

EMBODYING THE NATION: LITERATURE AND DIPLOMACY IN BRAZIL

by

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(Under the Direction of Susan C. Quinlan)

ABSTRACT

Since its independence from Portugal in 1822, Brazil has had an impressive number of influential literary figures to become diplomats, conducting official negotiations between Brazil and other nations. Writers such as Domingos José Gonçalves de Magalhães, Francisco Adolfo de Varnhagen, Manuel de Oliveira Lima, João Cabral de Melo Neto, João Guimarães Rosa and Vinicius de Moraes—to name only a few—have all represented Brazil through its Ministry of External Affairs, Itamaraty. These writers evoke a politics of national representation in the literary and diplomatic fields, navigating not only the world of international politics, but also coming into close contact with other literatures and cultures, as they work abroad. In this way, diplomacy places them in an advantageous position from which distinct literary perspectives on Brazilian history and identity can be conceived in a comparative light.

This work is roughly divided into two sections. The first half contextualizes the writer-diplomat tradition in Brazil from the nineteenth century to the mid-twentieth century. This portion of my study considers the role of important intellectual institutions in the consolidation of this tradition, such as the Instituto Histórico Geográfico Brasileiro (founded in 1838) and the Academia Brasileira de Letras (founded in 1897). Following

this broad theoretical and historical contextualization, the second half analyzes specific literary works by three writer-diplomats from the immediate post-World War II period within the contexts of their diplomatic careers: João Guimarães Rosa, Vinicius de Moraes and João Cabral de Melo Neto. The study of the relationship between literature and diplomacy in Brazil not only reveals insight into the development of themes and narratives of certain authors' works, but also helps to further clarify many of the colonial and global aspects of Latin America's interconnected politico-cultural histories and identities.

INDEX WORDS: Cold War in Latin America; Diplomacy in Brazil; Intellectual History in Brazil; Literature in Brazil; Magalhães, Domingos José Gonçalves de; Melo Neto, João Cabral de; Moraes, Vinicius de; National Identity; Neocolonialism; Oliveira Lima, Manuel de; Postcolonialism; Rio Branco, Barão do; Romanticism; Rosa, João Guimarães; Vieira, Antonio

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DEDICATION

To my wife, Alaina, and our two beautiful children, Cole and Ila—may we always remain as close as we have while living in Family and Graduate Housing, Apt. 110-D.

And to the future—may it be filled with love, laughter and the patter of little feet.

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Although this document bears only my signature (and I assume full responsibility for its contents), my dissertation is, as are most works of scholarship, the result of intense collaboration. There are a number of people whose help has made this dissertation possible, and to whom I am wholeheartedly thankful. In this section, I have attempted to express appreciation to all those people without whose help this project would have been impossible.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

In 2007, while conducting research at the Arquivo Histórico do Itamaraty in Rio de Janeiro, I came across a letter written in 1951 by a boy from Stow, Ohio named Kenneth Rowe. The letter was addressed to the Brazilian Ambassador Hildebrando Accioly in Washington, D.C. (Rowe). Accioly was serving at the time on the Council of the Organization of American States (*Accioly Letter to Kenneth Rowe*). The young boy made two simple requests to the Ambassador. He asked for an autograph and also for any information the Ambassador could provide about Brazil:

My dear Mr. Ambassador: I am studing [sic] about Brazil by my self [sic] and since you are from Brazil I am wondering if you would send me your autograph and some information on Brazil. And if you do, you can send it to: My address is Box 77, Stow, Ohio. Sincerely yours, Kenneth Rowe
(Rowe)

The Ambassador promptly responded to Kenneth's letter with a note that read: "Dear Kenneth: I am happy to hear that you are studying about Brazil and I take pleasure in enclosing something about my country. Here is my autograph too. Sincerely yours, Hildebrando Accioly" (*Accioly Letter to Kenneth Rowe*).

Elaborative of the relationship between writing and the nation, the salience of this exchange between Kenneth and Ambassador Accioly rests primarily in the metonymy created between the Ambassador and his nation, Brazil. This metonymy is first expressed

by Kenneth's request for an autograph. There is no other motivation for Kenneth's request other than the fact that the Ambassador is from Brazil: "[S]ince you are from Brazil I am wondering if you would send me your autograph" (Rowe). For Kenneth, the autograph has a symbolic national meaning. It is not only a stylized expression of Accioly's personal identity, but also a keepsake representative of the nation. Under the guise of Accioly's ambassadorship, his autograph is a written symbol for the nation itself.

Another curious aspect of this correspondence, indicative of the metonymy implied between the Ambassador and Brazil is that, in his response, Accioly inverts the order of Kenneth's request. Kenneth placed the request for an autograph first and then secondly he requested "information on Brazil" (Rowe). The Ambassador, on the other hand, first conveyed that he had "enclose[ed] something about [his] country" and then states that he had included his "autograph too" (Accioly *Letter to Kenneth Rowe*). The reversal by Accioly of the order of Kenneth's request further depicts the symbolic interchangeability of writing, diplomacy and the nation. Gaining "information on Brazil" (Rowe) is tantamount to obtaining the "autograph" of the Ambassador.

These brief points raised about this otherwise inconsequential exchange between Kenneth and Ambassador Accioly demonstrate how a written literary expression of an individual identity may harbor within it the complexities of articulating a national identity at the conflux of literature and politics. As my dissertation will demonstrate, writers, as well as diplomats, in order to successfully navigate the challenges of their national present, are inevitably required to reorganize and restructure a national identity into narrative. The complexities involved in an expression of a collective national identity

through the written expression of a single individual require the negotiation of national symbols and history.

As I analyze the works of three important Brazilian writer-diplomats in the postwar era—João Guimarães Rosa, João Cabral de Melo Neto and Vinicius de Moraes—my inquiry into the relationship between literature and diplomacy in Brazil becomes inextricably linked to questions of nation-state formation with special consideration of the ways in which Brazil has historically positioned itself before its hegemonic others (i.e.: Europe and the United States). The relationship between literature and diplomacy then is intertwined with centuries of international dialogue founded in postcolonial and neocolonial paradigms that continue to be important to understanding Brazilian society today.

Drawing on both Mikhail Bakhtin's theory of dialogue, as put forth in his essay "Epic and Novel," and on Kirsten Silva Gruesz's recent book entitled *Ambassadors of Culture: The Transamerican Origins of Latino Writing*, Chapter 2 will elaborate a theoretical approach towards understanding the relationship between literature and diplomacy in Brazil. Placing the Brazilian writer-diplomat tradition within broader regional and global contexts, Chapter 2 will also briefly consider the work of other writers from Latin America such as Octavio Paz and Gabriela Mistral, revealing the inherent affinities between literature and diplomacy in numerous other Latin American countries.

The enduring relationship between literature and diplomacy is bound to the discourses of Romanticism apropos of nationalist projects of European expansionism, later adopted in the nineteenth century throughout Latin America. The historical

foundations of the writer-diplomat phenomenon thus reflect the entrenched qualities of a ritualistic politico-cultural dialogue that places all nations within an abstract system of reciprocal equality. This system of reciprocal equality facilitates locally the construction of a national identity through the elaboration of a national literary project. The national literary project of Brazil in the nineteenth-century proposed to rival those of Europe where the ideologies of nationalism historically originated.

In Chapter 3, I focus solely on Brazil as I consider the importance of nineteenth-century institutions such as the Instituto Histórico e Geográfico Brasileiro and the Academia Brasileira de Letras.¹ These institutions were crucial to the development of the writer-diplomat tradition in Brazil. The prevalence of writer-diplomats in the establishment of the ABL in the late nineteenth century opens the way for a retrospective analysis of the writer-diplomat tradition since independence. Contemporaneous with independence in 1822, the pre-Romantic poet Domingos Borges de Barros was one of the first writers to serve his newly independent nation abroad as a diplomat. Thus, beginning with Barros, the writer-diplomat tradition takes shape throughout the Romantic period with writers such as Domingos José Gonçalves de Magalhães and Araújo Porto Alegre, among others. These Romantic writer-diplomats articulate a national identity that portrays a sense of anxiety in comparison to the literatures of Europe, echoing the nation's impetus towards achieving a symbolic equality with those nations there.

Chapter 3 will also discuss the integral role of Emperor Dom Pedro II in the development of the writer-diplomat tradition in the nineteenth century. Dom Pedro II's patronage of the arts was often focused on the intellectuals of the IHGB in mid-nineteenth century Brazil. In the IHGB, he catalyzed the relationship between literature

and diplomacy, appointing writers to diplomatic posts in Europe on special historiographic missions. As an example of his patronage, Francisco Adolfo de Varnhagen researched in Europe, under a diplomatic guise, the historical archives of numerous countries in order to write the first comprehensive history of Brazil: *História geral do Brasil* (1854). Thus, the organization of the nation's history in the nineteenth century was not only, in broad terms, an effort to articulate a national identity in relation to the metropolis through an exploration of its colonial past. It was also, as concerns the historiography of Varnhagen, an attempt to articulate that identity through the lens of a conservative viewpoint, protective of the power of the monarchy.

In Chapter 4, I configure the Jesuit priest Padre Antonio Vieira as a predecessor to the writer-diplomat tradition in Brazil. Vieira's *História do futuro* (1663-1667) is used as an appropriate departure point for analyzing the broad cultural processes involved in the emergence of the tradition. An examination of Vieira's Baroque/Early Enlightenment expression of Portuguese national identity emerging between the poles of monarchy and religion illuminates the foundational elements of national discourse in Brazil. In general, national discourses are inevitably bound to a "sacred" rhetoric, legitimizing the national enterprise as an other-worldly project. A comparison of the literary project of Vieira to that of later Brazilian writers such as Machado de Assis and João Guimarães Rosa explains the function of literature and diplomacy among the elite to symbolize an immutable and powerful nation. Furthermore, a comparison of Vieira with later Brazilian writers demonstrates how the appearance of the writer-diplomat tradition confirms, in the words of Gruesz, concerning the construction of a Latino identity in the US, "The conditions of authorial celebrity. . . heavily informed by nationalistic desires" (15).

Chapter 5 begins the portion of my dissertation in which I analyze works by specific authors of the postwar era within the context of their diplomatic careers. In Chapter 5, I begin to configure the relationship between literature and diplomacy as a means to further examine the politico-cultural pressures of a nation dominated by exogenous hegemonic forces. In order to broach a consideration of US hegemony in relation to the three works that I consider, I build upon Jean Franco's characterization of Latin American literature in the 40s and 50s put forth in her article, "The Nation as Imagined Community." In the 40s and 50s, Latin American literature had become, according to Franco, "a skeptical reconstruction of past errors" that "made visible the absence of any signified that could correspond to the nation" ("The Nation" 205).

The main objective of Chapter 5 is to compare João Guimarães Rosa's diplomatic work at the Serviço de Demarcação de Fronteiras with his landmark novel *Grande sertão: veredas* (1956), considering Riobaldo's negotiations of the (meta)physical borders of the sertão as national allegory. In an interview with Günter Lorenz, Guimarães Rosa affirms the relationship between the nation and Riobaldo, declaring that "Riobaldo. . . é apenas o Brasil" (qtd. in Lorenz 96). In the pages of Guimarães Rosa's novel, the reader witnesses the *travessias*, or crossings, of the protagonist Riobaldo as he travels throughout the *sertão* in search of a resolution to his interminable internal conflicts with, and his ruminations on, God, the Devil and Diadorim. Riobaldo's travels find a crucial parallel: the politico-cultural *travessia* of postwar Brazil.

Riobaldo's quest for an identity in *Grande sertão: veredas* parallels in the twentieth century an intensified search for a national self frustrated by the many challenges to Brazilian development. Riobaldo's travels traverse, through allegory, the

boundaries between literature and reality; or rather, Riobaldo's travels portray a mythical and symbolic rendering of the nation. Unable to create a satisfactory bridge that would reconcile Riobaldo's present with his past, the novel is a frustrated dialogue between Riobaldo and the interlocutor in which only one voice is heard. So long as Riobaldo is unable to decipher his past, the future of Brazil is equally uncertain.

Chapter 6 examines Vinicius de Moraes's poem "Pátria minha" (1948).

Conceived within the context of his diplomatic experience in Los Angeles from 1946 to 1950, "Pátria minha" projects a vulnerable image of a feminized nation whose politico-cultural identity is faced with seemingly insurmountable economic and political pressures. In the first line of the poem, Moraes expresses the identity crisis faced by his country: "A minha pátria é como se não fosse" ("Pátria minha" 383). By inventing an unrealized national space, Moraes simultaneously confirms and questions Brazilian national identity throughout the poem. My analysis examines the poem in conjunction with personal correspondence and other public documents in order to understand Moraes's conception of his nation in the mid-twentieth century. Brazil, similar to other Latin American countries, was, in the 40s and 50s, threatened by US-economic expansionism and the ideological warfare of the Cold War. These dilemmas caused Brazilian writers to question and rewrite the discourses of history and identity that had been articulated since independence.

As suggested by Gruesz, "The rhetoric of ambassadorship insists on literature's place within a public sphere, where definitions of citizenship, identity, and policy are debated" (18). In Chapter 7, I analyze João Cabral de Melo Neto's poem *O cão sem plumas* (1949), written during his first diplomatic posting abroad in Barcelona, taking

place from 1947 to 1950. The poem *O cão sem plumas* reveals deep empathies between Cabral's diplomatic career and his poetry. Both his literary and diplomatic work during the period deal with questions of citizenship and national identity. Through my analysis of the poem, viewed in conjunction with official diplomatic communiqués, conference addresses, personal correspondence and other personal documents, the affinities between Cabral's writing and diplomacy become apparent. João Cabral de Melo Neto's work in both poetry and diplomacy are linked to how the oppression and economic destitution of postwar Spain under the Franco regime compares with that of his own native region, the Northeast of Brazil.

The last chapter of my dissertation, Chapter 8, presents my conclusions, drawing brief connections among the preceding chapters and pointing to future research projects, such as the work of the contemporary diplomat João Almino.

Chapter 2

Embodying the Nation: Towards a Theory of Literature and Diplomacy

Estamos fadados, pois, a depender da experiência de outras letras (10)
—Antonio Cândido, *Formação da literatura brasileira*

In 1836, the diplomats Domingos José Gonçalves de Magalhães (1811-1882) and Francisco Salles de Torres Homem (1812-1876), along with the soon-to-be diplomat Manuel de Araújo Porto Alegre (1806-1879), published from Paris a short-lived literary journal entitled *Niterói* (Costa e Silva 23). In *Niterói*, Gonçalves de Magalhães published his landmark essay: “Discurso sobre a história da literatura no Brasil.” This essay has traditionally marked the beginning of Romanticism in Brazil when the intellectual elite “tomavam ciência das *novidades* européias” (Bosi 81) and attempted to configure a Brazilian voice within the panorama of Western nationhood. According to Magalhães, the nation’s poets needed to rely less on the imagery of Europe, “colhidas nos livros,” and instead glorify “outras belezas naturais” (par. 30). These “outras belezas naturais” were of course only to be found in Brazil: “O que mais dá realce e nomeada a alguns dos nossos poetas não é certamente o uso dessas sedições fábulas, mas sim outras belezas naturais, não colhidas nos livros, e que só o céu da pátria lhes inspirará” (par. 30).

Although Magalhães proposes to distance himself from the imagery of European Romantics, he was still following in their footsteps. In “Discurso sobre a história da literatura no Brasil,” he argues that, in order for him and his countrymen to create a national literature, it was necessary to imbue their literary work with local images and themes. Yet, this autochthonous orientation was founded in the nativism of Europe; a

literary approach which sought to utilize local paradigms of history, folklore and art in the construction of a national identity. Thus, in the Romantic era, the nation's natural flora and fauna, as well as the reappropriation of indigenous myths and traditions, became the primordial material *par excellence* for the movement in Brazil.

After returning from their travels in Europe, Magalhães, Torres Homem, and Porto Alegre became active participants in the intellectual and literary debates of the period. In Rio de Janeiro, close-knit circles of intellectuals met together in parlors, bars and palaces to discuss literature.² This small network of writers, politicians and other intellectuals made a point to always keep in step with trends developing in Europe; literary trends, fashion trends and otherwise. Considered as the avant-garde of the time, Magalhães, Torres Homem and Porto Alegre were important members of this network of elites. All three men participated actively in Rio's intellectual atmosphere, garnering the praise of the nation's principal literary and political instigator, Dom Pedro II (1825-1891). As far as their diplomacy is concerned, Francisco Salles Torres Homem would eventually give up his diplomatic career in favor of life in Rio. Yet, Magalhães and Porto Alegre finished out their lives serving their nation abroad. Magalhães worked in Russia, Spain and the United States while Porto Alegre served in Portugal as well as in Dresden and Berlin (Costa e Silva 23).

The prominence of these three writers in the intellectual life of Rio, coupled with their diplomatic travels, expresses the fundamental role of diplomacy in the construction of a national identity. Diplomatic travels during the nineteenth century created the circumstances by which a local identity might be constructed in relation to the traditional cultural centers of the West. Thus, the inherent irony of the relationship between

literature and diplomacy in Brazil is that the expression of the local necessitated the physical displacement of its elite to the foreign.

Recently, Alberto da Costa e Silva organized a book of essays entitled *O Itamaraty na cultura brasileira* (2002). In this volume, he published an essay entitled “Diplomacia e cultura” in which he proposes that Magalhães, Torres Homem and Porto Alegre are prototypical members of Brazil’s writer-diplomat tradition. These three men serve to demonstrate one of the most intriguing facets of the relationship between literature and diplomacy in Brazil:

Os três podem ser tidos como modelos no exercício de uma das funções mais fecundas do diplomata, embora das menos reconhecidas e estudadas: a de trazer para o seu país e nacionalizar o que de novo se pensa, ensaia e pratica em outras partes do mundo. (23)

Since its independence, an impressive number of influential literary figures have played important roles in diplomacy. The enduring relationship between literature and diplomacy in Brazil includes every literary period from Romanticism to Modernism to contemporary times and forms a tradition of writer-diplomats spanning the centuries from independence to today. Poised at the threshold of not only the world of international politics, but also at those thresholds of distinct national literatures and cultures, writer-diplomats have been placed in advantageous positions from which a Brazilian perspective on history and identity can be conceived in a comparative light.

In the introductory chapter to *O Itamaraty na cultura brasileira*, Celso Lafer, the ex-Minister of Brazilian External Affairs (1992, 2001-2002), briefly theorizes about the importance of writer-diplomats to Brazilian literature. Lafer proposes that, despite

existing stylistic and thematic differences, the vast array of writer-diplomats considered in the book points to a fundamental commonality. The literature of each seeks to define that which individuates Brazil from other nations:

[A] despeito da variedade inerente a uma obra coletiva que trata de autores diversos pertencentes a distintas épocas. Entendo poder-se dizer que o presente livro está permeado pelo tema da identidade e projeta uma busca constante do que é o Brasil. (“O Itamaraty” 11)

The relationship between a symbolic literary representation of Brazil and the representative nature of diplomacy is important. Just as literature may constitute the nation in printed form, diplomacy is its political counterpart. Due to its extraordinary number of writer-diplomats, Brazil constitutes a noteworthy case of the convergence of politics and literature in the articulation of a national identity—one worthy of in-depth investigation.

Although the aesthetics of Romanticism eventually gave way to the rise of Realism and Naturalism while at the same time the Empire gave way to the First Republic (1889), the writer-diplomat tradition never faded with the beckoning of new schools or the organization of new political regimes. Nonetheless, the continued relevance of the writer-diplomat tradition was not always a given. The writer-diplomat phenomenon could have easily faded after the dethronement of Dom Pedro II in 1889 since in the nineteenth century the tradition was explicitly connected to his patronage (see chapter 3). In the latter part of the nineteenth century, however, the relationship between literature and diplomacy gradually disconnected itself from the patronage of Dom Pedro

II and, as the nation ushered in a new century as a democracy, the tradition took on a life of its own.

Aluísio Azevedo (1857-1913), after writing *O mulato* (1881) and *O cortiço* (1890) served as a diplomat in Spain, Japan, Argentina, Italy and England (Moisés 197-201). Likewise, the Parnassian poet Raimundo Correia (1859-1911), who published *Sinfonias* in 1883, and the pre-modernist Graça Aranha (1868-1931), who published his novel *Canaã* in 1902, worked as diplomats abroad. Raul Bopp (1898-1984), who as a member of the Modernist movement (1922-1930) published the influential poem *Cobra norato* (1931), served in a number of diplomatic positions, eventually attaining the rank of ambassador. The second generation Modernist poet, Murilo Mendes (1901-1975) was also a diplomat. Many other writers also served Brazil as diplomats such as Afonso Arinos, Otto Lara Resende, Manuel de Oliveira Lima, Eduardo Prado, Ronald de Carvalho, Luís Aranha, Álvaro Lins, Ribeiro Couto and Rubem Braga.³

Writer-diplomats are even still active today with poets such as Alberto da Costa e Silva, Davino Sena and Felipe Fortuna as well as novelists such as the Ambassador João Almino. Other important writers can also be connected to diplomacy, even if they never were diplomats. For example, much of Clarice Lispector's literary production was written while stationed abroad with her husband Maury Gurgel Valente, a diplomat. To the degree that the writer-diplomat tradition has been an integral part of Brazil's intellectual life since independence, a consideration of the depth and breadth of the relationship between literature and diplomacy constitutes a useful tool in understanding the politico-cultural processes at work in the development of national identity.

In the middle of the twentieth century, Raul Bopp was working as a diplomat alongside João Guimarães Rosa in the Departamento Político do Ministério das Relações Exteriores in Rio de Janeiro. At this time, he was asked by Rosa to restructure the entrance exam required of candidates who sought careers in diplomacy. In Bopp's *Memórias de um embaixador* (1968), he writes that, while considering the exam's layout, he came to the conclusion that the successful candidate must possess a great aptitude in the Portuguese language as well as a convincing knowledge of Brazilian culture:

Ao aceitar o cargo, procurei, com especial interêsse, tomar pé em assuntos didáticos. Pareceu-me que duas matérias estavam exigindo, urgentemente, um novo tratamento: Cultura Geral e Português. . . Português deveria constituir a prova básica dos vestibulares. A seleção dos candidatos deveria ser feita, de preferência, entre os que possuíssem qualidades naturais de expressão. (90-91)

A diplomat's duties traditionally demand participation in political, cultural and linguistic settings which are inherently multinational. In these settings, the clear and concise articulation of national norms, values and policies is indispensable. For this reason, according to Bopp, diplomats need to possess "qualidades naturais de expressão" (91). Such an emphasis on strong written and oral communication arguably favors the employment of literary writers in the diplomatic field. By employing Brazil's writers, the skills obtained by crafting poetry, novels, and essays could also be put to work in diplomacy, since the medium of the writer—the word—is the same as that of the diplomat.

In a letter written to João Guimarães Rosa (1908-1967) on December 6, 1949, the Ambassador Hildebrando Accioly (1888-1962), while stationed in Washington D.C., expressed a similar sentiment. In the letter, Accioly requests that Rosa employ his talents as a writer in order to provide his fellow compatriots with his impressions of Italy:

Dê-me pois notícias de seu trabalho literário, de seus projetos no campo cultural. A vida intelectual aí é intensa, mas não desejo que você se limite a vivê-la. O autor de “Sagarana” deve-nos outras obras do mesmo quilate. . . A Itália não lhe terá inspirado, naturalmente, nada naquele gênero. Mas seria interessante que, talvez com mais uma excursão por lá, dali nos desse as suas impressões de arte. (*Letter to Guimarães Rosa, 1949*)

As evidenced by Accioly’s latent implication that Rosa’s impressions of Italy would somehow be more valuable and eloquent than those provided by any other average traveler, the facility by which a writer-diplomat such as Rosa might express himself was, if not in fact a verifiable reality, at least a common belief. The salience of this belief in diplomatic circles is conveyed by Alberto da Costa e Silva when he states that “não há bom diplomata que não descreva as terras onde lhe coube viver” (34). For this reason, memoirs constitute a genre in Brazil in which diplomats have had an undeniable presence. To cite only a few examples, Bopp’s *Memórias de um embaixador* forms part of a diplomatic tradition including Joaquim Nabuco’s *Minha formação* (1900), Oliveira Lima’s *Memórias (Estas minhas reminiscências. . .)* (1937) and Aluísio Azevedo’s impressions of Japan in *O Japão* (1984), among others.

But, even though certain writers’ “qualidades naturais de expressão” (Bopp 91) may serve as one possible explanation for their prevalence among the ranks of diplomats,

such a reductionist view overlooks many of the parallel functions that exist between the worlds of literature and diplomacy. The writer-diplomat tradition in Brazil reflects a politics of representation which engenders questions of national identity catalyzed by intellectual exchange within the *transnational* contexts of literature and the *international* contexts of diplomacy. The single most defining characteristic of both literature and diplomacy in Brazil is the means by which each field dialogues with other nations and cultures.

In “Diplomacia e cultura,” Costa e Silva further contemplates some of the similarities between poets and diplomats. These similarities evolve around the use of language:

O diplomata, como poeta, trabalha com as palavras. Tendo por alvo destinatários tão diferentes e intenções quase opostas, ambos as usam para mostrar e ocultar, para convencer e iludir. . . A fadiga de lidar quotidianamente com as palavras, para que não digam tudo e deixem sempre um aberto para o avanço ou o recuo, pode gastar no diplomata [sic] o poeta e o ficcionista, para os quais cada palavra está encharcada de memória e vale por um outro tipo de desenho, timbre, peso, compasso e colorido. (26)

The suggestion by Costa e Silva that poetry and diplomacy exhibit “intenções quase opostas” opens the way to a discussion of the role of dialogue in the contexts of literature and diplomacy. The intentions of literature and diplomacy are seemingly opposite. The two function in different, although related, systems of exchange. Literature functions in a *transnational* system where the free flow of ideas is not typically impeded by the geo-

political borders of nations. On the other hand, diplomacy's principal reason-of-being is to ensure the sovereignty of the borders through which literature so freely passes, making it *international*. Literature is inherently open to the other. Yet, diplomacy is a metonymic representation of national borders, not willing to abate from fixed positions.

Still, even though literature is ideally borderless and diplomacy exists because of borders, they both rely on dialogue. As a national literature is elaborated, it must take into account some sort of conception of other opposing national literatures. Similarly, as soon as a nation proclaims its independence, one of its first acts is always to seek recognition of its sovereignty from other nations. Nations and, likewise, their literatures are not created in isolation, but rather, they bear the marks of historical and philosophical processes which have been constituted by centuries-old global transmissions of information.

According to Antonio Cândido in *Formação da literatura brasileira*, creating a literary tradition is a collective act dependent upon the organization of literary texts into a symbolic system imbued with the power to construct an identity for the society where these texts are created. In Cândido's terms, Brazilian individuals can connect with a greater collective identity through literature, transforming their own individual experiences into "elementos de contato entre os homens" and into "interpretações das diferentes esferas da realidade" (*Formação* 24). This symbolic system is maintained by three separate entities which together form a tradition. These three entities are "um conjunto de produtores literários," "um conjunto de receptores," and "um mecanismo transmissor" (*Formação* 23). Or rather, the system is constituted by writers, readers (or listeners), and literary works and criticism, respectively.

This line of transmission between producer and receiver is what, in Cândido's opinion, situates literature "como fenômeno de civilização" (*Formação* 24). If the symbolic role of a nation's literature is to connect its citizens to one another by providing a vehicle to share individual experiences (both fictional and real) that reflect a collective reality, then it is important to also consider how the constructions of a national literary tradition, and likewise those individual experiences that constitute it, are also developed in conjunction with those collective and individual experiences of other nations. In the worlds of literature and politics, it is deep interdependence and not independence that characterizes the transmission of ideas.

Writers and diplomats both have traditionally had special access to the politico-cultural channels that constitute a symbolic system functioning on an international scale. In 2002, Kirsten Silva Gruesz published a book entitled *Ambassadors of Culture: The Transamerican Origins of Latino Writing*. In this book, she demonstrates how, when considering the evolution of a Latino identity in the United States, "[a]uthorship serves as a form of political engagement within both national and regional contexts" (xiii). In this study, Gruesz traces the politico-cultural contours of an extensive network of nineteenth-century Latino writers in the United States. She does this in three distinct ways: she analyzes the dissemination of borderland texts through print-media from California and the Southwest; she investigates the Latin American reception and translation of American writers such as Longfellow, Whitman, and Bryant; and she also investigates the writings of exiled and otherwise estranged Latin Americans living in the cultural centers of the U.S., such as the Colombian writer-diplomat Rafael Pombo (1833-1912) in New York.

In order to characterize the extensive literary network crucial in the creation and transmission of a Latino identity in nineteenth century, Gruesz establishes a “statist metaphor” (18) indicated by the title of the book, *Ambassadors of Culture*. This “statist metaphor” (Gruesz 18) explicitly associates writing with diplomacy, or rather, configures writing as a type of “cultural ambassadorship” (xiii), opening the way for understanding the “ambassadorial role” (18) of writing in a transamerican context. In the section entitled “Citizen, Ambassador: Stations of Literary Representation,” Gruesz contemplates the representative nature shared by both literature and diplomacy:

An ambassador’s authority comes about secondarily; it resides in the political authority s/he represents rather than being intrinsic to the ambassador’s own self. To be an ambassador of culture involves reporting and representing, but not enforcing, the authority of that idealized realm of prestige knowledge in a place where it does not rule—whether in the hinterlands or in a cosmopolitan space where many value systems come together in a chaotic plurality, as they did in American cities. The rhetoric of ambassadorship insists on literature’s place within a public sphere, where definitions of citizenship, identity, and policy are debated. (18)

For Gruesz, the usefulness of the “statist metaphor” in explaining the transnational function of writing engages a notion of dialogue. The work of an ambassador involves “reporting and representing, but not enforcing” (18). Thus, by nature of the vocation, ambassadors find themselves estranged from the nations they represent in politico-cultural contexts where their authority, connected solely to the homeland, “does not rule” (18). The diplomat’s authority, derived from his/her nation, is thus engaged at a

crossroads, “where many value systems come together in a chaotic plurality” (18).

Ambassadors, like writers, must be open to dialogue with diplomats of other nations in order to establish that which belongs to their own. The significance of the writer-diplomat’s work is dependent upon mutual recognition by equivalent representatives of other nations. Or, in the words of Gruesz, writers “are made available as a kind of export product, one in which other young nations may take an intense interest” (15).

At its foundation, diplomacy is intended to stress communication and openness. It exists in direct contrast to its international alternative—war—which functions through a concept of violent domination of, and closed positioning against, the other. Diplomacy, on the other hand, even if it does imply boundaries, is still open to dialogue. Diplomacy places nations in a continuum of rhetorical (yet certainly not always actual) equality located within a plural space where one cannot theoretically dominate, but rather must remain open to, the voices of others. This process of diplomatic negotiation takes place within what Celso Lafer describes as the “movimento dialógico da diferença,” leading diplomacy to involve a “componente. . . simbólico” that “vai além da articulação e da negociação dos interesses” (“O Itamaraty” 11). This “symbolic component” referred to by Lafer resides in the metonymy between the nation and its embodied representation, the diplomat.

Literature, equally metonymic of the nation, also benefits as much as diplomacy from the interdependence of dialogue. It bodes a similar symbolic function of “reporting and representing, but not enforcing” local cultures and identities (Gruesz 18). The dialogue of ambassadors, dependent upon the recognition of mutual national sovereignty, links nations together in an international political system. In a similar fashion, literature

not only serves, on a national plane, to create *Cândido*'s symbolic system, connecting individuals to a collective reality, but it also connects nations together in an equally symbolic manner. This international literary system is (at least in theory) founded in an ideal, as is diplomacy, of mutual recognition and not domination. For example, just as all nations seek the recognition of their sovereignty from other already independent nations, the same often happens in the literary realm:

The most significant measure of his [the writer's] success is external: only when audiences outside the national sphere recognize and applaud his construction of the national essence does it become, for him, truly valid.
(Gruesz 19)

Writers, like diplomats, are articulated in an independent and equal position in relation to national others. Yet, the actual position of any nation, and similarly, its literature, is dependent upon a stratified system, evolving around local and global manifestations of power and domination. Nonetheless, the relevant theoretical analogy between diplomacy and national literature is that they both share an expressive rhetorical equality. In the words of Gruesz, "the cultural ambassador obligingly sets out to represent the national body by codifying through metaphor and figurative language its cultural identity, its specificity" (19).

Furthermore, the employment of the term "ambassadors of culture" by Gruesz does not only find validity in its rhetorical usefulness, but it also is bound to history. Although Gruesz's work is not solely involved in the analysis of the literature of Latin American writer-diplomats (and is much less interested in the phenomenon itself), she still recognizes the relevance of diplomacy in the creation of a transamerican Latino

identity: “A number of the writers in this study held diplomatic posts, which was a common enough occupation for letrados in newly independent Spanish America” (18). Similarly, the relationship is stressed when she states that “many of these writers,” discussed in the book, “served in diplomatic posts. . . mediating between local and global spheres of culture” (14-15). Thus, whereas Kirsten Silva Gruesz claims that, “[t]he rhetoric of ambassadorship insists on literature’s place within a public sphere, where definitions of citizenship, identity, and policy are debated” (18), the textual politics of literary representation provoke questions of the nation within the international literary system as well as those of the individual within the nation.

