts, turned left and plunged into a gap between two houses, under the cover of darkness. He leaned against the wall, but turned away immediately in fear of being careless, risking to get limestone marks on his clothing. A few cat whistles coming right above him culminated in a piercing noise of cats fighting furiously on the roof. Then, he came to realize the ridiculousness of the situation came out of hiding and resumed his walk home.

Passing close to the window, the sound of classical music came to his ears. Suddenly, he remembered their first conversation.

He was shaving when someone knocked at his door. The wife went to answer - it was the lady teacher. She was running late since she had missed the coach, and asked her if her husband could take her down to Lagoa. Valdemiro got ready quickly and left without eating.

Through the rear - view mirror, he noticed her distant, dark eyes, taking in the images of the island. “This is very beautiful,” she said, brushing the hair off her face while closing the window a little more. 'When you live many years on the Island, you no longer see it. It is within us," said Valdemiro. 'Well put, I suspected that was it. At night, I like to watch the sea from my window and listen to the music. It takes me to distances that I never thought I could discover with naked eye," said Filipa. Valdemiro stopped, letting her wander. Her voice shortened the distance. Without realizing it, they were already by the school gates.

Upon returning home, he brought within himself a poetic portrait of the island owing to Filipa’s sensitivity, reviving mysteries he knew but had no words to describe them.

**O PRÍNCIPE DOS REGRESSOS. LISBOA, ED SALAMANDRA, COL. “GARAJAU” 1999, PP. 46-48**

PRINCE OF RETURNS. LISBON, EDIÇÕES SALAMANDRA, COL. "TERN" 1999 PP. 46-48

### **4.4. WINTER**

He rebels against the winter from the slackness of his chair.  A blanket covers his knees, the aged warmth of gloominess. In the shadows, he sees the silhouette of his days. He brandishes against the dead hours an ember of drowsiness and forgetfulness. In his hands lulls a silent scintillation of boredom, lost foggy star. When he talks, he sings as if he was perched on a cliff of dark dawns. Around him, the silence falls like a torn rag.

He gets up. There is a sad remoteness in his steps, brief as magnolia petals. He enters the kitchen and does not recognize the country: a cod dish, potatoes and olives from the Alentejo. He questions the man he was, the age of his nocturne eyes.

It rains throughout the fall upon his sight. He retires to the silence of an adagio of waters, intricate path of longing down his face. The long summer afternoons resounding in his mind, still a boy, chasing pigeons, fatigued by the light of his screams. Returning to that time is the only way he can recognize himself. Even then, he lacked the joy of the color of dawn, suspended in the absence of his mother. Upon that age white clouds passed by, inaudible flights, until a bridge of anguishes collapsed under his steps.

The clothes he wears are his closest siblings.

He’s floating in a kind of tired harmony, as if expecting an angel of roses at the top of the window. He does not want to belong here: the snow falls close to him in the intimate exile as a treacherous sheet of fascination.

His son brings him two or three words, the smell of hay, the memory that he lays at his hands, a ballast of voices over the river.

But he cannot hear the child. Asks:

— Whose son are you?

Speaks to him of cactus, white walls against the sea, how the land dies on certain days of June.

— I am the son of the longing that you feel — he tells him, at last.

**O PRÍNCIPE DOS REGRESSOS. LISBOA, ED. SALAMANDRA, COL. “GARAJAU”, 1999, PP.147-148**

**PRINCE OF RETURNS. LISBON, EDIÇÕES SALAMANDRA, COL. "TERN" 1999, PP. 147-148**

# **EDUÍNO DE JESUS**

### 5.1. METAMORPHOSIS

waited for you to be born   
   in the public square   
   in the throat of the bird   
               who sang in the branch of a tree   
               or atop the shoulder of a statue   
  
hoped for you to bloom  
in City Park’s rosebush  
and your ashen body  
            was no longer   
           but a vegetal dream   
  
hoped for you to descend  
in a moon-ray  
and you would arrive  
              dancing en pointe (like a naked sylph)   
             to lie down on my bed   
  
In my fantasy   
of pubertal boy   
I craved for you to be a melody   
             a flower   
             a moonbeam   
  
I waited for you every minute   
of every day and night with   
nervousness and an anxious soul  
                caressing you on the petals of roses   
                or biting you in the fruit pulp

OS SILOS DO SILÊNCIO - POESIA (1948-2004). LISBOA. ED IMPRENSA NACIONAL CASA DA MOEDA.  2005, PP. 50-51   
  THE SILOS OF SILENCE - POETRY (1948-2004). LISBON. ED IMPRENSA NACIONAL CASA DA MOEDA.  2005, PP. 50-51

### 5.2. SIMPLY

    to love you with neither oaths nor promises   
            with neither sleepless nights   
             nor this passion that buleverses

             my nerves and haunts my life   
  
                    with neither despair nor romance  
                    as if nothing had happened to me  
                    with neither tears nor my anguish   
  
                   naturally simply placidly  
                   like the weeds that flourish on the route

OS SILOS DO SILÊNCIO - POESIA (1948-2004). LISBOA. ED IMPRENSA NACIONAL CASA DA MOEDA. 2005. PP. 58.

  THE SILOS OF SILENCE - POETRY (1948-2004). LISBON. ED IMPRENSA NACIONAL CASA DA MOEDA. 2005. PP. 58

### 5.3. STARDUST

  after the dream and the dream   
  and the fatigue and the road   
  
  when the eyes no longer saw

neither the wall nor the road   
  
  after the kisses and the laughter   
 with the hourglass halted  
                                  
 when the warning suddenly came  
 of the unexpected night   
  
 I got lost amongst meanders   
 and traces of invented light   
  
 in search of dust from stars,   
 which die, with the dawn

  OS SILOS DO SILÊNCIO - POESIA (1948-2004). LISBOA. ED IMPRENSA NACIONAL CASA DA MOEDA. 2005. PP. 128.

  THE SILOS OF SILENCE - POETRY (1948-2004). LISBON. ED IMPRENSA NACIONAL CASA DA MOEDA. 2005. PP. 128

### 5.4. ONE MAN DOWN THE LIFE

Had I any heart? Of gold ... Oh, I reckon   
    the flame quickly devoured it;   
     and now, in its place, I find a stone   
    it does not thrive; it does not hurt in me.  
  
    And things why I am esteemed:   
  Burden of nothing, weariness of the days   
   empty hands, useless?   
   What a burden, oh, what a burden ...   
  
   Oh my life crossed at the ford:   
   empty, arid, a dry river, nor   
   an inch of water to drown someone!   
  
   and me? A man down the life, on a stick   
   and a rope (whose shoulders are these?)   
   and blindfolded: Neither good nor bad.

 OS SILOS DO SILÊNCIO - POESIA (1948-2004). LISBOA. ED IMPRENSA NACIONAL CASA DA MOEDA. 2005. PP. 140. 1954  
 THE SILOS OF SILENCE - POETRY (1948-2004). LISBON. ED IMPRENSA NACIONAL CASA DA MOEDA. 2005. PP. 140. 1954

### 5.5. CONQUEST

I am a village man,   
with yellow boots I arrived in town.   
Have you an idea   
how townspeople laughed at me and at them!   
yet despite this, the city, I conquered!   
  
Today, I own a park with a garden bench   
where I sleep and dream.   
I have a mansion house in Newport, New-Eng-

land and a yacht anchored in Saint Tropez, and tomorrow   
I will start a whale business in Liverpool.   
Oh and now are you going to tell me that I'm a village   
man!   
  
I am, on the contrary, a Greek ship-owner, I con-

trol most of the Las Vegas casinos, I own 5% of the oil   
business from Persia and already bought (my old dream!) the

Santa Maria airport.   
nowadays, this is quite   
a real nest egg to get started,

(I'm just afraid that one day   
  the inspector of benches for public gardens   
  discovers   
and comes to tell me   
that my seat there under the maple at  
the edge of the pond where small red fish

swim and come to eat by hand   
belongs to the City Council.)

  OS SILOS DO SILÊNCIO - POESIA (1948-2004). LISBOA. ED IMPRENSA NACIONAL CASA DA MOEDA. 2005. PP. 156-157.   
  THE SILOS OF SILENCE - POETRY (1948-2004). LISBON. ED IMPRENSA NACIONAL CASA DA MOEDA. 2005. PP. 156-157

### 5.6. INTROIT

  I wonder ...   
                  Here's what I do.   
                  But do not expect   
                  you to answer.   
  
                  Such is my embarrassment:   
                  That, after all,   
                  there is nothing to expect   
                  from the questions   
                  I pose to you.   
  
                  Not responding is Thy wisdom;   
                  Asking is my blindness.   
                  Each of us understands the same light of day   
                  each one’s way.

OS SILOS DO SILÊNCIO - POESIA (1948-2004). LISBOA. ED IMPRENSA NACIONAL CASA DA MOEDA. 2005. PP. 179   
  THE SILOS OF SILENCE - POETRY (1948-2004). LISBON. ED IMPRENSA NACIONAL CASA DA MOEDA. 2005. PP. 179

### 5.7. WORDS

oh my God! Words are   
inaccurate voluble. However   
they just (while men go by)   
keep the signs of time forever  
  
after the warnings they give birth to  
air butterflies, larvae of the earth   
they dig the abysses by themselves  
open their wings / and (after all) shoot into flight    
  
Inaccurate? voluble? but unmovable  
they stay there on the white page   
waiting for a Stand up and walk   
from some human voice

   OS SILOS DO SILÊNCIO - POESIA (1948-2004). LISBOA. ED IMPRENSA NACIONAL CASA DA MOEDA. 2005. PP. 229

  THE SILOS OF SILENCE - POETRY (1948-2004). LISBON. ED IMPRENSA NACIONAL CASA DA MOEDA. 2005. PP. 229

### 5.8. MANY MANY THINGS

 many nights so many winters   
            many hungers and desires   
            My God! Much pimping and sodomy and treason   
            many cries very much rage very much lost sleep   
            so very much loneliness so very much    
  
           and so many crimes for nothing so very much love in vain   
           and so many of those who have forgotten   
          plus those who despair   
           and those   
          waiting quietly in their solitude   
  
          and those who are left high and dry  
         waiting on the beach for King Sebastian[[4]](#footnote-4)   
          (whether he comes or not)   
          oh! so many nights so many   
          (so many) of solitude

OS SILOS DO SILÊNCIO - POESIA (1948-2004). LISBOA. ED IMPRENSA NACIONAL CASA DA MOEDA. 2002. PP. 268

 THE SILOS OF SILENCE - POETRY (1948-2004). LISBON. ED IMPRENSA NACIONAL CASA DA MOEDA. 2002. PP. 268

### 5.09. THE ROAD

The old men say that on this road,   
be it short or long,   
one only arrives at the other side   
after wasting the life   
and then there is nothing on the other side   
  
However, youngsters go there, partying,   
arm in arm   
kissing, laughing, in the darkness  
thinking that once past this road,   
there are other roads to come.

  OS SILOS DO SILÊNCIO - POESIA (1948-2004). LISBOA. ED IMPRENSA NACIONAL CASA DA MOEDA. 2005. PP. 326. 1948.   
  THE SILOS OF SILENCE - POETRY (1948-2004). LISBON. ED IMPRENSA NACIONAL CASA DA MOEDA. 2005. PP. 326. 1948

# **EMANUEL DE SOUSA \***

### **6.1.**

I said, I am thirsty  
you said, you know nothing of the fate of waters   
I said, I'm afraid   
you said, the waters give birth to silk

I said, I'm not going in that river   
you said, glide in the hot memory of the sap that  
      shakes us  
I said, the way of the current is deep  
you said, there are planks where the sun floats   
I said, dew drips in the gorse  
you said, and in the vertigo of transitive light

the mirage of vegetal paradises

the reason of the root

the lucidity of the magnificent sun in  
     the uncontrollable urge of the glimpse  
I said, I want the water, I want the silk, I'll go in the river, I am the plank   
and you said, I am the destiny, I am the journey; I   
     I'm the sun, I'm the sorrow   
I said, everything is so fragile   
and you said, every flight has its risks   
I said, the tree is slow   
and you said, its roots are deep and your face   
                  is a desert surface   
I said, I'm a nomad   
you said, you have the desert fever  
I said, I have a willingness to go   
you said, from the desert you know the mirages   
I said, and the aloofness that goes inside me   
you said, I want to travel in you  
I said, your smile has the lightness of insects  
you said, from the laughter   
I said, and the vertigo of the wind that goes in its wings   
You said: the vertigo   
I said, laughter. river. Ariadne's thread   
you said, from the lightness of the wind. the insect   
I said, so simple   
you said, one truth was enough to love   
I said, the desire   
you said, your latitude is the thirst   
I said, the dew. the fog   
you said, that you offer me in your stare  
I said, you migrated to my gaze like a wet bird  
You said: I come from the south with the first winds  
I said, with you the tangency of distant dreams  
you said, I flew off wider and further away than the memory   
I said, from the flight you bring all seasonings of all breezes   
and you said, and the instinct to return

**EURÍDICE. LISBOA, EDIÇÕES QUETZAL, 1989, 3. PP. 51-57**

**EURYDICE. LISBON, QUETZAL PUBLISHING, 1989, 3. PP. 51-57**

### 6.2.

There is news of an inexhaustible bird  
that lives on a huge lake   
of cold rivers   
and fractured winds in   
where the creased flesh  
hurts whole and questioned.   
  
nothing is known of his flight. or of his drinking spots. or of the asleep days in his corner. or of the nights revealed in the blue lightning of wings beating in a digression of stars. heavens know neither its distance nor the limit of its flight. its evidence is read in the rising waters with an imperceptible tremble of things said at the platinous surface...

this inhabited bird is a virtuoso of loneliness.   
  
so fragile is its air that it cannot sustain a simple glance.   
  
only the lake will quell the unquenchable thirst that leads him to dive to unmentionable depths.   
  
those who seek it are taken by an uneasy fascination: they listen to a deliquescence of the senses in abandonment without fear and without distance in the smell of blood in the green sheet in the thickness of the silence.   
  
those who have its premonition journey the paths of a white look wrapped in dreams and clouded by vertigo of the abyss float on them.   
  
those who depart appended to the early dawn and to the cold of the weapons do not return. they are seen peddling dreams with eyes wide open to the light.   
  
and when death is already buoyant in the retina  
this enchanted bird   
digs the water with the beak  
an empty bottom   
and tied in wings rests in there  
its fantastic bird's body   
with eyes shrouded by scales.   
  
in the awe of the night static is the bird.