As Costa e Silva proposes that literature and diplomacy “deixem sempre um aberto para o avanço ou o recuo” (26), the varying degrees of open-endedness and closed-endedness by which the worlds of literature and diplomacy function share a distinct parallel with Bakhtin’s theory of the novel in his essay “Epic and Novel” (1941). According to Michael Holquist, the role of dialogue between intrinsic and extrinsic components in constructing an identity is a fundamental element of Bakhtin’s theory. Throughout Bakhtin’s work, there is “a ceaseless battle between centrifugal forces that seek to keep things apart, and centripetal forces that strive to make things cohere” (Holquist xviii). The relationship between literature and diplomacy reflects this same “sense of opposition and struggle” (Holquist xvii).

For diplomacy, dialogue is political, requiring the articulation of fixed positions and borders; it seeks coherence of purpose and design in order to represent national policy on the stage of world affairs. In contrast, literary dialogue exists ideally in a hybrid space between ways of being and perceiving the world where ideas and concepts can be

mutually shared without loss. The evolution of literature inevitably requires abandoning fixed positions. The evolution of diplomacy inevitably involves affirming them. Between the two, the dialogic struggle of national identity takes shape. In order to create a *national literature* (we now see the Bakhtinian paradox inherent in the phrase), the transnational nature of literature must become subject to the national representative nature of diplomacy. Thus, the intersubjectivity of literature is an integral part of the subjectivity of the nation, and vice versa.

In *Epic and Novel*, Bakhtin proposes: “[T]he novel parodies other genres” (5). If we understand the nation as not only a political construct but also a cultural one, then the politico-cultural operations of national identity are comparable to Bakhtin’s novelistic process. In the same way that novels parody other genres, nations parody other nations, evoking an “incomplete process of a world-in-the-making. . . stamped with the seal of inconclusiveness” (Bakhtin 30). Diplomats negotiate policy. Writers negotiate identity.

According to Celso Lafer, one nation’s dialogue with another, “para ser fecundo, não pode ser a repetição do repertório do Outro. Tal repetição petrifica o diálogo, que, imobilizado, deixa de ser crítico” (“O Itamaraty” 12). The writer-diplomat embodies the struggle of national literature, on the one hand, by allowing perceptions of national identity to be cast through the lens of his nation’s open-ended reciprocity with others while, on the other, still maintaining the nation’s immutable right to sovereignty on the stage of world affairs. As Brazil’s most prominent diplomat at the turn-of-the-century—José Maria da Silva Paranhos, jr., the Barão do Rio Branco (1845-1912)—often stated, “*Ubique patriae memor*—em qualquer lugar para sempre a pátria em minha lembrança” (Lafer “O Itamaraty” 11).

If “centrifugal” and “centripetal” forces characterize the Bakhtinian concept of dialogue as stated by Holquist (xvii), then they also characterize the relationship between literature and diplomacy. The former must remain open and the latter closed, in a constant struggle for national definition and self-realization. In the words of Bakhtin, “The period of national languages, coexisting but closed and deaf to each other, comes to an end. Languages throw light on each other: one language can, after all, see itself only in the light of another language” (12). Both literature and diplomacy are involved in what Bakhtin calls the “zone of contact” which, like the paradox of national literature, is in constant flux, articulated at “the inconclusive present (and consequently the future)” (37). This zone of contact “creates the necessity of this incongruity of a man with himself. . . . There is no mere form that would be able to incarnate once and forever all of his human possibilities and needs” (37). Bakhtin’s theoretical “man,” paralleling the nation, is embodied by the writer-diplomat.

The circumstances surrounding the emergence of the writer-diplomat tradition in Brazil converge at the intersection of two distinct planes—the political and the cultural. In the words of Homi K. Bhabha, it is expressly from the union of “political thought” and “literary language” that the symbolic modern nation manifests itself:

Nations, like narrative, lose their origins in the myths of time and only fully realize their horizons in the mind's eye. Such an image of the nation—or narration—might seem impossibly romantic and excessively metaphorical, but it is from those traditions of political thought and literary language that the nation emerges as a powerful historical idea in

the west. An idea whose cultural compulsion lies in the impossible unity of the nation as a symbolic force. (1)

The discourses of literature and diplomacy function within a complex matrix composed of politico-cultural spaces existing between nations and within them alike. Both literature and diplomacy inevitably evoke a politics of national representation. The diplomat and the literary work both symbolize the nation. It is from within this matrix that the paradox of the “impossible unity” of the nation is paralleled by the “impossible unity” of literature with diplomacy.

Before elaborating in subsequent chapters a more detailed analysis of the writer-diplomat tradition in Brazil, it is important to first configure, at least provisionally, the relationship between literature and diplomacy in broader contexts. The fact that the writer-diplomat phenomenon is not only germane to Brazil but has been seen in many other nations on various continents throughout modern times corroborates the representative nature of the two fields. Specifically, the relationship between literature and diplomacy in Latin America not only reveals insight into the development of themes and narratives related to certain authors’ works, but also helps to further clarify many of the colonial and global aspects of the region’s interconnected politico-cultural histories and identities.

Throughout the Americas and Europe, there have emerged important literary writers who served their respective nations as diplomats. For example, Benjamin Franklin (1706-1790) comes to mind as a crucial figure in the American Revolution for his service as a diplomat to France while also significantly contributing to the development of US print-capitalism. Likewise, the United States’ short story writer Nathaniel Hawthorne

(1804-1864) and African American writer, critic and political activist James Weldon Johnson (1871-1938) were both diplomats. In Europe, the phenomenon is equally apparent. Portugal's paramount realist Eça de Queirós (1845-1900) was a career-long diplomat, having written many of his definitive novels while abroad in Cuba, England and France. Additionally, the Frenchman François-René de Chateaubriand (1768-1848), an influential figure in the development of Brazilian Romanticism, served a brief stint as a diplomat around the time of Napoleon ("Chateaubriand" par. 7). In Latin America, the writer-diplomat tradition is especially relevant, encompassing figures such as Chile's Gabriela Mistral (1889-1957) and Pablo Neruda (1904-1973) or Mexico's Octavio Paz (1914-1998) and Carlos Fuentes (b. 1928), among many others.

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Latin America became caught in the middle of a shift in Western hegemony. As the pressures of economic expansion began to bear down on the region, a maritime Great Britain, which had dominated the region in the nineteenth century, was overtaken by the United States. Many of the writer-diplomats of the last two centuries, such as Miguel Ángel Asturias (Guatemala, 1899-1974), Joaquim Nabuco (Brazil, 1849-1910) and Alfonso Reyes (Mexico, 1889-1959), were writing at a time when, and in a region where, the line between political activism and literary activity was often blurred because of this shift in hegemony. The rise of US domination in the region was an important catalyst for many of these intellectuals, urging them to think of Latin America as a whole and contemplate a single Latin American identity in order to stand united against the neocolonialism of the US. Writers, such as Cuba's José Martí (1853-1895), found themselves along with other politicians and intellectuals contemplating the ramifications of this shift in hegemony. Besides

contributing to the construction of a collective identity, Latin American writer-diplomats' experiences abroad, whether in Europe, Asia, the United States or even within their own region, have also led them to new personal literary heights.

Gabriela Mistral's career abroad first began in 1922, when she left Chile for Mexico, invited by the Mexican Minister of Education to work in educational reform (Le Guin 53). A decade later, in 1932, after having left Mexico in 1926 and having worked in Europe for some time, Mistral joined Chile's diplomatic corps (Gazarian-Gautier "Introduccion" viii). Mistral served in a number of nations as a diplomat, including posts in Europe, Brazil, California, and in New York (Gazarian-Gautier *Gabriela* xviii). Indicative of the dialectical processes associated with Latin American identity, it was during her initial experience abroad in Mexico that Mistral "saw her country in perspective and that she first embraced in her concern all the problems of Latin America" (Gazarian-Gautier 33). Her poetic production during this period while in Mexico includes the poem *Ternura* (1924). According to Jaime Quezada, *Ternura* is a "[l]ibro de fundamento en el andar lugares y recorrer territorios, en el goce maravillador de olores, sabores y colores" (119). Through "el descubrir" of the region's "naturaleza geográfica y humana" (Quezada 119), *Ternura* tackles, in poems such as "Meciendo," "Canción Quechua" and "Niño mexicano," not only questions of Latin American identity, but also issues of child development and the roles of women in society.⁴

In 1945, Mistral won universal recognition when she was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature. She was the first in a series of Latin American writer-diplomats to be so honored. During her speech, Mistral proclaimed: "At this moment, by an undeserved stroke of fortune, I am the direct voice of the poets of my race and the indirect voice for

the noble Spanish and Portuguese tongues” (par. 3). Pablo Neruda received the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1971 and, similar to Mistral, also served Chile abroad in a number of different countries.

Neruda’s first experience abroad as a diplomat was in Burma. There, far from Chile and in an entirely new culture, Neruda expressed feelings of exile while writing his poem *Residencia en la Tierra* (1925-1935). According to the contemporary writer-diplomat Jorge Edwards, there is a direct relation between the premise of *Residencia en la Tierra* and Neruda’s Burmese experience: “The title is a hidden allusion. Residence on Earth [sic] is actually residence in the language. . . In his letters from the Far East, he repeatedly explained that his only territory, his only certainty in those years, was the Spanish language” (Farah 70). Writing was a means for Neruda to remain connected to Chile while abroad. Some of Neruda’s other posts would also be important to his development as a writer. In Spain, he came into personal contact with Mistral and, while serving in Mexico, he had dealings with Octavio Paz.

Octavio Paz received the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1990. Decades earlier, in 1962, he had been appointed as the Mexican Ambassador to India. During the 50s, in the midst of his diplomatic career, Paz published two volumes of essays dealing with Mexican identity: *El laberinto de la soledad* (1950) and *El arco y la lira* (1956). Years later, Paz expressed in an interview that these two works question the relationship between national and individual identity:

Pero otro tema—otro misterio—me interesó tanto o más: que significa ser mexicano? Esta pregunta sobre México y sobre los mexicanos es también

sobre mí mismo. Y así surgieron los dos primeros libros de ensayos: *El laberinto de la soledad* y *El arco y la lira*. (Paz qtd. in Rosman 75)

Reminding us here of Cándido's symbolic literary system where individual experiences serve as "elementos de contato entre os homens" (24), Paz questions the nature of a collective Mexican identity by questioning his own personal identity. Or rather, he suggests that the national experience is constructed through the articulation of the individual experience.

Many of the essays in *El laberinto de la soledad* came as a direct result of his individual experiences abroad as a diplomat. Specifically, in the opening essay entitled "El pachuco y otros extremos," Paz expresses how his first diplomatic post in Los Angeles influenced his perspectives of Mexican identity:

Y debo confesar que muchas de las reflexiones que forman parte de este ensayo nacieron fuera de México, durante dos años de estancia en los Estados Unidos. Recuerdo que cada vez que me inclinaba sobre la vida norteamericana, deseoso de encontrarle sentido, me encontraba con mi imagen interrogante. Esa imagen, destacada sobre el fondo reluciente de los Estados Unidos, fue la primera y quizá la más profunda de las respuestas que dio este país a mis preguntas. (12)

When Paz states that "cada vez que me inclinaba sobre la vida norteamericana. . . me encontraba con mi imagen interrogante" (12), he proposes a dialogic aspect to identity formation that relies on ontological negotiations, taking place on a collective national plane between Mexico and the United States. Through Paz's imagery, the dialogic reciprocity of the historical relationship between the two nations takes shape. The

“imagen interrogante” of Mexico “destacada sobre el fondo reluciente de los Estados Unidos” is revealed like a photograph resting in its chemical bath. Paz expresses the idea that one’s own national identity can only be ascertained through its comparison with other national realities. Further, he suggests the dialectics of identity formation are as important to the nation as they are for the individual, since the former relies on the latter to articulate its existence. Or rather, the national is a product of the individual.

In “El pachuco y otros extremos,” Paz expresses the duress of the political and cultural subordination of centuries of colonization and domination in a Latin American context. He writes: “La historia de México es la del hombre que busca su filiación, su origen. Sucesivamente afrancesado, hispanista, indigenista, ‘pocho,’ cruza la historia como un cometa de jade, que de vez en cuando relampaguea” (18-19). The historically subordinate political position of Mexico within the international system—a position expressed through a paternal metaphor as a “hombre que busca su filiación”—is exemplified by the nation’s problematic histories with France, Spain, the United States and even with its own indigenous past. During these centuries of struggle, Paz proclaims Mexico has only had ephemeral flashes of success, when “de vez en cuando” the nation “relampaguea” (19).

The essays of *El laberinto de la soledad* express the complexities apropos of the relationship between literature and diplomacy. This relationship is complex since both the negotiation of national identity and national policy take place in international contexts, between rhetorically sovereign but, in reality, highly stratified nation-states and literatures. As a testament to the difficulty of balancing his roles as a national political representative and a cultural icon, Paz renounced his ambassadorship in 1968 in protest

of the Tlateloco student massacre, demonstrating solidarity with “muchos jóvenes escritores vinculados con el movimiento estudiantil” (Vizcaino 115). The balance between the national and the individual as well as the political and the cultural is in constant negotiation.

One of the principal conclusions made by Paz’s essay, expressed in the closing lines of “El pachuco y otros extremos,” further reinforces this dialogic reciprocity of seeing oneself through the other: “En cada hombre late la posibilidad de ser o, más exactamente, *de volver a ser*, otro hombre” (25). Between the “one” and the “other” identity formation takes place. By investigating the development of the writer-diplomat tradition in Brazil during the nineteenth century, the next chapter will reveal the importance of diplomacy in facilitating literary dialogues across borders in the construction of a national identity.

Chapter 3

Literature and Diplomacy in Nineteenth-Century Brazil

Chapter 3 will discuss the relationship between literature and diplomacy in Brazil, especially in the nineteenth century. The chapter begins with a brief discussion of the founding of the Academia Brasileira de Letras, taking place in the latter part of that century (1897). From the vantage point of the ABL, the study then retrospectively investigates the overarching political and cultural factors that led to the appearance of significant numbers of writer-diplomats in nineteenth-century Brazil. Beginning with the earliest manifestations of Romanticism, the chapter will also discuss specific examples of the conflux of writing and diplomacy, such as the works of Domingos Borges de Barros and Domingos José Gonçalves de Magalhães, within a postcolonial framework. Barros and Gonçalves de Magalhães indicate the process by which the institutionalization of the relationship between literature and diplomacy took place in Brazil, evolving around the development of official discourses important to collective identity formation among the elite.

As political policies and cultural trends gave way to the discourses of nationhood, the relationship between literature and diplomacy first officially manifested itself in the Instituto Histórico e Geográfico Brasileiro, shepherded by the patronage of Dom Pedro II and founded, long before the ABL, in 1838. The writings of Francisco Adolfo de Varnhagen, one of the most prominent writer-diplomats of the period, will also be considered in connection with the IHGB. The articulation of a national identity was

necessitated in the nineteenth century by Brazil's politico-cultural dependency on Europe. The elite's efforts to assert a national identity are epitomized by the physical travels and literary expressions of Brazilian diplomats. Diplomacy, in this sense, has a profound historical impact on the orientation of Brazilian literary expression. As Brazil's preeminent writers and historians embarked on diplomatic missions, they became par excellence the embodiment of a dual movement towards and away from the metropolis.

Historical treaty negotiations, such as the Treaty of Tordesilhas (1494), the Treaty of Madrid (1750) and, later, the work of the Barão do Rio Branco, serve as useful metaphors for understanding the relationship of literature and diplomacy. The literary act in Brazil represents a binding of Brazil in textual accord with other nations, becoming analogous in many ways with the negotiations of diplomatic treaties. The relationships established by these negotiations are comparable to what Luiz Costa Lima has termed the "formação de compromisso." The "formação de compromisso" asserts Brazil's "autonomia política e literária ao mesmo tempo que, sem hiato algum, se mantinha o padrão europeu" (Costa Lima 206). By stressing the international facets of literature and politics in the nineteenth century, this study not only serves as a useful tool to understand the dialectics of identity formation among the elite, but also briefly points to the elision of other peripheral discourses.

The Academia Brasileira de Letras (ABL) was founded by Machado de Assis and others such as Joaquim Nabuco and José Veríssimo in 1897 with a mission to standardize the nation's language while also canonizing its literature. The ABL envisioned itself as a society capable of classifying the parameters by which Brazilian literature and language could accompany political and economic developments. Teresa Malatian, in her essay "O

Brasil visto do Itamaraty: Oliveira Lima e a história diplomática,” describes the ABL as a “campo social de grande prestígio na Primeira República, especialmente reconhecida no início do século como o local por excelência de consagração dos intelectuais” (89). Due to its national focus, the ABL in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was an important institution where literature and politics *lato sensu* intersected so that, in the words of Machado de Assis, “a nossa literatura. . . se desenvolva e caminhe aos altos destinos que a esperam” (“Instinto” 804).

Although the ABL’s first members were unable to predict the political turmoil that would characterize Brazil in the upcoming century, they had already imagined by 1897, in counterpoint to the unstable politics of the First Republic, the importance of a steadfast literary establishment. Accordingly, Machado de Assis, in his inaugural address, anticipated that the role of the ABL would be to “conservar, no meio da federação política, a unidade literária” (“Na Academia” 926). For Machado, the ABL needed to follow the French Academy’s example in order to “sobreviver aos acontecimentos de toda a casta, às escolas literárias e às transformações civis” (“Na Academia” 926).⁵ Likewise, the diplomat Joaquim Nabuco, at the same inaugural session, proposed that: “A formação da Academia de Letras é a afirmação de que literária, como politicamente, somos uma nação que tem o seu destino, seu caráter distinto” (par. 17). Thus, its founders proposed that, although the ABL would be a function of the national project, it would not be subject to coeval political changes. Or rather, to borrow from Homi K. Bhabha, Machado de Assis suggests that the ABL should be grounded in the “nation as a symbolic force” (1) and not to any specific literary school or political movement.

One of Machado de Assis's first official acts as president was to set up, at the prompting of José Veríssimo, a committee to decide a standardized Portuguese spelling of the nation's name. While Veríssimo preferred Brazil with a z and Capistrano Abreu preferred Brasil with an s (Bechara xviii), others like João Ribeiro suggested discarding the name completely in favor of the indigenous Ibirapitanga (Henriques 227). In the words of the Visconde de Taunay, Brazil was at the time “a única nação civilizada que não sab[ia] escrever o próprio nome” (Henriques 226).

This early emphasis on orthographic standardization in the ABL is but an anecdotal example of the nation's general impetus to connect the vast Brazilian territory through writing. Discussing a standardized way to spell the nation's name corresponds to the elite's efforts to consolidate national identity. Literature and historiography were integral parts of this process, stemming from a desire to “explicar as razões do atraso perante as nações hegemônicas e buscar soluções que permitissem a construção da nacionalidade” (Malatian *Oliveira Lima* 9). Glorifying Brazil's preeminent historians, critics and writers through membership in the ABL engendered a sense of collective right to this identity.

The ABL was in many ways formed at the crossroads of literature and diplomacy. From the beginning, the ABL counted among its membership many diplomats. Indeed, eleven of the forty founding members of the Academia Brasileira de Letras were writer-diplomats, having contributed to Brazilian historiography and/or literature and also having officially served their nation abroad. These eleven are, in alphabetical order: Carlos Magalhães de Azeredo (1872-1963), Aluizio de Azevedo (1857-1913), Rui Barbosa (1849-1923), Raimundo Correia (1859-1911), Domício da Gama (1862-1925),

Graça Aranha (1868-1931), Luís Caetano Guimarães Júnior (1847-1898), Manuel de Oliveira Lima (1867-1928), Salvador de Mendonça (1841-1913), Joaquim Nabuco (1849-1910) and Eduardo Prado (1860-1901).⁶

Similarly, seven of the ABL's forty patrons—deceased writers chosen by the founding members to symbolically shepherd their respective chairs—were writer-diplomats. Magalhães de Azeredo, founder of the ninth chair, chose as his patron the writer-diplomat and founder of Brazilian Romanticism, Domingos José Gonçalves de Magalhães (1811-1882). Taunay, founder of the thirteenth chair, chose Francisco Otaviano (1826-1884). Alcindo Guanabara chose, for the nineteenth chair, Joaquim Caetano da Silva (1810-1873). Likewise, Joaquim Nabuco, Carlos de Laet, Oliveira Lima and Eduardo Prado chose Maciel Monteiro (1804-1868), Araújo Porto Alegre (1806-1879), Francisco Adolfo de Varnhagem (1816-1878) and the Visconde do Rio Branco (1819-1880) for the twenty seventh, thirty second, thirty ninth and fortieth chairs, respectively. As will be demonstrated, beyond these founders and patrons, there have been many other important writer-diplomats in the ABL, beginning with the election of the Barão do Rio Branco in 1898, the most important diplomatic figure in late nineteenth century Brazil, for his contributions to historiography.

The literary society also shared a similar focus with Brazilian diplomacy. Diplomacy was literature's political companion in the nineteenth century. In the words of Celso Lafer, a diplomat and current member of the ABL, “a diplomacia, como uma política pública, se alimenta numa dialética de mútua implicação e polaridade, tanto da História do ‘eu,’ quanto da História do ‘outro’” (19). Literature and diplomacy were two principal means by which the nineteenth century Brazilian elite maintained ties with

intercontinental “others” in Europe while also attempting to articulate its difference from the same. This interplay between Brazil and Europe was a recurring theme of intellectual and political activity throughout the nineteenth century.

The founding of the ABL represents the consolidation of the relationship between literature and diplomacy, developed throughout the nineteenth century while also pointing to what would be its continued relevance in the twentieth century. Yet, whereas in the 1800s most diplomats in the ABL were principally focused on the production of history, in the twentieth century, the most renowned members were writers of poetry and prose. Writer-diplomats such as Ribeiro Couto, Afonso Arinos de Melo Franco, João Cabral de Melo Neto, João Guimarães Rosa, Vinicius de Moraes, Otto Lara Resende, and more recently the poet, diplomat and historian Alberto da Costa e Silva were/are all members of the ABL. Similarly, other diplomats in the twentieth century, who did not necessarily produce creative works, but were either critics, journalists, philologists or historians, also belonged to the ABL. This list includes Antonio Houaiss, Sergio Paulo Rouanet, and Assis Chateaubriand, among others. Notwithstanding the fact that the ABL is an important point of intersection for the worlds of literature and diplomacy, there are still a number of other important writer-diplomats who did/do not belong to the ABL. This list includes writers such as the modernist Raul Bopp and the contemporary novelist João Almino, currently Consul General of Brazil in Chicago.

The large number of writers that became diplomats during the nineteenth century has led some historians such as Ubiratan Machado to contemplate the phenomenon. While commenting on the frequency in which writers sought appointments as public servants in politics and government, U. Machado in *A vida literário no Brasil durante o*

romantismo observed that: “Tão atraente quanto a política só a diplomacia. . . Além de permitir longas viagens mundo afora, oferecia largos ócios para a atividade literária” (175). Similarly, Malatian noted that diplomacy and literature were two careers by which many intellectuals during the belle époque affirmed their mission of consolidating national identity and politics:

Consolidou-se assim no Itamaraty um dos espaços de sociabilidade mais articulados da Primeira República, que reunia intelectuais, especialmente historiadores, como Eduardo Prado, Joaquim Nabuco, João Ribeiro e Oliveira Lima. . . A construção de uma interpretação do Brasil e de suas relações internacionais motivava esse círculo (“O Brasil” 88)

I wish to stress two salient aspects suggested above by U. Machado and Malatian. First, diplomats were allowed and even encouraged while abroad to devote significant amounts of time to intellectual production focused on Brazil. Second, a diplomatic career offered opportunities to travel “mundo afora.” These two aspects are both associated with Lafer’s observation that the role of diplomacy is to define the “História do ‘eu’” in relation to the “História do ‘outro’” (*A identidade* 19). The national bent of the diplomats’ extracurricular intellectual production coupled with the international facet of their official travels, principally in Europe, illustrates the transcultural processes of identity negotiation among the Brazilian elite. In the words of U. Machado, diplomacy was “um maná caído dos céus” (175) that put Brazilian writers in touch with European nations and cultures while affording them the time to contemplate their nation’s own realities.

The attraction of diplomacy for writers was a phenomenon that began in Brazil with independence (1822) and underwent a process of institutionalization throughout the

nineteenth century, creating both a strong political (official) and cultural (informal) connection to develop between the two fields. U. Machado observes that: “Foi no exterior e em funções diplomáticas, que se escreveram algumas das obras mais extensas e trabalhadas do romantismo brasileiro, como *A confederação dos Tamoios*, de Magalhães, e *Colombo*, de Porto-Alegre” (175).

The ideals of Romanticism, elevating the individual and the nation above all else, were important in the development of the empathy between literature and diplomacy. Writer-diplomats stand at the threshold of both the worlds of individual and national autonomy, embodying the ideals of an enlightened cultural protagonist traveling abroad in search of those “truths” that would bring meaning and glory to the nation. In the words of Alberto da Costa e Silva, writer-diplomats traditionally served an important role in Brazilian intellectual circles:

as lições e os exemplos de outros, que, enriquecidos pelas experiências no estrangeiro, concorreram, de seus postos fora do país ou durante suas breves ou alongadas estadas no Brasil, para renovar não só os processos criativos, mas também as visões e os entendimentos do mundo de seus contemporâneos (26)

This heroic articulation of the writer-diplomat, empowered by an enlightened vision encountered abroad to be shared with his fellow Brazilians, is reminiscent of Joseph Campbell’s definition of the archetypal hero of world mythologies. In *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, Campbell explains that the hero returns from a “mysterious adventure with the power to bestow boons on his fellow man” (30). As Costa e Silva proposes, these writer-diplomats were sent on journeys to Europe and other lands in an effort to

procure the “visões e os entendimentos” needed by their nation for the articulation of a Brazilian identity. Described in such a fashion, the heroic qualities attributed to Campbell’s archetypal hero of myth become equally attributed to the writer-diplomat.

The preponderant themes of nineteenth century Brazilian literature stemmed from the ideals of Romanticism which favored just such a heroic concept of literature. As the Latin American colonies followed in the wake of U.S. independence and the French Revolution, literature was put to the task of configuring this period “para todas as nações da América” as “o momento da grande afirmação cultural” (Bosi 95). Romanticism, as a literary school based on the philosophies of the European Enlightenment, created what Luiz Costa Lima calls “heróis-escritores” (206). According to Alfredo Bosi, the principal literary subjects of the Romantic period are the nation and the hero: “o Romantismo dinamizou grandes mitos: a nação e o herói. A nação afigura-se ao patriota do século XIX como uma idéia-força que tudo vivifica” (95).

Taking center stage in Romantic literature, the individual expresses the political and cultural processes associated with the formation of national identity. The protagonists and poetic voices of Romantic works often take on attitudes and actions which play a key role in defining an individual autonomy paralleling the rise of national autonomy. In the words of Richetti, the protagonists of Romantic literature “form part of an emerging social formation, connected. . . to an increasingly efficient ordering of objects and persons through written documents and records, as the organized totality called the nation-state begins to materialize” (49). In this way, writer-diplomats and their fictional protagonists or poetic “I’s” reflect the processes of nation-building. The limits of individual autonomy, expressed within the new “emerging social formation” of the

nation-state, formulate the political and cultural boundaries of the nation. As writer-diplomats move beyond the limits of these borders during their “experiências no estrangeiro,” they traverse the threshold of national consciousness and become imbued with power by the collective to “renovar. . . as visões e os entendimentos do mundo de seus contemporâneos” (Costa e Silva 26). Thus, the individual takes center stage in literature, formulating the parameters by which the political and cultural processes associated with a distinctly Brazilian national identity may be defined through literature and diplomacy.

Antonio Cândido, in his book *Literatura e sociedade*, conveys how the author can play a role in the process of collective identity formation as he represents a shared point of contact between readers:

[O] escritor, numa determinada sociedade, é não apenas o indivíduo capaz de exprimir a sua originalidade, (que o delimita e especifica entre todos), mas alguém desempenhando um papel social, ocupando uma posição relativa ao seu grupo profissional e correspondendo a certas perspectivas dos leitores ou auditores. . . caracterizando um diálogo mais ou menos vivo entre o criador e o público. (88)

Therefore, as Latin America broadly, and Brazil specifically, adopted the political systems which were forming across Europe and in the United States, Romantic writers took on the responsibility of articulating a collective identity that could place Brazil within the greater cosmos of Western nationalism(s). The role of the writer-diplomat to “renovar,” in the words of Costa e Silva, shares similarities with Cândido’s definition of the literary system. Diplomats, like writers, serve as intermediary agents between Brazil,

its symbols, and society. They also function as points of contact by which the nation might articulate its differences in relation to others. For those in a privileged position to “read” him in his “papel social,” the writer-diplomat embodies the collective processes of identity negotiation in relation to dominant European cultures, becoming a symbol of the entire nation, not only in his official political capacity, but also through his cultural production.

As the questing writer-diplomat becomes a metonym for the nation, writing does not only affirm “a nação e o herói” (Bosi 95, emphasis added), but it also begins to configure the nation as hero, and vice-versa. This personified nation, headed down the “glorious” path of “progress,” following in the footsteps of those cultures that have long dominated it, is expressed in the following quote by Gonçalves de Magalhães, taken from his “Discurso sobre a história da literatura do Brasil” (1836): “Hoje o Brasil é filho da Civilização francesa, e como Nação é filho dessa revolução famosa que abalou todos os tronos da Europa, e repartiu com os homens a púrpura e o cetro dos reis” (par. 33). As the trappings of royalty—“a púrpura e o cetro”—are taken from kings and imparted to the people through the reorganization of the political system, the nation becomes the new glorified symbol of the collective. Since this process is founded in the philosophies and revolutionary histories of the European Enlightenment, Brazil must inevitably develop its own nationality as the socio-political offspring of Europe.

During the Empire, ties between Brazil and Europe would continue to strengthen as they were promoted by “um grande esforço do governo imperial. . . para a consolidação do modelo político existente” (Wehling 42). The imperial apparatus, even though independent from Portugal, was focused on assuring the survival of the new

monarchy in the image of the old one. In this period after independence, Dom Pedro II began to send diplomats to Europe with the official mandate to cull information from archives to be used in writing national history. For this reason, Malatian, in her book *Oliveira Lima e a construção da nacionalidade* states that “a construção de um discurso histórico legitimador do Estado nacional” was, during the nineteenth century, explicitly connected with diplomacy (9). History, as the established program of the Empire, was needed to help define and project Brazil not as a divided confederation of provinces, but as a unified imperial entity, to reinforce the power of the emperor (Wehling 43).

The Instituto Histórico e Geográfico Brasileiro, since its founding in 1838, established a strong connection between writing and diplomacy. This institution “caracterizou-se por abordar a gênese da nação sob ângulo do progresso, definindo sua identidade pela diferença em relação à Europa e às demais nações americanas” (Malatian “O Brasil” 89). In order to articulate Brazil’s own history as being connected to, yet still different from, the metropolis, the IHGB placed “um adido de legação diplomática em Portugal e na Espanha, para realizar a cópia de documentos de interesse para a escrita da história” (Malatian *Oliveira Lima* 10). In this way, the Ministério das Relações Exteriores became a mediatory institution between the old metropolis and Brazil while serving as an “abrigo para intelectuais que utilizavam a carreira diplomática, de modo a tornar possível sua dedicação à produção intelectual” (Malatian *Oliveira Lima* 14).

The endeavor to unite the nation’s regional political fractions in favor of absolutism was an important element of the official role of literature and diplomacy in the nineteenth century. One example of the historiographic role that diplomacy played in validating the new Empire is the work of Francisco Adolfo de Varnhagen (1816-1878),

patron of the thirty ninth chair in the ABL. Varnhagen's historiographic output was authorized by Dom Pedro II and supported by the IHGB in order to create historical foundations in which to base the legitimacy of a Brazilian Empire facing regional dissent. Throughout his diplomatic career, Varnhagen conducted research not only in Portugal, but also "em arquivos holandeses, espanhóis, paraguaios e austríacos, associando diplomacia e história" (Malatian *Oliveira Lima* 10). In his article "Varnhagem, história e diplomacia," Arno Wehling explains that Varnhagen elaborated, in his foundational *História geral do Brasil* (1854), "uma perspectiva unitária, monarquista e simpática à colonização portuguesa" (50). This was the historical position needed by Dom Pedro II to concretize his political authority.

Thus, after independence, Brazilian literature moved simultaneously towards and away from its European roots. João Pandiá Calogeras's *History of Brazil* (1930) comments on the effects of this antagonistic process in the nineteenth century:

It may be said that these decades witnessed a profound change in the orientation of our literature. It became, as it were, nationalized. . . European influence however continued to exert tremendous influence. . . this appreciation of the literature and thought of other countries contributed to that intellectual ferment which eventually made the literature of the empire more nationalistic and more Brazilian. (198-99)

Although it was no longer a colony of Portugal, Brazil's literature, similar to its Empire, was still closely tied to Portugal. Lafer, in his work *A identidade internacional do Brasil e a política externa brasileira*, contemplates the effects of the enduring relationship between Brazil and Portugal. According to Lafer, the uniqueness of Brazil's position as

an independent Empire, distinguishing it from other Spanish-speaking democracies of Latin America, further encouraged the nation's continued connection with the metropolis:

Com efeito, a ruptura que se insere no processo mais amplo, político e econômico, da desagregação do sistema colonial, se dá com importantes componentes de continuidade em relação a Portugal, singularizando o ingresso do Brasil no concerto das Nações. . . Neste sentido, o Brasil recria em escala continental a singularidade lingüística e sociológica que, na Europa e na Península Ibérica, caracterizaram historicamente Portugal (32-35)

As Brazil recreated the “singularidade lingüística e sociológica” of Portugal in the New World, the writer-diplomat would be an important proponent of Brazil's connection with Europe. Dom Pedro II desired to stress this continued empathy with Portugal and Europe when he offered his support to the IHGB, becoming protector of the institution and presiding in no less than five hundred and six sessions (U. Machado 89). Likewise, Dom Pedro II consistently offered a number of “bolsas de estudo, viagens ao exterior, sinecuras, financiamento ao estudo, edições de livros, [e] subsídios” to ensure the continued legitimization of the Empire and the “progress” of Brazil in relation to Europe (U. Machado 99).

Geography also played a role in the growth of the relationship between literature and diplomacy. Rio was both the political and cultural epicenter of Brazil throughout the nineteenth century. This was an important coincidence that facilitated, for many writers, the possibility of a diplomatic career. It was necessary for anyone with the intention of having a career in writing to be involved in Rio de Janeiro's intellectual life. Dependency

on Rio de Janeiro for the means to publish and to collaborate grew throughout the nineteenth century, leading historian Jeffrey Needell to state that, during the *belle époque* (1898-1914): “To be accepted as a man of letters meant to live, or, at the very least, to publish in Rio” (180). Needell goes on further to state that the “sons of educated planters or urban-based families” not only often found themselves with the “leisure to write and publish,” but also typically ended up with a “career in the bureaucracy, the Colégio Pedro II, the parliament, political journalism, and diplomacy” (185). After graduating from the *Academias*, these “sons of educated planters or urban-based families” were expected to lead serious lives, contributing to the “progress” of the country in their destined areas, such as politics or medicine. And since, in the words of U. Machado, “*versos e romances*” were seen as “*uma crise da mocidade,*” the liberties of collegiate life, including “*o álcool, o charuto, os tóxicos e a ingestão do mais perigoso de todos os alucinógenos: a literatura,*” were to be left behind in favor of a “*nova vida profissional e doméstica*” (170). A diplomatic career offered the chance to gain professional prestige while continuing to write. For writer-diplomats, membership in the IHGB and/or the ABL was a means by which they might develop the relationships that would help them to be promoted in both their professional and literary careers. For this reason, these two institutions configure “[d]ois espaços de sociabilidade. . . dessa burocracia estatal locada no Itamaraty” (Malatian “O Brasil” 88-89).

Through their travels, especially in Europe, writer-diplomats gained direct access to cultural and philosophical ideals that guided literary production in Brazil. Although Gonçalves Dias was not a writer-diplomat, a brief discussion of his “*Canção do exílio*” (1847) serves as an introduction to the mechanisms at work in the relationship that was

developing between literature and diplomacy vis-à-vis Europe in the nineteenth century. Considered as possibly the most definitive poem of Brazilian Romanticism, one of the key elements of “Canção do exílio” is a narrative voice that emanates from Europe. In the opening lines, the poem underscores Brazil’s cultural relationship with Europe. As Gonçalves Dias imagines his country as the Other of Europe expressed in the dichotomy of “aqui” (Europe) and “lá” (Brazil), Brazil becomes trapped by the rhetorical polarity of contrasting images: “Minha terra tem palmeiras, / Onde canta o Sabiá; / As aves, que aqui gorjeiam, / Não gorjeiam como lá” (180). To borrow from Silviano Santiago’s essay “Why and For What Purpose Does the European Travel,” this narrative voice articulated from the metropolis “impose[s] on the Other” Brazil “his inexorable condition as a copy” (23). Or rather, whereas “As aves, que aqui gorjeiam, / Não gorjeiam como lá” (180), the manner in which the Brazilian bird sings acquires its meaning only in relation to the “aves” of Europe.

This exemplary poem of *saudade*, typical of many from the period, is bound to centuries-old European perspectives of travel literature which depicted the Americas as an exotic location that “não existe pelo que é mas pelo que não é” (Rouanet 70). In the words of José de Alencar’s *O Jesuíta*: “esta terra [Brazil]. . . ainda está deserta. É necessário criar-lhe um povo, sem o qual nunca ele poderá ser livre e respeitada” (qtd. in Costa Lima 216-217). For this reason, the Romantic expression of Brazil “Canção do exílio” as a paradisiacal Other of Europe harbors within its subtext an irresolute impasse between national identity and its distance from an idealized Europe. This stratified hierarchy of identities through which diplomats were obligated to navigate while representing the nation abroad was possibly best expressed in the words of the writer-

diplomat Joaquim Nabuco: “On one side of the ocean, one feels the absence of the world; on the other the absence of [one's] country” (qtd. in Santiago “Worldly” 154).

Domingo Borges de Barros (1779-1855) was an important precursor to Brazilian Romanticism and possibly the first writer-diplomat of an independent Brazil. He was born in Bahia and later educated at Coimbra. After his schooling was complete, he traveled throughout Europe in official and non-official capacities where, in Paris, he published his volume of poetry *Poesias oferecidas às senhoras brasileiras por um baiano* in 1825 (Bosi 83). According to Cândido, Barros was “quem primeiro exprimiu em poesia o tema da saudade da pátria, que experimentou em longa estada na Europa, onde fora, segundo diz, aparelhar-se das luzes para servi-la” (*Formação* 289). Barros writes: “De luzes sua pátria carecia,/ Ir procurá-las seu dever lhe ordena,/ E julgando que a pátria assim servia,/ Pouco lhe pareceram riscos, pena” (qtd. in Cândido *Formação* 289). In this passage, Barros configures himself as the questing hero in search of “luzes” that his nation needed for its own self-realization. The procurement of these “luzes” necessitated Barros’s departure from his country in order to search for them abroad in Europe. Lafer explains that “o jogo dialético entre as ‘luzes’ da objetividade racional da ‘Ilustração’ e a subjetividade da auto-expressão individual e coletiva liberadas pelo Romantismo” configure the “razão de ser da diferenciação de interesses estratégicos, políticos e econômicos e de visões que dão a perspectiva organizadora e as coordenadas da inserção de um país no mundo” (*A identidade* 19). Thus, just as the foundations of Brazilian diplomacy are connected to the discourses of the Enlightenment and Romanticism, so are the “luzes” referred to here by Barros. As far as Europe was home to both the Enlightenment and Romanticism, the travels of writer-diplomats performed an essential

task in constructing Brazil's own autochthonous "auto-expressão individual e coletiva" (Lafer *A identidade* 19). The nations of Europe are articulated as the possessors of the national traits that Brazil's elite desired to develop at home. Yet, ironically, Europe is also, in Santiago's terms, the historical "one" that imposed on Brazil its otherness, complicating the articulation of its equal status.

In the economy of travel represented in Barros's poem, the same anxiety of comparison found in "Canção do exílio" is present. The *saudade* expressed in Barros's poem reveals an anxious belief in an inherently defective Brazil vis-à-vis Europe, embodying the paradox of the "realidade americana ter-se constituído, através dos tempos e das narrativas dos viajantes pela própria negação de uma realidade" (Rouanet 70). The idea that "something's missing" in Brazil is an important intellectual trope of the period. In the words of one of Barros's contemporaries, published in the *Revista do Instituto Histórico e Geográfico Brasileiro*: "[N]ão poderemos esperar que daqui a mais vinte anos corramos o páreo com as nações mais civilizadas do antigo continente?" (Martins 275).⁷ Silviano Santiago, in his essay "Worldly Appeal: Local and Global Politics in the Shaping of Modern Brazilian Culture" also refers to this same sense of lack felt by the period's intellectuals:

The historical identity of new nations such as the American ones is not to be found where the nativists, that is, politicians with a small p, think that they will find it. It is outside national historical time and outside native space; for that reason it is lacunal and eurocentric. In short, its location is "absence," determined by a movement of tropism. (151)

Beginning with Domingos Borges de Barros, this “movement of tropism,” or what I am describing as a curving towards the “luzes” of Europe, represented an unequal process of identity negotiation that was reliant on the gaze of Europe over its American other, Brazil.

In 1946, Sergio Buarque de Holanda (1902-1982) wrote a preface to the centennial edition of the writer-diplomat Gonçalves de Magalhães’s germinal book of Romantic poetry, *Suspiros poéticos e saudades* (originally published in Paris in 1836). In this preface, Holanda noted that Brazil was indebted to Magalhães for establishing the first rumblings of a national literary spirit. Yet, conversely, Brazil was also indebted to him for instigating the trend of fatalistically imitating everything that emanated from France, in terms of literature and art (Cerqueira par.2). Luiz Costa Lima, in *Sociedade e discurso ficcional*, proposes that the work of Magalhães forms the basis for what he terms the “formação de compromisso” (206). This “formação de compromisso” is the continuation and consolidation of a political and literary dialogue between European and Brazilian intellectuals, denoting the unequal relationship between the two:

Como a tese parecerá escandalosa, digamos apenas que, com o projeto de Magalhães, afirmava-se a autonomia política e literária ao mesmo tempo que, sem hiato algum, se mantinha o padrão europeu. Noutros termos, a ênfase na natureza pátria era uma formação de compromisso, que, aparentemente, servia a todos. Às autoridades constituídas, que se viam respaldadas por intelectuais préstimos; aos (poucos) confrades europeus que dedicavam algumas atenciosas linhas ao destino das novas nações; ao

ralíssimo público local, que assim podia se orgulhar de seus heróis-
escritores, tão distintos da desagradável massa cafuza e mameluca. (206)

The “*formação de compromisso*” strengthened cultural dialogue with Europe while obeying a complex ordering of social hierarchy developed among writers, politicians and critics in both places, emphasizing deeply rooted colonialist dependencies and disdain for the peripheral cultural realities of the “*massa cafuza e mameluca.*” Considering the dialectic objectives of both diplomacy, as defined by Lafer, and literature, as defined by Costa Lima, the “*formação de compromisso*” was well represented by the fraternization of literature and diplomacy. This relationship was consolidated by the policies of the IHGB, reflecting especially in the nineteenth century, the politico-cultural dependencies of literature embodied by writer-diplomats such as Domingos Borges de Barros, Gonçalves de Magalhães, and Francisco Adolfo de Varnhagen.

The spheres of mutual influence developed in the ABL are likewise indicative of the “*formação de compromisso.*” Whereas the IHGB was an important part of the Empire’s efforts to consolidate the nation under the monarchy, the Academia Brasileira de Letras (ABL) envisioned itself an integral part of the First Republic’s mission to continued national development. At the beginning of the twentieth century, Manuel de Oliveira Lima (1867-1928) still emphasized the importance of constant dialogue with the old metropolis in order for Brazil to successfully develop as a nation. In Gilberto Freyre’s book *Oliveira Lima: Don Quixote Gordo* (1968), composed mainly of conference addresses and other correspondence between Oliveira Lima and Freyre, Freyre refers to the emphasis Oliveira Lima placed on tracing through history the moments, movements, and literary works that give Brazil its own national character. For Oliveira Lima, this

national character is overtly connected to Portugal. In a conversation that Freyre had with Oliveira Lima while they both lived in the United States—the former at college and the latter at work in Washington—Freyre quotes the diplomat as having stated:

É preciso fixar como Varnhagem uma atenção absorvente no conhecimento do passado pátrio; conservar como Magalhães um interesse profundo na evolução da expressão poética e filosófica da literatura de que era ornamento; prender-se como Ourem ao desenvolvimento e notar as tendências da legislação nacional; identificar-se como Penedo com o desdobrar dos recursos, a florescência da economia e o prestígio do nome brasileiro—para se conservar ininterrupto o circuito e manter-se constante a correspondência não entre agente e o governo, mas, o que é bem mais custoso, entre o rebento transplantado e o tronco originário. . . não esquecem seus horizontes, não alheiam seus corações e não abdicam seus origens. (qtd. in Freyre *Oliveira* 107)

This genealogy constructed here of writer-diplomats, including the aforementioned historian Francisco Adolfo Varnhagem and the Romantic poet Gonçalves de Magalhães, traces the contours or “circuitry” of a comparatively new and filial Brazilian national identity within the universe of Portuguese and European identity. For Oliveira Lima, Brazil’s success was reliant upon a total effort to maintain a politico-cultural trajectory linked with that of Portugal.

While implying his own inclusion within this lineage constructed between “agente e governo,” and between the Old and New Worlds, Oliveira Lima also enters into an interesting intertextual dialogue with at least one other contemporaneous Latin American

writer. There is a distinct contrast we might draw between Oliveira Lima's idea of genealogical linkage with Europe and the Cuban Jose Martí's emphasis on rupture, embodied among other ways in the metaphor of the trunk. In his influential essay "Nuestra América," written in 1891 as a prelude to Cuban independence from Spain, Martí states:

La historia de América, de los incas acá, ha de enseñarse al dedillo, aunque no se enseñe la de los arcontes de Grecia. Nuestra Grecia es preferible a la Grecia que no es nuestra. Nos es más necesaria. Los políticos nacionales han de reemplazar a los políticos exóticos. Injértese en nuestras repúblicas el mundo; pero el tronco ha de ser el de nuestras repúblicas. (151-52)

In "Nuestra America," although he is attempting a rupture with that which "no es nuestra," Martí represents the "typical irony of writing (in) America" (Sommer 73) as he conveys a "historia de América" that, although proposed to be separate from, is still founded in European paradigms. When he states: "Nuestra Grecia es preferible a la Grecia que no es nuestra," Incan history inadvertently becomes a New World reflection of Greek history instead of standing alone in its own right. Martí's "Nuestra América" instigates a break with Europe by proposing that the Latin American "bases genealógicas da nacionalidade" (Rouanet 48) should be founded in an Incan or indigenous history. Nonetheless, such an image of rupture is intrinsically connected with Europe, as it is founded in the ideals of rupture connected with the French Revolution (1789) which gave "origem a uma nova era para toda a humanidade" (Rouanet 49).

Within this paradox, a contrast emerges between Oliveira Lima and Martí.

Whereas Martí claims “el tronco ha de ser el de nuestras repúblicas” (152), Oliveira Lima proposes Brazil must “manter-se constante a correspondência. . . entre o rebento transplantado e o tronco originário” (107). Oliveira Lima’s concept of “conserva[ndo] ininterrupto o circuito” still reflects the “política centralizadora” of Dom Pedro II which promoted a “historiografia enaltecadora do Império como período de paz e tranqüilidade” (Malatian “O Brasil” 89). Thus, as Martí demonstrated how “[s]uccessive generations may deny literary resemblances to the point that denial itself constitutes a resemblance” (Sommer 73), Oliveira Lima, to the contrary, seems to be open to this resemblance.

While both writers’ nation-building projects share similar goals and even dependencies, their approaches are formed from opposing points of reference. Both prove problematic. Just as Martí had intellectually colonized the indigenous space, Oliveira Lima overtly neglects other peripheral discourses in favor of a connection with Portugal and Europe. Oliveira Lima’s statement, bound to ideologies of the period, demonstrates “uma visão eurocêntrica, branqueadora e elitista” (Malatian “O Brasil” 89).

Nonetheless, Oliveira Lima’s conversation with Gilberto Freyre still demonstrates the importance of mutual dialogue with the old metropolis. As Oliveira Lima proclaims: “não esquecem seus horizontes, não alheiam seus corações e não abdicam seus origens” (qtd. in Freyre *Oliveira* 107), Brazil, as a nation-state, becomes a symbol that resides at a mythical conflux of past, present, and future. This canonical construction erected from the vestiges of colonialism and the Empire is realized at the horizon of the eternal present where the future could converge with the roots of the past perpetually elevating

Portugal's "transplanted son" to its "royal" place within the constellation of Western nationalism.

Oliveira Lima was a member of an elite society of late nineteenth century writer-diplomats who played important roles in the renegotiation of Brazil's borders with its South American neighbors. The most prominent of this society was José Maria da Silva Paranhos, the Barão do Rio Branco. According to Synesio Sampaio Goes Filho in *Navegantes, bandeirantes, diplomatas: Um ensaio sobre a formação das fronteiras do Brasil*, Rio Branco's life's work was "o fechamento definitivo. . . das fronteiras do Brasil":

Como advogado do Brasil, [Rio Branco] fora vitorioso nos conflitos com a Argentina (1895), e a França (Guiana Francesa, 1900); agora Chanceler, assina tratados de limites com a Bolívia (1903), o Equador (1904), a Holanda (Guiana Holandesa, 1906), a Colômbia (1907), o Uruguai (1909) e o Peru (1909). (256)

The negotiation of Brazil's borders through treaties with all of these South American neighbors, represented by Rio Branco's work, became a benchmark of Brazilian diplomacy. Because of Rio Branco's efforts, the nation was then able to devote "as energias brasileiras para campos mais férteis" (Goes Filho 256). For this reason, Brazil's geopolitical stability exists in direct contrast with that of other Latin American nations since: "[d]ivergências sobre limites até hoje são uma pesada carga na vida política internacional de várias nações do continente" (Goes Filho 256).

Further, as Goes Filho mentions the direct line of successful territorial disputes that one might trace from the Treaty of Tordesilhas, to the Treaty of Madrid and

eventually to the work of Rio Branco, he states: “Olhando de relance o passado de quase 500 anos, pode-se afirmar que sempre houve soluções satisfatórias para os conflitos territoriais que se foram constituindo com o decorrer do tempo” (310). These border negotiations that form an integral part of Brazilian diplomatic history form the basis of a metaphor that echoes in the literary realm. Just as these treaties negotiated the terms by which Brazilian geography would be defined in relation to other nations, Brazilian writer-diplomats coordinated a Brazilian identity in relation to other literatures and cultures.

The Treaty of Madrid, negotiated by Alexandre Gusmão (1695-1753), a Brazilian born diplomat working for the Portuguese crown, stands as the first document representative of diplomacy oriented towards the Brazilian territory. In the words of Lafer, the treaty “representa o marco inicial da ação diplomática voltado para a configuração jurídica do território brasileiro” (*A identidade* 30). Likewise, for the Barão do Rio Branco, the importance of the Treaty of Madrid was “na renúncia a linhas imaginárias de demarcação” (Lafer *A identidade* 30).

In 1750, Alexandre Gusmão was in charge of the Portuguese side of negotiations with Spain over territorial disputes in South America. Portugal sought to capitalize on the efforts of bandeirantes and others who had, over the centuries, extended Brazilian colonization west of the Tordesilhas line(s).⁸ Boris Fausto, in his book *A Concise History of Brazil* (1999), explains the relationship between the Treaty of Tordesilhas and the Treaty of Madrid:

Since the beginning of the 18th century, Brazil’s borders had nothing to do with the blurry Line of Tordesilhas. The spread of São Paulo’s bandeira expeditions westward and that of the cattle ranchers and the armed forces

in a southwesterly direction extended the country's frontiers. . . The new borders still had to be legally recognized, and this was a matter taken up mainly with Spain. In the Treaty of Madrid, which was signed by both the Spanish and the Portuguese crowns, the principle of *uti possidentis* was accepted, to the benefit of the Portuguese. (72-75)

In this treaty, important questions regarding the borders between the two colonial empires in South America were settled. The treaty mostly favored Portugal as it took into account its colony's long-standing settlements in territories west of the Tordesilhas line. In the words of Goes Filho, "A formação das fronteiras brasileiras no período colonial pode ser imaginada como um diálogo entre bandeirante e diplomata" (310). After the Treaty of Madrid, Brazil's enormous size was concretely defined, making it, in the words of Lafer, a country of "escala continental," such as Russia, China, and India (*A identidade* 43). For his work with the Treaty of Madrid, Alexandre Gusmão has been considered "o avô dos diplomatas brasileiros" (Lafer *A identidade* 31).

The questions of territorial occupation assumed in the Treaty of Madrid, the most important of Brazil's colonial treaties, would be reflected in Oliveira Lima's only theatrical work, *Secretário d'El Rey*, written in 1904. Reviewed by Machado de Assis, Oliveira Lima's play, which portrays Alexandre de Gusmão as its principal character, was praised for its "espírito nacional que [a Oliveira Lima] assegura lugar eminente na literatura histórica e política da nossa terra" ("Oliveira Lima" 938). In the play, the fictional Gusmão, not unlike the historical one, finds himself estranged from his native Brazil, as a diplomatic secretary in the courts of Lisbon. In Portugal, attending to the business of King Dom João V, Oliveira Lima's character becomes caught in a love

triangle which, as reviewed by Machado, appropriately describes “a capital dos reinos, com a máscara dos namorados noturnos, a gelosia de sua dama, o encontro de vadios, capas enroladas, espadas nuas, mortos, feridos, a ronda, todo o cerimonial de uma aventura daquelas” (Assis “Oliveira Lima” 937). In this play, even though his love for “his lady,” Dona Luz, is ultimately frustrated, Gusmão wishes her well on her move to Brazil as she is married to his rival, Dom Fernando. Upon arriving at their new home in the recently established territory of Goiás and, in order to show their respect to Gusmão’s courteousness, Dom Fernando and Dona Luz promise to tirelessly “Trabalhar pelo progresso do Brasil” (Oliveira Lima, *Secretário* 1016).

Recognizing not only the dual presence of history and politics within the work, but also the duality of the play’s locus, articulated between a real Portugal and a romanticized Brazil, Machado de Assis continues in his review: “Com razão chama o autor ao seu *Secretário d’El Rei* uma peça nacional, embora a ação se passe na nossa antiga metrópole, por aqueles anos de D. João V. É duas vezes nacional, em relação à sociedade de Lisboa.” (“Oliveira Lima” 937). From Lisbon, where the protagonist also finds himself being “doubly national,” the fictional Gusmão delivers his monologue to his departing Dona Luz, describing for her the territory of Goiás:

Lá podereis dilatar o peito, encher os pulmões, respirar livres, em paz, na plena selva virgem, ao abrigo das tentações políticas e dos enredos das tertúlias. Nada há de melhor para a alma do que essas imersões na Natureza. Retemperam-lhe o vigor, purificam-lhe a substancia. . . Vereis se vos engano, se existe nada mais belo do que aquela terra de encantos. Tudo alí é formoso, e é grande. As colinas são montanhas, as árvores

gigantes, os rios mares, os campos solidões ou antes oásis sem fim. Dá gosto viver debaixo daquele céu azul, naquela atmosfera transparente, sobre aquele solo privilegiado. (*Secretário* 1015)

The duality of the play's "nationality," being based in Portugal but also portraying Gusmão's homeland of Brazil, is indicative of the dialogical processes that defined Brazil's politico-cultural identities among the elite since independence to the beginning of the twentieth century. In Oliveira Lima's description, Brazil is portrayed as an edenic utopia being at once powerful, gigantic and peaceful. It is a paradise waiting to be discovered. Yet, of all the images evoked in this mythical description of Brazil, there is one crucial image that is most notably absent. In Oliveira Lima's colonial Brazil, there are no people. Just as Gonçalves Dias's "Canção do exílio" makes no mention of Brazilians in favor of depictions of birds and palms, Gusmão's fictional epilogue only describes "colinas" that are "montanhas" and "rios" that are "mares." Indeed, in his Brazil, there are no Brazilians. In the same way that Barros's poem expresses that Brazil was missing "luzes," these bucolic descriptions depict an eternal nation that serves as a primordial locus in which history is waiting to be created by the newly married couple on their way to Goiás.

Whereas the work of diplomats and bandeirantes provided the frame, Brazil's literature provided the magma for expression. The literary shape of Brazil, as is its geopolitical counterpart, is partly the result of the expansionist and diplomatic work of writer-diplomats. Similar to Gusmão's task of fixating Brazil's borders while abroad in Portugal, writing in the nineteenth century began to create the nation's own literary space while still binding it to European Romanticism. Through the "formação de

compromisso,” there would be, in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, sufficient space for the construction of symbolic literary works to fill the imaginative vastness of the Brazilian territory. Just as Oliveira Lima’s play is described by Machado as “duas vezes nacional” (“Oliveira Lima” 937), the importance of a dual perspective, or rather, a dialogue with other literary traditions, especially those of Europe, has been an essential character of Brazilian literature, facilitated through diplomacy. Even in the mid-twentieth century, João Guimarães Rosa commented on the importance of the inherent ties between European and Latin American literature: “Você sabe que nós, os latino-americanos, nos sentimos muito ligados à Europa. . . No final das contas, somos parentes espirituais: avó e netos. . . Se a Europa morresse, com ela morreria um pedaço de nós” (qtd. in Lorenz 97).

The realities of Brazilian diplomacy form, as it were, a historical pillar which supports the nation’s literary and cultural propensity towards the dialectical search for self. This search for a national self is not only an inward journey, but also a continual negotiation of literary, political and cultural borders with other nations. This negotiation, facilitated in Romanticism by what is expressed as Brazil’s inherent lack, was especially connected with Europe in the nineteenth century.

In the twentieth century and as the international system evolved, Brazil began to take note also of the necessity for dialogue not just with Europe but also with its hemispheric neighbors. Lafer noted that as the First Republic (1889-1930) formed, being “brasileiro” became more and more associated with being “latino-americano” (*A identidade* 36). As a result, the “dialética diplomática da História do ‘eu’ e do ‘outro’,” (Lafer *A identidade* 19) which had traditionally emanated between Brazil and Europe, “levou diplomatas de peso e intelectuais como Oliveira Lima, José Veríssimo, e Manuel

Bonfim, a apontar,” not only Brazil’s exceptional qualities among its Latin American neighbors, but also, “o que temos em comum com ‘nuestra América’” (36).

In subsequent chapters, the work of writer-diplomats such as João Guimarães Rosa, Vinicius de Moraes and João Cabral de Melo Neto will be considered in connection with the fundamental reorganization of twentieth-century Brazilian politico-cultural realities. This reorganization is linked with a growing collective Latin American identity, as the region faced postwar domination by its hegemonic neighbor to the north, the United States of America.

Chapter 4

From Writing the Nation to Writers-as-the-Nation: Padre Antonio Vieira and João

Guimarães Rosa

Lobato no seu surrealismo próprio, dizia que nada mais parecido com galhões de caixão de defunto do que o uniforme da nossa Academia Brasileira de Letras. A imagem é dura e vendo, nas fotos, Rosa morto, dou razão a Lobato (49)

– Paulo Dantas

Sou escritor e penso em eternidades. . . Eu penso na ressurreição do homem. (qtd. in Lorenz 78)

– João Guimarães Rosa

Se eu fosse o Chefe Juscelino, mandava botar na praça principal de Brasília o trovãoíssimo nome de ‘Praça Antonio Conselheiro.’ (qtd. in Dantas 87)

– João Guimarães Rosa

In this chapter, Padre Antonio Vieira’s prophetic writings serve as a point of departure for analyzing the process that legitimates the enterprise of nation building. In the book-length essay *História do futuro* (1663-1667), Vieira (1608-1697) prophesies of a Quinto Império do Mundo in which a resurrected Portuguese monarch assumes a divinely appointed reign over the world. Written as the Enlightenment began to take shape in Europe, Vieira’s *História do futuro* constructs a Portuguese identity upon two distinct pillars—religion and monarchy.⁹ In later centuries, the eclosion of nationalism would rearticulate the relationship between these pillars. As some monarchies were subsumed and others subverted, emerging nation-states became the new, yet no less sacred and personified entities of politico-cultural organization. The nation-state model was adopted throughout South America in the nineteenth century with special ramifications for Brazil.

Before discussing Antonio Vieira's work, I will first analyze the broad politico-cultural parameters by which national sovereignty was conceived in the Enlightenment. Specifically, I will discuss the importance of the theory of divine right and its function within the absolute monarchies of Europe. Then, we will look at how this theory was later employed in constructing the rubric of national identity. Comparing the early Enlightenment project of Vieira to that of nineteenth- and twentieth-century Brazilian writers will facilitate an understanding of the "sacred" function of literature and diplomacy among the elite, creating, "[t]he conditions of authorial celebrity. . . heavily informed by nationalistic desires" (Gruesz 15).

After the Protestant Reformation (1517-1648), many dynasties throughout Europe began to base their sovereign authority on divine right. In the early seventeenth century, King James I of England declared one of the most well-known definitions of divine right: "THE State of MONARCHIE is the supremest thing upon earth: For Kings are not onely GODS Lieutenants upon earth, and sit upon GODS throne, but even by GOD himselfe they are called Gods" (James qtd. in Burgess 837). By evoking divine right, King James I suggested an otherworldly power to his rule, not reliant upon clerical or plebian support. The crown was the ultimate power and to question the crown's authority was equivalent to questioning God. The theory of divine right throughout Europe preempted the need for the crown's legitimization by the Church and nobility, allowing it greater theoretical, if not also greater practical, dominion over its territory and subjects (Burgess 837). Separation from the Church in favor of a direct connection with God was a crucial first step for the development of nationalism since the "divine right of kings made the theory of sovereignty concrete" (Burgess 838).

In Portugal, the unquestionable power of the crown was established centuries before the Reformation. Portugal had since the twelfth century based its sovereignty on divine will. According to legend, Christ appeared to Afonso Henrique to help him defeat the Moors at the Battle of Ourique in 1139; a battle which concretized Portuguese proclaimed in 1128. The legend of Christ's appearance at Ourique was utilized by the nation throughout the centuries to assert "the role of the Portuguese as the chosen people of God" (Boxer 375). In the words of Charles R. Boxer, "the miraculous appearance of Christ to Dom Afonso Henrique at Ourique. . . was elevated to the position of an unquestioned national dogma" (375).

Raymundo Faoro in *Os donos do poder* (1958) also concluded that, in later centuries, the patrimonial system of Portuguese royalty would serve as an important means to assure the dominance of the aristocracy over other important institutions such as the Church:

Temerosa do domínio das camadas que a apoiavam—o clero e a nobreza—a realza deslocou sua base de sustentação. . . Buscava o trono a aliança, submissa e servil, do povo—o terceiro estado. Já Afonso II († 1223), na luta contra o clero pôde bem avaliar a força desse novo instrumento político, ao enfrentar, ajudado pela plebe furiosa, um poderoso bispo e seu cabido. . . O rei era na verdade o senhor de tudo—tudo hauria dele a legitimidade para existir (7-8)

In the thirteenth century, the sovereignty of the Portuguese crown was further established by the dynasty of Dom Afonso II (1185-1223). The system to develop in Portugal as a result was called the *padroado real*. According to Boris Fausto in *A Concise History of*

Brazil, the padroado real “entailed an ample concession from the Roman church to the Portuguese crown” (23-24).

Likewise, the sovereignty of the Portuguese crown was a powerful tool in developing a cultural defense against impending political dilemmas, especially in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Throughout the Middle Ages, “Western Christianity had become more deeply attached to king and kingdom and more reliant upon a defensive polarization of communities into saved and damned” (Myscofski 78). For this reason, the prophesied messianic return of Portuguese kings from crucial moments in the nation’s history, such as the return of Sebastião (1554-1578) during the usurpation of the Portuguese crown by the Spanish (1580-1640), formed the basis for creating “heroes who rose to assume messianic stature. . . idealized in song and poem and through the passage of time” (Myscofski 78). In this way, kings such as Dom Afonso I, the nation’s founder, Dom Sebastião, o desejado, and Dom João IV, “came to symbolize the power and fulfillment of thriving empires loyal to Christian doctrine” (Myscofski 78).

In later centuries, Sebastião (1554-1578) alone came to represent the totality of these myths. According to Sue Anderson Gross, in her article “Religious Sectarianism in the Sertão of Northeast Brazil 1815-1966”:

Sebastianism was the belief that Sebastian, the Portuguese king whose death in 1578 at the hands of the Moors opened the way for Philip of Spain's ascension to the Portuguese throne, was not really dead but "in hiding" in an enchanted kingdom. Some day he would return to earth at the head of his armies and initiate the millennium. (370)

Vieira would employ the myth of Sebastião in creative ways, proposing that later Portuguese kings would embody the mission of Sebastião and usher in the millennial reign of Portugal (Cohen 26).

As the Enlightenment took shape, a new anthropocentric vision of government formed, questioning the validity of the theory of divine right and the infallible god-like king. This new vision rattled the foundations of Europe's centuries-old governing practices and “[a] obediência incondicional à autoridade real deixava de ser a única forma—ou sequer a forma legítima—de se conseguir ou de se preservar a paz social” (Rouanet 26). Beginning with the English Revolution (1640-1660), and culminating with the French Revolution (1789-1799), the long established hierarchies between kings and subjects founded on divine right was being restructured. One of the most important philosophers to express this transformation taking place was the Englishman John Locke (1632-1704). According to Locke, a new democratic organization needed to emerge that would organize societies no longer into highly stratified political systems, but into systems which, at least theoretically, supported “[a] state. . . of equality, wherein all the power and jurisdiction” of individuals “is reciprocal, no one having more than another” (5). There is a parallel in the Enlightenment between Locke's philosophies about the equality of individuals and the equality of rising nation-states. As we read in the “Declaration of Independence” of the United States of America, a basic tenet of the Enlightenment was that just as “all men are created equal,” all independent nations similarly have a “separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them” (“The Declaration” 26). For this reason a nation, according to Enlightenment philosophy, is analogous to the individual: both independent actors no

longer subject to any authority above them and both placed in a position of reciprocal equality with others.

Despite the incompatibilities of Enlightenment philosophy with the theory of divine right, a strong empathy between monarchies and emerging nation-states endured throughout Europe. By only being accountable to God while simultaneously being like Gods, kings such as James I of England or Dom Sebastião and Dom João IV of Portugal embodied the same religious rhetoric that independent nations would later employ to authorize their organization. As the systemic shift from dynasties to nation-states led to the destruction of the divine link between deity and monarchy, a new relationship was to emerge with the divine expressed by the binomial equation of “Deus-Pai” becoming equivalent with “Mãe-Pátria”:

Em pleno processo de laicização do pensamento ocidental, o mito essencial da cristandade se transplanta para o discurso histórico, agora em versão secular: a filiação comum não é mais centrada no Deus-Pai, mas na Mãe-Pátria, entronizando-se o supremo valor do nacional a que todos devem se submeter, inclusive os governantes. (Rouanet 29)

The latent concept of divine right within Enlightenment philosophy gave way to the personification of nations expressed as the “Mãe-Pátria.” This new supreme political body subverted the divine right theory by which royalty had justified its hierarchical reign. The discourses that historically reinforced a crown’s divine right to governance are transferred to the nation’s divine right to sovereignty.