**EURÍDICE. LISBOA, EDIÇÕES QUETZAL, 1989, 3. PP. 35-36**

**EURYDICE. LISBON, QUETZAL PUBLISHING, 1989, 3. PP. 35-36**

### 6.3.

- I'll get rid of the papers and everything was but a last urgent truth, I burn the melancholy. the yellow. the brown years. the rents. the singularity. photographs. intimate things.

faded you persevere thrashing and making the memory howl in anticipation of the dreams. you are a word sitting on the floor counting the distance from a known history in the eagerness of time. the inhabited return the ballast. I will get rid of it. moving the roots.

**EURÍDICE. LISBOA, EDIÇÕES QUETZAL, 1989, 4. PP. 61**

**EURYDICE. LISBON, QUETZAL PUBLISHING, 1989, 4. PP. 61**

### 6.4.

life by a thread. Ariadne. death is never quiet. never tires of peeping. while God walks the whole street with hands in his pockets and only stops to kick a stray dog.   
  
not even a gesture   
a complete vacuum.   
  
life. Ariadne. drew deep wounds. very similar. very dry. burned by the winds. while God sitting by the sea is waiting for water to go by. as if water went and did not become a river again.   
    
not even a gesture   
a complete vacuum.   
  
life. a short break. Ariadne. I will not be long. I will go there and will be back. I have some accounts to settle with God. give me the thread. your stare.   
  
not even a gesture   
a complete vacuum.   
  
I do not feel the body anymore. Ariadne. do not wait for me at the entrance to the labyrinth.

**ARIADNE. POESIA. LISBOA, QUETZAL EDITORES, 1999, 2. P. 17**

**ARIADNE. POETRY. LISBON, QUETZAL EDITORES, 1999, 2. P. 17**

### 6.5.

The words go by   
through narrow corridors.   
syllable  by  
syllable.   
the trail of the senses. the weight of being here-and-now with voices biting the memory. the dry mouth. whatever it was. the shipwrecked voice tries to say what the words don’t. I throw them against the wall until they hurt. until they feel and do not say that the night is an eclipse. a movement of the eyelids. a dog sleeping on the floor at the entrance to dawn.   
  
I seek his face   
the womb of words.   
oblivion  the

time the whole moon.   
I seek green summers in your unfinished mouth. the reason to love   
so much did I love you and I never loved you.

**ARIADNE. POESIA. LISBOA, QUETZAL EDITORES, 1999, 2. P. 18.**

**ARIADNE. POETRY. LISBON, QUETZAL EDITORES, 1999, 2. P.** **18**

### 6.6.

neither do I want to run away   
 nor do I want to pretend.   
  
tell me ... who gave birth to me at seventeen hours and ten minutes on Peace Street when the sun of a late May fell in the distance. what stars peeked at times yet to come.   
  
talk to me ... from the constellation of Gemini to Scorpion. what do stars say of the immense loneliness of the world closed inside me?   
  
tell me ... because here I go with the wild ducks.

determined. flying towards the arctic. with necks stretched.   
  
tell me ... if telling is allowed.

ARIADNE. POESIA. LISBOA, QUETZAL EDITORES, 1999, 2. P. 35.

ARIADNE. POETRY. LISBOA, QUETZAL EDITORES, 1999, 2. P. 35

### 6.7.

Sitting at the table with our backs to the life we ​​play Russian roulette with a full drum of bullets: a linen cloth wrapped in the neck, leaning against the barrel to feel the cold, the silence, the gaze spilled at the void.   
  
a fish flies circling the moon and other dreams that the earth is his.   
  
then the accuracy of the gesture. the bullet. the sound. the blast. the body shuddered. the mouth opened. the arm gave way. the gun fell in and in the white linen the hole through which the soul has fled.   
  
how many times you die. how many times we feel the cold.   
  
worse than death is that half-death, that does not allow us to die. so we gamble everything. we fill the barrel with bullets. with certainties. with ire. with words. with voids.   
  
seated. we play life as if everything took place across the lake.   
  
and one day the last bullet went away. we did not hear it. we had no time. we were with our backs facing life. so absorbed by being here. with the certainty of the reason of things. with spat words.   
  
what? ... who do you think I am?

**ARIADNE. POESIA. LISBOA, QUETZAL EDITORES, 1999, 2. P. 37.**

ARIADNE. POETRY. LISBOA, QUETZAL EDITORES, 1999, 2. P. 37

### **6.8**.

It rains. rains in the body. it is time to go. deep is   
the appeal of all things and his way is drawn-out.   
  
the wings still carry many nights   
for flying. Many memories to recount   
  
it was September 7                I still remember.

**ARIADNE. POESIA. LISBOA, QUETZAL EDITORES, 1999, 4. (O VOO DAS AVES), P. 73**

ARIADNE. POETRY. LISBON, QUETZAL EDITORES, 1999, 4. (THE FLIGHT OF BIRDS), P. 73

# EMANUEL FÉLIX

### 7.1. SPRING

Spring arrives amidst smiles,   
saluted by birds in their corner  
and the muttering fountains amongst the common ivy   
in the meantime they run with the Zephyr.   
  
Now suspended, the storm awaits

in skies blanketed by a black mantle   
Thunder died away bringing back the singing

of birds and fountains amongst the common ivy.   
  
And when the soft hayfield blooms,   
the goatherd sleeps next to the dog,   
with the gentle murmur of foliage.

Festive sounds arrive with the mild breeze;   
nymph and shepherd dance, and on the meadow,   
a clear picture of spring arises.

“AS QUATRO ESTAÇÕES” DE ANTÓNIO VIVALDI (1965) IN 121 POEMAS ESCOLHIDOS, P. 73  
"FOUR SEASONS" BY ANTONIO VIVALDI (1965) IN 121 SELECTED POEMS, P. 73

### 7.2. SUMMER

Under the harsh blazing Season of the Sun

There is numbness in men; pine trees burn  
in the parched scrubland; insistently,

a cuckoo softly rehearses its songs.   
  
Incessantly the gentle Breeze blows;   
Boreas challenges his neighbor;   
the shepherd bemoans, in anticipation   
of the frightful storm coming his way.   
  
The fear of lightning, of thunder   
buzzing like an angry swarm of bees

gets hold of his weary resting limbs.   
  
Oh, how their fears are justified:   
flashes tear the skies, but powerful,   
the wind breaks the spikes, scatters the grain.

“AS QUATRO ESTAÇÕES” DE ANTÓNIO VIVALDI (1965) IN 121 POEMAS ESCOLHIDOS, P. 74  
"FOUR SEASONS" BY ANTONIO VIVALDI (1965) IN 121 SELECTED POEMS, P. 74

### 7.3. AUTUMN

The peasant celebrates with dances and songs   
the grand pleasure of a happy harvest;   
lit up by Bacchus liquor, so many   
end up in a daze of sleep.   
  
They dance with abandonment, and in its corners

a moderate aria gives pleasure;   
now, the Season calls, all those   
who only find delight in leisure.   
  
The hunter goes hunting with the Dawn.   
with hunting horn and musket, the dogs look for   
the beast, chasing her wherever she goes.   
  
Already diffident and tired, she does not run;   
powerless to escape, oppressed, she dies

from muskets and hunting dogs.

“AS QUATRO ESTAÇÕES” DE ANTÓNIO VIVALDI (1965) IN 121 POEMAS ESCOLHIDOS, P. 75  
"FOUR SEASONS" BY ANTONIO VIVALDI (1965) IN 121 SELECTED POEMS, P. 75

### 7.4. WINTER

 shriveled with cold, walking   
over the snow, under severe wind howl,   
Running and stomping their feet at every moment,   
the unstoppable teeth chattering with cold.   
  
Quietly resting next to the fire,   
when the rain does not stop for a single moment   
outside; or carefully, with slow steps,   
on ice that numbs the walk.   
  
Suddenly, a slip, he falls down on the ground,   
and starts again as if running   
while the ice does not break and is unfolding.   
  
Or, listen as it whistles   
Sirocco, Boreas, every wind at war,   
that this is the joy of winter.

“AS QUATRO ESTAÇÕES” DE ANTÓNIO VIVALDI (1965) IN 121 POEMAS ESCOLHIDOS, P. 76   
"FOUR SEASONS" BY ANTONIO VIVALDI (1965) IN 121 SELECTED POEMS, P. 76

### 7.5. MELIBEA

Melibea is the spring   
of men with no childhood   
  
Melibea is a smile   
a gesture of hope   
between the sea   
and the green hills   
  
Melibea - one thousand silences   
without faraway distances

no longing for  
no absences   
no returns   
  
(Ah   
freedom is an irony   
like nobody’s sun   
same moon every night   
a forbidden fruit   
and its price)   
  
where birds enshrouded in silence   
sleep on the first tree of the road.

“POEMAS DE MELIBEA (1965), PP. 52  
“MELIBEA POEMS (1965), PP. 52

### 7.6. THE BELLE

When she dresses and combs her hair,   
Covered with rubies and emeralds,   
did you know that her hair sidecombs   
are all the taxes of many a village?   
TU KUANG TING (IX century)

15 EM 121 POEMAS CHINESES, POEMAS ESCOLHIDOS, P. 88   
 15 IN 121 CHINESE POEMS, SELECTED POEMS, P. 88

### 7.7. SPEECH

Speech (very brief) on the artistic creation   
to Jean-Claude Bertrand

With what love do we rape the desert leaf   
whose margins probe the borders of blood   
whose shores travel the multiple surface   
of dunes   
open hand   
perhaps we fondle the face the whole space   
the fire sudden in the other  
the pencil   
the memories  
the gesture instead of weight   
the journey  
without a body compass   
  
with what violence do we love the land   
separated from the astonishment   
over the humus the strength the hot space   
the form   
the brief speech    
[Dated Paris, 1979]

A VIAGEM POSSÍVEL (1965-1992), POEMAS DISPERSOS EM 121 POEMAS ESCOLHIDOS, P. 175  
THE VOYAGE POSSIBLE (1965-1992), POEMS SPREAD IN 121 SELECTED POEMS, P. 175

### 7.8. EMERGENCY CALL

From Rutland Sq., Boston, Massachusetts, you sent your Christmas wishes.   
Then I saw you in Brussels, at the Grand’ Palace, but nothing was   
possible, as you were guiding a tourist

excursion

and the bus   
was about to depart, on time.   
  
At Rouen, we met on Rue de l'Horloge.   
and at Paris, on the terrace of a cafe in Saint-André-Des-Arts.   
But we said nothing to each other   
because we were afraid that none of us was one or the other.   
At Ottignies, it snowed;   
I saw your face glued to the window of the train carriage

second class   
on the other side of the line.

I was on my way to Gent.   
And you?   
Liège Direction?   
  
Since then, I have seen you, I swear,   
crossing any given street in any given city   
on any documentary film   
or suddenly, in passing,   
in any newspaper photograph.   
  
In the meantime,

this brief postcard from Tientsin:   
'From China, With Love'.   
  
you do not sign it Laura,   
your name is neither Beatrice   
nor Annabelle Lee   
  
however; I know your name and your body,   
although I do not know where you live   
(Who knows?).   
  
And so I beg you that if one day   
(Extremely unlikely)   
This emergency appeal   
gets to your hands   
falls under your eyes,   
descends in your heart,   
that, then you write, write soon, promptly,   
stating your country,   
your city, your abode.   
  
Because I'll cover my head with ashes, again  
I’ll put on the sandals,   
I’ll hold my boxwood cane,   
I’ll embrace relatives and friends   
and I will depart looking   
for the infinitely ineffable.

A VIAGEM POSSÍVEL (1965-1992), POEMAS DISPERSOS EM 121 POEMAS ESCOLHIDOS, P. 173-174  
THE VOYAGE POSSIBLE (1965-1992), POEMS SPREAD IN 121 SELECTED POEMS, P. 173-174

# MARIA DE FÁTIMA BORGES

### 8.1. INHERITANCE

 The swiftness to leave a small island is equal to the ease with which one enters it, even when the seas were the only way and the passport. The island I inhabit was always a place where people were either in exile or on leisure. Some people also got lost, especially at a time when search and rescue services had no equipment worth of searching.

“Gone missing” was a phrase used in situations of everlasting absence, without one ever knowing the whereabouts of those who had left. There were cases of breakaway people but eventually one would know about their reasons, but there were also non-reasons or simply the lack of both. Then, the escape was not exactly an escape, since there were unknown reasons, both plausible and improbable, for an attitude taken by default. "Gone missing" was, in these circumstances, the most current and appropriate expression. There even was the case of a whole family that disappeared overnight. They left behind their home with everything inside. Bad weather would take care of making a ruin of it. Inside the closet were the dresses of the daughters (at least these were the most spoken of items). People mentioned that they were made of silk and lace, although no one had ever seen the girls wear such luxury either on the street or at parties. Moreover, they seldom showed up and when they did, it was always in discreet and simple terms, as if, respectability and beauty were enough for them. Handkerchiefs and assorted clothing were inside the drawers.  There was porcelain in the china cabinet. Some people even claimed that the piano was left open, with the musical score on the shelf.

    Why has Mr Salomão da Cunha fled, taking the whole family with him? Obviously, the initiative had to be his, never Dona Aliah’s and least of all from the five daughters. Debts - some said - though no creditors ever came up. Threats - others alleged - although they were quiet people with no known enemies. My grandmother, adjusted to the lack of neighbors, adding, sweetly and repeatedly: "It's because they were wanderers."