Brazilian writers in the nineteenth and even twentieth centuries played important politico-cultural roles, guaranteeing the nation’s sovereignty and sanctity as expressed in

the binomial “Mãe-Pátria” (Rouanet 29). The writer-diplomat, in many ways, is the embodiment of the politico-cultural processes by which the divine right of Europe’s dynasties is reformulated into the sacred privilege of the nation to self-determination. Through writing and diplomacy in Brazil, the ex-colony restructures its own identity in relation to the metropolis, asserting its independence. The travels of Brazilian writer-diplomats function as a legitimizing mechanism of a Latin American elite society that had long existed on the periphery of European culture.

In a letter to João Guimarães Rosa written on the 25th of February 1951, the Ambassador Hildebrando Accioly, stationed at the Organization of American States in Washington, is dismayed at Rosa’s inability to write creatively while stationed in Europe. For Accioly, writing literature should be a logical consequence of working in Europe: “Não me conformo, entretanto, com a sua improdutividade literária. Não é possível que Paris e Itália não lhe favoreçam a inspiração, sempre, aliás, tão espontânea” (*Letter to Guimarães Rosa, 1951*). As Brazilian writer-diplomats physically travel from the periphery to the center of Western civilization, they approach not only the origins of their nation’s colonial subjugation, but they also move towards the locus from where the first rumblings of nationalism originated. Entering into direct contact with the locus from where the central discourses of nationhood had emanated, as exemplified by Accioly’s letter, was supposed to inspire the elite to create a literature that could serve as a symbolic manifestation of the nation. Under a national rubric, Brazilian writer-diplomats play an important role in diffusing a sacred identity among the elite garnered from the “inspiração” of the metropolis.

For this reason, the complex processes involved in the negotiation of national identities from a colonial past are inextricably linked to diplomatic travel. It was proposed by Edward Said in his essay entitled “Identity, Authority, and Freedom: The Potentate and the Traveler” that, in the modern or postmodern worlds, there has been no greater theme that links nations and peoples together than that of travel: “The image of traveler depends. . . on a willingness to go into different worlds, use different idioms, and understand a variety of disguises, masks, and rhetorics” (18). In contrast to the traveler, Said juxtaposes the potentate: “Most of all, and most unlike the potentate who must guard only one place and defend its frontiers, the traveler *crosses over*, traverses territory, and abandons fixed positions, all the time” (18). The unique position of Brazilian writer-diplomats has traditionally been to perform both functions; that of traveler and that of potentate. They articulate a national position while also “cross[ing] over” and travers[ing] territory” (Said 18). They ironically advance their central position through dislocation and travel, “go[ing] into different worlds” and “us[ing] different idioms” (Said 18). For this reason, the writer-diplomat functions in a system described by Mary Louise Pratt in *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* where they, like Pratt’s theoretical “traveler,” operate in a field of “copresence, interaction, interlocking understandings and practices, often within radical asymmetrical relations of power” (7).

According to Maria Helena Rouanet, in her recent study of the Frenchman Ferdinand Denis and Brazilian Romanticism entitled *Eternamente em berço esplêndido* (1991), travel played an important role in formulating a national identity through literature:

Aqueles que faziam a história do Brasil, aqueles que viajavam pelo país afora e relatavam as suas impressões acompanhadas de descrições da natureza. . . ou os que escreviam literatura de ficção, todos tinham agora idêntica função: a de estabelecer as bases da identidade nacional. (115)

Throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Brazilian writer-diplomats moved away from the periphery towards a European center, discursively and physically. Yet, they embodied in their work a national center. In *História concisa da literatura brasileira*, Alfredo Bosi employs the two terms *centripetal* and *centrifugal*, as did Holquist concerning the work of Bakhtin, to describe a similar dual movement towards and away from the center during the Modernist period. Yet, unlike that of Bakhtin, this movement is not only a theoretical one towards encountering an identity, but it also embodies the physical travels of diplomats. Concerning the Modernist period, Bosi writes:

Nessa fase tentou-se, com mais ímpeto que coerência, uma síntese de correntes opostas: a *centrípetas*, de volta ao Brasil real, que vinha do Euclides sertanejo, do Lobato rural, e do Lima Barreto urbano; e a *centrífuga*, o velho transoceanismo, que continuava selando a nossa condição de país periférico a valorizar fatalmente tudo o que chegava da Europa. (304)

This dual movement—centripetal and centrifugal—creates a fictive place for Brazil to assert its own central location within the concert of nations. By centripetal and centrifugal motions, writer-diplomats disrupted the politico-cultural borders that had relegated their peripheral literary discourses to mimesis.

Vieira produced some of the first writings attempting to situate the identity and future of the Brazilian colony in light of its relationship to the metropolis. Born in Portugal, Vieira moved with his parents to Bahia at an early age where, as he studied to become a Jesuit priest, “seu brilho de precoce orador e latinista despertou a atenção dos superiores” (Bosi 44). Through sermons and letters now classics within the canon of Brazilian as well as Portuguese literature, Vieira took radical stances on issues such as the plight of indigenous people and of the slaves while writing within political and religious channels connected to the imperial apparatus. By comparing the national discourse of Antonio Vieira’s *História do futuro* with events and speeches from late nineteenth century to mid-twentieth century Brazil—especially those within the Academia Brasileira de Letras—my analysis will show how writer-diplomats assume a role similar to that of Vieira. Just as Vieira, as a Jesuit priest and diplomat, constructed a collective sacred identity for the Portuguese, Brazilian writer-diplomats become paradigmatic representatives of a new class of national representatives, sharing a similar function in identity formation.

As both a priest, and diplomat, Vieira symbolizes the conflux of important politico-cultural pillars such as monarchy and religion in an effort to project a unified Portuguese identity. As a Jesuit priest, he explicitly served the Pope. As a diplomat, he represented the Portuguese monarchy. Both these roles converge as Vieira seeks to eternalize the sanctity of the Portuguese nation through writing. At times, these distinct, yet interrelated roles enter into conflict with one another. Thus, his intense life is representative of the paradox of colonialism. The dynamic voice of his work rallies support for the colonized as often as it does for the colonizer as he places himself in an

intermediary and interlocutory position between the two. As he hoped for the domination of the world by the Portuguese, he also struggled with how to protect the dominated. Later Brazilian writer-diplomats would stand in similar intermediary positions as they attempt to articulate a national identity that emphasizes the nation's independence while still forging stronger politico-cultural ties with Europe and the US.

In 1638, Vieira took part in defending the Brazilian territory from the invasion of the Dutch. In recognition of his support for the Portuguese cause against the Dutch in Bahia, Vieira won favor in the eyes of the crown. He was invited to Lisbon in 1641 to serve in the court of King Dom João IV (1604-1656), who had only recently regained the throne from Spanish domination (1580-1640) (Moreira de Sá 7-15). In celebration of the recent return of the crown from Spain, Vieira delivered his *Sermão dos bons anos* in which he spoke of “os sonhos de grandeza de uma patria à espera do rei predestinado” (Moreira de Sá 10).

The glorification of Portugal together with the glorification of the Catholic Church was always Vieira's principal objective. Vieira led an extraordinary life, journeying across continents and living among many different nations and peoples as a representative of the Companhia de Jesus and a Portuguese diplomat. According to Alfredo Bosi, Vieira's immense originality owes as much to his international experience as a diplomat and Jesuit priest as it does to his individual genius:

Existe um Vieira brasileiro, um Vieira português e um Vieira europeu, e essa riqueza de dimensões deve-se não apenas ao caráter supranacional da Companhia de Jesus que ele tão bem encarnou, como à sua estatura

humana em que não me parece exagero reconhecer traços de gênio.

(*História concisa* 44)

The complex interplay between national loyalty, the supranational nature of the Companhia de Jesus and Vieira's direct exposure to other national realities as a diplomat was an important influence in his writing.

A few years after his arrival in Portugal, Vieira began his diplomatic career for D. João IV. From 1646 to 1650, Vieira represented Portuguese political and economic interests abroad in France, Holland and Italy (Moreira de Sá 10). But, despite his official status as a diplomat, Vieira often found himself rejected by many for his radical religious views. In 1652, his work as a diplomat done, Vieira returned to Maranhão in Brazil to rekindle his missionary activities. According to Thomas Cohen in his article "Millenarian Themes in the Writings of Antonio Vieira," during this period, Vieira began formulating his utopic visions of a millennial Portugal (23). While traveling on the Amazon, Vieira wrote the polemical millenarian text *Esperanças de Portugal* (1659). *Esperanças* was influenced by the Portuguese-born rabbi Menasseh ben Israel, author of the prophetic treatise *The Hope of Israel*. Vieira had met the rabbi while serving as a diplomat in Amsterdam in 1648 (Cohen 23). Thus, the beginnings of Vieiran prophetic texts are catalyzed by his experiences as a diplomat in Amsterdam. Vieira had already begun to circulate *Esperanças de Portugal* in Portugal even before returning there in 1661 (Cohen 23). After he returned to Portugal from Maranhão, his radical religious views were met with discontent by the Companhia de Jesus. The polemical reception of *Esperanças* set in motion the events that would lead to his arrest by the Portuguese Inquisition (Cohen 23).

Throughout his life, Vieira provoked many polemics within the Companhia de Jesus. At the crux of his discord with the Companhia was Vieira's belief that "The New World represented. . . not an appendage to the Old but a locus of prophecies that the Portuguese had been providentially chosen to reveal" (Cohen 23). Thus, the realization of the prophecies of the Quinto Império do Mundo in which Portugal would rule the world was impossible without the discovery, colonization and catechization of Brazil. Vieira was imprisoned for his radical religious views from 1663-1667 and during this period he wrote three prophetic texts: *Livro antepimeiro da História do futuro*, *História do futuro* and *Representações* (Cohen 23).¹⁰ In the *Livro antepimeiro*, Vieira situates within the northern Brazilian territory of Maranhão the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies that for him pointed to the imminent rise of the Portuguese:

Vieira's interpretation in the *Livro Antepimeiro* of scriptural references to Maranhão focuses on the first two verses of the eighteenth chapter of Isaiah. . . conclud[ing] that the Indians figured clearly in the language of the prophets, though the existence of these same Indians remained hidden from the church fathers and from their successors until the time of the Portuguese discoveries. (Cohen 29-30)

By placing the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies within the New World, Vieira subverts centuries-old Eurocentric exegetical practices which gave special consideration to the peoples of Europe (Cohen 29). In this way, he frustrates all other non-Portuguese millennial discourses by "transferr[ing] it [traditional exegesis] to Brazil with the conviction that it was in the backlands of the Amazon that God had chosen to reveal the mysteries of the Hebrew prophets" (Cohen 29). For Vieira, Portugal could not realize its

prophetic destiny without the inclusion of Brazil. The greatness of Portugal as a nation was borne out through its divine mission in its colonies.

In *História do futuro*, similar to the *Livro antepimeiro*, Vieira develops other creative exegeses of biblical texts, proposing that prophets of the Old Testament wrote of the Quinto Império do Mundo (Myscofski 89). In a letter written in 1674 from Rome to Duarte Ribeiro de Macedo (1618-1680), a Portuguese diplomat to Spain and France (Faria 1), Vieira states: “Roma para mim é Lisboa, onde estou sempre com o pensamento, e por isso sempre triste” (*Cartas* 3 73). In this letter, the equivalence of Rome, the religious capital of the West, to Lisbon, the national capital of Portugal, demonstrates how religion and monarchy were inextricably linked to Vieira’s concept of Portuguese identity. According to *História do futuro*, Portugal was destined by God to rule the last of five world empires. The first four had belonged, in chronological order, to the Assyrians, Persians, Greeks, and Romans. The last would belong to Portugal (*História* 26-29).

In *História do futuro*, Vieira articulates the Church as an integral part of the Portuguese nation since the “Quinto Império do Mundo” was not only the rise of Portugal to world domination, but also the ushering in of a new millennial Roman Catholic reign. The advent of the Quinto Império was to resurrect Portugal from the bondage of sixteenth and seventeenth century Spanish domination and usher in the second coming of Christ: “[E]ste Quinto Império de que falamos, anunciado e prometido pelos Profetas, é o Império de Cristo e dos Cristãos” (Vieira “Historia (II)” 39). After the advent of the Quinto Império do Mundo, what would ensue was a millennium of peace in which “Portugal será o assunto, Portugal o centro, Portugal o teatro, Portugal o princípio e fim destas maravilhas; e os instrumentos prodigiosos delas os Portugueses” (*História*

23). By creating a millennial empire that is as Portuguese as it is Christian, *História do futuro* displays how Vieira used his nation's religious and monarchical traditions as powerful political tools to rhetorically express an eternal nation. He conveys in his polemical works “the fundamental understanding that Portugal and its crown are the focus of the drama not only of national history but also divine destiny” (Myscofski 79).

Incurring severe criticism from the Portuguese Inquisition, the radical nature of Vieira's prophetic writings is not only the impetus for his acceptance, but also of his rejection by his nation. This dichotomy is similarly expressive of his position at the juncture of dynastic and Enlightenment currents. In a letter written on September 13, 1672, Vieira confessed his frustrations to Duarte Ribeiro de Macedo as he was exiled in Rome:

Eu devendo calar falo, porque devendo não amar amo. E já me tenho queixado muitas vezes a V.S.a de mim. E deste meu coração, tão meu inimigo e tão amante de quem não tem razão de o ser. Não quero ter mais pátria que o mundo, e não acabo de acabar comigo não ser português.

(*Cartas* 2 501)

Vieira was caught between continental and global forces. As the power of the Church was waning, Vieira was torn between his personal affection for Portugal, his familial and religious ties to the colony of Brazil and his transnational role as a Jesuit priest.

In order for a nation-state to be defined as such, it cannot be subject to any power above it, yet in the seventeenth century—an era of budding nationalist sentiment across Europe—the Church still played a preponderant role in Spanish, Portuguese and inter-European politics. From this conflict emerges Vieira's concept of Portuguese identity.

The mythical construction of the Quinto Império do Mundo was a third term in which religion and monarchy could still coexist. Even though the Quinto Império never materialized for Portugal, Vieira was correct about the rise of a new world order of which Portugal would be a part. The new age belonged to the unabated spread of nationalism across the globe. As Benedict Anderson notes: “[N]ationalism has to be understood by aligning it. . . with the large cultural systems” such as Christianity and monarchy “that preceded it, out of which—as well as against which—it came into being” (12). For Vieira, the worlds of monarchy, Empire and religion converged to portray the fatalistic processes at work in the formation of national identity. This identity was assembled symbolically at the intersection where Vieira’s literary, priestly and diplomatic trajectories reflect those of his nation and his religion.

In Brazil, the post-independence reigns of Dom Pedro I (1822-1831) and Dom Pedro II (1831-1889) are evidence of continued sympathies with the dynastic traditions of Portugal. But, the antagonisms underscoring the rise of nationalism led Brazil to adopt a modified form of monarchy. During Dom Pedro I’s reign, Brazil’s first Prime Minister José Bonifácio (1763-1838) was “the most powerful figure in the newly reorganized government” (Burns 120). Bonifácio, educated at Coimbra and well travelled throughout Europe, had in the years prior to becoming Prime Minister “immersed himself totally in the European Enlightenment” (Burns 120). He was an “avid reader of the *philosophes*,” especially “Rousseau, all of whose works he owned” (Burns 120). At the insistence of Bonifácio, Brazil became a constitutional monarchy on the March 25, 1824. Brazil’s first constitution “represented progress by organizing jurisdictions (branches of government), allocating powers, and guaranteeing individual rights” (Fausto 80). Yet, the nation’s

continued regional divisions and heavy reliance on slavery disallowed the constitution's full implementation (Fausto 80). Only one year after abolishing slavery, the Brazilian military ousted Pedro II, establishing the First Republic in 1889.

As the First Republic was taking shape in Rio, radical religious groups in the Northeast such as those led by Padre Cícero (1844-1934) and Antonio Conselheiro (1830-1897) began "reacting against a government that offended their values, their traditions and their centuries old customs" (Carvalho 150). Euclides da Cunha, in *Os sertões* (1902), considers the plight of the Northeast, providing a first-hand account of one of these religious revolts against the First Republic (1889). In a place not too far from the present day city of Euclides da Cunha, Bahia, the millenarism of Antônio Conselheiro manifested continued cultural connections with monarchy and religion in Brazil. In the massacre of Canudos (1896-1897), Conselheiro and his followers fought for months against the mismanaged onslaught of national troops. These troops had been sent to put down what the politicians in Rio felt was a monarchic rebellion by a radical religious group against the forming Republic. Conselheiro was eventually killed and the entire community destroyed. This stark episode of Brazilian history demonstrates how the Sebastianism of Vieira's *História do futuro* still resonated within the collective imagination of the Northeast.

The eternalizing religiosity of millenaristic rhetoric that proposed the inevitable return of a resurrected Portuguese monarch to usher in the Quinto Império would also continue to echo in literary societies such as the Academia Brasileira de Letras. This new mode of Sebastianism was no longer centered in the figure of a Christian monarch, but rather on the nation, depicting writers as sacred *porta-vozes* of the national project who,

through death, could, as Coelho Neto proposed for Machado de Assis, “tornar à superfície da vida ressurgido em glória” (Neto qtd. in Montello *O Presidente* 332-333).

As the vestiges of the Brazilian Empire slowly gave way to developments of the First Republic (1889)—such as the unprecedented economic growth of São Paulo and the first great waves of European immigration—Brazil’s intellectual elite still expressed a national soul connected with a colonial religiosity tied not now to the monarchy, but rather to the “Mãe-Pátria.” This new religiosity was no longer expressed by the priest, but rather by the writer. As the First Republic was replacing the faith of the Empire with the scientific philosophies of progress, the Romantic rhetoric of Walt Whitman (1819-1892) becomes relevant: “Only the priests and poets of the modern, at least as exalted as any in the past, fully absorbing and appreciating the results of the past, in the commonalty of all humanity” could “recast the old metal, the already achiev’d material, into and through new moulds, current forms” (Whitman 1061). The tropes of Vieira’s Portuguese ideal maintain rhetorical relevance among the Brazilian elite long after the monarchy is dissolved. In place of the priest, the expression of an “eternal” Brazilian nation becomes the responsibility of historians, diplomats and literary writers. These writers were seen as performing a sacred duty as interpreters of the nation. This concept of writing and writers (if it does not still exist today) continued among the elite well into the twentieth century.

In 1908, the first president of the Academia Brasileira de Letras (1897) Machado de Assis (1839-1908) passed away and Lafayette Rodrigues Pereira (1834-1917) was invited to take his place. Lafayette had, years previous, defended the work of Machado against the criticisms of Sílvio Romero by publishing four contestatory articles in the *Jornal do Comércio* (Montello *O Presidente* 318). These four articles, published in

January and February of 1898, were a response to Romero's then recently published book *Machado de Assis* (1897). In a letter written by Machado to Lafayette, Machado conveys his appreciation for the articles' well articulated defense of his work:

A espontaneidade da defesa, o calor e a simpatia dão maior realce à benevolência do juízo que V. Ex.^a aí [nos artigos] faz a meu respeito. Quanto à honra deste, é muito, no fim da vida, achar em tão elevada palavra como a de V. Ex.^a um amparo valioso e sólido pela cultura literária e pela autoridade intelectual e pessoal. (“A Lafaiete” 1043)

For Lafayette's defense of Machado, he was deemed by the ABL as Machado's appropriate successor. Lafayette accepted the invitation to join the Academia, but he refused for reasons unknown to deliver the traditional “Discurso de posse” that would have praised Machado's life and work.

Since Machado de Assis was, in the words of Josué Montello, “a mais alta glória literária do Brasil,” he was denied “o louvor que lhe era devido” by Lafayette (*O Presidente* 320). Years later in 1926, the Academy would still feel that too little had been done to memorialize their first president. That year, the then president Coelho Neto appealed to the nation for the construction of a monument that would venerate the memory of Machado de Assis. For Coelho Neto, this monument would represent the “glorificação devida a um dos maiores vultos da literatura pátria e um dos mais peritos lapidários da língua portuguesa” (Coelho qtd. in Montello *O Presidente* 333).

In the words of Jeffrey D. Needell, the predominant concept among the members of the Academy at its founding was that “national literature was the nation's soul, memory, and conscience” (182). The role of religious discourse in creating the ABL “*ad*

immortalitatem”¹¹ and, likewise, in controlling its membership reflects, on a national plane, the elite’s impetus towards glorifying the nation through glorifying its literature. As demonstrated by this example with Machado, when a member of the ABL dies, the society attempts to affirm through symbolic discourse the assurance of that writer’s place within the national canon of literary “immortals.” When Lafayette refused to deliver his “Discurso de posse,” he frustrated the ABL’s established process of national sanctification through the canonization of literature.

Originally modeled after its French counterpart, the ABL memorializes through election those Brazilian authors whose works have been perceived as being of national consequence. This symbolic role of the ABL in proposing an immutable constancy in the face of political change is no more evident than in the manner by which the institution has glorified its deceased members while maintaining control over the admission of new ones. The “Estatutos da Academia Brasileira de Letras,” written in the same year the institution was founded, clearly and concisely delineate its purpose:

A Academia Brasileira de Letras, com sede no Rio de Janeiro, tem por fim a cultura da língua e da literatura nacional. . . Só podem ser membros efetivos da Academia os brasileiros que tenham, em qualquer dos gêneros de literatura, publicado obras de reconhecido mérito ou, fora desses gêneros, livro de valor literário. (par. 1-4)

In the ABL, there is a constant membership of forty Brazilian writers, corresponding to an equal number of available chairs. In order for a new writer to be elected into one of the forty chairs, a current one must first pass away. The seat then becomes, like the royal throne, available for a successor to assume occupancy and take his place in the literary

society. Similar to how Vieira awaited the promised return of Sebastião to the throne of Portugal, the empty chairs of the ABL represent the constant rebirth of the nation. Writers take on this metaphorical significance as they are eternally resurrected *ad immortalitatem* with the induction of each new member. Likewise, only allowing a fixed number of chairs is metaphorical of the need for the nation to “guard only one place and defend its frontiers” (Said 18).

During the term of a writer’s membership, three landmark speeches may take place. The first is the “Discurso de posse” by which the newly inducted member accepts the chair while lauding the life and work of the writer who most recently occupied the chair. The second is the “Discurso de recepção” by which the new member is symbolically received into the society. A third possible speech is the “Discurso de adeus” which, once the member is deceased, serves as a literary eulogy praising the merits of the author’s work.

João Guimarães Rosa’s death—his moment of “absolute singularity” (Derrida 22)—took place on the 19th of November 1967. On the 16th of that same month, Guimarães Rosa finally accepted his chair at the Academia Brasileira de Letras (ABL), delivering a speech entitled “O verbo & o logos.” This speech (presumably the author’s last “literary” work) would be the first of three commemorative speeches to take place over the course of the next four days. The second address, by Afonso Arinos de Melo Franco (1905-1990), was delivered immediately following Guimarães Rosa’s speech. In his address, Afonso Arinos ceremonially welcomed Guimarães Rosa into the Academy. Yet, less than seventy-two hours later, Rosa unexpectedly died of a heart attack in his apartment in Rio de Janeiro. As a result, only four days after the author’s induction, a

third speech would take place. On the 20th of November, Austregésilo de Athayde (1898-1993) delivered his eulogistic “Discurso de adeus a Guimarães Rosa” bidding farewell to the distinguished Brazilian writer and diplomat.

While proclaiming Guimarães Rosa’s work as “uma das conquistas mundiais da cultura brasileira” (100), Afonso Arinos’s speech deals with death on a literary level. He postulates that the death of Diadorim in *Grande sertão: veredas* symbolizes “uma espécie de expressão mais alta da humanidade” (103). Four days later, Athayde’s speech would be no less symbolic. He proposed that, through death, Guimarães Rosa became a part of “[a]queles que a morte revitalize, sendo perene portanto o processo reintegratório do humus fecundo” (111). If Guimarães Rosa was culturally invigorated by death, as Athayde suggests, then this symbolic return to life takes on monumental significance for the nation. Concerned not necessarily with Guimarães Rosa’s physical remains, but rather with his social ones, these ABL speeches configure death in a collective sense in order to consolidate and perpetuate an eternal national ideal linked with literature. Accordingly, Guimarães Rosa and Machado de Assis are articulated through the process of induction in the ABL as the cultural gatekeepers of the nation’s eternal narration.

In order to provide “proof” of the writer’s immortality and likewise that of the nation, the commemorative speeches surrounding Rosa’s death align themselves with important national symbols. In his speech, Afonso Arinos compared Guimarães Rosa’s writing to the creation of the planned city Brasília: “Fizestes com elas [as palavras] o que Lúcio Costa e Oscar Niemeyer fizeram com as linhas e os volumes inexistentes: uma construção para o mundo, no meio do Brasil” (99). Although its construction is most directly associated with the Kubitschek presidency, Brasília is a national symbol that is

greater than the period in which it was created. The construction of a magnificent city in the interior of Brazil was first prophesied by the now canonized Saint João Bosco (1815-1888). In 1883, Bosco received a vision in which God revealed to him that a promised land would be established in the Goiás region: “Entre os paralelos de 15 e 20 havia uma depressão bastante larga e comprida, partindo de um ponto onde se formava um lago. . . [S]urgirá aqui a terra prometida, vertendo leite e mel. Será uma riqueza inconcebível” (Bosco 6). More than seventy years later, Kubitschek worked to make Bosco’s vision a reality: “One day in 1956 Niemeyer went riding with his longtime friend, President Juscelino Kubitschek, who told him his dream of Brasília and casually added: ‘I want you to design it.’” (“The Architect” par.2). As Arinos compares Guimarães Rosa’s work to Kubitschek’s dream-city Brasília in his ABL speech, he evokes a tradition linked with Bosco’s vision that articulates the nation as the “terra prometida.” Since Brasília, like the empty chairs in the ABL, is a physical location continually reoccupied by successive political representatives, Arinos proposes that both the city and Guimarães Rosa’s work represent the empty space wherein the nation might be written “no meio do Brasil.”

Taking place just one day after Rosa’s death and four days after his acceptance into the ABL, the symbolism of Athayde’s “Discurso de adeus a Guimarães Rosa” attributes transcendental power to the deceased author through religious imagery.

[Ó] querido e breve companheiro, taumaturgo sertanejo, senhor de invenções inauditas, profeta do mundo que se desentranha, de culturas primitivas seculares, atrevido bandeirante de realidades ainda não sondadas, João Guimarães Rosa! São incontáveis os serviços à tua pátria, cujo renome e prestígio aumentaste entre as nações (110)

By evoking the image of a prophet, Athayde transforms Guimarães Rosa into a medium for the expression of a “divine” national will and destiny. But, the “prophet” Guimarães Rosa, instead of being in the service of God, is in the service of Brazil. Thus, something akin to Walt Whitman’s previously cited conception of the poet-priest, Athayde’s representation of Guimarães Rosa as one that has borne “incontáveis. . . serviços a tua pátria” takes on symbolic importance. In order to envision national “realidades ainda não sondadas,” Athayde constructs for the ABL a mythical image of Rosa connected with the religious rhetoric of nationality. This relationship between the religious and the literary evokes a Romantic image of “artists as special people and art as sacred” (Kernan 27). In Brazil, imagining death through “símbolos de imortalidade” associated with mythical-religious power and authority, such as “figuras de dragões, leões, anjos, corujas, folhas de palmeira ou de louro, santos, da própria Virgem, do próprio Cristo” had long accompanied the memorial traditions of the elite (Freyre *Sobrados* xl). As the politics of death manifests itself in the arena of national literature, Guimarães Rosa, as a writer, becomes an eternal symbol of what it means to be Brazil(ian).

Directly related to Rouanet’s binomial equation of “Deus-Pai” with “Mãe-Pátria” (Rouanet 29), another striking example of a connection with the religious is Athayde’s peroration. This portion of his speech explicitly appendages Rosa’s writing to the Bible as it contemplates the deceased writer’s newfound “eternal” glory:

E uma das tuas páginas flui a naturalidade desta reflexão consentânea com a sabedoria de Eclesiastes: “As coisas por si mesmas, por si, escolhem de suceder ou não, no prosseguir.”¹² A escolha de suceder foi feita, feita por si mesma, nos desígnios da divina Graça, a qual te recobre com a Sua luz,

neste derradeiro passo da eternidade que começa. Neste nosso adeus há muito de saudade, consideração e amor, mas o seu profundo sentido é o do testemunho unânime do País (111)

The appearance of three words in this passage that begin with the majuscule—“Graça,” “Sua,” and “País”—open the way for furthering a religious connection. The appearance of the first two—“Graça” and “Sua”—represents a typical expression of reverence for God. Yet, by allocating the majuscule also to the word “País,” Athayde shows that it is not only deity that is revered. The speech places Brazil on the same level as the “divina Graça.” Thus, in like manner to Guimarães Rosa’s sanctification as a prophet, this deified designation of the “País,” as it stands personified “reclinado. . . sobre as aparências humanas [de Guimarães Rosa]” (111), reflects the religiosity through which an intellectual institution whose motto reads “ad immortalitatem” is obligated to navigate in order to shore up its national designs. Thus, what is of note here is not the religiosity proper of Brazil or Brazilians, but rather the speech’s manipulation of religious and historical symbols to give “eternal” national relevance to Guimarães Rosa’s death.

The ambivalence between “Graça” and “País” is further complicated in its relationship to the memorialized writer by such slippery and highly subjective phrases as “claridade do teu espírito,” “passo da eternidade,” “admiração universal,” and especially “[a] alvorada de tua bem-aventurança” (111). But, those who write the nation must articulate such ambiguities in an effort to guarantee a mythical rendering or, as Guimarães Rosa suggests, a rendering that is “entrançado e uno” (“O verbo” 58). Even Guimarães Rosa, in his own speech, reflected on this relationship between “Graça” and “País.” Quoting the mineiro Arthur da Silva Bernardes who was president of Brazil from

1922 to 1926, Rosa self-referentially proclaims: “*O fim do homem é Deus, para o qual devemos, preferentemente, viver. Eu, porém, vivi mais para a Pátria, esquecendo-me d’Ele*” (“O verbo” 83).

In Athayde’s speech, dissolution by death is no less an option for the culturally enfranchised members of the ABL than it is for the nation. Thus, in order for the nation’s scholarly dead to be transfigured into national symbols, these discourses must impose upon their bodies metaphysical attributes of religious entities for which death poses no threat of dissolution. In his interview with Günter Lorenz, Guimarães Rosa predicts with due sarcasm an apocalyptic day when Brazil, like Vieira’s Portugal “será o assunto,” “o centro,” and “o teatro” of the world (*História* 23). On this day, Brazil’s “brasilidade” will be consummated globally:

[N]ós, os brasileiros, estamos firmemente persuadidos de que sobreviveremos ao fim do mundo que acontecerá um dia. Fundaremos então um reino de justiça, pois somos o único povo da terra que pratica diariamente a lógica do ilógico, como prova nossa política.” (Rosa qtd. in Lorenz 92)

As he reflects jokingly on the problems with Brazilian domestic politics, Guimarães Rosa likens his concept of “brasilidade” to a millenaristic concept of history in which Brazil will survive the “end of the world” and usher in a “kingdom of justice.” This anecdotal reference is reflective of the necessity of inventing an eternal nation through writing.

In his acceptance speech “O verbo & o logos,” Guimarães Rosa contemplates the challenges of adequately remembering the predecessor to his chair. He expresses a sense of obligation to portray João Neves’s “individual greatness” not as relative to his life, but

rather in absolute terms: “Como redemonstrar a grandeza individual de um homem, mérito longuíssimo, sua humanidade profunda: passar do João Neves relativo ao João Neves absoluto? Sua perene lembrança – me reobriga” (59). With the advent of physical death, the relativity of João Neves’s life becomes transformed through its “perennial remembrance” into an absolute. In this way, Guimarães Rosa recognizes writing as an inexact, yet necessary operation of contextualizing an absolute. By remembering João Neves da Fontoura as an “absolute” entity not destroyed by death, Guimarães Rosa gives cultural and collective significance to the individual life of his predecessor. The next two sentences in the passage read: “O afeto propõe fortes e miúdas reminiscências. Por essa mesma proximidade, tanto e muito me escapa; fino, estranho, inacabado, é sempre o destino da gente” (59). Writing becomes an “unfinished” act, which, similar to death, has limitless rhetorical possibilities.

The (im)possibilities expressed here echo at the borders of nations. Nations are at once finite, yet imagined as infinite¹³ and the successful creation and articulation of national symbols through writing is necessary in order to affect the erasure of their finitude. In Guimarães Rosa’s case as well as that of D. Sebastião, death brings to the forefront this paradox since, according to Derrida, it is an ambiguous cultural and biological event that imposes a limit. As writer-diplomats cross not only the borders of other nations, but also the border of death, there is space for what Derrida calls the “possibility of the impossible” (11). The limit imposed by death is reflected at the borders of nations and cultures. The ambivalent spaces of death allow for proscription since “[d]ying is neither entirely natural (biological) nor cultural. And the question of limits

articulated. . . is also the question of the border between cultures, languages, countries, nations, and religions” (Derrida 42).