The sea had been the usefulness of the land for them as for many others. In fact, nothing is more fortuitous than the place where one is born. The Earl’s birth was no exception. Neither the father nor the mother had anything to do with the chosen place. None of them even knew that such place existed. It was at the home of my great-grandmother, Luiza Adelaide, who, at that time, rented available bedrooms to recommended strangers. The Earl was born in the room that, today as then, lies at the far end of the house’s left wing. Its window faces the small courtyard surrounded by high walls, where the same flushed Bignonia blooms. If it is not the same it is a clone.

Although, the legitimacy of the title remains unclear until now, it turns out that, only some time later, it became known that the child was actually an Earl. Nobody has had the courage or even the willingness to consult the annals and unravel mysteries that one wanted to believe in. Furthermore, my great-grandmother would rather have an indefinitely probable Earl as a guest, than a long-term stated commoner. After a while, several conclusions were drawn from diverse evidence. At that point, it became clear that, indeed, he was an Earl. The presumptive father’s photograph, who nobody ever got to know in person, acquired a scope broader than the strict determination of ancestry. The mother that, so subtly, hinted at old noblemen had a figure that warranted blood certificates. Of course, by dubious means, the boy was the Earl they made of him. Isn’t it true that some rumors only become corroborated with time? Being an indefinite-term Earl isn’t that part of being it already?

It did not take much effort for people in the small town to start addressing him as Earl. As the mother acquiesced, a certain degree of noble motherhood was bestowed upon her (she always acceded to whatever was proposed, as if other people were exceedingly generous).

It was as noble as decadent or just because it was so decadent, even nobler yet.

The ever-increasing delays in payment of rent and the tolerance of Luiza Adelaide, who immediately became attached to the child, helped create a climate of close kinship. That didn’t obviate (on the contrary, it favored it) that twenty years later, that same Earl ended up marrying my grandmother.  Whether I liked it or not, I, therefore, became her descendant and naturally descendant of his father.

- He is from Minho region, where I came from - that's what my grandmother said when she could no longer hide the pregnancy that drove her from the Minho to so faraway lands, so young and as youthful as the other.

    According to what I gathered, without much effort, my grandmother came to this island in the early twentieth century and remained here eagerly ascertaining her virtue until her death. She may have helped gluing newspaper strips on the windowpanes of the house (which has a considerable number of them) during the Second World War. The same windows from where I watch the flushed Bignonia and the courtyard, now transmuted into a garden. There, my carelessness allows for the strength of the reed. On the other hand, my modest endeavors have allowed some rose trees to grow. They refuse the allure of uniforms that walk the street. Those uniforms arrived as quickly as they went, because the sea was the usefulness of the land.

On the lounge room, I keep the wedding portrait of my grandmother, or rather the bride’s portrait, just because someone has done away with the image of the groom, or, deliberately or by negligence, he refused to let himself be photographed. He usurped from others the Daguerreotype that he knew would survive, later on, in one form or another. My grandfather’s life was a sometimes reckless, other times stubborn, but constant flight towards oblivion. The presence of the Earl is more than discernible, even if absent from the picture. Just like someone who, just before gone missing, avails himself to become larger, neither in shape nor facial features, but in possibilities that our imagination cannot withstand. Alongside the portrait, in a porcelain vase without a set color rests the orange flower made of wax that adorned the bride’s headdress. When things match each other, our duty is to put them together. By the opposite (or is it the same?) reason, I removed my portrait from this table. I never found any affinities between this couple and my ill-bred person, I mean, my simple person.

    Since birth, my grandfather was always a man prone to fatalities. His mother was kicked out of home and his father was, supposedly, the instrument of a fatal and sad outcome. He had excessively long and dark hands as if they were molded for secret strangulations.  A half-unlit cigar between his teeth, that I always saw as being black, prevented him to speak just like other people, to smile or, at least, to kiss the children. He always carried the austerity of those who advocated with an iron fist a statute he already knew as precarious. I remember last seeing him when I was fourteen. At the time, he pursued restoration of miniatures with such fervor that it exhausted his patience for the lively things of the world. His taste for old things and his disdain for the new was an unending saga. They led to hostility towards those who did not share his affections and dislikes and, secondly, the indifference or distrust towards those who showed interest in his art.

Although this Earl was a member of the family de jure, for me, it was as if, in fact, he did not belong. I got an ever-increasing feeling that he was no more than another museum piece. One more, among those few pieces which he set aside for himself, from the ones randomly found in a neighboring fair that he brought home just in case.

 Besides, what affinities could I have with my grandmother? A paternal orphan since she was three months old, she grew up like a greenhouse flower between my great-grandmother and her mother, inheriting the kindness from the former, and from the latter, the inclination to efface her own gestures and proffer innocuous opinions. Eventually, this mixture would be responsible for her two savage boys, who, just in time, migrated to Brazil. However, apparently the same mixture had nothing to do with her daughter, a kind of custodial angel who, with the help of her husband and my father, was even able to pay up the mortgages. Why do I remember it now? Naturally, because there is nobody else in this house and one hears nothing but the sound of the sea. I only got the usefulness of the house, albeit the sound of sea is slightly altered today because of the wind. It is almost unobtrusive; one just knows it mainly exists in the higher areas. Of course, remembering does not require a great effort and remembering is a means to feel less lonely or alone, as befits the character of each moment.

It did not surprise anyone my grandfather’s absence at my dinner when I turned fifteen. We were all accustomed to his retreats to the workshop and to the long evening walks. It was not worth enquiring about the destination of such walks.

For years, no news came to us. The worry about what might have happened to the Earl eventually turned into relief. Long before the escape, his behavior quashed any reasons for sorrow. Angelically, my grandmother, blamed fate. During evening gatherings, the discontinuous conversations went on but, really, never involving people in what was said. Deep inside each of us, my grandfather came to be imagined where it would not be possible: at the workshop where, driven to himself, he meticulously glued, polished and retouched. He measured his gestures and his power, very attentive to whom he was and so detached from what others tried to be. Somewhere in the world, the Earl would still be doing the same thing or something else. Breathing, or, just maybe, thinking – not much – of what he had left behind on the island where he was born by chance and - I am almost certain - always despised sincerely.

    It was no more than a name on a letter that notified us of the Earl’s death. "I found the enclosed box in one of my father’s drawers with a recommendation to be delivered to you after his death.” The package bore no sender’s name and its postmark was illegible.

The box containing five ivory crucifixes was added to my grandmother’s wedding portrait and to the orange blossom, with a recommendation to be delivered to my daughter after my death.

This is a light heritage. These bonds were as enigmatic as if they were foreign. As if they were our own.

**IN REVISTA TELHADOS DE VIDRO**

**IN MAGAZINE GLASS ROOFS**

# FERNANDO AIRES

### 9.1. MY OLD TEACHER

[...] my philosophy teacher at Liceu Antero de Quental of Ponta Delgada was kind of a grandfather to me. Later, he would become a close friend and colleague at the same high school. That camaraderie just started by the time I was a secondary school student and continued until the end of his existence. Therefore, I can say I knew him all my life.

I was a visitor to his home; it was soon to become a frequent habit. I entered it just as if it was my own. I looked for him in his upstairs office that opened onto the terrace where there is a wisteria and where one can sight the intimacy of neighboring backyards. There, by the window, he used to read and listen to the music with his grey tousled hair and the checked blanket on his knees. Around, there was the monastic silence and complicity that he deeply cherished. Later on, and despite the years, he always kept alive his independent mind, the freshness of fantasy and a certain “je ne sais quoi” of never-ending adolescence.

In his rebellious times, he challenged the gods; never losing sight, that man's destiny is made up of ephemeral gestures and barely known echoes of shadowy days. Therefore, he always took the side of tolerance.

Ruy Galvão had a complex personality, a sometimes-controversial duality between intimacy and openness to others, between silence and speech. His islander soul was shifting and unstable - as the seismic ground or as the landscape and the climate of his island, where boundaries are not very clear between stillness and movement, between light and shadow, between land and water. He was all this and much more. My old friend and Professor, to whom I owe so much, was a rare example of character and loyalty. Now that he is gone, I never returned to his old house. But as I said, we are also made up of things and people that surround us. Thus, in the interstices of this tangled web that weaves me, I always remember Ruy Galvão, not only as a great friend, but also and mainly as the wind that sowed, yeast that helped harvest the wheat fields to become bread.

       RUY GALVÃO DE CARVALHO. PONTA DELGADA, INSULANA MAGAZINE, VOL LIX, 2003

### 9.2. HELENA

     For the second time in a row, Helena comes home to go out again. And the mother says “Blimey girl! You don’t stay still for a minute!” Indeed, the walls of Vila Real choked her. She thinks of Alvaro and the island she does not know. Again, she reads the letter she received yesterday. She already knows by heart the journey, the arrival and the parents. She smells the envelope, closely examining the circular stamp above the seal, looking for signs of his fingers, his hands. She tries to make an idea of ​​Ponta Delgada - the cluster of still buildings looking at the sea. A static place with the church, the beached boats and the fishermen. The faraway mountains, not always visible. Alvaro had mentioned all this, more than once, but one thing is to hear, another is to be there to see and experience. To feel the pier where life is shared between sobs and hugs, and where she imagines him looking further away, the collar turned up, his hair in the whirlwind. She knows that there is nothing else to do but wait. She waits. The frisson of his hands over her body. His voice tinged by the island pronunciation – the deep accent, gloomy, bleak as the island in the squawk of common terns. The rain dripping from the eaves, soaking the island. And the mother asking “Hey girl, what is wrong with you?”

Nothing, I have nothing.

Nothing! You walk like a corpse, a lost soul wandering with ashen face through the house...

I told you. It’s nothing.

Well I get it, Helena! Look at Cassilda with a child in her belly. This guy, forget him! For God's sake, forget him!

Helena kept silent. There is a riot inside her. Then, suddenly, she says “leave me alone, mother! Oh, let me be!

I wish your father were still here! Was he still alive and things would be so different. He would cut you the allowance. He would keep you at home where you belong and married to a local guy.

Helena gets up and leaves. She locks herself in her bedroom. The mother keeps talking to herself, thinking of her dead husband. Even at home she wears dark clothes. She is slim and her hair began to grey.  The eyes are still beautiful, in a watery tone between the greenish and light grey, with long eyelashes. Something in her mouth, in the corners of the mouth, speaks of a lifetime of difficult decisions, concerns and routines. Of silent days spent in her duties. Sleepless nights filled with rosaries prayed to the Virgin Mary because of that sole daughter in Coimbra plus that guy over in the islands, an untraceable place, perhaps on the other side of the world. That thing (how big?) like a rock in the middle of the seas, a space of shadows and fevers, perhaps inhabited by dark-skinned people. Helena blinded by love sharing her life with people of other mores, and she, her poor mother, a widow, alone in Vila Real.  Praying in fear for the remainder of her days. Crying in every corner of the house. Waiting for her letters. What else could she do but pray? Pray and pray aplenty to Our Lady. Pray alone, the corpse of the husband in the grave, the daughter in that unknown place in the world.

A ILHA DO NUNCA MAIS, LISBOA EDITORA SALAMANDRA, 2000, PP. 64-65

 THE ISLAND OF NEVER AGAIN. LISBON. EDIÇÕES SALAMANDRA, 2000, PP. 64-65

### 9.3. ARMANDO, THE LAST ROMANTIC

 He has been flirting since high school with Inês da Silveira. She was a pretty girl. Her unbounded hair was as luxuriant as a cornfield. Over time, he fully dedicated himself to that passion, hoping for an equal reward. However, things did not happen that way. On the contrary, they accentuated the ever-increasing bad moods of Inês, so obvious that no one could deny them. Thus, Armando was led to believe that life had reserved him an unfair share of disillusionment and unfairness. He would not even consider cutting off with Inês.

However, one day, Inês no longer wanted him. No and no, because they did not get along. Because it was better now than later - and that was the breakup. A blow that cut short his future hopes. For countless months, he went on with unspeakable neglect, his beard and hair growing as bleak and gloomy as his solitude. He had thoughts about ending his life.

However, he did not end it because, with persistent fingers, time has this tendency to flatten the creases of the days.

He started to write poetry again and play the guitar. Moreover, he was sure that women, seeing him go by very serious, followed him with her eyes. He was sure that for a long time they kept thinking about him and about the coded messages that came in the wind.

He was well aware that memory does not tire to recall the near and far, but until that happens, people suffer too much, with almost no defense. A curse. Thus, in a dark, almost absurd manner, Armando felt the need to go and try to live away from the island, in a faraway place.

He put much effort into it, applied for jobs and waited for a long time. Repented several times and many more did he not repent. Finally, a job came in and he left. On the pier, one lone friend embraced him with the despair of those who leave for exile.

     Soon he had the opportunity to regret the endless nostalgia of the faraway distance and longing. Of a return. Everything helped him fan his imagination. The rumpled verses improvised on the guitar. In memory of Inês da Silveira, a memory never extinguished.

     And it was then that he met Rosário.

     She was slim and brunette, a forgotten smile on her mouth. An elated way of looking sideways. He had met her that afternoon, outside the job when they were being held by the rain. When it stopped pouring, they left the shelter together - she walked ahead, half dozen feet away from him. He went following her, in the same direction. She turned around the street corners, the same he had to turn around to get to his home. And this, this coincidence, soon gave him the assurance of a common destiny. At the top the street, she stopped at number 13, put the key in the door and entered. Armando was lodging in a building just a few feet away.

He started meeting her often when going to work every day, other times when returning home. No longer strangers. Once, they smiled and started a conversation. One other day, he left her at her office door. On the way, he spoke of the island. About the kind of autumn light that usually falls into the sea. Over time, he also spoke of himself. Of his nature. Of his deceased mother. Later he confessed his predilection for the writings of Camilo and, tentatively, his taste for poetry and the guitar.

     And Maria do Rosário was listening to him. Looking at him with interest, for the first time. Noticing how slim he was and how, on the sly he looked at her, with a gasp.

     Before going away, she said now you no longer have a reason to be upset, do you? Now we're friends.

     And home she went.

     He was thinking of her light skirt swayed to break clear of the hips. Of her haircut. Of her smile. A sort of relief in an unknown place. A willingness to invite people to his party.

 And he carried with him something special that made people smile at him.

Life, for him, became more bearable. Sometimes he felt a bright tumult in the chest when he was with Rosário - with her mirrored laughter, her fine instinct of being so sweet. He only felt the old squeeze when he returned to his room: the old alarm as a stain, floating over a foamy weakness. The old habit of preferring to be where he wasn’t, of hoping for what he didn’t have. Prisoner of himself. Prisoner of the Island. A longing for Inês.

 Inês. How long ago? – And his life shaken by irreconcilable feelings, shared between the hollow spaces of his room and the appeals of the faraway land. But, next day, it was just enough for him to be with Rosário, to feel light and round, again, a diaphanous roundness of iridescent balloon, swollen to where joy lived. Staring at her to tell her everything, but then, there was the shyness and the remembering of the other. The character inherited from his mother.

**MEMÓRIAS DA CIDADE CERCADA. LISBOA, EDIÇÕES SALAMANDRA, 1995, PP. 81-82-83 E 84.**

MEMORIES OF THE SURROUNDED CITY. LISBON, EDIÇÕES SALAMANDRA, 1995, PP. 81-82-83 AND 84

# MARCOLINO CANDEIAS

### 10.1. POEM OF BURNING LONGING

If they ask say that I am not here  
that I do not exist that I never existed  
wrong address, it must be next door  
tell them I died and won’t eat any more  
I am trying to die of longing  
  
I want to serenely pierce my heart   
thinking of my little bit of land my mother country crying a strange pleasure  
to remember my home without any dream at all  
to see cling on to me the small swarm of endless friends parents relatives  
and get all tingly about the honey upon arrival  
refresh my lips with azure blue American grape wine and sun  
my throat is dry as a clod  
  
I want to choke the closed fist of this room  
absent in the smoke from my silly cigarette   
as if I was at the café in Angra saying words scrolling in a spiral  
without nothing nothing nothing but sips  
and much much much friendship building up the time  
and the politics and the poem and the night and the life  
  
If someone comes please say that I never was never had been  
say that I ran away riding Pegasus to run in the roller coaster  
as if suddenly I became such a little boy  
that the world would fit into me  
  
If someone comes please say that I am at the Old House caring for grandchildren with my father at the vineyard  
he is an expert at that  
I am in Monteiras stroking the large eucalyptus I planted when I was a kid  
you can also say that I went to the bulls at whatever place  
and that I'm in a tavern drinking a wet cold beer  
sautéing peanuts and broad beans on toast with wishful teeth   
  
Still say  
that I've always been there and was never absent  
that I have my mouth dry with nostalgia  
that today is the Holy Spirit Monday and my eyes are burning  
with 40 °C of illuminations and festivities  
many girls walking around with their feet in tight new shoes  
that do not feel tight because of enjoyment of the feast  
the music playing many guys out of the dance and fireworks  
dating and flashing the acceleration of motorcycles  
a lot of partying a lot of joy  
  
Please say that I am not  
tell myself that I do not exist  
  
But say it in order to convince me.

“ILHA DE EMOÇÃO”, NA DISTÂNCIA DESTE TEMPO. LISBOA, EDIÇÕES SALAMANDRA, COLEÇÃO “GARAJAU”, SÉRIE ESPECIAL, 2ª EDIÇÃO REVISTA, 2002, PP. 25-26

"ISLAND OF EMOTION," IN THE DISTANCE OF THIS TIME. LISBON, EDIÇÕES SALAMANDRA, COLLECTION "TERN", SPECIAL SERIES, 2ND REVISED EDITION, 2002, PP. 25-26.

### 10.2. TWILIGHT IN THE ISLAND

I

The day dies as if voices were falling asleep  
in the mouths of animals  
woven  
in a fluttering sound  
II

The farmer dressed in sweat  
when hitting the pale  
plants the last gesture

of those bonded to the land all their lives  
III

in the smell of grass,  
a subtle audible sound of silence  
sprouts a twilight of crushed flowers  
IV

in the air  
hangs a silent odor of sea breeze

**“ILHA DE EMOÇÃO”, NA DISTÂNCIA DESTE TEMPO. LISBOA, EDIÇÕES SALAMANDRA, COLEÇÃO “GARAJAU”, SÉRIE ESPECIAL, 2ª EDIÇÃO REVISTA, 2002, P. 33.**

 "ISLAND OF EMOTION," IN THE DISTANCE OF THIS TIME. LISBON, EDIÇÕES SALAMANDRA, COLLECTION "TERN", SPECIAL SERIES, 2ND REVISED EDITION, 2002, P. 33.

### 10.3. LAST CONVERSATION WITH JOÃO VITAL

In memoriam of João Vital, great popular poet from Terceira Island, singer of extempore duel songs at the island’s feasts of the Holy Spirit, author of 'dances', incessant and relentless reader, perpetual student of life, world citizen, my great friend and companion of afternoon chats sitting at the Café Aliança tables. Deceased in S. Bento, Angra do Heroísmo in January 1972.

after My friend after this news  
along the day my laughter sounded like sucking a lemon for a bet  
  
You came down into my soul like a heavy yellow chestnut  
that I had known since childhood  
and suddenly  
as suddenly as if the morning risers  
came down dry and lifeless at my side   
  
I regret this end to our conversations at Aliança   
(always cut off by the sudden arrival of the urban bus)  
there you offered me golden-yellow aromatic tobacco  
tobacco to make poems  
and in one block of verses I saw you X-rayed crystal clear  
as a natural spring  
you made me understand why the existence  
sometimes bought you the truth  
your little cough still echoes in my ears  
your enormous image of good giant still echoes in my eyes  
your testimonials of perpetual student   
However I will never see you as a tree full of foliage  
fasciculately rooted in the masses  
gently shaking the canopy  
to invent songs  
My words will no longer have an answer  
across the cold and sad table at the Aliança  
And the unfinished conversation my friend

“GENTE E TEMPO” NA DISTÂNCIA DESTE TEMPO, LISBOA, EDIÇÕES SALAMANDRA, COLEÇÃO GARAJAU, SÉRIE ESPECIAL, 2ª EDIÇÃO REVISTA, 2002 PP. 17-18

(PEOPLE AND TIME, "IN THE DISTANCE OF THIS TIME. LISBON, EDIÇÕES SALAMANDRA, COLLECTION" TERN ", SPECIAL SERIES, 2ND REVISED EDITION, 2002, PP. 17-18.

# JOSÉ MARTINS GARCIA

### 11.1. TAX UNINTERRUPTED

Aristides, the philosopher, was not really a cynic in the classic sense, although, he had assimilated the gist of Diogenes’ lesson regarding detachment from material goods. If he didn’t choose to live in a barrel that was due to the exorbitant price of the barrels, which, as everyone knows, are much sought after in the black market, ever since they became a possible solution to the housing problem. Aristides, the philosopher, paid the conventional rent to live in a comfortable shed, although the landlord was trying - in vain – to kick him out. (The greedy owner wanted to turn it into a motel.) Aristides rarely wasted his time with gossip. Times belonged to technocrats, and that was not too prestigious for philosophers, especially the skeptics - those killjoys who did applaud neither computerized exploits nor the idea of ultimate happiness through cybernation.

Poor Aristides was almost fifty, when he was caught by Anacleto, the philosopher, a man much concerned with systems of political-social intervention, who reminded him of his civic duties, sublimation, participation, socialization and nationalization, and eventually was able to get a promise of collaboration from the skeptic in the Summa Philosophical magazine run by Anacleto. Anacleto was apprehensive by the defection of his closest associates all seduced by filthy profit. The times were bad for the veritable humanism - Anacleto argued. The skepticism, if aimed at the materialism of the new magnates, could and should help to demystify the new scientism, that delusional form of vile positivism - continued Anacleto. The uncouth masses were entirely devoted to materialism and neo-positivism. They had already assailed all fields of culture, attempting nothing less than stifle, intellectually and financially, the Summa Philosophical magazine, the last bastion of a healthy and active humanism - Anacleto concluded.

After much urging and indoctrination Aristides had promised him a critical review. He had to evaluate a dubious work entitled “The neo-neo-philosophy facing up the burial of paradigms”, a collective work stretching throughout a thousand pages. The hapless skeptical philosopher became chafed at the very first chapter with the glaring translation errors, the chaotic terminology drawing close to a conceptual jungle and the misspellings that assumed unprecedented proportions...In short, those thinkers may well want to say something, but once translated into katapharaonic, they became more katapharaonic than the natives.

That dammed promise was dancing in Aristides’ mind! ... He had given his word! ...on top of all people, to Anacleto...! He felt entrapped. Moreover, he only had himself to blame for falling into that trap. So, he went on swallowing up that prose, trying to guess its meaning so veiled by the abominable translation. Driven by the ideal of fulfilling the promise given, after three months, he could write two pages of cautious considerations, scholastically accomplished between yes and no, one part well, the other in reverse, and perhaps, consciously distributed throughout. He folded the two pages, added his regards to Anacleto, called his work 'a pastiche' and sent it all in the mail. He did not sense having signed a terrible conviction.

Anacleto returned his greetings accompanied by a note of “warm congratulations”. A month later, Aristides received an issue of Suma Philosophical. His prose, in small print, was not enough to fill a column on the section of book reviews. 'I won’t do it again! - muttered the philosopher, ignoring that he was forever tagged.

However, the end of the calendar year was nearing. To his amazement, Aristides received a request signed by João Calhau, the chief accountant at Summa Philosophical, urgently demanding a copy of his taxpayer file number in order to be paid the amount of two thousand and fifty-three Escudos and forty cents, for the critical recension published.

For over a decade, Aristides had not published a single line. Due to his lack of social life and typical philosopher’s distraction he ignored the meaning of taxpayer file number. After a lot of thought about his personal case and that strange syntagma, Aristides concluded that the loanwords had blown up out of proportion in katapharaonic speech. Indeed, taxpayer could only be an Anglicized term, resulting from the adaptation of contributor, which means 'collaborator'. Aristides had fallen into the trap of 'collaborating' with Summa Philosophical ... and now, for some democratic design, a collaborator in newspapers and magazines had to get a card, certainly allotted by some new form of censorship or by a trade union of intellectuals… dammed life! Triumphant bureaucracy! How many disasters would result from those ill-fated two pages of boring prose!

For a week, Aristides was assaulted by nasty premonitions regarding the new freedom of expression but decided to forget about it. They wanted to pay him some ridiculous sum and for that purpose, invaded his quiet life, trampled the language, and certainly, they would require his registration in some tertulia, probably thought conditioning and conditioned by a membership fee higher than the value of a recension. It was simply disgusting!

Poor, penurious, penniless, Aristides!  On Christmas’ eve, he received a new message from the aforesaid João Calhau. He requested him to resolve immediately the matter of two thousand and fifty-three Escudos and forty cents. Mentioning how honorable Philosophical Suma was he added it did not intend to owe anything to anyone. Furthermore, Aristides’ silence and indifference became harmful to the smooth functioning of that institution, which would have to close its yearly accounts in full possession of all documentation. It also requested that Aristides produced not only a photocopy of the said taxpayer card, but also a duly completed blue slip. 'What then - muttered Aristides - that annoying card is not enough now? ... The receipt must be blue. It is no longer black on white. It must be shit on blue. These people went crazy!"

A week after the New Year, Aristides was again assailed by the infamous recension. Now, even Anacleto admonished him softly, drawing attention to his “sloppiness in fulfilling a basic civic duty." He availed himself to help Aristides 'smooth' that 'anomaly', proposing an appointment whenever Aristides found appropriate.  A photocopy of the complaints made by João Calhau was enclosed. The zealous chief accountant spread his accusing complaints over three typewritten pages, recalling his unimpeachable honesty, his exemplary methods and the transparency of his paperwork. Shaken by fear, he wrote with ominous adjectives, forecasting a court appearance, the condemnation and the discredit. He pointed the finger at Aristides, as a “probably unconsciously saboteur of a prestigious institution."

The dialogue between Anacleto and Aristides became vexed and clumsy. The Director of Philosophical Suma could not see what misunderstanding Aristides, the philosopher, had in terms of cards and taxpayers. After floundering in the murky waters of the concepts, each equipped with differing meanings, they started a phase of mutual aggression, since they could make no headway towards a lifeline through dialogue.

Behind the desk, strewn with multicolor paperwork, Anacleto had no choice but to ensure that he would obtain a tax card for the escapist collaborator.  buried in a couch, with visible discomfort, Aristides, enquired if the thing was thus terminated. “No, God-fearing and law-abiding man, not at all! What about the receipt? ... So, who is going to sign the receipt?”

A month later, a new pleading letter from João Calhau bombarded the hapless Aristides. He was welcomed by the diminutive head of accounts with effusive handshakes, cheers of all kinds and species, ungainly salaams and other expressions of joy. The little man in his sixties, half-bald, myopic, all crispy and brushed, in an effort to sit the ragged philosopher on an armchair, stumbled on corners of desks, collided with chairs and trod down papers on the ground. Afterwards, angered by this tough victory, exhibited a small yellowish rectangle - the infamous taxpayer card - sent by the 'immense goodness' of Dr Anacleto. Now he returned it to its rightful owner, after having photocopied this “crucial document."