This “possibility of the impossible” is also embodied in the duality of the writer-diplomats missions to articulate a national center while positioning themselves abroad in the periphery of other national discourses. This paradox is captured in the interview with Günter Lorenz when Guimarães Rosa states that his hometown in Minas Gerais “Cordisburgo foi sempre uma Europa em miniatura” (97) or when he states that the German writer “Goethe. . . [e]ra um sertanejo” (85). As death opens the space for Guimarães Rosa’s eternal return, diplomacy provides the means to disrupt the binary exclusion of the periphery from the center. If Cordisburgo is European and Goethe Brazilian, then that which was peripheral is now central and vice versa. Even if death, and specifically the death of Guimarães Rosa may be, as Derrida proposed, a phenomenon that “names the very irreplaceability of absolute singularity (no one can die in my place or in the place of the other)” (*Aporias* 22), within it rests—just as it rests within the nation—a sufficient emptiness to allow for grounding death’s collective meaning to eternal absolutes.

Athayde’s speech connects Guimarães Rosa to religious imagery by consecrating him as a transfigured mythical prophet, articulating the author’s “absolute” greatness while also embodying the “absolute” greatness of a personified Brazil mourning the loss of one of its most celebrated authors. Joaquim Nabuco, in his “Discurso de Posse” at the ABL’s inaugural session on July 20, 1897, proposed the necessity to create a mystifying discourse for the ABL and likewise for the nation:

As Academias, como tantas outras coisas, precisam de antiguidade. Uma Academia nova é como uma religião sem mistérios: falta-lhe solenidade. A nossa principal função não poderá ser preenchida senão muito tempo depois de nós, na terceira ou quarta dinastia dos nossos sucessores. (par. 8)

Guimarães Rosa's death incorporates the ABL's national mission while fulfilling Nabuco's proposition of creating future "mistérios." Similarly, by Athayde articulating Guimarães Rosa as a prophet of the "pátria, cujo renome e prestígio aumentaste entre as nações" (110), Rosa's transformation is constructed at a temporal and cultural crossroads of Brazilian history. A pre-colonial history of "culturas primitivas seculares" and a colonial history of "bandeirantes" converge with the nation's future "realidades ainda não sondadas" over a solemn, yet still fatidic, authorial and, above all, national body (Athayde 110).

In his preceding speech "O verbo & o logos," Guimarães Rosa demonstrates a similar erasure of borders between the physical and the metaphysical. This erasure of borders is needed to express a parallel between the "absolute" individual and the "absolute" nation. According to Guimarães Rosa, as they worked together as diplomats, he and Neves often referred to one another by substituting their proper names with toponyms. This habitual occurrence between the two diplomats expresses a limitless metaphysicality that replaces not only Neves and Rosa's limited individual mortality, but also the nation's delimited geography.

Por mim, freqüente respondia-lhe topando topônimos. – "*Cachoeira concorda?*" – se bem que, no comum, o chamasse "Ministro." Escuto-o: – "*E agora? Que há com Cordisburgo?*"

– Muito, Ministro. Muita coisa. . . (58)

Just as topographic dots and lines on a physical map represent the literal shape of the nation, the substitution of João Neves’s proper name for his hometown of Cachoeira, Rio Grande do Sul and that of Guimarães Rosa’s proper name for Cordisburgo articulate these writer-diplomats as toponymic metaphors, capable of giving metaphysical form to Brazil. Through the articulation of this substitution, these dialogues between Guimarães Rosa and João Neves “induce the body to become a cultural sign” (Butler 522), erasing the borders between the individual and the nation.

By linking Guimarães Rosa’s implication that within this toponymic metonymy there is “muita coisa,” we can begin to consider the repercussions of his prior remark: “entendíamos juntos, do modo, o país entrançado e uno, nosso primordial encontro seriam resvés íntimos efeitos regionais” (58). As these writers transform themselves discursively into “efeitos regionais,” Rosa’s speech not only proposes an eternal connection between writing and Brazil, but it also elides the political, cultural, and even geographic differences found within its territory. This elision is accomplished by implementing a mystifying homogeneous discourse which casts Brazil’s long history of struggles between regional politics and culture as mere “efeitos regionais” in favor of the national consolidation of a “país, entrançado e uno” (58). Although Guimarães Rosa’s literature is far from representing a homogenous political discourse, it is evident through these speeches that he understood that his role as a writer was to create a connection between the geopolitical shape of the nation and its literary invention. It is a unity “entrançado e uno” that can only exist fictitiously based in a strategically essentialist ideal which allows those things “Brazilian” to establish themselves in a central position.

As writer-diplomats become the loci for national metonymy, they amass cultural weight transformed from writers of the nation into writers-as-the-nation. This national metonymy functions as a means by which the representation of Brazil's geopolitical boundaries might be associated with a genealogy of the Brazilian "soul." Drawing a parallel with the early years of the ABL, this metonymy is reminiscent of the words of Coelho Neto when he proposed that "AINDA QUE ELE PRÓPRIO, com a pena, haja construído o monumento perene do seu nome," Machado, through the construction of a monument that would be a "preito nacional," could "tornar à superfície da vida ressurgido em glória" (qtd. in Montello *O Presidente* 332-333). Just as Neves and Guimarães Rosa were to be grounded in fixed geographic locations, Machado's monument was to affix his memory in a visible geographic space in urban Rio. The metamorphosis from writers of the nation to writers-as-the-nation presents visible physical "proof" to the nation of its divine conception.

Coeval with the founding of the First Republic, Machado de Assis had already contemplated the importance of writing in sustaining a national project when in "Instinto de Nacionalidade" (1873) he suggested how, through a judiciously measured use of criticism, Brazilian literature might "se desenvolv[er] e caminh[ar] aos altos destinos que a esperam" (804). Machado illuminates the importance of the writer in this project as one powerful enough to embody the nation, navigating the politico-cultural discourses of nationhood in Brazil. In *História do futuro*, Vieira proposes the conflux of religion and monarchy in order to articulate an eternal Portuguese identity in the crowning Quinto Império do Mundo. The ABL speeches surrounding Rosa and Machado de Assis's death similarly configure the nation as a sacred entity that emanates between the poles of real

geopolitical space and its metaphysical and “spiritual” counterpart—literature. In the same way that Vieira as a priest invented a third term for the Portuguese nation between monarchy and religion, the writer-diplomat also stands as an intermediary, bridging the worlds of international politics and literature which involves a coming-to-terms with Brazil’s postcolonial relationship with the metropolis. As the writer takes on Sebastianistic form, the nation likewise becomes god-like and infallible.

In a letter written by Guimarães Rosa to Accioly on the January 10, 1950, he confesses:

Por aqui tudo corre sem relevo, sob o frio e a geral preocupação com os assuntos internacionais. . . Quanto à literatura, tenho estado improdutivo e duro como chão de cimento. Creio que para mim a inspiração é passarinho tropical, que aqui não gorgéia como lá.

As Guimarães Rosa references “Canção do exílio” (1847)—Gonçalves Dias’s nationalist poem from the Romantic period—he alludes to the importance of reciprocity with the metropolis. By proposing that “inspiração é passarinho tropical, que aqui não gorgéia como lá,” he echoes sentiments from his interview with Lorenz that “Cordisburgo foi sempre uma Europa em miniatura” (97) or that “Goethe. . . [e]ra um sertanejo” (85). Whereas Gonçalves Dias had written his poem of longing for his homeland while abroad in Europe, Rosa inverts the terms by which writing the nation might take place. It can only take place within the borders of Brazil, inverting the Eurocentric point of articulation of “Canção do exílio.” Although Rosa proposes that he must physically be in Brazil in order to write, the real implication is that literature like the writer exists in a metonymic relation to the nation. In order for writing to fulfill a role of conjuring an

image of the nation that is “entrançado e uno,” literature must deconstruct the paradigms of periphery and center expressed by the prepositions “aqui” and “lá,” replacing the traditional hierarchy with difference and placing the divine mission of the writer on par with that of Sebastião.

Chapter 5

Geografia In(de)terminável: Guimarães Rosa's *Grande sertão: veredas* and the (Meta)physical Borders of Brazil

Obrigado, Compadre. Nossas fronteiras, desguarnecidas, precisadas, te agradecem. (qtd. in Araújo 44)

– João Guimarães Rosa, August 28, 1963

As I argue in chapter three, the realities of Brazilian diplomacy form a historical pillar which supports the nation's literary and cultural propensity towards the dialectical search for self. This search for a national self, similar to a diplomatic treaty, is a continual negotiation of cultural and territorial borders with other nations. In this chapter, I will explore the diplomatic work of Euclides da Cunha and João Guimarães Rosa in order to further develop my proposition that Brazilian literary discourse can be imagined as a border negotiation. An understanding of the importance of twentieth-century border negotiations to the diplomatic imaginary of Brazil—as represented by these two writers, as well as by others such as Rio Branco—will help place my analysis of *Grande sertão: veredas* in historical perspective. The main objective of my analysis will then be to compare João Guimarães Rosa's work at the Serviço de Demarcação de Fronteiras with his landmark novel *Grande sertão: veredas* (1956). I will consider *a priori* the protagonist Riobaldo's negotiations of the (meta)physical borders of the sertão as national allegory.

The work of the Barão do Rio Branco established an important precedent in Brazilian international affairs and policy for the twentieth century. As a diplomat, Rio

Branco settled territorial disputes with almost every one of Brazil's bordering countries. As I mention in chapter 3, he played a key role in resolving questions with Argentina in 1895, French Guyana in 1900, Bolivia in 1903, Ecuador in 1904, Guyana in 1906, Colombia in 1907, and both Uruguay and Peru in 1909 (Goes Filho 256). As a result of his important work on borders, Rio Branco has been consecrated as a national hero:

[É] raro ver na história dos países um diplomata ser consagrado como herói nacional. No caso de Rio Branco, isto se deve ao reconhecimento generalizado da importância do seu legado e pertinência da sua “idéia” de Brasil. . . [N]a sua visão do cenário internacional, soube se situar a meio caminho—que era o bom caminho para o Brasil—entre o juridicismo radical irrealista, que caracterizou muitos dos seus contemporâneos latino-americanos, e a pura política do poder de Teddy Roosevelt. (*A identidade* 46-47)

Rio Branco's diplomatic deliberations over questions of national borders resulted with favorable outcomes for Brazil. From the north in Pará to the south in Rio Grande do Sul, Rio Branco guaranteed Brazil's sovereignty over many disputed regions. The most salient element of Rio Branco's balanced approach to international affairs at the turn of the century was his non-interventionist, yet pragmatic stance, placing Brazil “a meio caminho” between competing political ideologies (Lafer *A identidade* 46).

On the one hand, Rio Branco's diplomacy contrasted with the international politics of the United States; a nation which has often employed an overtly interventionist approach in the region, described by Lafer as “a pura política do poder” (*A identidade* 47). The United States' realist approach to international politics was, during Rio Branco's

time, exemplified by the United States' involvement in Cuba and, afterwards, made official by the addition of the Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine. The Roosevelt Corollary stipulated an "obligation on the part of the United States to European governments for the conduct of certain Latin-American states" (Rippy 267). But, Rio Branco's diplomacy also contrasted with the international politics of many other Latin American nations. His pragmatism was not prone to the "juridicismo radical irrealista" of his political counterparts in other neighboring countries (Lafer *A identidade* 46).

In a personal memorandum written in 1963 to the Chefe do Departamento de Administração, Guimarães Rosa briefly suggests the importance of Rio Branco's diplomatic work. As Guimarães Rosa requests permission to hire a new secretary at the Serviço de Demarcação de Fronteiras, he comments: "[E]ste nosso Serviço de Demarcação de Fronteiras, tão sério e importante para o Brasil e no Itamaraty (V. O Barão do Rio Branco)" (qtd. in Araújo 44). As exemplified by Guimarães Rosa's statement, Rio Branco's work was crucial to establishing the prestige and efficacy of Itamaraty in the world of international affairs. Rio Branco's pragmatic dialogue and peaceful conflict resolution became a precedent to which Brazilian diplomats have attempted to adhere throughout the twentieth and twenty-first centuries (Lafer *A identidade* 46-47). For this reason, Rio Branco's work is a source of symbolic pride for the nation, "tão sério e importante para a nação" (Rosa qtd. in Araújo 44).

Lafer's observation that Rio Branco insisted on situating Brazil "a meio caminho" (*A identidade* 46) between opposing liberal and realist paradigms of international politics also reflects the intermediary role ascribed to the intellectual in Latin America. According to Silviano Santiago, intellectuals have historically served as a "bridge,"

connecting Latin America to the dominant discourses and ideals of Western society. These ideals traditionally emanate from Europe and the United States. In his essay “Latin American Discourse: The Space In-Between,” Santiago employs the image of a star as metaphor in order to convey the domineering influence of these metropolises over Latin American intellectual production:

The origin is the pure and unattainable star that contaminates without ever sullyng itself, and which shines for the artists of Latin American countries whenever they depend on its light for their creative expression. . . [T]o establish the bridge—and thus reduce the debt and distance between the artist, a mortal, and that immortal star—is surely the essential role and function of the Latin American artist in Western society. (32)

As an embodiment of the symbolic process of creating a national identity from the geopolitical vestiges of colonialist realities and of bridging the gap between a national ideal and reality, the image of Rio Branco, similar to that of so many other Brazilian intellectuals (see chapter four), has been symbolically immortalized in stone by his nation. This is due to the intellectual’s ability to represent, “a meio caminho” (Lafer *A identidade* 46), a third term that represents both the ideals of the metropolis while also reflecting specific realities of Latin America and Brazil. The symbolic transformation of the nation’s intellectuals into statues publicly proposes Brazil’s successful attainment of an immutable Western ideal of nationhood while also suggesting its difference within that same spectrum.

In the main corridor of the Palácio do Itamaraty in Rio de Janeiro, there are dozens of marble busts representing many important national and international political

figures. These statues mostly depict important Brazilian politicians and diplomats, but there are also busts of important figures from the United States, such as George Washington, and figures from other nations. These statues enter into symbolic dialogue as they are positioned as equals, side by side, along the corridor. But, the larger-than-life statue of the Barão do Rio Branco, standing alone outside the palace, breaks with this dialogue. The statue of Rio Branco, positioned at the entrance to the palace's inner courtyard and reflection pool, stands as a sentinel vested in military garb, guarding through his domineering posture the internal political apparatus of Brazilian national identity: Itamaraty (see photo).

Near the middle of the courtyard, placed beside one of the many majestic imperial palms that line the path of the reflection pool, more evidence of the nation's discursive immortality is found. On a small plaque are inscribed the words of João Guimarães Rosa: "Aquele palmeira alta / Tanto quis, tanto cresceu / Ficou mais longe da Terra / Chegou mais perto de Deus."



Through these public manifestations of nationalist sentiment that transform the intellectual into stone, one sees the impetus that propels the nation towards attaining the status of Santiago's metaphorical star.

Stone effigies also share an important relationship with the nation's theoretically immutable, discursively constructed and yet invisible borders. An even greater example than that of Rio Branco, depicting the nation's propensity to elevate the intellectual to the stars and thus immortalize the nation, is that, in 1969, the tallest peak of the Curupira mountain chain located on the Brazil-Venezuela border was given the name of João Guimarães Rosa. The ability of a nation to ward off threats to its identity rests in its ability to transform the reality of its politico-cultural constitution into a mythical symbol, whether real or imagined—a flag, a statue, a palm tree, a mountain.

The affinity between literature and diplomacy, expressed by a shared impetus towards national definition and symbolic transformation, is similarly exemplified by Euclides da Cunha's diplomatic work during the first decade of the twentieth century. Euclides da Cunha served Itamaraty from 1904 until his death in 1909. During this brief period at Itamaraty, the author worked not as a diplomat abroad, but rather as the “chefe da comissão de limites com o Peru” and later “como adido do Barão do Rio Branco” (Silva Pontes 12). In the former capacity, Euclides da Cunha was the leader of a joint Peruvian-Brazilian commission which travelled to the Acre territory. This commission was organized by Rio Branco in order to “produzi[r] um relatório que fundamentasse a discussão sobre a delimitação de fronteiras” in the region (Silva Pontes 60). In the words of Kassius Diniz da Silva Pontes in *Euclides da Cunha, o Itamaraty e a Amazônia*: “O governo peruano aspirava ao domínio de grandes áreas no Alto Purus e Alto Juruá,

aquiescendo, assim, com a penetração de seus nacionais no território acreano” (51). In hopes of capitalizing on the rich natural resources in the region of the Purus and Juruá rivers, especially the rubber tree forests, the Peruvian government wanted to claim a vast amount of land in the Acre territory and Amazon region, totaling more than 440,000 square kilometers (Silva Pontes 51). As a result, Peru supported a number of organized occupations by “caucheiros peruanos.” The presence of these “caucheiros,” or rubber farmers, in Acre and Amazon prompted the need for a diplomatic resolution between the two nations (Silva Pontes 52).

Because of the work of the joint-commission led by Euclides da Cunha, the territorial disputes were peacefully resolved favorably for Brazil. In the words of Silva Pontes: “[O] tratado de limites com o Peru, baseado nos trabalhos da comissão de limites presidida no lado brasileiro por Euclides, foi firmado em 8 de setembro de 1909” (139). Unfortunately, Euclides da Cunha passed away before the treaty was signed.¹⁴

In 1906, just after his trip to the Amazonian region, and also in 1909, only months before his death, Euclides da Cunha published two different books associated with his experiences in northern Brazil. The first book published was entitled *Peru versus Bolívia* (1906), “escrito em razão de seu trabalho no Itamaraty e por solicitação direta do Barão do Rio Branco” (Silva Pontes 11). In *Peru versus Bolívia*, Euclides discusses a territorial dispute between Bolivia and Peru, arguing in favor of Bolivia (Silva Pontes 52). Rio Branco prompted Euclides da Cunha to publish this study since, according to Silva Pontes, “[a]s dimensões da área em disputa indicavam que o processo de arbitragem em curso em Buenos Aires poderia vulnerar interesses de outros países do continente” (Silva Pontes 125). The subject of territorial disputes between Peru and Bolivia bore directly on

Brazil's interests in the region. Brazil, having shared, at one time or another, a border with every nation on the continent except for Chile, has always had an intense interest in territorial disputes arising between its neighbors.

In *À margem da história* (1909), published just before his death, Euclides da Cunha is no longer concerned with international politics. In this work, he detains his narrative to the development of the Amazon. Throughout *À margem da história*, the author elaborates his opinions on the principal ecological challenges facing the nation in its attempts to develop the Rio Purus region of the Amazon. The development of the Amazon region was an important subject at the turn of the century for Brazil. Many felt that the natural resources there—especially the seemingly limitless supply of latex—held the potential to spur on Brazilian economic development. In *À margem da história*, Euclides da Cunha proposes that the principal deterrent to the region's development was the “abandono a que [a Amazônia] foi relegada pelo governo central” (Silva Pontes 106). This neglect of the region by the central government in Rio de Janeiro consigned its inhabitants to a life of misery. For Euclides da Cunha: “o seringueiro parece condenado a sofrer na floresta o resto de seus dias” (Silva Pontes 99).

Apart from analyzing Euclides da Cunha's diplomatic career in detail, *Euclides da Cunha, o Itamaraty e a Amazônia* also situates the author of *Os sertões* (1902) within the intellectual climate of the period. According to Silva Pontes, Rio Branco was a central figure around which a number of intellectuals rallied during the First Republic:

No Brasil, durante a Primeira República, houve uma imbricação muito clara entre elites políticas e elites intelectuais. . . A ação do Barão do Rio Branco, trazendo para o Ministério das Relações Exteriores intelectuais

conhecidos, evidencia que nas primeiras décadas da República o Estado era o locus onde escritores e professors poderiam obter estabilidade financeira e, em contrapartida, legitimar ideologicamente o novo regime político. (Silva Pontes 25)

As a central figure among the intellectual and political elite, Rio Branco was an important catalyst for the entrance of Euclides da Cunha and others into Itamaraty, prompting the consolidation of the writer-diplomat tradition. Rio Branco's intermediary role between the two fields of literature and diplomacy is confirmed not only by his election to the Academia Brasileira de Letras in 1898, but also by his close relationships with many important literary figures of the period. Besides Euclides da Cunha, Rio Branco interacted with intellectuals such as Graça Aranha and José Veríssimo, among many others.

Although there are decades between Euclides da Cunha's and João Guimarães Rosa's diplomatic careers, the two still share a distinct connection. Both writers were directly involved in the negotiation of national borders. Similar to Euclides da Cunha's work in Acre, Guimarães Rosa spent the last eleven years of his life resolving territorial questions with Bolivia, Paraguay and other neighboring nation-states. More especially, he worked to resolve questions with Paraguay over the Salto das Sete Quedas region in preparation for the construction of the Itaipu dam. Guimarães Rosa, in a letter to his Italian translator, Edoardo Bizzarri, who was working on *Corpo de baile* (1956) at the time, describes the intense nature of his work concerning Salto das Sete Quedas:

Pois, Você. . . deve ter acompanhado nos jornais o palpitante caso de divergência com o Paraguai, o assunto de Sete Quedas. . . Imagine, pois, o

que sucedeu, de junho do ano passado, até julho deste. Foi uma absurda e terrível época, de trabalho sem parar, de discussões, de reuniões, de responsabilidades. (123)

In the 1950s, the Paraguayan and Brazilian governments began deliberating over the proposed joint-construction of the Itaipu dam. The negotiations for the construction of the dam practically occupied the entire eleven year period that Guimarães Rosa was appointed to the Serviço de Demarcação de Fronteiras. Due in large part to the groundwork done by João Guimarães Rosa, the Itaipu project was eventually approved. The enormous dam was constructed in the 70s and, in the early 80s, went into full operation, serving to benefit both Brazil and Paraguay.

João Guimarães Rosa was a career diplomat and, unlike Euclides da Cunha, who only served Itamaraty by appointment for five years and never held a post abroad, Rosa served in a number of different countries. But before joining the ranks of Itamaraty, Guimarães Rosa practiced medicine. After finishing medical school in 1930, he worked for four years as a doctor. He first opened a clinic in the small town of Itaguara (MG) from 1930 to 1932. Then he served as a volunteer medic in the Revolução Constitucionalista de 1932. Lastly, he worked in a hospital in Barbacena (MG) until 1934. While in Barbacena, Guimarães Rosa decided that his calling was no longer in medicine. Vilma Guimarães Rosa, in her book *João Guimarães Rosa: meu pai* speculates about what led her father to stop practicing medicine: “De minha mãe eu soube o motivo que levou papai a abandonar a Medicina: sua frustração de não conseguir salvar os seus pacientes, em alguns casos” (153).

After some research about the exigencies and technicalities of a diplomatic career, Guimarães Rosa prepared to take the entrance exam in 1934. In a letter to his parents, written from Barbacena on November 1, 1933, Guimarães Rosa expresses that he felt he had found his “true vocation” in diplomacy:

Há 64 consulados de carreira e 30 e tantas legações e embaixadas. Sahe-se [sic] como consul ou *Secretário de Embaixada*, escolha à vontade da pessoa. Pode-se ir para América, África, Ásia, Europa ou Oceania, tendo de ficar 4 anos fora do Brasil e 2 anos no Rio, isso continuamente. Tenho esperança de fazer carreira breve, e para isso empregarei todos os meus esforços, pois penso que descobri a minha verdadeira vocação.

(Vilma Guimarães Rosa 169)

Once Guimarães Rosa decided that diplomacy was his “verdadeira vocação,” he prepared intensely to qualify in the exam. Placing second in the final rankings of examinees, Guimarães Rosa’s excellent performance on the entrance exams was a source of satisfaction to him. He greatly anticipated his new career and, two days after his oral exam, he conveyed his excitement to his first wife, Lygia, in a letter written July 6, 1934 from Barbacena (MG): “Modestia a parte, foi sensacional a minha prova oral. . . A minha oral foi reputada a ‘melhor que já se fez no Itamaraty’” (Vilma Guimarães Rosa 316). On July 11, 1934, he officially became a “Consul de 3a classe,” after successfully passing on his first attempt; a rare feat for an examinee (“Rosa” *Anuário* 484).

After a few years stationed at diplomatic headquarters in Rio de Janeiro, Guimarães Rosa was posted at his first Brazilian consulate abroad—Hamburg, Germany. He remained in Germany from 1938 to 1942. Upon first arriving there, the author was

enamored with the city. In a letter written to his parents on May 16, 1938, he expresses his excitement, describing the city in detail for their vicarious pleasure. This tradition of detailed description would be reiterated in his letters to his parents as he recounted to them his trips and experiences in Europe. Speaking of Germany, he writes:

[A] Alemanha é qualquer coisa de formidável! Belezas naturais, ordem, limpeza, trabalho, vida, alegria. Principalmente, todos aqui se divertem. Ninguém se incomoda com os atos e as vestimentas demais. Ninguém receia o ridículo. (Vilma Guimarães Rosa 174)

The irony of the last phrase of the author's utopic descriptions of Hamburg, stating that, "Ninguém receia o ridículo," must have become dreadfully clear to him, as World War II (1939-1945) overtook Europe. In the first years of the war, before being transferred to South America, Guimarães Rosa performed an admirable, yet somewhat clandestine service for many German Jews. He helped a number of them emigrate to Brazil. In "Guimarães Rosa, viajante," Felipe Fortuna affirms that the writer-diplomat "costumava ajudar as vítimas judaicas e emitia mais vistos do que a cota estipulada em lei" (372).

After his compulsory departure from Germany in 1942, Guimarães Rosa was stationed in Bogotá, Colombia from 1942 to 1944. Then, from 1950 to 1951, he was in Paris where, according to his daughter Vilma, he began writing *Grande sertão: veredas* (1956) (Vilma Guimarães Rosa 154). After Paris, Guimarães Rosa returned definitively to Brazil, spending the rest of his diplomatic career at the Secretária do Ministério das Relações Exteriores. From 1951 to 1956, the author served in various capacities at the Secretária, such as "Examinador de Cultura Geral nos vestibulares" and "Chefe da

Divisão do Orçamento do M.R.E [Minsitério das Relações Exteriores]” (“Rosa” *Anuário* 484).

But, the most significant period in Guimarães Rosa’s diplomatic career took place from 1956 to 1967. During these years, he served as chief officer of the Serviço de Demarcação de Fronteiras. This period is also, in literary terms, the author’s most productive. From 1956 to 1967, Guimarães Rosa published all of his literary works except for the germinal *Sagarana*, which was published a decade before *Corpo de baile* and *Grande sertão: veredas*, both appearing in 1956. In 1962, Guimarães Rosa published *Primeiras estórias* and in 1967, only months before his death, he published *Tutaméia: terceiras estórias*. Two other volumes were also published in the wake of his death in November of 1967. A collection of short stories, *Estas estórias*, was published in 1969 and, in 1970, a book of essays and memoirs entitled *Ave, palavra* appeared.

During these eleven years of unprecedented literary activity, a distinct parallel emerges between the author’s literary production and diplomatic service. In “Guimarães Rosa, viajante,” Fortuna opens the way for establishing this connection. Guimarães Rosa’s literary and diplomatic work are both characterized by “pesquisa intensa sobre o assunto; na atenção paciente ao detalhe e à minúcia; no horror à improvisação e à observação pouco profunda; na constante necessidade de pensar e investigar o Brasil” (Fortuna 380). The same procedures that characterize the author’s literary process also characterize the author’s diplomatic work. In both literature and diplomacy, Guimarães Rosa’s all-consuming attention to detail is apparent. In both fields, Guimarães Rosa dealt with important questions of geography and national destiny that required intense study and research. Likewise, for Guimarães Rosa, these two fields converge as he was

incessantly involved in the “constante necessidade de pensar e investigar o Brasil” (Fortuna 380).

Heloísa Vilhena de Araújo, in her foundational study *João Guimarães Rosa: diplomata*, portrays the political atmosphere of Brazil in the 1950s and 1960s. In Araújo’s study, she points to the anxiety felt by the federal government concerning the development of economic projects in border regions:

[N]o âmbito da orientação dos Governos brasileiros, especialmente após a II Guerra Mundial, nos planos interno e externo. . . a solução satisfatória dos problemas de limites tornou-se requisito para que se pudessem aproveitar economicamente as áreas fronteiriças e utilizar os recursos naturais aí existentes, muitas vezes compartilhados com os países vizinhos. (41)

The main objective of the Serviço de Demarcação de Fronteiras, under the leadership of Guimarães Rosa, was the “preparação do terreno para o estabelecimento de relações construtivas com nossos vizinhos” (Araújo 42). This “preparação de terreno” eventually gave way to the construction of the Itaipu dam in the 1970s.

The principal objective of the nation’s push towards economic development in the 1950s and 1960s was in line with other greater political forces directing inter-American relations at the time. Especially in the early 1960s, there were significant incentives for economic development offered to Latin American nations by the United States. Through the John F. Kennedy-inspired Alliance for Progress, the US government offered aid for economic development to Latin American countries where significant progress in democratization and education reform was being made. The Itaipu dam project was a

means for Brazil to continue on the path towards further developing the interior while also remaining in line with the hegemonic demands of the United States.

The United States was interested in assuring its total domination in the hemisphere through economic, cultural and military programs and interventions. Of course, as exemplified by its support of the military coup of 1964, leading to the imposition of a non-democratic regime, even the United States was less concerned with the promotion of the democratic ideals of the Alliance for Progress than with the assurance of its own survival. The irony of the United States' contradicting policies in the region is well represented by a statement made by the Senator Albert Gore Sr., not long after the military coup of 1964: "I have heard. . . that all of the members of the [Brazilian] congress who advocated the kind of reforms which we have made a prerequisite for Alliance for Progress aid are now in prison." (qtd. in Leacock 195).

Although a diplomat, Guimarães Rosa considered himself anything but a politician. Guimarães Rosa's distaste for politics is noted by the author himself in his interview with Lorenz. Guimarães Rosa considered his calling as a diplomat, as well as that of a writer, to be distinct from the work of local politics:

Quando os escritores levam a sério o seu compromisso, a política se torna supérflua. Além disso, eu sou escritor, e se você quiser, também diplomata; político nunca fui. . . A política é desumana, porque dá ao homem o mesmo valor que uma vírgula em uma conta. . . . eu jamais poderia ser político com toda essa charlatanice da realidade. (qtd. in Lorenz 63-77)

For Guimarães Rosa, politics worked in direct opposition to the purposes of writing and diplomacy. Politics rejected the intrinsic value of individual existence, converting it into ideological leverage and economic profits. On the other hand, Guimarães Rosa conceived of both diplomacy and writing as serving a more symbolic function to the nation. The role of literature and diplomacy was to “dream” of ideals: “um diplomata é um sonhador e por isso pode exercer bem essa profissão. O diplomata acredita que pode remediar o que os políticos arruinaram” (Rosa qtd. Lorenz 77).

Because of Guimarães Rosa’s distaste for local politics, his view of projects such as the Itaipu dam was one that conceded to diplomatic work not only its obvious economic or political purpose, but also a figurative one. Guimarães Rosa felt the Itaipu project should be an expression of Latin American solidarity, capable of mending the relations of two nations that, in the nineteenth century, during the War of the Triple Alliance (1864-1870), were characterized by violence. During the War of the Triple Alliance, Uruguay, Argentina and Brazil had all but annihilated the entire population of Paraguay. The Itaipu dam was a means for Brazil and Paraguay to come to terms with their past through cooperation.

A diplomatic document representative of such a hope for Latin American solidarity is the “Nota 92,” an important memorandum written by Guimarães in 1966. This memorandum is, despite the implication of its title, an exposition numbering many pages written to the Paraguayan government concerning the resolution of the territorial dispute in the Salto das Sete Quedas region. The dispute over this region was hindering the advancement of the Itaipu project. In “Nota 92,” Guimarães Rosa expresses the symbolic importance of the Paraná River where the Itaipu dam was to be built:

O Brasil está, como sempre esteve, disposto a encetar conversações em torno de tão importante questão, e a promover, em conjunto com o Paraguai, os planos necessários à utilização prática, não só do enorme potencial energético decorrente do Salto de Sete Quedas, como de todas as possibilidades que oferecem, à agricultura e à navegação, as águas do Paraná; de tal sorte que esse grande rio, ao invés de oferecer aos dois países razões de litígio e desavença, seja entre eles um elo de união, como sempre desejaram os anteriores Governos do Brasil, e firmemente deseja o atual. (“Nota 92” 171)

In “Guimarães Rosa, viajante,” Fortuna proposes that “Nota 92” is not only “um dos documentos mais primorosos da diplomacia brasileira,” but also “um modelo de conhecimento histórico, seguindo a lição seminal do Barão do Rio Branco, sobre os tratados que definiram a linha divisória entre os dois países” in 1872 and 1927 (379). The span of the Itaipu dam, connecting Paraguay with Brazil, was not only a visible bridge of millions of metric tons of concrete and steel, but also a symbolic “bridge,” expiating previous atrocities and attesting to the resilience of Latin American identity cauterizing in the fiery furnace of the Cold War.

The attention to detail and intense research employed by Guimarães Rosa in the resolution of this border dispute with Paraguay bears a resemblance to his novelistic process in *Grande sertão: veredas*. During the years of research that led to the composition of “Nota 92,” Guimarães Rosa was, according to Araújo, “paciente, minucioso, rigoroso, na resolução das controvérsias, na manutenção dos marcos, na sua densificação, na correção dos traçados dos mapas” (42). Described by Graciliano Ramos,

Guimarães Rosa's writing process was also characterized by a similarly laborious process: "vigilância na observação, que o leva a não desprezar minúcias na aparência insignificantes, uma honestidade quase mórbida ao reproduzir os fatos" (xvi).