Alarmed, Aristides recognized his name under a nine-digit number. Nine digits meant that the multitude of collaborators (or collaborationists?) amounted to the order of hundreds of million. So far, had the katapharaonic population reproduced gigantically...or else, it was a multinational group. Thinking better: the contributors’ lot should form a union on a planetary scale. He was awakened from his horrible calculation by the restless kerfuffle of João Calhau who, bragged about the virtues of his transparent accounting, which only waited to be exonerated from the taint resulting from the absence of a blue slip. Aristides conceded not having the slightest idea of ​​what a blue slip was. Given the absence of a receipt in blue, the other raised his hands to the head and took back all he had said. After all, there was no progress towards solving the case, because nothing could be resolved without the blue receipt.

Aristides decided then to renounce to the ridiculous amount that had entailed so many letdowns. After all, in order to survive no one needed two thousand Escudos and some cents.

He had endured many years without publishing a line... Besides, when he wrote that little recension, he was not even thinking about money. He wasn’t even aware that the magazine used to pay for such trifles.

Taking this last remark as a serious lack of consideration, João Calhau frowned, fiddled with his tie and straightened up to reiterate the full transparency, etc., etc.. He could not accept the proposed waiver, no sir!

Trying to outgrow his patience, Aristides suggested, then, a donation of such a diminutive amount to a charity. Irate, João Calhau argued that in the current state of a booming economy, such institutions no longer existed. Aristides then lost his mind and thundered “Have I, or not, the right not to receive the money?"

He hadn’t.

Now that the cold winter was mitigated by the footsteps of hope of the incoming spring, Aristides got a new message, signed by Director Anacleto, regarding the impossibility of the waiver proposed to João Calhau. The nausea of ​​the poor philosopher didn’t alleviate whenever he felt torpedoed by the 'crime' of a critical review.  In his mind, once so healthily skeptical, the idea of a universal muzzle through a bureaucratic conspiracy started gaining ground. Anacleto, the purported humanist, seemed hit by this mammoth conspiracy. He had smudged half dozen pages to expose a tight argument, only based on airy assumptions. Like any responsible citizen, Aristides should have acquired a blue book of receipts. He could not reject the fair amount that was rightfully his, because with that attitude, not only did he disturb the normal functioning of democracy, but he also vilified the fair struggle of the intellectuals for a more dignified and respectable status. When everyone was demanding a fair payment of royalties, when everyone rebelled against the obliteration of the Spirit - an essential element of liberation from the cogwheels - when everyone expected grants, scholarships, protection, patronage, when everyone stated that intellectual work should be subject to a remuneration as manual labor was - here came, Aristides, in a very elitist gesture to corroborate the ancestral (and false!) contempt of the 'enlightened' for worldly possessions. And so on... Anacleto just wanted to convey to Aristides, that with some sacrifice and some class awareness he had sent someone to the Finance Department to buy a booklet of blue receipts for the needs of the unwary philosopher. Calling upon their old friendship he awaited the visit of the rebel friend.

Aristides sought Anacleto, peeved by that nonsense - unworthy of a philosopher - and, determined to remind him some basic ethical principles. He was going to preach a sermon to the degenerate ...but then he fell into the clutches of João Calhau.

The pathetic receipt was not blue but orange. Asked about the discrepancy and whether there was recent legislation changing the colors’ names, João Calhau arrogantly smiled and declared that everything in this world was conventional.

The orange rectangle presented itself before Aristides’ eyes, fully completed. When João Calhau, with a sigh of relief, asked the visitor to please fill it out, the philosopher felt dizzy and rubbed his eyes, disbelieving the reality. The small fine print, virtually indecipherable, laced horizontally, vertically and obliquely in some directions, the threaded surface of the rectangle. “This space is reserved for the nature of the rights of taxpayers” - warned João Calhau, putting his bitten fingernail on a line of dots almost devoured by cabalistic characters. “And how are my rights going to fit in here?"- asked Aristides. 'Press' – riposted the other. 'Press what? "- Insisted the philosopher.  “The author's rights” - explained the accountant. Blasé, Aristides wrote in cramped letters: “Copyright”. João Calhau probably compassionately, offered: "Put your signature in here. I fill in the rest. I have plenty of practice with these things."

A month after these events, Aristides was again assailed by a new message of João Calhau - it smelled like spring. A disgrace! An awful mess occurred. The use of the term 'copyright' would penalize the declarant. An injustice! On such a modest amount, it would imply a 30% deduction, whereas, if the word “writer” was in the place reserved for the nature of rights, the deduction would only be 15%. With many apologies and plenty mea culpa João Calhau, in order to annul the first, asked him to send a second blue slip, duly completed.

Aristide's first impulse was to destroy that obscene paper… and all future papers. Then, remembering the boring letters of Dr Anacleto, pulled from the tattered briefcase the hideous orange book, inscribing the word 'writer' in the black rectangle and signed. He was no longer aware of his psychic unity – an old problem often addressed. It was a blue slip in orange, filled prior to filling, spawning in multi-colored receipts on unreadable book reviews. When the height of summer came in, he received a bank check amounting to one thousand two hundred seventy-six Escudos and twenty cents. It related to a prose, published centuries ago in a journal of the Devil. He considered it boring and tinged with poison. He did not bother to quantify the difference, although he vaguely felt that he had been robbed of a small amount from another equally small amount.

When, in early fall, he got a letter from a certain Manuel Calhau, he opened it with a mixture of disgust and indifference. As the new head of accounts at Suma Philosophical, he was requesting an urgent review of expenditures to accomplish a policy of transparency. He asked the addressee to please complete the attached receipt. This one was in white paper with typewritten words. The gross amount included therein with respect to a critical recension, was one thousand two hundred seventy-six Escudos and twenty cents, minus thirty per cent of copyright (the amount that Aristides should return to the new chief accountant), representing three hundred and eighty-two Escudos and eighty-six cents. The philosopher should also sign the receipt over a tax stamp of value unacknowledged.

Aristides sank into catatonia. They saw him retire to the North, where there were caves and wild animals. Everything suggests that his last writing in pencil on wrapping paper was this: 'Being is. The non-being is not. But now being is and is not. I am and am not. I am a being and a non-being. I am neither a being nor a non-being. I am being the being and I am being the not-being. If I'm being not-being, then I am not '.

**KATAFARAUM RESSURRECTO, EDIÇÃO DO AUTOR, 1992, PP. 76-84.**

**KATAFARAUM RESURRECT, AUTHOR’S EDITION, 1992, PP. 76-84.**

# ONÉSIMO TEOTÓNIO DE ALMEIDA

### 12.1. THE QUESTION OF AZOREAN LITERATURE.

The debate about whether there is, or not, an Azorean literature might be considered as sterile by some. However, I personally feel it is a fertile source of information - data, ideas, perspectives, concepts, speculations, interpretations, explanations, analysis - reflecting worldviews, theoretical positions about aesthetics, outlooks of a human reality in a specific geographic space (the Azores) from many of the topmost literati in the Azores. It would be unreasonable to ignore simply the recurrence of this issue without seeing in it something deeper than a mere semantic debate. Even if one wants to deny it the grandness of outcomes, there are causes and reasons for its emergence and cyclical resurgence, that no attentive and interested observer or scholar may despise [...]

Some of the most intelligent insights in this microcosm of the Azores, indeed, have taken place in the literature field. The texts debating the existence, or otherwise, of an Azorean literature represent the theoretical awareness, an explanation of viewpoints, intentions, demarcation and distancing positions by all those who dynamically have been using the Azores as a theme, or using them as a space or background in which moves the reality that they have created or recreated in their text.[...]

This motley of relentless and insistent literary works (there is no smoke without fire) [Azorean literature] turns out to be a special case (at least, dissimilar) within the national context of Portuguese literature as a whole. The use of the expression [Azorean literature] should not be cause for so much itching of democratic spirits. Nor should one decide against pursuing the exploration of that literary world it encompasses, especially, at a time, when there is extensive talk about decentralization and diversity. The Portuguese literature will benefit from this. It will be less monochord and less dull.

**“INTRODUÇÃO” E “A QUESTÃO REVISITADA”, A QUESTÃO DA LITERATURA AÇORIANA. RECOLHA DE INTERVENÇÕES E REVISITAÇÃO. ANGRA DO HEROÍSMO, SECRETARIA REGIONAL DE EDUCAÇÃO E CULTURA, 1983, COLEÇÃO GAIVOTA/32, PP. 14-15-214**

**"INTRODUCTION" AND "THE ISSUE REVISITED", THE QUESTION OF AZOREAN LITERATURE. COLLECTION OF SPEECHES AND REVISITATION. ANGRA DO HEROÍSMO, REGIONAL SECRETARIAT FOR EDUCATION AND CULTURE, 1983, COLLECTION SEAGULL 32, PP. 14 - 15-214**

### 12.2. WHAT IS L(USA)LAND?

CA - Can you define the concept of L(USA)land?

OA - When the word is correctly printed, its meaning quickly jumps to the eye. It consists of highlighting USA in the Portuguese adjective LUSA (from 'Lusitanian') plus the termination 'land' (from terra, land) used in some countries - New Zealand, Iceland - or even Disneyland. The resulting word is intended to mean that kind of special country formed by the Portuguese communities in America that are neither quite Portugal nor America, but a mixture of two cultures. It is much simpler to use that word than the expression “Portuguese communities of America.”  Even on the stylistic side, it wins hands up in any text. Since this term reflects a reality - the hybrid aspect of this special world – I rather use it instead of any other. And it is not because I am the author of the neologism.

Interestingly, I invented it at a time when I sensed it. I was in a class of Metaphysics with Roderick Chisholm, the great philosopher. Instead of following the lecture, I began to think that just a few blocks away from that building there was a Portuguese community. It had nothing to do with what was happening in that classroom, or even with the university in general. Plus, this community, like other Portuguese communities, spoke, lived, thought in Portuguese, cooked in Portuguese, and enjoyed themselves in Portuguese. However, it was an island within America, notwithstanding some yeas and shôas. Even so, it was already an American community when viewed from Portugal.

The adjective derived from this noun is written in lowercase - l(USA)landese. It is not a duplicate of the already existent Luso-American. 'Luso-American' only refers to American people of Portuguese descent, i.e., already born in America. It does not encompass the immigrant. I used the term L(USA)land for the first time as title to my book “Daily life in L(USA)land” [Da Vida Quotidiana na l(USA)lândia] . Today the term is used by many people. The journalist Vamberto Freitas, a native from Terceira Island based in California, uses it, as does the writer Urbino San-Payo, also in California; João Carlos Tavares, a reporter in Rhode Island, ibid. José Augusto Seabra a professor at the Faculty of Humanities of Porto, welcomed this neologism in a chronicle on the newspaper “O Comércio do Porto”. Cunha de Oliveira has also used it. And one day, by pure chance, I saw Aldónio Gomes on a Lisbon TV refer to it as an example of a creative neologism. This is to mention only some examples. Pardon my publicity... [...]

C.A. – Is Emigration a drama?

OA - The case of emigration from the Azores to America normally finishes with a 'happy ending”, although it is a drama for many and a tragedy to many more. It always leaves its mark. On some people more than on others. The older you migrate, the harder it is to adapt. The separation does not leave that strong a mark on children and young adolescents. The world that physically remains behind goes along with the emigrant. It is part of him; it is his world, although physically no longer exists in his day-by-day. That is the drama. It is like an amputated limb (say those who have experienced it) where one gets the impression that is still there, you feel it, although it is not there. You have the image, the emptiness, the want. That is why the immigrant tries, as best as he can, to recreate at his new abode the world he left behind. Moreover, he does so according to his means and affordability: sweet bread and chorizo, the feast on behalf of the patron saint, the music band, the soccer team and the color of the house, the folk group and the Holy Spirit soups. After all, culture is this. The way a human group is tucked in the world, how it relates to it and to others. After all, the most visible trait of immigration is the culture of a group. [...]

One can see what is idiosyncratic in a group only in contrast with other groups. These peculiar and typical aspects are the ones that the immigrant feels as his own and tries to recreate in his new environment, precisely because he did not find them there.

**[SETEMBRO DE 1982], ENTREVISTAS DADAS PELO AUTOR AO CORREIO DOS AÇORES E CONDUZIDAS POR EDUARDO BETTENCOURT PINTO IN L (USA) LÂNDIA, A DÉCIMA ILHA. ANGRA DO HEROÍSMO, 1987, PP. 243-244-250-251).**

**[SEPTEMBER 1982], AUTHOR INTERVIEWS GIVEN BY MAIL TO THE AZORES AND CONDUCTED BY EDUARDO PINTO BETTENCOURT IN L (USA) LAND, THE TENTH ISLAND. ANGRA DO HEROÍSMO, 1987, PP. 243-244-250 - 251).**

### 12.3. OH, NÉZIMO? WHAT NAME IS THAT?

 There are two billion (?) people

 In the world. I am therefore

one bilionesimus

(Vergílio Ferreira , Conta-Corrente), Vol I, pp. 350)

And me? Simply...

... Onesimus!

One of these days, I walked into a Portuguese restaurant here in L(USA)land. From a table of three, I hear: 'Let's have a trivia contest! Who is able to say correctly his name?

Him, that is, me. Nobody won. Two of them came to 'Nemésio', what is quite usual among the Portuguese. I often say that I feel quite honored by the confusion, but my real name is Onésimo.

I am quite used to it. In my childhood, in Pico da Pedra, it went from Nézeme to Nerse, and 'Oh Ness'. A colleague took delight in calling aloud: “Ânesse!” during my first year of French. I was already accustomed to the many variants they used to call me. I turned my head only to face his laughs.

Never answered back. I laughed as well. The first time I found that name written, without being my own, was on a French Dictionary: Onésime. I never saw the list from where my father had chosen it. His name was Manuel but he was tired of the monotonous names around him. Onésimo sounded good and no one had it. A couple of excellent reasons to name me, so he thought.

For years, I collected the written versions of my name. They had already reached more than sixty when I lost the list. I remember a few: Aumésimo, Honézio, Eufrésio, Inésio, Ornéstimo ... Since my second given name was not much better - Teotónio – sometimes I enriched the collection with pairs such as "Oneziamo Piotamo" as Monsignor Lourenço baptized me when calling me to the blackboard in my first year of English.

The stories continued in the U.S. One day, at the waiting room of a university dean, I heard the receptionist call several times: “Uanessaimo!” Since no one else was in the waiting room, she turns to me and asks, “Are you not Mr Uanessaimo Elmira (American version for Almeida)?” I looked at her and suddenly decoded in such pronunciation a new reading of Onésimo robbed of its accent by the American typewriters. [...]

The name itself is, after all, less problematic for Americans. Being accustomed to so many diverse people coming from all over the world, they ask to spell it and generally they memorize it. But there are creative variations. For example, I subscribe to a magazine where they take me for Irish: O'Nesimo.

In Portugal, our vaunted capacity for language does not extend to names. I can attest it. A frequent dialogue on the phone starts with me saying 'Onésimo Almeida here'. Then, the operator or a secretary: "What!" And out of the blue, gossips to the colleague, sitting next to her “What an odd name!"

There was a time when my by-line appeared on the Lisbon Press but since nobody saw me on the streets or in social gatherings, some people could swear it was a nom de guerre.

In New Bedford, I have kept for years a show on the Portuguese channel cable-TV where, for quite some time, I was known as the 'Wednesday man', after the day that my program was broadcast.

Ah! Television stories would fill a book. But let us stick with those relating to the name. Here goes the last one:

Once, I was with a group of friends at a restaurant in the Azores. A gentleman comes by, full of apologies for the intrusion, and asks me if I have a brother in America, as compère of a TV show, since I was so much alike him, or so he said. Told him no, adding, “Incidentally, I have a brother in America, and he, yes; he has a brother with a TV show, only that brother is... me”.

Ah! Ah! Ah! Chatted for a little while, until the vacationing Luso-American TV viewer, again excusing himself finally bade goodbye. Half an hour later, he returns:   
- Will you please excuse me, but I was just talking to you and knew who you were, but could not remember your name. I just recalled it now: Vitorino Nemésio.

Whilst gratifying to me (albeit insulting to Nemésio) this confusion does not stop there. This is my preferred variation:

In Ponta Delgada, when I went to visit my friend and excellent poet Urbano Bettencourt, his little daughter asked “Dad is this Vitorino Onésimo?"

Well, but now I am not alone. One of my compadres[[5]](#footnote-5) on the outskirts of Santo Tirso gave my name to one of his children. One day, arriving in Lisbon I phoned them at home - 'It is Onésimo', I said, and a faint voice from the other side of the line says – “It is also Onésimo here! "

I already found another in the football team of my student days at Brown, a Mexican student of Applied Mathematics. I know, moreover, of the existence of a Cape Verdean poet called Onésimo Silveira, who spent some time at the United Nations. Once, at a conference on African literature of Portuguese speaking countries, I personally met an American teacher, who was a specialist in the area. After a while, I started receiving some strange letters from him, which, to me, made no sense at all.  He was referring to people only known to me by name and work, but not of my acquaintance: Baltazar Lopez, Luis Romano, Manuel Ferreira, among others. One day, it all became clear; the letters were directed to Onésimo Silveira.

This new confusion is not unique. Once the newspaper O Jornal, where I collaborated for many years, published the name of a certain Onésimo Teotonius Silveira in a list of people in the Azores when the Open Presidency took place there.

And I could go on forever with stories around my name(s). Individually or grouped. I did not mention the Pereira or the double Teotónio Pereira. Nor did I allude to the complications arising from using only two names in English - first and last - with the abbreviation of the middle names, eliminating the rest. I removed the 'Pereira de'. If I had left the 'De' in America, I would be classified under DeAlmeida. I declined.  As a matter of curiosity, in this part of the world using “De” is pretentious. But at JL[[6]](#footnote-6) they did not budge and kept the “De”. I always sign the texts without it. Stronger reasons have kept it indelible just below my photo.

By this, I imply to have no control over the names they call me. In America, with fixed rules of treatment, when the reference is formal, they treat me as Mr Almeida or, sometimes Prof. Almeida. In Portugal, even in newspaper columns, is 'Onésimo' or quite pompously, 'Professor Onésimo'. One cannot imagine someone referring to 'Professor Oscar[[7]](#footnote-7) 'or' ‘Professor ‘ Joel[[8]](#footnote-8)' pardon the comparison. Well, I find it amusing. And it enhances my collection of stories.

If you have a strange name, there is another side to it. Once, I got a letter from Portugal and the envelope was only addressed to Onésimo / Brown / Boston. The city was wrong, but the mention of the university was enough for the people in Boston to add the postal code of Brown. Upon its arrival here, the university officials handled the rest.

When I mentioned the story to my friend Doug, from Vancouver, he did not believe in me and wanted to test my word. He repeated the formula. I also received the letter, this time with a stamp: “Please inform the sender's of the addressee’s full address."

I got lost here and almost forgot to mention the Greek origin of the name Onésimo. It is both a proper name and an adjective. It means 'useful' and 'fruitful', which has nothing to do with me, let alone with this chronicle. In the Bible, is also the name of a slave, a man from Colossus converted by St Paul, while in prison. My homonymous ancestor had stolen no one knows what. Some studies on humor report that biblical passage - apparently the only one - where there is a slightly humorous intent. Indeed, S. Paul makes a pun on the name in the Letter to Philemon: '... Onesimus, who is now usefully working for you and me ...'

I said it was a Greek name, but, in Greece, when I made that statement, my Hellenistic friends became skeptical since they never heard of it. It is no longer used. However, on a Tuscan vacation trip, Kyrios Yannis gleefully announced his discovery to me: actually, there is a St. Onesimus, who is venerated on a small chapel lost in the high mountains of the Crete hinterland. He insisted on taking me to visit it. It was a very poor chapel as befits a slave and a thief and, of course, this columnist. Inside, two icons bearing the name of Saint Onesimus were inscribed in two different spellings: one with a Ε (epsilon), and the other with Η (eta). (It seems that the varieties of spelling come from afar). Apparently, he is now the saint patron of judges. One can only mull how does a saint, former thief, ends up as patron of judges. The story is fun and complicated, as the reader may have noticed in all that concerns onomastic issues. I will not tell. It would be the nth comic story and I will save you from another nuisance.

This narcissistic exercise became an abuse in the declination of my name, combined as a subject of this chronicle. I will give my full support to any reader that thinks I touched the brink of syrupy.

For this reason, to clear all misconceptions about the intent of this self-contemplation, I enclose here my favorite story of these series. By the way, it has nothing to do with 'Onesimus', but with the ex-Arab and today very much Lusitanian surname 'Almeida'.

A Chinese female student doing her PhD in linguistics at a Canadian university wrote me a letter sprinkled with respectful salaams in English, ungrammatical but full of goodwill, asking me the favor of supplying her with information about the Portuguese language. I do not know where on earth she obtained my name. I cannot remember how she got out the version of Onesimus, but it was quite crippled. As for Almeida, just a typo, accurate and consistent, both on the envelope and after the beginning of the letter: 'Dear Professor Almerda[[9]](#footnote-9)

One-billionth my esteemed Vergílio Ferreira? And I? Ex-slave / thief, far worse than simply Onesimus: not even Almeida!

Onesimus Teotónio (without of) Almeida (1989)

(1994) QUE NOME É ESSE, Ó NÉZIMO? – E OUTROS ADVÉRBIOS DE DÚVIDA, 1ª ED. LISBOA, ED. SALAMANDRA

(1994) OH NÉZIMO? WHAT NAME IS THAT? – AND OTHER ADVERBS OF DOUBT, 1ST EDITION, LISBON, SALAMANDRA

# **URBANO BETTENCOURT**

### **13.1. VARIATIONS (IN A MINOR KEY, OF COURSE) ON THE POETRY OF EDUARDO BETTENCOURT PINTO**

I walk down the names and places  
of these verses. From Geography  
I know very little: the pictures where we get lost  
from childhood and earth smells,  
the leisure time, their wrinkles  
on the face of page, a brief twitching  
of leaves over the south.  
There are three syllables lost  
in the mesh of such an elusive a map:  
**AN** is perhaps the sweetest  
and **GO** the most hurt,  
**LA** lighter as if it were  
a syllable where one listened  
to the rumor of the gods and their absence. [...]  
I return from names and places  
of these verses. I will not say, however,  
the exact extent to which I got  
lost or found.  
On the sill I lay the tunic  
of words, the secret salt from their ways  
and listen  
to the slow breathing  
of the world.

**LUGARES SOMBRAS E AFETOS. TEXTOS DE URBANO BETTENCOURT E DESENHOS DE SEIXAS PEIXOTO, 2005, PP. 16 E 18.**

**PLACES SHADOWS AND AFFECTIONS. TEXTS FROM URBANO BETTENCOURT AND DRAWINGS BY PEIXOTO DE SEIXAS, 2005, PP. 16 AND 18**

### **13. 2. S. JORGE**

1. Hurriedly, I get into S. Jorge before slowing down substantially. For the very first time I am not coming into dock. The plane fits, almost to a dot, on the asphalt strip embedded in this wild plot at Queimada**.**

From Lajes to S. Jorge it is a mere thirty-minute’s trip with the misty Graciosa in the background, at right. It is impossible not to think about other journeys in the '60s, when the yachts from Pico took six hours or more from Angra to Velas. Progress has brought us convenience and comfort at a fast pace. Inexorably, it abolished the sense of travel and its protracted duration, that long-lasting glide of the island in front of our eyes [...]

I arrived in S. Jorge in early and tranquil March. [...]

2. The session takes place in a relatively austere room of the Velas Municipal Library, endowed with valuable furniture, amongst recent and old works of art. Some purchased, others donated, and to my bewilderment some of the rare works that belonged to the Library of Fr. Faria, before he offered them to the municipality. [...]

6. A significant number of people in S. Jorge Island live at high altitude, especially on the north coast. However, what really fascinates me is the parish of Urzelina at sea level, with its stately homes, enveloped in a sleepy and harmonious atmosphere. Many of them have front-gabled porches. Its inner tranquility seems to extend outdoors (or, is it indoors that they anticipate the smell of old vineyards and blooming orange groves?) Its profuse basalt stone, gives them a remarkable sobriety and a distinct demeanor. [...]

8. Professor Nemésio Serpa, a native of Pico’s internal diaspora, opens the session in the Town Hall, [...]

The session runs nicely, not only in quantitative terms, but also in an atmosphere propitious to a dialogue between the persons at the conference table and the public in attendance. [...]

Towards the end of the session, someone asks me why the writers do not write or rather why I do not write about S. Jorge. The voice that challenges me is between the sweet and shy. After speaking publicly of writing as a passion I would love to have sufficient time (the time here is so rhythmic) to explain it to this woman. So many of us are forced to seek survival (under-living) by other expedients that writing is almost a kind of smuggling, an act of piracy and devouring self-punishment. I also would need time to tell her that what I leave here now is not in any way, a response to her appeal, but simply the set-up of some of my impressions of this visit of less than forty-eight hours. It is a broadening of circumstantial threads, several of them jotted down in the remainder of a SATA Boarding Pass [...]

9. Monday morning I get out of S. Jorge. The archipelago is definitely left behind. One of these days I will run away from S. Miguel.

**[1988; REVISTO EM 1992] (“S. JORGE SEM DRAGÃO” IN O GOSTO DAS PALAVRAS III. LISBOA, EDIÇÕES SALAMANDRA, COL. “GARAJAU”, 1999, PP. 9-10-13-14-16-17).**

**[1988, REVISED 1992] (S. JORGE WITHOUT DRAGON "IN THE TASTE OF WORDS III. LISBON, EDIÇÕES SALAMANDRA, COL." TERN "1999, PP. 9-10-13-14-16-17).**

### 13. **3.**

The island may be, first of all, this living space (and to the islander, “to be” is much more of a verb than “to live”, as Nemésio wrote) and where one can watch the flow of time dissolving contours and edges. This is a space too close to the body. Sore and painful too. Embarrassing and paradoxical in the unlimited horizons that let us anticipate without ever substantiating it. This leads to a staged confrontation that in writing is between the ephemeral, the finitude of the Island and the Absolute like a mirage of desire. It is also part of that game between the near and the far-off, the concrete and the intangible, in which Rui Duarte Rodrigues, for example, leaves an inevitable trail of a subtle melancholy.

Therefore one gets an inside glimpse. There, it is also possible to detect the denouncing of the ruins and of the tedium of everyday life. It is also detectable the total detachment and the interpenetration of the body on the island and vice versa. But there is also an outside view, at a distance, from those who departed. I will call them Sons of Ithaca, since they build the island imagined by Desire and by Memory: simultaneously Odysseus and Penelope in their path of (ad)ventures. They (un)make the shroud of words interwoven in the course of the days, awaiting for an arrival that they know is permanently postponed. Because the island they seek is already the lost island of Memory. An evocative vision, so that the imperfect tense can be the verbal tense of nostalgia and of fascination. Nemésio, Natália Correia, Vasco Pereira da Costa, Marcolino Candeias, João de Melo, Avelina da Silveira (quoted in a recent phase of symptomatic cross-language) or Mário Machado Fraião, they all sail at about the distance of this time (a title for a work of Marcolino Candeias). They heal and recover by writing a diluted island time, which is also the one we found in some of the poetry of João Teixeira de Medeiros. He is a poet of great quality and expressive rigor never going beyond the quadra (four verses) and the redondilha (septet or five syllable verses). His experience of emigration allows him to double the feeling of presence and relative remoteness of the island. [...]

One of the key motifs in the writing of short-story authors of Horta was these mirages of America. There, we can also find most of the thematic, physical and social fields that the later Azorean narrative will be responsible for developing and making complex. They include the mystifying reuse of the childhood worlds in the heartland of the island. They then disseminate to become disperse or annihilated by the big world, be it Lisbon, Paris, the Americas or, more recently, Africa (where the destruction was the complete nonsense in wartime colonial times). They also encompass the discovery and the initiation of life and body provided by the departure and wandering.