Physical geography, in order to be translated into a national geo-political reality, must be inevitably deduced to narrative through diplomacy. Treaties and other official communiqués ascertaining the exact location of borders between nations, such as the "Nota 92," result principally from two means: the actual exploration of territory and demarcation and also by the consultation of archives such as preexisting treaties and maps. The diplomatic experiences of both Euclides da Cunha and João Guimarães Rosa both attest to this process of transforming geography into political boundaries through narrative. The documents resulting from these two authors' diplomatic careers, concerning the Brazil-Peru border, in the case of Euclides da Cunha, and the Brazil-Paraguay border, in the case of Guimarães Rosa, are narrative representations proposed to correspond to a literal national reality.

In a letter to his father written from Rio on October 27, 1953, Guimarães Rosa likewise communicates the importance of research and descriptive detail in his literary work: "O detalhe é muitas vezes de grande proveito, pois metido num texto dá impressão de realidade" (qtd. in Vilma Guimarães Rosa 207). Thus, a parallel between the "realidade" represented by diplomatic negotiations—a type of narrative political fiction—and the "impressão de realidade" in Guimarães Rosa's literary enterprise materializes. The correspondence between Guimarães Rosa and his father, especially during the 40s and 50s, represents well the compositional process by which the author transformed his native region—the sertão—into a mythical symbol of the entire nation.

Through a comparable procedure to the historical research done as a diplomat, Guimarães Rosa is able to create a dynamic and exuberant fictional topography as the result of scholarly inquiry and travel. In a letter written to his father from Rio on December 9, 1955, as Guimarães Rosa nears the completion of both *Corpo de Baile* and *Grande sertão: veredas*, the author expresses his appreciation for his father's collaboration in his work:

Apreciei, muitíssimo, as notas que o senhor me mandou. . . Estão todas colecionadas, com apontamentos e sublinhados dos pontos mais importantes, e, aos poucos, serão, todas elas, aproveitadas nos meus livros. . . Fico esperando que o senhor me mande mais. Não precisa de mandar coisa alinhavada e seguida. Bastam pequenos tópicos. Tudo é útil. Preciso explorar mais o senhor, que a mina é ótima. Desde já vou agradecendo, e muitíssimo. (qtd. in Vilma Guimarães Rosa 213-214)

Throughout Guimarães Rosa's career, he persistently requested any tidbits of information that his father was willing to provide. The information provided by his father was duly catalogued and archived so that it could serve in the future to create landscapes and characters based in the folklore, history and geography of the sertão.

Another resemblance to Guimarães Rosa's diplomatic work in his compositional process is the author's actual physical exploration of the sertão. In 1945, Guimarães Rosa writes a letter to his father explaining his plans to spend a few days in the sertão, taking notes and making observations in his notebook in preparation for future literary works:

Além do prazer de passar 5 dias em B. Hte. [Belo Horizonte] e revê-los, a todos, preciso de aproveitar a oportunidade para penetrar de novo naquele

interior nosso conhecido, retomando contato com a terra e a gente, reavivando lembranças, reabastecendo-me de elementos, enfim, para outros livros, que tenho em preparo. Creio que será uma excursão interessante e proveitosa, que irei fazer de cadernos abertos e lápis em punho, para anotar tudo o que possa valer, como fornecimento de cor local, pitoresco e exatidão documental, que são coisas muito importantes na literatura moderna. (Vilma Guimarães Rosa 179-180)

Throughout their correspondence, Guimarães Rosa's father, like a living oracle, functions as the author's link to the region's history. The relationship between Guimarães Rosa and his father resembles that between "o senhor," the silent interlocutor in *Grande sertão: veredas*, and the protagonist Riobaldo, respectively. The relationship evokes many of the same dichotomic relationships developed in the story: "a sertaneja e a urbana, a coloquial e a erudita, a oral e a escrita" (Bolle 40).

Similarly, Guimarães Rosa's excursions into the sertão resemble the work of the diplomat—exploring, cataloguing, alphabetizing and organization the nation—in order to employ his findings in his literary enterprise. In the novel, the interlocutor, similar to Guimarães Rosa in real life, proposed to visit the sertão in order to explore and catalogue its natural wonders. In an episode near the beginning of the book which serves as a topographical exposé of the region, Riobaldo questions the interlocutor about the intentions of his visit: "Mas, o senhor sério tenciona devassar a raso este mar de territórios, para sortimento de conferir o que existe?" (*Grande sertão* 25). Similar to both Guimarães Rosa's visit to the sertão in 1945 and Euclides da Cunha's voyage to the Amazon in 1906, the interlocutor has come to the sertão to explore and catalogue the

resources found therein. Riobaldo proposes to offer himself as the interlocutor's guide. In the words of Willi Bolle, in his recent book *Grandesertão.br: o romance de formação do Brasil* (2004) in which he compares Cunha's *Os sertões* with Rosa's *Grande sertão: veredas*: "O narrador de Euclides, assim como o de Guimarães Rosa, se oferece como guia através da *Terra*, respectivamente o sertão de Canudos, no norte da Bahia, e o "Alto-Norte brabo" de Minas Gerais" (53).

In the episode in which he proposes to serve as a guide, Riobaldo opens the interlocutor's view through description to the diverse natural wonders and landscapes of the sertão. After posing his question to the interlocutor, Riobaldo confesses he would like to guide "o senhor" across the sertão, if it were not for his advanced age and rheumatism: "Não fosse despoder, por azias e reumatismo, aí eu ia. Eu guiava o senhor até tudo" (*Grande sertão* 26). Delineating the potential itinerary of their voyage, Riobaldo pronounces no less than 26 distinct geographic locations in the short span of just two pages, indicating the route he and the interlocutor would take across the sertão's "mar de territórios." These 26 locations are: os altos claros das Almas, Serra do Tatú, dos-Confins, A [beleza] da-Raizama, Saririnhém, Meão-meão, uma terra quase azul, Buriti-Mirim, Angical, Extrema-de-Santa-Maria, Chapadão das Vertentes, Cabeça-de-Negro, Buriti-Comprido, Piapora, Paracatu, Serra do Cafundó, o [rio] Urucúia, serra do Estrondo, serra do Roncador, rio Carinhanha, rio Paracatu, Porto das Oriças, Claráguas, Fazenda Boi-Preto, Campo-Azulado, and Queimadão (*Grande sertão* 25-27).

Riobaldo, like Guimarães Rosa's father, is a font of local knowledge, an entity upon which converges the history and mystery of the region. Similar to the folk knowledge owned by Guimarães Rosa's father, the geographic knowledge that Riobaldo

possesses is directly related to his experiences in the sertão. The exorbitant quantity of place names mentioned in the novel is only rivaled by the equally mesmerizing amount of extraordinary experiences had by Riobaldo there. In *Grande sertão: veredas*, the sertão's physical geography, in order to represent a national identity, transforms the limits of a narrated topography into a limitless mythical reality.

As previously discussed in chapter four, during the Enlightenment, the individual and nation begin to be both abstractly conceptualized as functioning within systems of reciprocal equality. This similarity between the individual and the nation is reiterated by the metonymic relationship of Riobaldo with the sertão, becoming a crucial narrative device contained in *Grande sertão: veredas*. This metonymy casts a collective light on the allegorical nature of the protagonist's travels in the sertão. In an episode in which he considers the central question of the novel—whether or not he sold his soul to the devil—Riobaldo suggests a collective meaning to his plight: “Se vendo minha alma, estou vendendo também os outros” (311).

The proposition that Riobaldo's actions can be understood as national allegory was first conceded by Guimarães Rosa in his interview with Günter Lorenz in Geneva in 1965, at the Congresso de Escritores Latino-Americanos. As the two discussed the worldwide reception of *Grande sertão: veredas*, the interview brought to light Guimarães Rosa's opinions on the many equivocal attempts by European critics to analyze the novel's protagonist. In the interview, Lorenz asks Guimarães Rosa for clarification about Riobaldo. Guimarães Rosa then explains: “Riobaldo e todos os seus irmão são habitantes de meu universo. . . Riobaldo é sertão feito homem e é meu irmão. . . creio que Riobaldo. . . é apenas o Brasil” (qtd. in Lorenz 95-96). Bolle also suggests that there is an

allegorical aspect to the novel *Grande sertão: veredas*. According to Bolle, the novel is “Um *network*, no qual o sertão é o mapa alegórico do Brasil” (8). For Bolle, *Grande sertão: veredas* is a rewriting of Brazilian history, reflecting twentieth century paradigms, such as:

o avanço da industrialização e da tecnologia, o desenvolvimento explosivo das cidades, a revolução da mídia, a expansão dos mercados e a exacerbação do imperialismo em duas guerras mundiais, a emergência das massas do cenário político e o despertar de uma consciência do ‘Terceiro Mundo’ (34).

In this chapter, I will argue, similar to Bolle, that the specific moment in history in which Riobaldo’s story is recounted to the interlocutor (and not necessarily the historical time in which the action of the novel takes place) coordinates Riobaldo’s dilemma with a national negotiation of an emerging postwar Latin American identity. If “Riobaldo. . . é apenas o Brasil” (qtd. in Lorenz 96), then the story of Riobaldo is an allegorical account of the (dis)location of postwar Brazil’s national identity. This dislocation results from the intense international pressure for economic development and for the nation’s alignment with one of the emerging superpowers of the bipolar international system. Muffled and suppressed by these international pressures, the identity of Brazil becomes nearly indecipherable. Or, in the words of Bolle, “O sertão aparece aqui como labirinto, lugar por excelência do se perder e do errar. Apagam-se todas as referências, a cartografia chega ao limite e se desfaz” (65).

Upon a close reading of the sparse details known of the interlocutor who sits opposite the jagunço Riobaldo as he tells his tale, the presence of a jeep, or rather “jipe,”

as it is written in the text, serves as an important index for defining the historical time of the narration; one with international ramifications. In 1939, as Europe prepared for World War II, the United States military was developing the first versions of the jeep. These first jeeps were light-weight all-terrain vehicles that became famous throughout the world for their rugged and reliable engineering and design. In 1940, the corporations Bantam, Willys Overland Motors, Inc., and the Ford Motor Company presented to the army the first prototypes of the vehicle (Fowler 17). The jeep design eventually had a great impact on the outcome of the war as it “appeared on all fronts,” transporting soldiers and ammunitions across long stretches of difficult terrain in Europe, Asia, and northern Africa (Fowler 8). This off-road vehicle became the first of a new type, a predecessor of today’s SUVs.

Similar to its progeny, the jeep’s curious name is likewise derived from an acronym. The initials GP, meaning “General Purpose” vehicle, painted on the sides of prototypes during trials “were seen by an anonymous GI who coined the name ‘jeep’” (Fowler 23). In part due to its proven reliability in the war and also due to the United States’ growing political and economic might after the war, the jeep, along with its name, was exported all over the world and adapted by military forces and civilians alike. After the war, it quickly became a success among farmers and others who wished to travel in less hospitable terrain, but no longer desired to do it by horse and saddle.

In Brazil, the jeep became increasingly popular for travel in rural areas among the wealthier ranchers. In the 1950s, to take advantage of the jeep’s growing popularity in Brazil, the American entrepreneur and philanthropist Henry J. Kaiser opened up “Brazil’s first national automotive company,” Willys-Overland do Brasil, S.A. (Rabe 1706). In

1956, the same year that João Guimarães Rosa published *Grande sertão: veredas*, Willys-Overland do Brasil was developing a new factory in São Paulo. A note from the October 27, 1956 issue of *Business Week* magazine entitled “Jeeps on Parade Help Willys Finance Its Plant in Brazil” explains one of the techniques employed by Willys to attract private Brazilian investment:

The 15-jeep caravan parading through villages in Brazil’s state of Sao Paulo [sic] last week looked like a Wall Street campaign to rope in the small investor. . . Willys is setting up a new factory near Sao Paulo [sic] that, by 1960, will turn out 20,000 jeeps a year. (158)

Before the company floundered and was bought out by Ford, Willys Overland do Brasil played an important role in popularizing the jeep as a reliable means of off-road travel among Brazilians in the immediate postwar period (Rabe 1706).

For a novel set in a place where horses still serve as the principal means of travel, this brief history of the jeep’s introduction to Brazil may first seem extraneous to the text. Indeed, with the exception of one lone reference to a “jipe” in all of the 608 pages of the novel, the principal types of *carros* mentioned in *Grande sertão: veredas* limit themselves to oxcarts and train cars. But the presence of the jeep allows us to place the time of Riobaldo’s oral history in the early 1950s, when the vehicle was first introduced to Brazil.

On the banks of a river called de-Janeiro and close to where this river meets the São Francisco, Riobaldo meets Diadorim for the first time. As Riobaldo recounts this episode to the interlocutor, he makes reference to the interlocutor’s mode of travel—the jeep. Speaking of the difficulties had in crossing the de-Janeiro river with an oxcart,

Riobaldo praises the efficiency of the interlocutor's vehicle: "Daí, o senhor veja: tanto trabalho, ainda, por causa de uns metros de água mansinha, só por falta duma ponte. Ao que mais, no carro-de-bois, levam muitos dias, para vencer o que em horas o senhor em seu jipe resolve" (*Grande sertão* 95). The contrast between the oxcart and the jeep is an important one. On one hand, the jeep is able to cross the de-Janeiro in a matter of hours. On the other, the oxcart requires days of effort. The contrast painted by these two modes of travel—the jeep representing the most current and the oxcart the past—points us to the real crux of the problem in the novel: the rationalization of the past with the present.

The presence of the jeep does not only place the novel historically, but also emphasizes the fact that there is no bridge to cross the de-Janeiro. This lack of a bridge that would facilitate travel across the river, by oxcart and jeep alike, symbolizes Riobaldo's existential frustration. Just as the ideal solution to crossing the river relies on the construction of a bridge, the solution for Riobaldo's existential dilemma rests in his ability to reconcile his past through storytelling. But, the recounting of history itself is problematic. In the words of Luiz F. Valente, "the past is made up of two inseparable complementary dimensions: that of the events and that of the effort to remember, which is itself immediately transformed into past" (83). Since Riobaldo's recounting of his story to the interlocutor is bound to the story itself, only Riobaldo's future, to which he will never arrive, holds the answer to his dilemma. For Riobaldo, just as there is no bridge spanning the de-Janeiro River, there likewise is no possible means of bridging the gap between his past and present, making impossible any future resolution to the novel's central question: "O diabo existe e não existe? Dou o dito. Abrenúncio" (*Grande sertão* 10).

Similar to Vinicius de Moraes's "Pátria minha" (discussed in the next chapter), *Grande sertão: veredas* also points us to "the unfinished and impossible project of the modernizing nation state" in postwar Latin America (Franco "The Nation" 205). As an example of the articulation of this unfinished national project, Riobaldo is an allegory for the nation: "Jagunço é o sertão" (*Grande sertão* 311). As Riobaldo conveys to the interlocutor the episode in which Diadorim communicates her real name for the first time, Riobaldo explains: "O sertão é isso, senhor sabe: tudo incerto, tudo certo" (*Grande sertão* 156). Luiz F. Valente, in his article *Affective Response in Grande sertão: veredas*, draws a relation between the indefinite images of this (meta)physical sertão and the indeterminate nature of Riobaldo's life experiences:

First, the meaning of sertão is presented as provisional and entirely dependent on perspective. Second, sertão is redefined in terms of the affective relationship between the region and its people. Thus this redefinition has two basic characteristics: it is relational and open to constant change. The result is that the possibility to define sertão completely and univocally is denied. (78)

The nebulous nature of Riobaldo's symbolic and physical travels throughout the sertão not only creates a metonymic relationship between him and the region he inhabits, for indeed, he is a living cartography of the sertão, but his character also represents the relationship of an integral Brazilian identity with the irreconcilable realities of mid-twentieth century Latin America.

Riobaldo's struggles are embodied in the form of another character—Diadorim. S/he is thought to be male, but, as we discover at the end of the novel, is actually female.

As Riobaldo seeks to come to terms with his homoerotic attraction to Diadorim throughout the novel, he also seeks to bring order to his universe. Being at the same time male and female, lover (although unconsummated) and comrade, Diadorim comes to represent all the ambiguity of Riobaldo's life as a jagunço. This ambiguity leads Riobaldo to not take sides, but to remain sympathetic to both banks of the river. Thus, he inhabits the endless in-between, traveling "rio abaixo" (*Grande sertão* 318) in his constant search for his place in the world of the sertão. This geographic and existential travessia, this caught in-betweenness of Riobaldo, is typified in moments like an episode with Jõe Bexiguento when Riobaldo asks: "Mas a gente estava com Deus? And Jõe Bexiguento responds: Uai?! Nós vive. . ." (*Grande sertão* 220). Riobaldo is quite honest with the interlocutor about his dilemma: "Conto ao senhor é. . . o que não sei se sei, e que pode ser que o senhor saiba" (*Grande sertão* 229). Riobaldo's frustrated identity is also represented in the moment when he asks the interlocutor: "O jagunço Riobaldo. Fui eu?" (*Grande sertão* 216).

Although nationalist rhetoric does not occupy a prominent position in the novel, the metonymic relationship established between Riobaldo and the sertão can likewise be articulated as a symbol of a frustrated collective national identity. As Riobaldo attempts to reconstruct his past to discern whether or not he sold his soul to the devil at Veredas-Mortas/Veredas-Altas (*Grande sertão* 601), the novel symbolically disputes conceptions of a glorious national destiny, exposing previous Romantic notions of the nation as being merely contrived and constructed. In his interview with Lorenz, Guimarães Rosa elaborates his conceptions of national identity, proposing the indisputable reality of its existence while also pointing to the impossibility of its intellectual articulation:

É lógico que existe a “brasilidade.” Existe como a pedra básica de nossas almas, de nossos pensamentos, de nossa dignidade, de nossos livros e de toda nossa forma de viver. Mas o que ela é? Muita gente já quebrou a cabeça por causa do assunto. (90-91)

By configuring Riobaldo as an allegorical representative of the nation, *Grande sertão: veredas* represents a (meta)physical border negotiation, delineating the parameters by which the novel’s protagonist Riobaldo, as a symbol for Brazil, posits that national identity, although it does exist, is nonetheless impossible to ascertain.

The dueling dualities of the novel represent distinct dialogues that together form the parameters of national (Brazil) and individual (Riobaldo) identity. In the words of Riobaldo: “Eu penso assim, nas paridades” (*Grande sertão* 312). These parities also represent the opposing interests of nations in negotiations. Treaties are “pactos” that assure the sovereignty of a nation. The “pactos” parallel the construction of a national identity. The irony, of course, is that there is no truly discernable difference in the human organism that would distinguish an individual born within the boundaries of one nation from the other. Similarly, there is nothing distinctly Brazilian about the eastern bank of the Paraná River, and nothing distinctly Paraguayan about the opposite shore. The process that links the members of a single nation together is equivalent to the processes by which Riobaldo poses his question to the interlocutor: “Quero é armar o ponto dum fato, para depois lhe pedir um conselho. Por, daí, então, careço de que o senhor escute bem essas passagens: da vida de Riobaldo, o jagunço” (*Grande sertão* 216). The answer for both the nation and Riobaldo rests in *travessia*, an endless passage towards a future ideal in which they both hope to, but never will, discover the justification for existence.

Riobaldo's travels traverse, through allegory, the boundaries between literature and reality; or rather, Riobaldo's travels portray a mythical and symbolic rendering of the nation. Riobaldo's quest for an identity in the fictional sertão of Guimarães Rosa's *Grande sertão: veredas* parallels in the twentieth century an intensified search for a national self. Unable to create a satisfactory bridge that would reconcile the nation's present with its past, the novel is a frustrated dialogue in which only one voice is heard—that of Riobaldo. And as long as the interlocutor goes unheard, the future is uncertain. As Riobaldo is not capable of absolving himself of the death of Diadorim because he cannot understand his past, the ideological pressures of the Cold War were likewise distorting the nation's perspectives of its national identity to the point of rendering its identity “tudo incerto, tudo certo” (*Grande sertão* 156).

Chapter 6

Vinicius de Moraes, “Pátria minha” and the Feminization of Brazil

O rouxinol canta, a noite inteira, nos galhos dos castanheiros-bravos,
onde esplendem, em candelabros minúsculos, os cachos das flores
alvíssimas. (qtd. in Vilma Guimarães Rosa 177)

– João Guimarães Rosa, May 26, 1939

In this chapter, I will analyze Vinicius de Moraes’s poem “Pátria minha” (1948).

“Pátria minha” was written while Moraes was stationed as a “Cônsul de Segunda Classe” (“Moraes” *Anuário* 385) in Los Angeles, the author’s first diplomatic post abroad.

Moraes’s interpretations of Brazil in this poem originates, as did many of his other works, from the standpoint of relationships between the sexes. Conceived within the specific politico-cultural context of mid-twentieth century Latin America, “Pátria minha” traces through intimate imagery the contours of Brazilian identity. The poem conjures a complex and vulnerable image of a feminized nation as it deals with themes of artistic exile apropos of Moraes’s diplomatic experience in Los Angeles. Written as an open letter to Brazil of the late 1940s, the nation is articulated as being in transition and threatening dissolution. Gendered relationships play an important role in the poem, as they portray Brazil’s vulnerable position between local and global hegemonic discourses.

“Pátria minha” was composed not long after the end of both World War II (1939-1945) and the Estado Novo (1937-1945) and published in 1949 by João Cabral de Melo Neto on his boutique home press in Barcelona, Spain (“Cronologia” *Moraes* 46). At the time, the emerging Cold War was reshaping global politics with preponderant

ramifications for Latin America. In this chapter, I will analyze the analogies between Moraes's diplomatic work and his conception of Brazilian identity during this tense period in national history. My analysis will utilize archival materials such as personal correspondence and diplomatic documents located in the Fundação Casa de Rui Barbosa and the Arquivo Histórico do Itamaraty as I consider both the global and local perspectives in which "Pátria minha" was conceived.

The poet, playwright, and lyricist Vinicius de Moraes (1913-1980) is well known at home and abroad for his artistic work. His cultural production encompasses a complete range of forms. He collaborated with Antonio Carlos Jobim (1927-1994) on songs such as "Garota de Ipanema" (1962) and "A felicidade" (1959). He was also recognized internationally for the filmic adaptation of his play "Orfeu da concepção" (1955) entitled "Orfeu negro" (1959) and directed by Marcel Camus (1912-1982). Yet, despite his varied production, Moraes was first and foremost a poet. In 1966, during an interview with a French reporter at the Cannes Film Festival, Moraes confessed: "Em primeiro lugar sou poeta. Todas as minhas outras atividades artísticas decorrem do fato de que sou poeta antes de tudo" (qtd. in Calil 9).

Beginning in 1933 with *O caminho para distância*, Moraes published a number of books of poetry. The period between 1933 and 1938 was Moraes's most productive (Neto 402). He published *Forma e exegese* in 1935, *Ariana, a mulher* in 1936 and *Novos poemas* in 1938. In 1943 came *Cinco elegias. Poemas, sonetos e baladas* was published in 1946. With many more works to follow, the first edition of Moraes's complete prose and poetry was published in 1968.

Thirty years prior, in 1938, at the beginning of his literary career, Vinicius de Moraes moved to England to study for two years, after graduating from the Faculdade de Direito da Universidade do Brasil (“Moraes” *Anuário* 385). The British Council had awarded Moraes a two-year scholarship to Oxford for his books of poetry *O caminho para distância* and *Forma e exegese* (Cruz de Moraes 38). Unfortunately, however, Moraes was unable to complete his course of study. His stay in England was cut short because of World War II. In a letter to his friend and fellow poet Manuel Bandeira, written in 1938, Moraes contemplates the horrors of war. One year before he would actually return to Brazil in late 1939 (“Cronologia” *Moraes* online), Moraes conveys to Bandeira his reaction to a bombing scare in London: “Fiquei acreditando que a guerra é uma entidade aparte no mundo que nem fala o Ecclesiastes. Há um momento em que ela independe totalmente do controle político dos países” (*Letter to Bandeira 1938*). In the letter, he also explains his feelings about returning to Brazil. Further describing this frightening episode in which he “esperav[a] o bombardeio aéreo de Londres” (*Letter to Bandeira 1938*), Moraes writes: “Tenho uma máscara contra gases pra mostrar a vocês na volta e a satisfação de tudo ter saído bem, quentinha, dentro de mim” (*Letter to Bandeira 1938*). Fearing for his safety and for that of his pregnant wife, Beatriz, the two returned to Rio (Cruz de Moraes 38). Although he was disappointed to leave Europe, he was relieved to have escaped without serious injury or incident.

Back in Rio, Moraes worked with various newspapers and magazines as a film and literary critic. But, the poet’s meager salary was not enough to support his family. According to Laetitia Cruz de Moraes in her essay “Vinicius, meu irmão,” Moraes had

tried with no avail to find a career that would match both his artistic temperament and also provide for his family's financial security:

Urgia, portanto, encontrar um emprego que, libertando-o da pressão econômica, lhe permitisse entregar-se com mais sossego à atividade literária. A diplomacia, onde se encontram tantas grandes figuras da literatura brasileira, pareceu-lhe a melhor carreira. (Cruz de Moraes 39)

For Moraes, working for the Ministério das Relações Exteriores seemed a reasonable solution to his dilemma. He could combine his passions for travel and writing with a prestigious and secure profession.

The employment of writers in government and public service positions was by Moraes's time hardly a new occurrence in Brazil. Throughout Brazil's history, many writers often found stable careers not only in diplomacy, but also in other government positions. The regularity with which writers have been employed in government positions in Latin America points to an enduring connection between politics and literature. The connection results in part from the fact that the economy of writing was in colonial times, if not explicitly controlled, at least highly regulated by the political apparatus. The strong connection which developed between writing and politics made it commonplace in Latin America for writers to be employed in public careers and involved in public life. In the words of Angel Rama's posthumous *The Lettered City*: "The letrados affected the majesty of Power and took from it the principles of concentration, elitism, hierarchy, and, above all, the distance that set them apart from the rest of society" (29).

In the late nineteenth-century, many writers from the generation of Machado de Assis (1839-1908) obtained gainful employment in local government or politics.¹⁵

Official appointments provided writers the opportunity to earn a decent living while remaining connected to important circles of influence. While working in Rio, these writers gained access to Brazil's principal publishing venues as well as to the nation's most vibrant "high" culture. In the 1930s, although Rio's cultural hegemony had lost ground to São Paulo, Moraes, like those of the generations preceding him, had been employed by the government. In 1936, he began a job as a government film censor for the Vargas regime after his friend and fellow writer Prudente de Moraes Neto recommended him for the position (Neto 402). Despite Moraes's love for Rio, the prospect of becoming a diplomat turned out to be a greater attraction than a local government position.

In the 30s and 1940s, while the capital still remained in Rio, the city was the locus of intense political transformation just as it had been during Machado's time. In 1930, Getúlio Vargas took control of the government through a military coup. The coup was instigated on the grounds of an illegal election to prevent president-elect Júlio Prestes (1882-1946) from taking office (Skidmore 3). The military coup of 1930 brought to a halt the democratic process that had been painstakingly gaining a foothold in Brazilian politics since 1889. What ensued were fifteen years of authoritarian rule in which Vargas attempted to "replace this [Brazil's] quasi-confederation with a strong federal executive" (Skidmore 36). Although the Vargas regime stymied the development of democracy, it was able to make headway in other important areas of development. For example, Vargas's economic policies were crucial in advancing the nation's industrial expansion. Vargas also established the first minimum wages, created unions, pensions and set up the Bank of Brazil (Skidmore 44).

But, in order to maintain control over public opinion and wield sufficient power to direct the nation, the authoritarian leader had often exercised inordinate pressure on the media, censoring opposition (Skidmore 48). As a result of Vargas's tight grip, diplomacy was an attractive option for many writers. A career in diplomacy allowed writers the chance to escape the immediate political pressures of Rio through posts abroad while they still maintained an official connection with national life. Thus, being a diplomat was viewed by the most radical as a type of self-imposed exile and by the most orthodox as a means to serve the regime in power. But, it offered to both a secure space to pursue writing.

Moraes and others such as João Cabral de Melo Neto and João Guimarães Rosa all began their diplomatic and literary careers during the Vargas era. Moraes began his career in 1943, only a few years after publishing his first book of poetry ("Moraes" *Anuário* 385). Guimarães Rosa entered the service in 1934 around the same time he completed the first draft of what eventually became *Sagarana* ("Rosa" *Anuário* 483). And, when Cabral became a diplomat in December of 1945, at the end of the Estado Novo, he had already established himself as an important poet ("Mello Neto" *Anuário* 369).

In 1941, after months of study, Moraes made his first attempt at the exam required of all persons desiring a career in diplomacy. But, he failed to classify because of a technicality. According to Cruz de Moraes, the poet had accidentally signed his name to all the exam papers out of habit. This habit resulted from years of "assina[ndo] toda a papelada dos filmes" while working as a government censor (Cruz de Moraes 39). He was automatically disqualified from the competition for this reason.

In 1942, after an extended trip to Northeastern Brazil, where he met João Cabral de Melo Neto (“Cronologia” *Melo Neto* 45), he returned to Rio and took the exam again. This time, Moraes passed and officially entered diplomatic service on December 10, 1943 (“Moraes” *Anuário* 385). Born in Rio on October 19, 1913, Moraes was thirty years old when he became a diplomat. Moraes’s career spanned more than 25 years (1943-1969) and eventually took him to Los Angeles, Paris and Montevideo, where he would not only fulfill the regular duties of a consul, but also represent his country at academic conferences, film festivals and other cultural events. Throughout his career, Moraes would struggle to balance his official duties as a diplomat, familial obligations and his artistic and personal pursuits. Propelled to international fame in the 1960s, Moraes could no longer fulfill his duties as a diplomat and in 1969 the poet was forced into retirement (Neto 414).

For the first few years of diplomatic service, from 1943 to 1946 (“Moraes” *Anuário* 385), Moraes remained in Rio at the Secretária do Ministério das Relações Exteriores. During this period, Moraes used his status as a diplomat to voice his opinion on matters of domestic policy such as the presidential election of 1945. Near the end of the Estado Novo, opposing opinions to Vargas had become more and more prevalent in the media. On February 22, 1945, the *Correio da Manhã*, a local paper in Rio de Janeiro, published an interview with the novelist and presidential hopeful José Américo de Almeida (1887-1980) “in which he [Almeida] explained why presidential elections must be held” (Skidmore 49). According to Skidmore, this interview was concrete evidence that Vargas’s constraints on the media were relaxing (49).

In 1945, not long after this interview, Moraes along with two other diplomats also severely criticized Vargas. In the proclamation entitled “Manifesto em favor da democracia,” Vinicius de Moraes, Jayme Azevedo Rodrigues and Lauro Escorel de Moraes “desancavam o próprio governo a que serviam” (Albin 429). In the document, the three declared their opposition to Vargas’s potential candidacy in the upcoming free elections of December 1945. As a result, all three were almost fired from their diplomatic posts, but they were not “porque isso poderia enfraquecer mais o governo,” further damaging Vargas’s already wavering public image (Albin 429). The three diplomats used the “Manifesto” to summarize the dilemma *en utero* that Brazil and the rest of Latin America faced in the emerging international order of the postwar world:

O Brasil se encontra hoje diante de dois caminhos nitidamente demarcados: ou a implantação de um regime verdadeiramente democrático, que garanta ao povo brasileiro o exercício de suas liberdades essenciais e lhe assegure um governo idôneo na ordem internacional; ou a sobrevivência da ditadura em que temos vivido, desde o golpe de novembro de 1937. . . Em consequência, ao expressar nas presentes circunstâncias, preservando a nossa independência diante das correntes partidárias. . . nos declaramos contra toda e qualquer candidatura oficial, particularmente a do sr. Getúlio Vargas, que encarna o regime da irresponsabilidade, a prepotência e o arbítrio, a extinção das liberdades públicas e o favoritismo político. (“Manifesto”)

Pronouncing their “independência diante das correntes partidárias,” Moraes, Rodrigues and Escorel de Moraes evoked in the “Manifesto” their status as diplomats in order to

create a critical space between themselves and the Vargas regime. The three diplomats begin the document stating their diplomatic credentials: “Nós, Segundo Secretário Jayme Azevedo Rodrigues, diplomata classe K, Cônsul Vinícius de Moraes, diplomata classe J e Lauro Escorel de Moraes, diplomata classe J, servindo na Secretária de Estado do Ministério das Relações Exteriores” (“Manifesto”). From this official position, the three hoped their “Manifesto” would persuade others against voting for Vargas. But, ultimately, Vargas was never a candidate in the election. In the document, instead of siding with Vargas, the diplomats’ professed “solidariedade com a candidatura do Major Brigadeiro Eduardo Gomes” (“Manifesto”). Gomes gained thirty-five percent of the final vote in the election, losing to Eurico Gaspar Dutra (1883-1974) (Skidmore 64).

During the Estado Novo (1937-1945), Brazil’s image in the international sphere was riddled with inconsistencies, mirroring the nation’s deep divisions at home. When World War II began, the nation maintained an official stance of neutrality, while still considering an alliance with Germany (Dávila 271). By the end of the war, however, the allure of economic aid and hemispheric solidarity led Vargas to align the nation with the Allies:

The regime that had flirted with fascism and been courted by Nazi Germany to form wartime alliances found a more solicitous suitor in the United States, which offered considerable economic aid in exchange for military and political cooperation during World War II. (Dávila 271)

By the end of the war, Vargas was trying to place Brazil in step with other democracies abroad despite maintaining an undemocratic state at home. Accordingly, Jerry Dávila further proposes that, “whether Brazil was a nation that respected the gains of fascist

powers, or turned against fascism and embraced the American system, Vargas stood at its center” (271). Most notably, Vargas supplied troops to fight in Italy near the end of the war. He also allowed the US to use islands in the Atlantic as airbases. But, Brazil’s international policy against the authoritarian Nazi regime was an incongruous stance, contradicting the nation’s domestic reality:

In 1944, he [Vargas] received reports of criticism of the Estado Novo among the Brazilian officers fighting alongside the American Fifth Army in Italy. The Brazilians had become aware of the anomaly of fighting for democracy abroad while representing the dictatorship at home. (Skidmore 48)

The irony of “fighting for democracy abroad” (Skidmore 48) is indicative of the complex forces shaping not only Brazil, but all of Latin America during the period. The incompatibility of international policy and domestic reality became ever more apparent when Vargas sent soldiers to fight in Italy. Or, in the words of Moraes’s “Manifesto”: “Não podemos esquecer, tampouco, a flagrante contradição existente entre a orientação da nossa política exterior, ratificada na Itália pelo sangue de nossos irmãos, e as tendências dos atuais dirigentes do país” (“Manifesto”).

Brazil would struggle throughout the twentieth century to find stable political, cultural and economic footing. Similar to other Latin American nations, Brazil belonged to what came to be known in the mid-twentieth century as the “third world.” Although the origins of the term have been disputed, its meaning is clear. The term “third world” has traditionally referred to those “developing nations” that did not fall during the Cold War under the ideological auspices of either the United States (the “first world”) or the

Soviet Union (the “second world”). According to Christopher M. White, the term “third world” has three distinct connotations: first, it is a geo-political and economic term, referring to what we now term “developing nations”; second, it refers to a “*third* zone of influence outside the control of either of the superpowers” during the Cold War, and, lastly, the term refers to an “alternative or *third* ideological path from the two set out by the superpowers” (20). These two paths to which White refers are of course capitalism (USA) and communism (USSR). The new emerging postwar international system playing out on the ideological battlefield of the “third world” presented serious challenges to the politico-cultural identity and economic development of nations in Latin America. The challenges confronted by Brazil, as a “third world” nation, would be engaged by Moraes not only in the “Manifesto,” but also in his poetry. After the Estado Novo, the global conflicts which eventually developed into the Cold War assumed their authoritarian form in Brazil with the military dictatorship beginning in 1964.

Apart from the global forces shaping Latin America, the local political environment of the Estado Novo was already one of conflict. These conflicts originated not only from the rise of competing hegemonic ideologies on the world stage, but also from longstanding regional rivalries. In his book *Politics in Brazil, 1930-1964*, Thomas E. Skidmore describes how “The polarization [between Brazilian polity and Brazilian society] so evident by March 1964 had roots far deeper than the immediate controversy surrounding Goulart’s actions as President” (xv-xvi). The political mechanisms that led to the coup of 1964 had been set in motion in 1930 when Vargas took power.

In 1945, when Moraes’s “Manifesto” was written, the ideologies of communism and twentieth-century democratic capitalism were shaping Latin American politico-

cultural discourse. Both national ideologies—the capitalism of the US and the communism of the USSR—envisioned the “third world” as a dangerous territory in need of at least political direction, if not domination. In Jean Franco’s “The Nation as Imagined Community,” written in response to Fredric Jameson’s controversial article “Third World Literature in the Era of Multinational Capitalism,” she explains the difficulties encountered by “third world” writers in Latin America during the 40s and 50s. Specifically, the literary discourses of twentieth century Latin America greatly differed from the earlier homogenizing nationalist discourses of the nineteenth century.

In the nineteenth century, the elite employed literature as an arm of the political apparatus to be used in the consolidation of national identity (Franco “The Nation” 205). In the twentieth century, literature began to serve a less subservient role to politics, but it still functioned, as in the previous century, as an important index of national identity. In the 40s and 50s, Latin American literature had become, according to Franco, “a skeptical reconstruction of past errors” that “made visible the absence of any signified that could correspond to the nation” (“The Nation” 205). While agreeing with Jameson that there are recurring themes of struggle and domination depictive of many realities of a number of “third world” countries, Franco still refutes Jameson’s proposition in “Third World Literature” of the existence of a single homogenous category of third world literature defined inevitably, as Jameson argues, by the unfailing use of national allegory:

This cyclical conjunction of modernity and repression in the name of national autonomy or development has been vigorously contested in literature but in terms that are far too complex to be labeled “national allegory.” (“The Nation” 205)

For Franco, the use of national allegory, if at all apropos of the literatures of the third world, was still far from representing a pervasive and categorically definitive literary discourse that connected all “third world” nations through a common struggle for sovereignty. In postwar Latin America, no longer did literature attempt to unflinchingly imagine a nation on the path towards a glorious destiny, represented by the protagonist-heroes of Romanticism. Instead, previous suppositions about the realization of any national ideal were brought into serious question.

Besides Vinicius de Moraes, there were a number of other Latin American writers at the time questioning why their respective Latin American countries had not “developed into modern industrialized nations” (Franco *Decline* 36). Many Latin American writers such as Octavio Paz in his collection of essays on Mexican identity *Laberinto de la soledad*, portrayed Latin American nations in crisis during the period (Franco *Decline* 36). In Brazil, Graciliano Ramos and Clarice Lispector as well as João Cabral de Melo Neto and João Guimarães Rosa all questioned through literature the chasm between a national ideal and national reality.

In his poem “Pátria minha,” written while stationed in Los Angeles from July 1946 to September 1950, Moraes configured his diplomatic experience as a type of exile. Moraes’s view of his post abroad as an exile was in part due to his motivation for becoming a diplomat. The financial stability of a diplomatic career was an important factor in his decision. While in Los Angeles, Moraes confessed to Manuel Bandeira his utilitarian view of a diplomacy: “a carreira continua não me interessando senão como pão-nosso” (*Letter to Bandeira* 1949). Without doubt, one of Moraes’s principal aims for

a career in diplomacy was, as Cruz de Moraes suggests, to earn a steady income while still being able to write (39).

Moraes's conception of diplomacy as a type of exile exemplifies the irony suggested by Franco of writing in Latin America during the 40s and 50s. In 1948, when Moraes wrote "Pátria minha," he captured through familial and intimate imagery Brazil's struggle for identity. Brazil, simultaneously oppressed and empowered by the outcomes of the region's colonial history, was trapped by conflictual local and global forces, transforming the nation into a battlefield of neocolonialism. Faced with the politico-cultural realities of the developing Cold War and US economic expansion, "Pátria minha" configures Brazilian identity in similar terms to those of Franco. In the very first line of the poem, Moraes conveys the difficulties of defining his nation: "A minha pátria é como se não fosse" ("Pátria minha" 383). By inventing an unrealized space existing between the definitive form of the verb *ser*, "minha patria é," and the subjunctive form, "como se não fosse," Moraes simultaneously affirms and negates Brazil's existence ("Pátria minha" 383). Thus, in a phrase reminiscent of Franco's hypothesis, the poem "ma[kes] visible the absence of any signified that could correspond to the nation" (Franco 205).

In the two years prior to composing "Pátria minha," Moraes was having difficulty finding the time and inspiration to write. But, in 1948, Moraes finally overcame his writer's block. The poet describes in a letter to Manuel Bandeira in February of that year his newfound inspiration: "Disparei de repente a escrever. Há três dias que escrevo como um desalmado. . . Fiz três poemas que vou logo mandar, e de que, apesar dos pesares, gosto" (*Letter to Bandeira 1948*). Moraes goes on to explain that "Pátria minha" was one

of the three poems written during this epiphanic flash: “Um chama ‘Pátria minha’” (*Letter to Bandeira 1948*). “Pátria minha” was written along with two other poems: “Epitalamio,” described by Moraes as “uma cadência em decasílabos historiando tôdas as minhas mulheres” and another entitled “Ode à Legítima Espôsa” (*Letter to Bandeira 1948*).

In the same letter, Moraes asks Bandeira to examine two lines of verse which are not included in the final published version of “Pátria minha.” Although it would be difficult to ascertain the exact stanza in which these apocryphal lines were originally situated, beginning my analysis with them allows us to triangulate the location of Brazilian identity within its specific historical context. In an act of self-censorship, fearing retaliation by the Dutra administration (1945-1950), the following verses were omitted by Moraes in the final version of “Pátria minha”:

O poema “Pátria Minha” de que te falei tem um verso assim:

A minha pátria não é filha de negociante nem

/ mulher de miltar [sic]

Diga se v. acha se vão me despedir ou prender por causa. Porque estou para mandar o poema para o *Diário Carioca*. Não quero trapalhadas agora. Estou pagando lentamente minhas dívidas. Quero positivamente viver sem dívidas. Depois podem me prender, se quiserem. (*Letter to Bandeira 1948*)

Moraes knew that leaving the two overtly political lines in the poem would expose him to potential disciplinary measures from President Eurico Gaspar Dutra. Since he was apparently more concerned at the time with his professional survival than with

unrestrained artistic liberty, the poet wished first and foremost to avoid the possibility of imprisonment or dismissal. If, in 1945 at the end of the Vargas era, Moraes and others felt emboldened enough to oppose the regime in “Manifesto” when they criticized the Estado Novo, during the Dutra presidency, Moraes no longer felt he had the same luxury.

Bandeira responded to Moraes’s letter a few weeks later advising the poet and diplomat that he should, in fact, remove the lines from the poem:

Ontem fui ver o Rodrigo no Ministério e consultei-o sobre o verso da
‘Pátria minha.’ Ele acha perigoso para você deixá-lo no poema. O
momento aqui é de reação e não faltará um f. da p. que o remeta
diretamente ao Dutra. (*Letter to Moraes 1948*).

Moraes’s fear that his comments could be construed as a front to Dutra-style democracy or, worse, as a confession of a misconstrued communist affiliation was not unfounded. According to Skidmore, “In May 1946,” during a period when communism was on the rise in Brazil, “the Dutra government purged all government employees known to be members of the Communist party” (66). Although these two apocryphal lines are far from being overtly communist, the exigencies of the period demanded that Moraes be judicious in his political commentary. Nonetheless, as evidenced by the emphasis given to the line, “Não quero trapalhadas agora” (*Letter to Bandeira 1948*), Moraes was not overly concerned with opposing Dutra. He was more concerned with keeping his job.

As Moraes proposes that Brazil was, at the time, “como se não fosse,” so are these two apocryphal lines in relation to the poem. They simultaneously belong while also remaining foreign to the poem. In these lines, Moraes feels compelled to emphasize that Brazil is neither “filha de negociante” nor the equally feminized “mulher de mil[i]tar.”

The dispute between these two positions reveals both the national and international prisms through which Brazilian identity was being cast in the late 1940s. *Prima facie*, the “mil[i]tar” is obviously a direct reference to Dutra, who was ex-War Minister for Vargas. But, it is also a disapproval of the role that the military has played in Brazilian politics since the late nineteenth century. As was the case with the declaration of the Republic in November of 1889, “in 1930 and November 1937, it was the military, not the politicians, who were the immediate custodians of power,” ushering in new political regimes (Skidmore 53). In the words of Moraes’s “Manifesto,” these military interventions subverted the democratic process, often leading to an “evidente ameaça à realização de eleições livres” (“Manifesto”).

On the other hand, the “negociante” is a reference to the United States and its exploitative economic policies in post-War Latin America. The commercial might of the United States was potentially no more evident to anyone other than Moraes, who was living in the US at the time, but not as a citizen. From his oblique perspective as a consul, Moraes experienced the bustling postwar economy of Los Angeles and witnessed the concretization of US economic domination not only in the region but also on the world stage. In the letter to *Bandeira* from 1948, Moraes confesses his opinion about the US. Moraes was not fond of the United States’ obsession with economic growth, which destroyed, in his opinion, any real cultural vitality: “os EEUU. . . Merda de terra, merda de gente” (*Letter to Bandeira 1948*).

United States’ economic development had been analyzed by Moraes’s consulate through in-depth monthly reports. In one of these reports, from the month of August 1948, entitled “Notas econômicas,” the consulate describes Los Angeles’ record-breaking

uses of water and energy. The exorbitant use was due to the exponential growth of the region:

O consumo de água em Los Angeles (117 milhões de galões) e de eletricidade (3.435.000.000 kilowatts-hora), bateu, este ano, todos os records. . . o crescente aumento de população e a extraordinária expansão comercial e industrial contaram como fatores decisivos para a obtenção de um tal máximo. (Brasil “Informação econômica”)

As exemplified by its ever-increasing consumption of water and energy, California, similar to many other states in the US, was expanding at a rapid pace. This economic expansion had real consequences in Latin America.

One of the most well known examples of United States’ neocolonialist postwar economic policies in Latin America is that of the Central Intelligence Agency’s intervention in Guatemala. The then recently organized CIA deposed the democratically-elected Guatemalan president, Jacob Arbenz, in order to ensure the United Fruit Company’s (UFC) economic dominance in the region. In 1954, the CIA overthrew Arbenz because the president was considering the nationalization of the UFC in hopes of “breaking its [the UFC’s] economic hold over the country” (Franco *The Decline* 23). There was much resentment in Latin America against United States’ because of their government’s intervention in situations like the one involving UFC and Guatemala (Franco *The Decline* 22). An earlier Brazilian example of the United States’ attempts at extracting huge profits from the region is, of course, Henry Ford’s failed rubber-manufacturing plant, his Amazonian utopia called Fordlandia (Fausto 177).

A letter written by the local Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce addressed to all “Consular Officials in the City of Los Angeles” also exemplifies the exploitative nature of the growing US economy manifested throughout Latin America:

It is a pleasure to present your office with a copy of our Directory of Importers of Los Angeles County. . . The Directory contains the names of nearly 400 importing firms in the County of Los Angeles, and lists the raw materials and essential goods each imports from all over the world. They are interested in buying more. (*Letter from Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce*)

As the battles of the Cold War and neocolonialism were beginning to play out on the local stage of Brazil, the globalizing forces against which and also within which national identity was attempting to emerge were forcefully bearing down on the nation. The two simple apocryphal lines of “Pátria minha” make clear Brazil’s position within this neocolonial prison. Brazil, as a “mulher,” was held captive by the local domination of the “mil[i]tar.” As a “filha,” the nation was also under the thumb of the paternalistic hegemony of the definitive “negociante,” the United States.

Norma Alarcón, in her article “The Theoretical Subject(s) of *This Bridge Called My Back* and Anglo-American Feminism,” explains the primary difficulty of proposing subjectivity when one is trapped by an objectified feminine stance: “To be oppressed means to be disabled not only from grasping an ‘identity,’ but also from reclaiming it. . . to grasp or reclaim an identity means always already to have become a subject of consciousness” (411). The explicit feminization of Brazil within the contexts of military intervention and US expansion corroborates Moraes’s proposition that Brazil was “como

se não fosse” (383). In “Pátria minha,” Moraes depicts this feminized paradox of (im)possibility between writer and nation, locating Brazilian identity within the discourses of global and local domination. Defining the nation as dominated by these two forces was a necessary task of the writer at the time; but it was also an ironic task. The imposing presence of local and global forces against which Moraes was obligated to write impeded the writer from ever fully completing the task. For this reason, the nation is “como se não fosse” (Moraes “Pátria” 383).

In the same letter to Bandeira, Moraes characterizes “Pátria minha” as a poem “de mui lírica dor-de-côrno” (*Letter to Bandeira 1948*). This classification of the poem as being written by a man betrayed by an unfaithful woman points us to another important gendered relationship within the poem. In “Pátria minha,” Brazil is not only explicitly cast as a “filha de negociante” and a “mulher de militar,” but the nation is also cast as the feminine object of the poet-narrator’s desire. After opening the poem with, “A minha pátria é como se não fosse,” Moraes continues with the gendered description, “é íntima / Doçura e vontade de chorar” (“Pátria minha” 383). In the third and eleventh stanzas, Moraes further concretizes the feminization of Brazil:

Vontade de beijar os olhos de minha pátria
 De niná-la, de passar-lhe a mão pelos cabelos
 Vontade de mudar as cores do vestido (auriverde!) tão feias
 De minha pátria, de minha pátria sem sapatos
 E sem meias pátria minha
 Tão pobrinha!
 [.]

Ponho no vento o ouvido e escuto a brisa
 Que brinca em teus cabelos e te alisa
 Pátria minha, e perfuma o teu chão. . .
 Que vontade me vem de adormecer-me
 Entre teus doces montes, pátria minha
 Atento à fome em tuas entranhas
 E ao batuque em teu coração. (“Pátria minha” 383-84)

Through this imagery, Brazil is not only the feminized object of the local military and the United States, it is also the feminized object of the poet-narrator’s desire. As the narrator desires to caress and kiss the nation, nursing it back to health from destitution, the objectification of the nation is magnified. The nation is thrice denied the power to emerge from domination: once by its relationship with the military, once by its relationship with the US and, lastly, by its relationship to the writer. Within this continuum of multiple dominations, Brazil’s feminized position has no choice but to deny “any signified that could correspond to the nation” (Franco 205).

The time of day in which the narration takes place is another important element of “Pátria minha.” The poem emanates from the dark of night, concretizing the unsettled angst felt by the poet-narrator as he attempts to nurse his nation back to health. The first stanza indicates the hour. At the end of the stanza, Moraes creates a paternal metaphor for the nation, referring to a moment in which he watched his young son Pedro sleeping:

A minha pátria é como se não fosse, é íntima
 Doçura e vontade de chorar; uma criança dormindo
 É minha pátria. Por isso, no exílio

Assistindo dormir meu filho

Choro de saudades de minha pátria. (“Pátria minha” 383)

As “uma criança dormindo,” Moraes’s son becomes the metaphor of a nation under the watchful eye of the writer (“Pátria minha” 383). While Moraes watches his young son sleep, the process of articulating Brazilian identity is an operation that must take place in the dark space of the night. In this way, the poem corroborates the frustration of writing in mid-twentieth century Brazil. Alluding to the night as a place where dreams as well as nightmares may be realized, Moraes implies the question: Can Brazil awake from the dark night?

The relevance of the dark is reiterated within an international dialectic when the poet-narrator recalls an episode when he gazed at the night sky in Maine. In the sixth stanza, Moraes describes spending the evening in New England trying to locate the definitive constellation of the Southern Hemisphere, the Southern Cross:

Ah, pátria minha, lembra-me uma noite no Maine, Nova Inglaterra

Quando tudo passou a ser infinito e nada terra

E eu vi alfa e beta de Centauro escalarem o monte até o céu

Muitos me surpreenderam parado no campo sem luz

À espera de ver surgir a Cruz do Sul

Que eu sabia, mas amanheceu. . . (“Pátria minha” 384)

In “Pátria minha,” the poet-narrator watches until daybreak in hopes of envisioning an allegorical manifestation of a true national self, the Southern Cross. He spends the entire night searching in vain for the Cruz do Sul since the constellation can only be seen in the Southern Hemisphere. In this way, the episode allows for a reflection of a North-South

dynamic in which the visible constellations of the Northern Hemisphere preempt the possibility of the poet locating the constellations of the Southern Hemisphere. As the stars represent a mythicized nation much like Macunaíma's transformation into a constellation, the domination of the northern stars points to an imbalanced dialogic of identity formation. A northern sky makes moot the relevance of a South American perspective. The "obscuring" domination of the United States is further emphasized when Moraes's expresses his longing to return to Brazil: "Quero rever-te, pátria minha, e para / Rever-te me esqueci de tudo / Fui cego, estropiado, surdo, mudo" ("Pátria minha" 384).

In another passage of the poem, the North-South dynamic is paralleled by the concept of Brazil simultaneously representing a utopia and a dystopia. Of course, the origins of all utopias carry within them this Eurocentric contradiction of (in)existence. The term *utopia* itself, invented by Sir Thomas More (1478-1535) and used as the title of his book *Utopia* (1516), bears a double entendre. The term is of Greek origin, but it is not clear whether or not it comes from *outopos* meaning "no place" or *eutopia* meaning "place where everything is well" (Cuddon and Preston 957). As Brazil is depicted "como se não fosse," the poem simultaneously creates both a utopic and distopic national space, founded in the possibility of what could have been, but apparently is not. Moraes exemplifies this paradox in the fourth stanza when he writes: "Porque te amo tanto, pátria minha, eu que não tenho Pátria" ("Pátria minha" 383). This ambiguous underpinning of Moraes's poem is concretized when in the penultimate stanza the poet refers to Brazil's own pre-discovery utopia, the "Ilha Brasil":

Não te direi o nome, patria minha

Teu nome é patria amada, é patriazinha

Não rima com mãe gentil
 Vives em mim como uma filha, que és
 Uma ilha de ternura: a Ilha
 Brasil, talvez. (“Pátria minha” 385)

While refusing to name the nation, Moraes sarcastically proposes that the nation’s name does not rhyme with “mãe gentil” (“Pátria minha” 385). If Brazil’s name no longer rhymes with “mãe gentil,” then, for Moraes, the only way to locate the nation is to point to a pre-discovery utopian legend, the “Ilha Brasil” (“Pátria minha” 385). Similar to many other mythical worlds of the medieval imaginary supposedly existing beyond Europe’s shores, the “Ilha Brasil” was an “ilha afortunada” that, according to the Portuguese historian Jaime Cortesão (1884-1960), often appeared on the maps of European cartographers in the centuries leading up to America’s “discovery.”¹⁶

As the poet refuses to name the nation he describes, Moraes embodies both possible meanings of More’s ambiguous term. Brazil is both a place where everything is well, the imaginary “Ilha Brasil,” and it is no place at all since it does not rhyme with “mãe gentil” (“Pátria minha” 385). With the writer’s traditional role of articulating national identity unrealized, the poet-narrator must be satisfied with a utopian national ideal that only exists in his imagination: “Vives em mim como uma filha, que és / Uma ilha de ternura” (“Pátria minha” 385).

In the poem, the act of naming symbolically represents the power to control national destiny and articulate a national identity. As long as Moraes cannot name his nation, Brazil eludes an identity. The expression of identity, traditionally controlled by the pen of the writer and seemingly assured to the nation by the literary discourses of the

nineteenth century, was frustrated in the 1940s and 50s. Writing seemed to no longer hold the same power as before. Yet the poet continued to write, unwilling to abandon hope in the “Ilha Brasil.”

The subordination of Brazil as a feminized object of the poet-narrator’s desire further constructs an intimate relationship between writer and nation. The final lines of the poem confirm the intimacy of the relationship:

Agora chamarei a amiga cotovia
 E pedirei que peça ao rouxinol do dia
 Que peça ao sabiá
 Para levar-te presto este avigrama: “Pátria minha, saudades de quem te
 ama. . .

Vinicius de Moraes” (“Pátria minha” 385)

With these closing lines, the poet includes his own name in the text as the poem takes the form of a private letter—secret and intimate. At this moment, the poet, the poem and the nation converge. Similar to Athayde’s personification of Brazil in his eulogy to Guimarães Rosa and also to Guimarães Rosa’s own preceding toponymic metonymy (see chapter 3), Moraes configures a concept related to what I termed the “writer-as-the-nation.” Moraes does this in counterclockwise fashion. “Pátria minha” does not recreate the writer-as-nation *per se*, but rather creates the nation-as-writer. The nation is the recipient of Moraes’s letter. Therefore, Brazil is an implied writer—one who would respond to Moraes’s “avigrama” if it were not, like the poet himself, rendered “cego, estropiado, surdo, mudo” (“Pátria minha” 384). In “Pátria minha,” the writer does not become the nation, but the nation becomes a personified converser with the writer

through the open-ended dialogue of the letter; Moraes and Brazil inhabit the same ontological plane.

The relationship between Moraes's autobiographical poetic voice and his nation articulate the two as sender and receiver, respectively. But, if the letter is an "avigrama," or a message to be carried by birds to the nation, the proposed romantic complexities of the mode of delivery suggest the enormous difficulties experienced by the writer to communicate with his nation. Moraes suggests that the message be transmitted from sender to receiver by three different species of birds: the "cotovia" (lark), the "rouxinol" (nightingale) and the "sabiá" (thrush) ("Pátria minha" 385). The delivery method is an eccentric and fantastical impossibility, depicting the impasse felt by Moraes at the time. Not only must these birds speak to one another, relaying the message orally, but the last bird must also somehow (supposedly through song) deliver the message to the metaphorical recipient, Brazil.

As Moraes evokes the sabiá as the last bird in the chain of this enormously complex transmission, he also inserts his poem squarely within the Brazilian literary tradition. Moraes parodies (or parrots) the sabiá of Gonçalves Dias's "Canção do exílio." For Gonçalves Dias, the sabiá symbolized the idealized nation:¹⁷

Não permita Deus que eu morra,
 Sem que eu volte para lá;
 Sem que disfrute os primores
 Que não encontro por cá;
 Sem qu'inda aviste as palmeiras,
 Onde canta o Sabiá. (Gonçalves Dias 180)

Just as Gonçalves Dias portrays the artist in exile and therefore unable to enjoy the benefits of full citizenship, Moraes in “Pátria minha” likewise depicts his consular post in Los Angeles as one of exile: “Por isso, no exílio” (383). But, the song of Moraes’s *sabiá* differs from that of Gonçalves Dias. Moraes’s *sabiá* does not descant the wonders of a primordial Brazilian paradise. The bird instead explicitly carries the poet’s sad news of exile. By inventing an impossibly fantastic mode of transmitting his letter which ends with the song of the *sabiá*, Moraes points to a communication breakdown between writer and nation that has taken place over the decades since Gonçalves Dias’s “Canção do exílio.”

In 1950, Moraes composed an essay entitled “Em defesa da literatura brasileira: considerações à margem da conferência de Stanford sobre o Brasil.” This address was written as a rebuttal to a talk given by the American professor from Stanford Ronald Hilton (1911-2007). According to Moraes, Hilton had stated during the conference that “os maiores escritores brasileiros, como Euclides da Cunha, lhe pareciam conter mais fulgor que consistência; que a grande força artística do Brasil lhe parecia residir na obra de um Oscar Niemeyer ou de um Portinari” (Moraes “Em defesa”). In response to this criticism of Brazilian literature, Moraes argues in favor of the great “organcidade” of Brazilian literature: “nenhuma arte é no Brasil mais básica para o entendimento do complexo brasileiro, seu povo, sua formação, suas políticas” (Moraes “Em defesa”). Moraes suggests in the address that the most important element of Brazilian literature is its ability to perpetuate a dialogue. This literary dialogue forms a mosaic of Brazilian identity, connecting writers together throughout the centuries:

Busque ainda agora, e verá o Professor Ronald Hilton os melhores mestres brasileiros do passado continuar florescendo nos melhores escritores do presente, como se seus despojos tivessem feito a terra ainda mais rica para essa correspondência genética. Verá êle Antonio Vieira, um cabeça-chata de Lisboa, dando fruto em Rubem Braga, um capichaba de beira-rio ancorado em Copacabana. Verá ele Castro Alves, um adolescente baiano lírico e rebelde que leu “Les Chatimes” de Victor Hugo, repontar num conterrâneo mais lírico e rebelde ainda: o romancista Jorge Amado.

(Moraes “Em defesa”)

Brazilian identity not only originates in the colonial discourses of figures like Padre Antonio Vieira, but it also links Brazilian writers to a common Western literary tradition which includes writers such as Victor Hugo. Brazilian literature cannot exist without dialoguing with the past and with other national literatures. As a requisite condition, his “generosa pátria de índios, negros, mulatos, cafusos e brancos de má-pinta” (Moraes “Em defesa”) should not only look inward, but should also gaze beyond the nation’s borders, engaging in a transnational dialogue of influences. For Moraes, the success of Brazilian literature depended on its ability to come to terms with a land and a people that was racially and geographically diverse while still accounting for a history that was bound to its colonial ties to Europe.

Recognizing the synthetic and dialogic qualities of Brazilian identity, defined by Moraes as “organicidade,” is key to understanding the relationship between literature and diplomacy in Brazil (Moraes “Em defesa”). In the fourth stanza of “Pátria minha,” Moraes expresses the need for literature to connect with the political atmosphere in which

it is conceived in order to represent the nation: “Em contato com a dor do tempo, / eu elemento de ligação entre a ação e o pensamento” (“Pátria minha” 383). In this quote, Moraes characterizes the role of the intellectual as a bridge between politics and literature—a role embodied by the writer-diplomat. “Pátria minha” articulates writing as an act which brings together the worlds of politics and literature to the degree that the poet-narrator can stay in contact with “a dor do tempo” and serve as a bridge between political “ação” and cultural “pensamento” (“Pátria minha” 383).

In an untitled document written some time after Moraes had returned to Brazil from the US, the writer-diplomat clearly expresses what he feels are his societal obligations as a writer and a diplomat. Bringing the two worlds together, Moraes describes both the writer and the diplomat as civil servants with obligations to serve the people:

É sabido de todos que o Ministério das Relações Exteriores baixou em 1949 uma portaria segundo a qual fica vedado a seus funcionários o exercício direito à livre expressão do pensamento, sem o beneplácito daquele órgão da Administração. . . Como homem, como escritor e como diplomata, cargo esse obtido por concurso, pago pelo povo para representá-lo no estrangeiro, não posso tampouco submeter-me mordaca imposta pela portaria em questão, cujo fim principal é sonegar ao povo o conhecimento da verdade, tapar a boca dos mais esclarecidos, manter o statu-quo tanto quanto possível até que, por hábito ou desmoralização, o próprio povo seja incapaz de reconhecer a realidade. (“Pólitica diplomática”)

Official codes of conduct established by the Dutra administration in 1949 required all diplomats' public expressions of opinion be subject to the scrutiny of the Ministério das Relações Exteriores. Moraes feels obligated both as a diplomat and as a writer to speak out against this political oppression so he can fully represent the Brazilian people. Silence and censorship on the one hand destroy the relationship between a people and their nation. On the other, dialogue guarantees its continued renewal. Likewise, Moraes feels that his purposes as a writer and diplomat make him part of a special class. "Como homem, como escritor e como diplomata," Moraes is one of the "mais esclarecidos" ("Pólitica diplomática"). He is able to "reconhecer a realidade" and, for this reason, obligated to make known to the people "o conhecimento da verdade" ("Pólitica diplomática"). This same sense of paternal obligation to the Brazilian people is expressed throughout "Pátria minha," creating a consistent theme connecting Moraes's literature to his diplomacy.

The long-standing relationship between writer and nation developed over the nineteenth century and most typified by Gonçalves Dias's poem "Canção do exílio" had in Moraes's time become frustrated by local and global politics. On the local stage, the censorship of the Vargas and Dutra administration denied Brazilian writers their traditional role as champions of the nation while, at the same time, the emerging Cold War curtailed Brazil's attempts at political and economic success. These two antagonistic forces were both willing accomplices in the frustration of Brazil's "heróis-escritores" (Lima 206), leading to the identity crisis portrayed in "Pátria minha."

The poem is an open-ended letter to the nation which resembles in many ways other politically-oriented documents signed by Moraes as a diplomat. Just as Moraes

signed his name to the “Manifesto,” the poem “Pátria minha” also bear his signature as an intrinsic part of the text. Both of the “Manifesto” and “Pátria minha,” as well as the other material discussed in this chapter, denote the inescapable dialectic between the public and private worlds of literature and politics. These worlds converge throughout Brazil’s history as they are embodied by the writer-diplomat. Although Moraes proposed to Bandeira that he viewed diplomacy as only a means to gain his “pão nosso” (*Letter to Bandeira 1949*), the evidence shown in this chapter disputes this view. This chapter has shown that there are in fact many similarities between Moraes’s poetry and his work as a diplomat. For Moraes, the work of the diplomat and the work of the poet are similar. Writing and diplomacy are a means by which he might express his continued hope in a national ideal when local and global politics were rendering such an ideal “como se não fosse” (Moraes “Pátria” 383).

Chapter 7

Diplomacy and the Dog: Citizenship and João Cabral de Melo Neto's *O cão sem plumas*

Esse troço ficou muito mal explicado. Mas tenho que escrever entre um telegrama a cifrar e passaportes a assinar (qtd. in Sussekind 238)
 – João Cabral de Melo Neto, June 4, 1951

This chapter will consider João Cabral de Melo Neto's poem *O cão sem plumas* (1949) in light of his diplomatic experience in Barcelona from 1947 to 1950. A discussion of Cabral's experiences in Barcelona reveals deep empathies between his diplomatic career and his poetry. My analysis will demonstrate that questions of citizenship and national identity, which begin to appear in Cabral's writing with *O cão sem plumas*, are also an integral part of his experience as a diplomat. The empathies between his writing and diplomacy are linked to how the oppression and economic destitution of Spain under the Franco regime and especially that of the Catalonian region—the location of Cabral's first post abroad—facilitate the poetic expression of the problematic of citizenship in his own native region, the Northeast of Brazil.

According to Kirsten Silva Gruesz in *Ambassadors of Culture*, "The rhetoric of ambassadorship insists on literature's place within a public sphere, where definitions of citizenship, identity, and policy are debated" (18). This chapter will specifically consider how diplomacy refocuses Cabral's poetry on issues of poverty, placing the debate of citizenship in the public sphere. In Barcelona, Cabral adjudicated immigration visas for large numbers of Spanish citizens and facilitated the repatriation of many destitute

Brazilians. He also witnessed the political oppression of the Spanish region, Catalonia, by Francisco Franco's dictatorial regime. All of these experiences in Spain would be determining factors in reshaping Cabral's artistic concepts of the function of poetry in society. Spain prompted Cabral to restructure his approach to writing. Cabral internalizes the diplomatic experiences had among the marginalized citizens of Catalonia, and the poetic expression of a similar Brazilian reality is the result. The poem *O cão sem plumas* serves as an act of cultural ambassadorship, linking the two nations together. With the poet as their diplomat, the subaltern inhabitants of the Capibaribe in Recife gain a voice in a broader national and international debate of citizenship and identity.