They are the hidden worlds of Cristóvão de Aguiar, João de Melo, Vasco Pereira da Costa, Manuel Ferreira, Álamo Oliveira or even those found in tales of Nemésio (these worlds will look bitter even under the hardworking summoning of memories. Sometimes they become wry which is the counterpart of some dysphoric nostalgia). It does not matter if they deal with the struggle between man, land and sea and, in particular, with the epic and tragic saga of the whalers from Pico Island, as occurs in Dias de Melo. Other times they are the concentrationary spaces of José Martins Garcia (where the satirical and burlesque register is a final form of liberation and the demonstration of an irreversible splintering). Others are simply oppressive and besieged spaces inhabiting the works of Fernando Aires, Fátima Borges and partially Daniel de Sá. Their writings aim at making their plural worlds a place where Man can meet and search for his time, his space and his memory as well.

What makes sense of a character like Margaret Dulmo is the dream of other broader worlds beyond the horizon, worlds less asphyxiating than the island. It is the dream of Californias lost in abundance that throws off many more characters into the hands of emigration’s risky adventures and misadventures. On this side of the islands you can also see it in almost every abovementioned narrator and also in Ruy Guilherme de Morais, José de Almeida Peacock, Eduíno Borges Garcia (whose 'Stowaway [Passageiro Clandestino]' constitutes a unique case in the narrative of emigration) and in the poetic prose of Adelaide Batista. On the other side of the Ocean it is visible in Onésimo Teotónio Almeida, Manuel Ferreira Duarte and José Francisco Costa, who use their own vision and experiences to write about the migration from within.

Thus, the Azorean Narrative (understood here as a macro-text ensuing from the plurality of individual narratives) may be read as the literary representation of the historical process and the struggles and advances of a people, its journey, the various appraisals it had about itself and the world, establishing thereafter the coordinates of a physical and symbolic territory needed for its survival. Simultaneously, this narrative attests to the, not always peaceful, dialogue that these [Azorean] writers waged not only with a literary tradition but also with their contemporaneity, not necessarily restricted to one language and a cultural space.

If we take for reference a couple of works such as “My World Is Not of This Kingdom” (1983) by João de Melo and “Fome [Hunger]” (1977) by José Martins Garcia, we see that the time compression operated (even in their very different narrative procedures) provides a fictional remake of five centuries of history. It is an efabulation between realism and fantasy and in which truth and myth reveal characters encapsulated in the contingencies and vicissitudes of an Atlantic insular fate, carrying with them the atavistic signs of isolation and distance.

In any of these works, the beginning of the narrative explicitly convenes a documentary source (fictitious in the former, and real in the latter) whose function is not even to caution about a possible framework in historical romance genre, but rather to establish the existence of a territory and a 'genealogy'. Both quoted documents relate to stumbling upon a new land, the instant when man steps on a different soil and names it (i.e. identifies it, dominates it with words and establishes its ownership). Somehow they acquire a mythical status when accounting to a primordial time of the founding acts that ushered in a new space and, consequently, a different story. Under this light, these reports legitimize the character’s right of ownership over a territory (of which the protagonist narrator of “Hunger [Fome]” possesses an acute awareness) and, at the same time, also establish a decisive identity factor (and the title of the novel by João de Melo is, in this respect, highly revealing).

Under such perspective, the strong territorial attachment that crosses the Azorean Narrative (Vamberto Freitas talks about 'aesthetics of territoriality') can be seen as part of a symbolic heritage, while at the immediate level of 'empirical' time that each character was given to live, the intimate linking between the characters and their conditioning space will grow into more complex contours.

Margaret Dulmo presents some considerations about love. In the final pages of the “Stormy Isles (Mau tempo no Canal)” and already summing up of her marriage to Andrew Baker, she puts "the love of our land” next to the love of friend and daughter as “what is known of pure and serious in the world”. It must be of significance that the statement is attributed to a character that throughout the narrative is primarily characterized by the incessant desire to escape from the “abridged world” of the island in response to the allure of another space beyond the mysterious and precarious line of horizon. After all, this tension between the near and distant, the Island's limited and the world unlimited is one of the dynamic features of most characters in Azorean fiction, pushing them into an experience of wandering and, ultimately, departure.

Admittedly, and returning to the two works previously highlighted, in “My World Is Not of This Kingdom” we are faced with an insular world still turned in on itself, although the outside signals are felt sometimes dramatically there (and may anticipate the dispersion that occurs in “Gente Feliz com Lágrimas [Happy People with Tears]”, where each family member knows your particular form of wandering that only the writings by Nuno Miguel/Rui Zinho will allow to be rescued from utter loss). But in “Hunger [Fome]” we find a character on the run, doomed to “divagation either carnal or narrative” (made as a chronicler of his own pilgrimage). His perdition originates in motivations conjured upon themselves in diverse manners but outrightly reduced in his speech to 'the hunger of movement, travel, space, or simply a [lamb] chop'. Nonetheless, this journey of the protagonist towards the east may at some point, be seen as a kind of return to the ancestral European 'home' (an impossible and 'unforgivable' return). What can be seen here is a dispersion made of uprooting and splintering of a character. When such character goes in search of fragments of itself it will inevitably find the island’s 'old memory' that remains attached and follows it as an indelible imprint of territorial origin, impressed at the very heart of its 'genetic code'.

The trips to the west will, however, achieve no better fortune (as other characters used by José Martins Garcia, know only too well, when making up the cycle of pilgrimage in Europe and America), except what can be translated into accumulated U.S. dollars and material prosperity. This may only occur after a painful journey of initiation and learning in the world. But they also attest to this movement of attraction/repulsion to the island’s space, its most devastating effects  are the impact of centrifugal and centripetal forces over Francisco Marroco, a character of “Pedras Negras [Dark Stones](1964)” by Dias de Melo. They comprise despair, dream and the fear of a future imagined in past memories. They propel him to search for the American Paradise, an attitude where the ballast of the economic conditions leads to the rebellion, the insolence of the tragic hero (‘Pico Island will not have my bones'). The image of the absent island will, however, impose its will as the large presence and wandering in Francisco Marroco, making him return to the island‘s space where he will be destroyed, driven to its initial stage, thus losing the happiness that he thought so lasting as the vast world that he had known.

**[1996; 1998] (“DOS AÇORES E DA SUA LITERATURA: ERRÂNCIA E PERMANÊNCIA” IN O GOSTO DAS PALAVRAS III. LISBOA, EDIÇÕES SALAMANDRA, COL. “GARAJAU”, 1999, PP. 64-66-67-68-69-70).**

**[1996, 1998] (AZORES AND ITS LITERATURE: WANDERING AND STAY "IN THE TASTE OF WORDS III. LISBON, EDIÇÕES SALAMANDRA, COL." TERN "1999, PP. 64-66-67-68-69 - 70).**

# ***VASCO PEREIRA DA COSTA***

### **14.1. TI FAUSTO**

The island, for him [Uncle Faust or rather, Ti Fausto], is not only not parishes, canadas [rural lanes], homes, myrica faya, yam and apple trees, pastures, livestock and all the people.  In the sunny stuffy days, he cuddles it as an old girlfriend that he loves with a crazy passion during the short and eternal nights.  [...]

To love the Girl-Island of pure eyes, like two lumps of fresh and glazed lava dripping sap of the earth. To jump in her wriggling dance. To play the strings on the most singing guitar [...]

To love the Woman-Island, unbroken and powerful, to scratch a petal of perfumed scent and fire, to feel the wooing, the fiery breath of her hot mouth, to enjoy the earwax from the fleeting ears on the tip of the tongue, [...]

To love the Mother-Island, her cozy and warm lap. To lay one’s head and rest on her large belly. To let her hand disremember and rest on the sleepy neck. To open her eyes and then revive this Pietà with a slow kiss on the palm of the hand while the smile slowly opens up, oblivious to the statue that I mold now: Ti Fausto and the Island, [...]

Ti Fausto serves me Verdelho wine. We toast to the emotion that binds us to this table.

A drop afloat in a wooden groove.  [...]

Ti Fausto clicks his tongue and extends me his cynical look of unbeliever god:

- That is how a grandson of farmers and traders’ son, has fine hands. A Word planter... a Seller of fictions…

Here I am, Ti Fausto, the graduate of round letters with the urge to call your friend Archimedes, who walked with you in Antioch, and from whom you received the cry of discovery in your divine ears.

Here I am, Ti Fausto, seeking a justification to give me contentment of me. With my agriculture of words, I could explain to myself the whole (the whole ...?) family truth. What is more, to absolve myself. My moment of eureka is this: being able to find, in the mastery of words, remission for the unforgivable resignation. With this sphere that writes[[10]](#footnote-10) [...] it all seems so likely and so full of truth! Like being the son of Manuel Terra Policarpo, borne away on the sloop Hope to Angra Bay carrying his swag[[11]](#footnote-11) with a bundle of linen and a letter to John Doe; a bag of rags from which he took and chewed the last biscuit of fern root. The year was 1920. My father was ten.

The never revealed secrets of his infancy rest unbeknown. His ingrained suffering was deep-rooted in the deepest veins of a desired oblivion.

The little boy got lost in the merciless toiling of a hungry island. And I only know him from the time he was a grown up man, living at Terceira Island, an island of parties and eating - in the words of the old picarotos[[12]](#footnote-12) that plough the waters of the sea and embed the harpoons of volition on the most barren black of cooled down lava.

**”PLANTADOR DE PALAVRAS”, PLANTADOR DE PALAVRAS VENDEDOR DE LÉRIAS. COIMBRA, SERVIÇOS CULTURAIS, 1984 – “PRÉMIO MIGUEL TORGA”, PP. 18-19-35- 36. /**

**WORD PLANTER...SELLER OF FICTIONS. COIMBRA, CULTURAL SERVICES, 1984 - "PRIZE MIGUEL TORGA," PP. 18-19-35 - 36.**

### **14.2. PEDRO AND INÊS**

        I lost count of the times that I sit at this desk, grinding the plastic Bic Biro, scrawling distraction circles and lines on the paper, looking for a glimmer that will send down from head to toes that misty history dancing and challenging in front of me. But I coerced the will to take this decision-that-be, no more postponing the writing!

I know, oh if I know! Where the wavering comes from: the history [of Pedro and Inês] has been told repeatedly, the lyric poets worked it lyrically, the historians worked it historically, and the dramaturges worked it dramatically. And, because they have overworked it, it always become anew in other words, sometimes scratchy sometimes silky, sometimes bright, sometimes disappearing into the darkness, sometimes plenty with a sound of joyful wonder, sometimes immersed in the silence of sorrow, either in a green merry-go-round dance of life or on a slippery sibylline slide into black death. Always renewed, is not exactly correct, because, after all, nothing has changed the fate of the people who made this history. It is well known that any writer that takes on this story, resurrecting the time and lives, livening houses, trees, darkness, paths and suns, in the very end will be obliged to bring down houses, to fell trees, to set darkness aflame, to block off paths, to wipe out suns, to silence time and to kill.

Hence my scrupulous doubt before restoring, once more, to the ephemeral life of words, those who deserve the relaxing quietness of the tomb. How, then, will I wake up those who disgracefully went through their disgraced time, into this time of precarious verbs and no promise?

Let me however be bewitched by the wonderful speech of the words. When they touch the rigidity of death, they animate, by their indomitable power, the bodies in the graves. And nothing could I do now to avoid the real presence of all these people around me. They come close by the four corners of the table, rubbing on me, in strange whispers as a chorus of tragedy. They lurk, eagerly, over my shoulder, spying the words that I have for everyone.

**“SEGUNDA MEMÓRIA – PEDRO E INÊS”, MEMÓRIA BREVE. ANGRA DO HEROÍSMO, INSTITUTO AÇORIANO DE CULTURA, COLEÇÃO INSULA – NOVA SÉRIE, Nº 1, 1987, PP. 51-52.**

**"SECOND MEMORY - PEDRO AND INÊS," SHORT MEMORY. ANGRA HEROISM, AZORES INSTITUTE OF CULTURE COLLECTION INSULA - NEW SERIES, NO. 1, 1987, PP. 51-52.**

### **14.3. TOLL’S PLAZA**

Awakens the river  
next to the placid town  
  
in love fades the night   
in chimera and challenge  
on a ballad by Zeca[[13]](#footnote-13)  
  
A candle of youthful sunshine  
awakens  
and restores the uproar  
in the rebellious boat  
  
Behind the window of Torga  
Portugal departs for poetry

**SOBRE-RIPAS SOBRE-RIMAS. COIMBRA, LIVRARIA MINERVA, 1994, P. 34.**

**ABOUT STRIPS ABOUT RHYMES. COIMBRA, MINERVA BOOKSHOP, 1994, P. 34.**

### **14.4. CAMINO DE SANTIAGO**

Here I am with a shell and a walking stick   
pilgrim in search of the words  
 of the old idiom that I want to be spoken.  
  
Brief and vague I take them in the shell   
Tear them in the yard  
the tip of the walking cane  
helpless mature restless  
praying the immaculate heresy

of the bustling grammar of poets:  
Manuel Maria, Celso Emilio, Rosalía ...

**TERRAS. PORTO, CAMPO DAS LETRAS – EDITORES, S.A., 1997, P. 12.**

**LANDS. PORTO, CAMPO DAS LETRAS - EDITORES, SA, 1997, p. 12.**

### **14.5. IOS**

Those who invent islands only create  
known heavens and equally known hells  
to lives already lived in agony  
of being the least and aim at the most.  
  
those born in an island soon recognize

where less is elongated and more is death**.**

**TERRAS. PORTO, CAMPO DAS LETRAS – EDITORES, S.A., 1997, P. 16.**

**LANDS. PORTO, CAMPO DAS LETRAS - EDITORES, SA, 1997, P. 16.**

### **14.6. ODE TO LA MAISON DES HUIT HEURES**

Eight hours for work eight  
hours to sleep eight hours  
for leisure - beer  
at the Maison des huit heures  
a clock on the wall   
on his watch to be seen  
the lifetime of a miner  
measured by work sleep leisure whole  
worker

In the measurements rules measured in hand rules  
the clock right at eight o'clock  
at the Maison des huit heures.  
It smells of sweat and coal  
of hop plant criek and Jupiler’s malt  
of cold tobacco in the heat of the discussion  
of a lit cigarette in clouds of pleasure.  
  
Sometimes the sleep sometimes is  
the work clouding the cloudy room. an  
inexperienced pleasure in a cup of coffee  
a cuddle to a glass of cognac a  
sinking in a glass of rum.  
flooding sonorous sadness

and conspired rumors sparkling in gold  
of the mug where the foam cools of eight  
hours  
between the endless tables but with hours  
at the Maison des huit heures.  
  
Outside the factory the house and the rain sweeps  
the grey of eight plus eight hours of the vrai pays noir.  
Here abounds  
in the bitter taste of beer  
the accurate measure joy

of proletarian eight hours each day.

**TERRAS. PORTO, CAMPO DAS LETRAS – EDITORES, S.A., 1997, P. 19-20-21.**

**LANDS. PORTO, CAMPO DAS LETRAS - EDITORES, SA, 1997, PP. 19-20-21**.

### **14.7. AN INUIT SCULPTURE**

Shaped the man  
like its first discovery.  
  
And from a rib  
added to the obdurate mating

an Eve  
  
As the Indian Rodin  
God is nameless  
what a poet.

**TERRAS. PORTO, CAMPO DAS LETRAS – EDITORES, S.A., 1997, P.  
LANDS. PORTO, CAMPO DAS LETRAS - EDITORES, SA, 1997, P. 37.**

### **14.8. ROSE’S NAME WAS ROSA**

The mother said no more  
no more me no more you daughter  
no more names on the stone at the pier  
no more curtains of the island  
  
No more Rosa for you Rose you are now  
no more purple haze woes  
no more voodoo luck  
no more island no more   
  
But Rose did not want no more any longer  
and wanted to see the island of no more  
the unhappy purple curtains   
the names on the stone at the pier  
  
Grabbed herself and went away.  
No more Rose. Rosa again now.

**MY CALIFORNIAN FRIENDS. GÁVEA-BROWN, PALIMAGE PUBLISHERS, 1999, P. 25.**

# VICTOR RUI DORES

### **15.1. VIEW OF THE ISLANDS**

### **15.1.1. SANTA MARIA**

Oh waves of the bottomless sea! Oh Stars of the endless sky! Santa Maria Island is the inscrutable sphinx of an immensurable dream. Just because she is the threshold of the history of these islands. And because she can wholly fit in my chest. The southern whiteness of her body is etched in me. The pottery of her expression. Her limestone. Her deep bays. Her balmy coves. Her High Peak (Pico Alto) to see and for me to feel the easternmost point of myself...

I looked for you at Santo Espírito, next to a chimney with shapes from the Algarve. At the Lighthouse of Ponta do Castelo I woke up your love...

...  On S. Lourenço beach I laid with you. It was a humid night in a full moon and we heard moans of nymphs and centaurs happily indulging in orgies of sand, foam and sea. Afterwards, we went down exhausted and slept the satiated and tranquil sleep of the gods.

### 15.1.2 **SÃO MIGUEL**

Ah, the Lake of this Fire to love you endlessly! Ah, lakes and craters of this desire, oh erotic slots of these fumaroles...You, my love, are the breath of earth! You are the Seven Cities of my lost paradise! You are the enchanted princess hidden beneath the waters, emerging on a moonlit night to take possession of your kingdom! Green Island that I carry in my memory. Awe-inspiring parks and gardens of my dream. Pineapple of tenderness. Stew baked in the heat of the earth. The tradition of the tea. And my addiction of tobacco ... Gates of this city of Ponta Delgada. The Pier and the Avenue to stay on land to dream about the unachievable ... And the historic fog of pilgrims in devotion. And miracles of Holy Christ Lord of *Miracles*. And the people who work and are hungry and thirsty of dreams for the infinite… Believe me, my love: sleeping Atlanteans float in the depths of your sea, defended by monstrous fish and octopus with colossal tentacles!

### **15.1.3. TERCEIRA ISLAND**

I could call you the island of monuments and chroniclers, since you are the most historic of these historic islands ... I could talk about your fortresses, of your convents, of the façade of your Renaissance houses ...I might even call you Angra do Heroísmo, proud world heritage city! Or, Praia da Vitória, mother of the writer Nemésio that nobody read.

Oh yes, I could talk of your bullfights and the euphoria of your Feasts! I could say so much about your people and its festive partying. Of your camp fairs. Of your Empires. Of your juicy roasted rump. Of your desirable sweet bread. Of the Alfenim[[14]](#footnote-14) from your convents. Of the dances of your Carnival. Of the tenderness I shared with you in the garden. Of the kisses that we exchanged on the stools at Customs’ Hall. Of your farms in S. Carlos and your woodlands at Serreta...

But no. What I really want is to rest my eyes in your Mount Brazil. And imagine that I will depart and go through these seas! To live intensely the buzz aboard lit cruisers. And breathe on deck, the wide-open horizons. Then return to the ship cabin and fall asleep. With the waves for a pillow.

### **15.1.4. GRACIOSA**

You are the Antilles Island, both female and feminine! I bless you and bless your volcanic vulva - the disquieting beauty of your Furna do Enxofre [Sulphur cavern] ...I praise the clarity of your skies and the transparency of your seas! I bless the afternoon baths at Carapacho and at Praia. And I bless thy town of Santa Cruz, the araucaria trees of your Plaza, the elegant outline of your sober manor houses, your marshlands that reflect the stillness and beauty...

And blessed be thy windmills and your star shaped milk “Queijadas [custard pie]” that give me love. And blessed be thy “Aguardente [cognac]” aged in oak casks. And the fragrance of cantaloupe from your lips.

Blessed be your joy of life and revelry of the feast of your Carnival dances! Blessed be thy people, quiet, friendly and industrious.

I want you and lust for your salty body. And I'm sitting on the edge of your memory - O my beloved, graceful and glorious island!

### **15.1.5. SÃO JORGE**

With you, I dream of distant journeys. I fill the eyes with steep cliffs. I seek enchanted islands of blue. I listen to the music of tides and the singing of terns. And in the high seas, I look up to the passing ships and the shadow of their hulls reflected in the water.

S. Jorge is a ship that ran aground in the shoals of Urzelina. It is also an island that is as long as my longing and as steep as my emotion. From the top of its mountains, I see the waterfalls that plunge steeply to the ocean.

To get ecstatic and to let myself be transported to the most fantastic dream I go down to the Fajãs. I taste a secular cheese that is the wealth of the island. They show me quilts that are hand embroidered poems.

I wait for you at the wharf at Velas. So, we will hop on the next boat to take us to the other side of it all.

### **15.1.6. PICO**

The Island of the majestic mountain. Your bosom of goddess lying on her back in mid-Atlantic...Wonder of lava and mystery! I will climb up to the nipple of your Pico Pequeno [little peak]! The exhilaration of holding you, way up high.  The heart of the archipelago pulses in you.

A volcanic Island of black stones. Through them flows the Verdelho wine. The wine that was served at the Tsars’ table. Isle of epic maroiços[[15]](#footnote-15) and petrified loneliness.

Island of whalers that harpooned the bread, the dream and the hope - men who defied life for the death of the Leviathan - the Olympian lord of the seas.  Contemplative Terra Alta. Channel of so many travels. Magical effect of so much light. Mulberry and prick of bramble thicket. The enchantment of the manor houses. Tidal wells. Wine harvest in August. Lajes, past and tradition. Your name written on a pebble from Cais do Pico. And this people so simple, hard and hospitable. They work on land and at sea.

Island of wine cellars, vineyards, the commons, the alembics. Ancestral Island, poetic, deep and wild. Just like you Madalena, O my beloved.

### **15.1.7. FAIAL**

My sailor island of hair disheveled by the wind. You are as seductive as the keel of a boat. Or as the mouth smacking of beer. Or like the gin and tonic of universal friendship.

Tourists will never understand the still ashes of your Volcano or the cathedral of silence of your Caldera. Your deepest truth is in the maritime light of your city of Horta. And in the trip a thousand times resumed. Because you can fit in all the world’s sailboats.

I waited for you at the Marina Cafe. You were late and I amused myself looking at the yachtsmen walking with slow movements, above the pontoons. The men with shiny and bare chests are the wolves of the seven seas, tall and swarthy. The women, with blond hair and clear eyes of the sea, are undulating mermaids ... Here they are arriving brought by favorable winds. Here they rest from adventures in the seas. Here they recharge the batteries to retake the wheel. Here they celebrate the newfound joy of the senses...

... And then, they leave. Because wandering is their destiny, their way of pursuing happiness and dreams. There they go. Ocean free.

### **15.1.8. CORVO**

You are the smallest island, but in your Caldera fit all the islands of this world!

I walk on Vila Nova to feel your reality and the weight of Time: I watch old people sitting in the sun. They abide by the same old life cycles, the same ancestral rites.

I hear your insulated voice, O my beloved, mythical island. I share your loneliness and I know about the tyrant longing spiked deep in your chest! I imagine America's golden hope. And in the distance, I spot a boat and dream of the departure.

The waves sweep your dock. Ah, the hull of this ship that is your life is constantly hit by this sea.

Oh, I wish I could go away. To go through all the maritime miles of all oceans. To visit the nautical beauty of luminous and maritime cities.

### **15.1.9. FLORES**

What shall I do, my love, with this island portrayed in the deep and blue waters of your eyes?

How much gold is sunk in the depths of your sleeping seas! How many skeletons of sunken ships! How many swollen planks of the wreck! How many anchors of shells and corals! How many palaces of algae and seaweed! How many debris floating in the shuttle of waves!

Some people call you the Garden of the Atlantic or Azorean Switzerland. I prefer your real name: Flores.

I touch your body dressed in hydrangeas. I get out of Santa Cruz and walk along mountains and terraced slopes, idyllic streams and ponds. There is freshness and a fascinating charm in your running waters and a true imposing spectacle is your Rocha de Bordões. I cannot arrive at Lajes. I get lost in the endemic vegetation of your land...

I make it to the sea and get past your Monchique Islet. I rub my foggy eyes and I am at the westernmost point of Europe. That is where you give me the honeysuckle kiss of thy mouth, red and salty as the gills of turbot.

 IN [http://MINIATURAIAS.BLOGSPOT.COM/SEARCH/LABEL/-VISÕes](http://miniaturaias.blogspot.com/search/label/-Visões)

### **15.2. THE SALESMAN AND THE ISLAND**

 The phenomenon of insularity has left scars in the minds of the Azorean people. Five centuries of physical isolation, of constant contact with the sea, of finite horizons of volcanic cataclysms, of a religiosity that was specifically generated in the holy terror of earthquakes and volcanoes, all these factors have, definitively, marked and shaped the way of being, thinking and acting of the Azorean people.

     Living in the middle of the Atlantic, and demonstrating an unequivocal universality, our people have the full and precise awareness of the geographical narrowness of the Azores. And, incidentally, it was in S. Jorge where this story occurred. I report it as it was told by the poet Carlos Faria.

     One given day a salesperson arrived at the village of Velas, aboard the ship “Lima” from Lisbon. It was the first time he came to the Azores, and no sooner had he put his foot on the dock, he hastened to inquire with a Customs police officer the whereabouts of a particular person he wished to speak to. Once he got the answer, he ran up the pier in such a haste that he slammed into an old man who had come to the pier on that "day of St. Steamboat” to get the latest news. In the confusion, the old man grabbed the salesman's arm and said:

     - Ah me rich lord! Where on heck are you going in such a hurry? Calm down, man! Look, the island ends right there.

**HISTÓRIAS COM PERIPÉCIAS. HORTA. ED. CORREIO DA HORTA (1ª ED.) 1999 PP. 47-48**

**STORIES WITH A TWIST. HORTA. PUBLISHED BY CORREIO DA HORTA (1ST ED.), 1999, PP. 47-48.**

1. On Pico Island, past a certain altitude on the rocky hills, there was the need to clean up the rocks. Since there were too many, even after building up the delimitating walls, they created “maroiços.” The rocks were laid one on top of the other, in steps or ramps, enabling people to carry stones for the upper levels that ended up almost as a pyramid in a conic conglomerate of stone. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Translator’s Note: Regent Teacher was someone who had not attended the College of Teachers but who was, through some qualifying testing, considered apt to teach as a replacement teacher, albeit having no tenure and a salary lower than an official teacher. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Translator’s Note: Cova da Iria, near Fátima in Portugal, place where Our Lady of Fátima allegedly appeared to three little shepherds in 1917. Sameiro is a holy shrine devoted to Mary in Braga. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Eponym equivalent of waiting for Godot [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. The **compadre** is a joint father, godfather, friend [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. (the newspaper Jornal de Letras [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Professor Óscar Lopes, a well-known Portuguese Scholar [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Professor Joel Serrão, another well-known Portuguese scholar. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Translator’s note: [Alshit] ‘. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Ball pen [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. swag, that is, all one's belongings on one's back wrapped in a blanket or cloth [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Picaroto, inhabitant of Pico island [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Zeca Afonso a Resistance songwriter prior to the Revolution of 1974 [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Alfenim is a sweet typical of the island and of the Feasts of the Holy Spirit, being given during its preparation various shapes like flowers, doves, chickens, among others. During the Feasts, it may have shapes representing parts of the human body, in gratefulness for miracles obtained. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. On Pico Island,after a certain altitude on the rocky hills, there was the need to clean up the rocks. Since there were too many of these, even after building up the delimitating walls, they created “maroiços”. The rocks were laid one on top of the other, in steps or ramps, enabling people to carry stones for the upper levels that ended up sometimes in a conic conglomerate of stone [↑](#footnote-ref-15)