The poem *O cão sem plumas* is the first of many poems, such as *O rio* (1953) and *Morte e vida severina* (1954-1955), that evokes the imagery of the Capibaribe River. As Cabral traces in these poems the river's course flowing from Pernambuco's hinterland to the capital Recife, the river becomes a means by which the poet navigates sociopolitical questions in his work—questions such as those of citizenship. Luiz F. Valente, in his recent article “Brazilian Literature and Citizenship: From Euclides da Cunha to Marcos Dias,” argues that citizenship is an intrinsic aspect of national identity:

The modern concept of citizenship is linked to the rise of liberalism during the eighteenth century, and derives from the expansion of individual liberties in the context of a national State, which is central to the project of the French and American Revolutions. . . . Citizenship has come to be associated, therefore, with the entitlement to inalienable political and civil rights—and more recently to economic rights combined with the sense of belonging to a national community. (“Brazilian Literature” 11)

In *O cão sem plumas*, Cabral represents a politically oppressed minority—the poor inhabitants of the Capibaribe region—within the broad politico-cultural panorama of Brazilian identity and citizenship. As he does so, the nationalist projects of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries come to the forefront. These projects proposed the enfranchisement of the citizenry was defined by “competitive *interactions* between free, individual *citizens*” (Valente “Brazilian Literature” 13). But, the Brazilian reality of citizenship, instead of emphasizing free interactions among constituents, historically posited a stratified paternal system with the white European as the head, “project[ing] the image of a patriarchal family. . . dominated by personal, fixed and amicable *interrelations* between *members*” (Valente “Brazilian Literature” 13). Such stratification inevitably resulted in the exclusion of the lower classes.

Furthermore, according to Valente, the concept of citizenship in Brazil was throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries founded on “the fable of the three races” (13). This “fable” bases Brazilian identity on a harmonious synthesis of the three constitutive colonial peoples: “the European white, the African black and the native American Indian” (Valente 13). As Valente argues, whereas nationhood and citizenship were both to be characterized by reciprocal equality among constituents engaged in competitive interrelation, the notion of citizenship in Brazil was founded on a polarized hierarchy between the races, maintaining the colonial status-quo intact (Valente 13). As Cabral deals with the exclusion of the lower classes in *O cão sem plumas*, he questions the validity and viability of the patriarchal model of Brazilian citizenship, portraying the contradictions of the nation’s liberal ideals with the realities of life for the impoverished and disenfranchised inhabitants of the Capibaribe river.

The relevance of Spain to Cabral's poetry has been proposed by many literary critics where they have often emphasized Cabral's exposure to Spanish poetic forms and visual art as influential factors in the transformation of Cabral's poetry. To cite a few examples, Benedito Nunes in *João Cabral de Melo Neto* (1971) divides Cabral's poetry into two broad phases: the period before his first post in Spain, ending with the poem *Psicologia da composição* (1947), and the poetry written afterwards, beginning with *O cão sem plumas* (Tolman 57). Similarly, Aguinaldo Gonçalves in *Transição e permanência—Miró/João Cabral: Da tela ao texto* compares the work of Cabral with the Spanish abstract painter Joan Miró (1893-1983), with whom Cabral became friends while in Barcelona. Other critics, such as Jon M. Tolman, have also commented on the importance of Spain in Cabral's work. In the words of Tolman: "João Cabral's fascination with Spain is unique in modern Brazilian literature" (57). The American poet Elizabeth Bishop also was interested in Cabral's poetry, naming him the "most important poet of the postwar generation" because of the consistency of his work (Bishop qtd. in Rohter par.4).

As concerns Cabral's relationship to Spain, in her preface to Cabral's *Obras completas* (1994), Marly de Oliveira comments that one of Cabral's most celebrated works, *Morte e vida severina* (1956), "é uma homenagem às várias literaturas ibéricas" (18). Even Cabral himself noted the influence of Spanish poetry in his work. In an interview with Tolman in 1972, Cabral admitted that in *Morte e vida severina* "joguei com formas tradicionais espanholas e brasileiras" (qtd. in Tolman 67). Apart from the influence on his choices of poetic form, Cabral also dedicated a number of poems specifically to Spain as subject matter. Compilations such as *Crime na calle Relator*

(1985-1987) and *Sevilha andando* (1987-1993) stem from Cabral's personal experiences in that country (Junqueira 474).

Another important work produced by Cabral which attests to his artistic engagement in Spain is his study of his friend Joan Miró. In 1950, Cabral published *Joan Miró*, a critical study of the artwork of the volume's titular namesake. In this study, Cabral elaborates the place of Miró's abstract approach to the traditional canon of Western visual art:

Por debaixo do conjunto de maneiras pessoais que constituem a formula-Miró, há uma luta que transcende o limitado alcance de uma exclusiva busca de expressão original. Há uma luta contra todo um conjunto de leis rígidas que vem estruturando a pintura posterior ao Renascimento. (719)

Cabral's observation that Miró brought into question fundamental paradigms of representational art established since the Renaissance is also applicable to Cabral himself. In his interview with Tolman, Cabral proposed that his work attempts to "recusar a inteira poética romântica egocêntrica tão importante na literatura brasileira" (qtd. in Tolman 67).

The traditional approach taken by critics to analyze Cabral's experience in Spain has been to investigate his perambulation of literary and artistic circles there. Not only has his relationship with the painter Joan Miró been investigated, but his relationships with poets such as Jorge Guillén, Carles Ribas, Joan Brossa and Antoni Tàpies have also been noted.¹⁸ As concerns the author's relationship with Catalan artists and poets, José Castello, in his recent biography *João Cabral de Melo Neto: o homem sem alma*, asserts that: "Na Espanha cerrada do franquismo, os artistas estavam intimidados e isolados. . . Cabral, com o respaldo de suas imunidades de diplomata estrangeiro, surge como um

catalisador de esperanças e um mestre a abrir perspectivas” (29). Cabral was instrumental in informing young poets such as Brossa and Tàpies not only about poetry, but also on issues concerning politics (Fernandez-Medina 101).

Despite the notable numbers of studies that analyze Cabral’s experiences in Spain, a critical approach that only considers Cabral’s association with the Barcelonan artistic scene or the influence of Spanish poetic forms omits altogether the actual experience that took Cabral to Spain in the first place—that of being a diplomat. In this regard, Castello proposes that only superficial consideration has been given to the connections between the author’s writing and his work as a diplomat:

A crítica deixa escapar, quase sempre, um componente fundamental da poética cabralina: a instância da fuga. . . Ao optar pela carreira diplomática, Cabral se transformou em um profissional de subterfúgio, em um viajante que veste e despe países e culturas ao longo de seus dias, um trãnsfuga que jamais cessa de fugir. (22)

Castello’s proposition that Cabral’s diplomatic vocation is a manifestation of the author’s tendency towards subterfuge and subversion, if not altogether well-substantiated, is at the very least provocative. What is especially interesting is Castello’s suggestion that the relationship between Cabral’s diplomatic career and his poetry is one that has by and large escaped the critical eye (22). By considering Cabral’s poetry in light of his diplomatic career, this chapter will attempt to neither be prone to proscribe the author’s experiences in Spain within purely literary circles nor to broaden the meaning of the author’s diplomatic experience so wide as to conflate that of being a diplomat with that of

merely being an arbiter of subterfuge. Both of these critical stances potentially elide the inherent empathies between literature and diplomacy.

Ivan Junqueira's article "João Cabral, um mestre sem herdeiros," published in *O Itamaraty na cultura brasileira* (2002), opens the way for my analysis of Cabral's poem *O cão sem plumas* in relation to his diplomatic work. Junqueira's article considers briefly the factors that lead Cabral to recognize his pre-Barcelonan poetry as a "beco sem saída" (Cabral qtd. in Moraes "Uma consagração"), citing the poet's epiphany that took place in Spain when he learned that "a expectativa de vida no Recife era de 28 anos, enquanto na Índia era de 29" (Cabral qtd. in Junqueira 453). In this chapter, I will illustrate how the dialogue provoked in *O cão sem plumas* among Recife and other underdeveloped and oppressed nations, such as India, or regions, such as Spain's Catalonia, is directly related to the international facets of Cabral's diplomatic experiences in Barcelona.

It is in part due to this admission by Cabral that his previous work was a "beco sem saída" (Cabral qtd. in Moraes "Uma consagração")—an admission quoted, yet undocumented in Junqueira's article—that I am able to articulate my research agenda for this chapter. Junqueira considers *O cão sem plumas* as "o ápice do estilo apolodal cabralino" since the poem introduces "um outro dado novo na poesia do autor: o da fusão do sujeito com o objeto real, ou seja, o rio Capibaribe" (453). Junqueira goes on further to state: "*O cão sem plumas* ostenta um notável avanço na poética do autor no sentido de que, aqui, João Cabral busca uma justificação ética para o destino humano, bem como uma autocrítica de sua obra anterior" (453-54). Through the analysis of interviews, letters and documents at the Fundação Casa de Rui Barbosa and the Arquivo Histórico do Itamaraty, as well as through the study of other published works by and about Cabral, this

chapter discusses the importance of Cabral's diplomatic experiences to the transformation in his poetry which begins with *O cão sem plumas*. In this chapter, I develop and document in a deliberate manner the convergence of Cabral's literature with his diplomatic career during his first post in Barcelona.

João Cabral de Melo Neto entered Brazilian diplomatic service on December 15, 1945 and he spent 1946 working and training in Rio. According to Itamaraty's *Anuário: 1962 e 1963*, Cabral arrived at his first diplomatic post—Barcelona on March 24, 1947 (“Mello Neto” 369). He remained in Barcelona until he was transferred to London on September 27, 1950 (“Mello Neto” *Anuário* 369). Even though Cabral would work at posts in places as far-removed as Honduras, Senegal, and France, the country where he spent the most time as a diplomat was Spain (“Cronologia” *Melo Neto* 26-28). After leaving Spain in 1950, he spent 2 years in London before being placed on administrative leave by the Vargas administration because of his purported Communist activities (“Mello Neto” *Anuário* 370). After being reconstituted as a diplomat, he returned to Barcelona on March 14, 1956 for a period of about two years (“Mello Neto” *Anuário* 369). In the sixties, he served in Seville, Madrid, and Cadiz (“Cronologia” *Melo Neto* 26-28). Yet, no diplomatic post in Spain was more crucial to the development of his poetry than his first.

In the late 1930s, approximately a decade prior to Cabral's arrival in Barcelona, Francisco Franco (1892-1975) had emerged from the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939) as the head of a newly organized authoritarian state. Franco's dictatorial policies were causing considerable political and economic difficulties for Barcelona when Cabral arrived in 1947. Barcelona was the capital of Catalonia, a region with its own distinct

history and language. But, in Franco's authoritarian Spain, Catalonian political and cultural autonomy, officially established in the early 1930s as the Second Republic of Catalonia (1931-1936), was vanquished (Laitin 302). According to Montserrat Guibernau in *Catalan Nationalism: Francoism, Transition and Democracy*, Franco imposed oppressive measures in Catalonia as well as in the Basque region in order to secure sovereignty and create a unified Spanish state: "Francoism sought to impose the way in which society should see itself and rejected the alternative images that both the Catalans and the Basques had formed, over time, of their own communities" (Guibernau 49).

To the poor economic situation that affected Spain generally, in Barcelona, was added the imposition of strict governing policies, negatively affecting the lives of hundreds of thousands in the region (Guibernau 49). According to David Laitin in his article "Linguistic Revival: Politics and Culture in Catalonia," the autonomous Catalonian Republic "was short-lived, due to the deep economic crisis, the multitudinous internal divisions, and the unequivocal rejection of regionalism by the military" (302). In Franco dominated Catalonia, political oppression was seen in almost every facet of life, both public and private (Laitin 302). The most noticeable form of oppression was linguistic. Franco banned all use of the local Catalan language in hopes of disrupting the sense of collective identity which could lead to rebellion against the dictatorial regime. After the Spanish Civil War, Franco issued "a series of ministerial orders that mandated the exclusive use of Castilian on birth certificates, in all official and public acts, and on all documents of public and private corporations" (Petherbridge-Hernandez and Raby 37). Franco also demanded that, "Street and store signs were to be written only in Castilian" (Petherbridge-Hernandez and Raby 37). Likewise, "[e]xpressions of Catalan

culture and Catalan instruction in schools were prohibited” (Petherbridge-Hernandez and Raby 36). In sum, during the 1940s, the dictator “demanded an immediate replacement of Castilian for Catalan in virtually all domains of life” (Laitin 302).

Cabral’s diplomatic work in Barcelona provided him with firsthand knowledge of the region’s politico-cultural and economic frustrations. At the Brazilian consulate, Cabral met daily with the challenges faced by Catalonians while interviewing potential immigrants and marooned expatriates. As these individuals, families, and entire communities endeavored to leave Francoist Spain, their plight took on special significance for Cabral, as a poet. The frustrations of Catalonia—a nation within a nation—found within Cabral’s subsequent poetry a Brazilian parallel—Recife. The next section of this chapter will discuss specific cases adjudicated by the Brazilian consulate while Cabral was stationed in Barcelona to provide a panoramic view of his general duties there.

On the 24th of July 1947, three months after João Cabral de Melo Neto’s arrival in Barcelona, the Brazilian consulate sent a telegram to Octavio Medeiros in Madrid, an individual living in Catalonia but claiming Brazilian citizenship. Guarded in a volume with all other Barcelona *Ofícios* from 1947 in the Arquivo Histórico do Itamaraty, this telegram marks the inconclusive end to months of communication between the Brazilian consulate and Medeiros:

Cinco passagens reservadas Osbohornos [sic] partindo Barcelona quatro agosto queiram apresentar-se este consulado munidos passaportes devidamente autorizados sai Espanha maximo dia dois agosto ponto peço-lhes acusar recebimento deste telegrama. (*Telegramas* 1)

After months of correspondence between the Brazilian consulate and Medeiros, the consulate finally agreed to allow Medeiros and his family entrance to Brazil. The complexities of the Medeiros case provide an exceptional case for the study of citizenship, illuminating Francoist politics of exclusion and the destitute economic realities of the time.

Five months prior to the Brazilian consulate's telegram to Medeiros, in a letter written in January 1947, Medeiros first explained his situation to the consulate. Medeiros was a Brazilian expatriate born in Rio who had resided in Spain since 1919. He was married to a Spanish woman and had four children, all born in Spain (*Letter, January 19, 1947*).¹⁹ Along with all other non-Spanish employees of the Patronato Nacional de Turismo (PNT), Medeiros had been mandated to accept Spanish citizenship or be dismissed from his job (*Letter, January 1947*). The prospect of abandoning his Brazilian citizenship for a Spanish one was not appealing to Medeiros. In his letter written in January of 1947, Medeiros explains to the consulate his reasons for giving up his job at the PNT:

Como me repugnava a idéia de trocar uma Pátria frondosa e pujante por outra já velha, desgastada e de duvidosas perspectivas, resolvi abandonar aquele emprego e continuar a ser cidadão brasileiro, título que sempre ostentei com admiração e orgulho. (*Letter, January 19, 1947*)

Hinting at the internal conflicts plaguing Spain during the period, Medeiros explains that he would rather remain a Brazilian than to be gainfully employed by a nation with “duvidosas perspectivas” (*Letter, January 19, 1947*). As a result, Medeiros's Brazilian “orgulho” had an adverse affect on his economic situation.

After losing his job of 11 years with the PNT as an “informador turístico,” Medeiros was, in January 1947, only meagerly employed. Since his dismissal, he had been providing for his family as a private language instructor. But, even though he spoke six languages, had been a professor in Rio (a job which he hoped to resume upon his return), and had published a dramatic poem in Spanish entitled “El Portal de las Índias,” of which all 3000 copies had been “esgotado,” he was practically destitute. His economic woes were due to the scarcity of tutoring opportunities available to him, especially in the summer months, when school was not in session. (*Letter, January 19, 1947*)

At the end of the January letter, Medeiros reveals the reason for writing to the Brazilian consulate; he makes an appeal: “Perdidas totalmente as esperanças de levantar cabeça na Espanha, o único caminho lógico que se me apresenta é o da repatriação, já que no Rio se me abrem inúmeras facilidades” (*Letter, January 19, 1947*). Medeiros was requesting, like many other expatriates in Spain, that the consulate help him to “iniciar as demarches necessárias a fim de conseguir a minha justificada repatriação extensiva à minha mulher e aos meus quatro filhos todos menores de idade” (*Letter, January 19, 1947*).

One month after his letter from January 1947, and still with no reply from the consulate, Medeiros sends another message, “rog[ando] uma resposta” (*Letter, February 11, 1947*). In reply to this second letter, the poet-diplomat Osório Dutra (1889-1968), then posted as the Cônsul Geral in Barcelona, responds: “[E]stou estudando minuciosamente o seu caso, para poder tomar uma resolução em consequência” (*Letter, February 19, 1947*). But, as another month passes with no further news, an even more desperate and diffuse Medeiros writes:

O verão de 1946 foi para minha família horrivelmente trágico. Sem lições, único esteio que me mantem, a situação agrava-se de tal maneira que não me vai ser possível vencê-la outra vez com certo decoro porque este ano já não tenho absolutamente nada que vender para resistir até a abertura dos novos cursos. . . Por tanto espero de sua salvadora intervenção o remédio eficaz e o ponto final de tantos males. (*Letter, March 16, 1947*)

As Medeiros's dire situation is revealed in increasing detail throughout the 1947 ofícios, his story becomes less and less the extraordinary tale of one stranded Brazilian seeking readmission into his native country, and more the tale of an entire era in Spanish emigration to Latin America. Similar to hundreds of others in Catalonia desiring to reenter or migrate to Brazil, Medeiros was floundering in a region plagued by joblessness, drought and political uncertainty.

From these general issues plaguing Medeiros and others in Catalonia, it is possible to abstract the themes of exclusion and citizenship that would soon emerge in Cabral's writing. After his experiences in Barcelona, Cabral's poetry began to explicitly deal with issues such as national identity and poverty. These issues, which come to the fore through his experiences in Spain, echoed in the Brazilian Northeast through his poem *O cão sem plumas*. In his interview with Tolman, Cabral comments on the relationship of *O cão sem plumas* with his diplomatic experience in Barcelona:

Em Espanha aprendi que em Pernambuco, minha terra, o nível de mortandade infantil estava mais alto e a renda per capita estava abaixo da da Índia. Abalado com a consciência da situação e vivamente impressionado com a miséria da Espanha de pós-guerra, comecei a

elaboração de uma expressão poética que tomasse em conta a realidade regional brasileira. As semelhanças entre as mesetas centrais espanholas e o Sertão brasileiro facilitavam o ressurgimento do Nordeste em minha poesia. O resultado foi *O cão sem Plumas*. (qtd. in Tolman 67)

In *O cão sem plumas*, the author contemplates the implications of a portrayal of life and death along the banks of the Capibaribe River. Although the setting is limited in scope by region and nation, the poem brings into the forefront universal qualities which allow for its abstract themes to replicate themselves in other analogous settings, such as Catalonia.

In stark contrast to the metapoetic themes of *Psicologia da composição*, *O cão sem plumas* deals with greater questions than those limited to the intellectual pursuit of the pure “estado de palavra” (*Psicologia* 96). In an interview with Vinicius de Moraes, Cabral spoke of his new poetic perspectives gained in Barcelona. Cabral states:

Depois, compreendi que aquilo era um beco sem saída, que poderia passar o resto da vida fazendo dêsses poeminhas amáveis, requintados, dirigisos [sic] especialmente a certas almas muito sutís. Foi daí que resolvi dar meia-volta e enfrentar esse monstro: o assunto, ou tema. *O cão sem plumas*, meu livro seguinte, escrito em Barcelona, foi a consequência.

(“Uma consagração”)

In the words of Jon Tolman, it was with *O cão sem plumas* that “João Cabral used,” for the first time, “regional and social elements as the raw materials for a lyrico-philosophical meditation on the fate of man” (58). It was because of “Espanha de pós-guerra” that Cabral was able to elaborate poetry which portrayed “a realidade regional brasileira” (qtd. in Tolman 67).

Throughout his stay in Barcelona, many other cases of immigration and repatriation beyond that of Medeiros and family presented themselves for Cabral's adjudication. On the fifth of November 1949, a request for immigration to Brazil by a group of 732 Spanish citizens, all residents of the Barcelona province, was registered in a letter signed by the post's new Cônsul Geral Argeu Guimarães. Guimarães, who had recently replaced Osório Dutra, sent an official query to the Ministério das Relações Exteriores in Brazil requesting information about the technical difficulties associated with the immigration of such a large group:

Senhor Ministro,

Tenho a honra de passar às mãos de Vossa Excelência a inclusa cópia de uma carta em que um grupo de espanhóis desta província se propõe a emigrar para o Brasil, acompanhada da lista individual dos componentes, em número de 732, pertencentes aos mais variados ofícios.

2. Muito agradeceria a Vossa Excelência a bondade de mandar examinar a aludida proposta, orientando esta Repartição quanto ao procedimento que deve adotar, em casos idênticos, cuja concretização exige acurado exame por parte de técnicos de emigração, além do preenchimento de formalidades, nem sempre fáceis, perante as autoridades locais. (*Proposta*)

In September of 1949, near the end of Cabral's stay in Barcelona, another group of 63 Barcelonan families inquired into the possibility of a mass departure to the Brazilian state of Goiás. These Spanish families had heard news that Goiás was anxious to receive

immigrants who were willing to form farming communities there. Along with a list that states the name, age and occupation of each family member requesting a permanent visa in Brazil, the letter sent by the consulate to the Ministro das Relações Exteriores conveys other specifics of the group's request:

As famílias em questão desejam ser informados. . . quais as facilidades que o Governo de Goiás está disposto a conceder-lhes e, sobretudo, se o mesmo Governo lhes podem fornecer uma garantia coletiva de manutenção e hospedagem até definitiva instalação no local que for indicado para sede da futura colônia, condição indispensável para obterem o “visto de saída” por parte das autoridades espanholas. (*Imigração*)

During the period in which Cabral first worked in Barcelona (1947-1950), there were hundreds of requests for immigration such as those of these two groups, as well as others for repatriation by dislocated Brazilians.

Many expatriates, similar to Medeiros, also found themselves without financial means. The situation of Iracema and Clara Araes Vicente in April 1947, described by the consulate as “sem recursos e passando provações,” was not out of the ordinary (*Repatriação, April 29, 1947*). Similarly indicative of the situation is Manoela Altero Crespo and her three children's case. In a letter written on April 24, 1950, the Cônsul Geral confirms the family's repatriation:

Tenho a honra de levar ao conhecimento dessa Secretaria de Estado que, a bordo do navio espanhol “Cabo de Buena Esperanza,” seguiu ontem para Santos, repatriado por este Consulado Geral, a brasileira Manoela Altero

Crespo e três filhos menores, que aqui se achavam em estado de indigência. (*Repatriação April 24, 1950*)

Catalonia in the 1940s was an area of Spain that was suffering drought, economic strategy and political oppression. Many people desired to relocate to Brazil in hopes of a new beginning.

Even in the bustling United States, others from the postwar period saw immigration to Brazil as a chance to escape undesirable circumstances. During Vinicius de Moraes time in Los Angeles, a special case involving the immigration request of an African American physician, Dr. Thomas Roy Peyton, although not directly related to Cabral's post in Barcelona, is of special relevance to a discussion of citizenship and exclusion. On April 10, 1946, the Brazilian consulate in Los Angeles sent a letter to the Minister of External Affairs, João Neves da Fontoura, requesting suspension of the immigration policy which discouraged granting permanent visas to people of non-European descent:

Embora saiba o critério na seleção de imigrantes se orienta no sentido de preservar na população brasileira os característicos da sua ascendência européia; ciente, pela determinação contida no telegrama de Vossa Excelência nº. 3, de 29 de Janeiro último, da proibição taxativa de conceder-se visto permanente a pessoas de raça negra, - peço venia para encaminhar a Vossa Excelência as anexas referencias ao Dr. Thomas Roy Peyton, que deseja fixar residência no Brasil. (*Letter, April 10, 1946*)

The Brazilian consulate in Los Angeles was requesting special permission to allow the immigration of Dr. Peyton since he was, as the letter describes, a “pessoa de alta

capacidade técnica” (*Letter April 10, 1946*). Dr. Peyton desired to emigrate to Brazil to escape racial discrimination in the United States. As an able physician, he hoped to work in the Cancer Center of Rio de Janeiro doing research (*Letter April 10, 1946*).

Dr. Peyton’s case is similar to another African American, Reverend James Grant, who in 1949 also desired to immigrate to Brazil from Los Angeles. In a letter dated October 4, 1949, the Brazilian consulate in Los Angeles sent a letter to the Minister of External Affairs, Raul Fernandes, conveying Reverend James’s wishes to emigrate. In the letter, the consulate describes Rev. James’s specific reasons for wanting to leave the US and live in Brazil:

Trata-se de pessoa do melhor caráter e de exemplar conduta, segundo todas as informações, que gostaria de prestar serviços no Brasil, país cuja “democracia racial,” segundo suas palavras, tem ele a maior admiração.

(*Letter October 4, 1949*)

Reverend James and Dr. Peyton viewed Brazil, as many others did in the period, as a “racial democracy” where they would not be discriminated against for the color of their skin. For many such as the Spanish Catalonians and these African Americans in Los Angeles, Brazil still held a mythical utopic allure.

In the 1940s, beyond political and financial hardships, meteorological hardships also plagued Catalonia during the period. When Cabral states in his interview with Tolman that “[a]s semelhanças entre as mesetas centrais espanholas e o Sertão brasileiro facilitavam o ressurgimento do Nordeste em minha poesia,” one can only imagine that the extended drought in Catalonia witnessed by Cabral in 1949 was one of these “semelhanças” (qtd. in Tolman 67). In a letter dated February 10, 1949, the consulate in

Barcelona submitted a report to the Ministério das Relações Exteriores entitled *Situação Hidro-elétrica de Catalunha*. This report discloses that, as a result of drought, Catalonia's hydroelectric energy reserves had been severely diminished, causing a number of blackouts in the region. Included in the letter is a cutout of an article from the "Diário de Barcelona." The article, written in response to the "visita que o Governador civil desta Província, Senhor Eduardo Baeza Alegria, acaba de fazer às instalações térmicas," verifies that "as reservas atuais são praticamente nulas, contando-se somente com a energia fluente dos rios, cujos caudais se acham reduzidos à mínima expressão" (*Situação 1*).

The article, as translated by the Brazilian consulate, appeals to the Spanish government to rely less on "Providence" and to plan better in the future for the possibility of droughts:

A seca é indubitavelmente tão pertinaz, que as suas conseqüências excedem todas as previsões. . . Quanto aos efeitos das restrições, também podem ser eles aliviados, como acaba de ser feito agora e pudera ter sido feito antes, si se houvesse confiado um pouco menos no favor da Providência. (*Situação 2*)

The article's description of the drought in Catalonia bears many resemblances with drought conditions of the Capibaribe river in Recife described in *O cão sem plumas*. The observation made by the "Diário de Barcelona" that the rivers in Catalonia were "reduzidos à mínima expressão" (*Situação 1*) brings to mind one of the opening stanzas of *O cão sem plumas*:

Aquele rio

era como um cão sem plumas.
 Nada sabia da chuva azul, da fonte cor-de-rosa,
 da água do copo de água,
 da água de cântaro, dos peixes de água,
 da brisa na água (105).

The relevance of drought to both Catalonia and the Brazilian Northeast becomes increasingly more important when we consider the importance of the metaphor of the river to the poem. The river is not only metonymic of, but also inseparable from, the men and women who inhabit its shores. This metaphor helps us understand how *O cão sem plumas* is not merely an important poem in Cabral's canon that just happened to be written while in Barcelona, but rather a poem whose imagery and thematic content directly result from the author's diplomatic experiences there.

As “[a]s semelhanças entre as mesetas centrais espanholas e o Sertão brasileiro” (Cabral qtd. in Tolman 67) prompt Cabral to reflect on the Northeast, the similarities between the hardships confronted by the inhabitants of the Capibaribe with the Catalonians led him to “dar meia-volta” in his poetic approach and to “enfrentar esse monstro: o assunto, ou tema” (Moraes “Uma consagração”). This “monster” or “theme” reveals itself with questions of citizenship and identity in the poem.

Similar to many Brazilian *retirantes* from the Northeast seeking better lives in the nation's urban centers of the south, Catalonian inhabitants envisioned immigration to Brazil as an escape from diverse hardships. Yet, for the thousands of Catalonian residents who had applied, whether as an expatriate or an immigrant, the situation was bureaucratically complex. Whereas we know that at least 795 people applied to emigrate

to Brazil (*Proposta*) in 1949, according to the final “Quadro Estatístico” that year, only fifty six (56) “vistos em passaportes estrangeiros” were given in December, contributing to a total of just four hundred and eighty seven (487) for the year. Likewise, the “Quadro” reports that only nine repatriations were granted in 1949 (“Quadro”).

A letter from the Brazilian consulate in Barcelona to the Ministério das Relações Exteriores in Brazil further characterizes the difficulties of immigrating to Brazil. Written on August 13, 1948, the letter reveals that, “De fato, é bem grande o numero de trabalhadores espanhóis desejosos de fixar-se no Brasil e impossibilitados de fazê-lo” (*Emigração*). Both immigrants and repatriates were required to navigate the complex bureaucracies of both nations in order to live in Brazil. Brazil had severely limited the number of permanent visas available for Spanish citizens. Spain also had further encumbered the process by requiring the approval of a “visto de saída” in order to leave the country (*Emigração 2*). As a result of the policies of both Spain and Brazil, the difficulties of immigration for “uma corrente imigratória espanhola capaz de representar uma contribuição eficaz ao desenvolvimento da agricultura e indústria nacionais” was, according to Osório Dutra, hindering economic development in Brazil (*Emigração 2*). Emphasizing a complex transcontinental crisis of national identity and citizenship, Medeiros story and others underscore the stagnancy and misery of postwar Francoist Spain which echoes in Northeastern Brazil.

In 1949, with the publication of *O cão sem plumas*, Cabral referenced in his poetry for the first time the challenges faced by the poor *recifenses* who inhabited (and still inhabit) the shantytowns along the formless banks of the Capibaribe river. The appearance of the Capibaribe in his work opened a new phase in the development of his

poetry. In earlier poems, such as *Psicologia da composição* (1947), which immediately preceded *O cão sem plumas*, Cabral neglected any intersubjective perspective of reality in favor of the inanimate solitude of metapoetical composition, articulated as “a fria natureza da palavra escrita” (*Psicologia* 96).

Before his experiences as a diplomat in Barcelona, Cabral had not yet opted for the use of metaphor and themes apropos of the collective social realities represented in *O cão sem plumas*. The poet had not concerned himself with issues of explicit socio-political import. Prior to *O cão sem plumas*, with *Psicologia da composição*, Cabral was, in the words of José Castello, only seeking to express the ideals of “uma poesia sem espontaneísmos ou rompantes de sensibilidade” (50). Maintaining his writing a safe distance from the temptation of what he considered facile recourse to ego-bound “inspiration,” he exchanged inspiration’s muse for an imposing narrative point of view, molding reality to an omniscient consciousness (Tolman 57). In an exemplary verse from *Psicologia da composição*, Cabral communicates his surreal metapoetic approach with a metaphor typical of his pre-Barcelonan poetry:

São minerais
as flores e as plantas,
as frutas, os bichos
quando em estado de palavra. (*Psicologia* 96)

With the power of the word, the poet-narrator of *Psicologia da Composição* controls the transformation of life. The transformation is represented by the conversion of organic “flores,” “plantas,” “frutas,” and “bichos” into inorganic, manipulable, and minable “minerais.” The author’s struggle, prior to *O cão sem plumas*, focused metapoetically on

“consciously avoid[ing] recourse to traditional poetic diction” and rejecting the egocentricity of “lyrical confession” in favor of the stone-like stillness of the word (Tolman 57).

Whereas *Psicologia da composição* only allowed for the carefully controlled transformation of the organic “flores” into inorganic “minerais,” *O cão sem plumas* proposed a much more organic process. *O cão sem plumas* creates a “paisagem de anfíbios / de lama e lama” (108) and the river region in which the poem’s subjects live becomes indiscernible from the subjects themselves. The metaphorical procedure in *O cão sem plumas* is thus no longer strictly metapoetical as it boasts a psychology that is immensely social, becoming no more a “psychology of composition,” but a psychology of humankind. As the river and the inhabitants along its banks fuse, “lama” becomes as much the ecological life-force of one as it is the protean origin of the other. The organic is no longer reduced to the mineral-like “estado de palavra,” but rather attains, through an endless series of metaphor, a state of constant flux.

Um cão sem plumas

É quando uma árvore sem voz.

É quando de um pássaro

Suas raízes no ar.

É quando alguma coisa roem tão fundo até o que não tem). (*O cão* 108)

As the poet relinquishes control over the object poeticized, composition is no longer a perfectly impersonal process. The exchange created by this approach reinforces the dialogical aspects of Cabral’s poetry. It is this organic/inorganic state “entre o que vive” (*O cão* 114) that the individual and the national as well as the universal and the regional

begin to interact. This interaction causes existential and sociopolitical conflicts to “roe[r]” (*O cão* 114).

According to Cabral’s conference address given at the Biblioteca de São Paulo in 1952 entitled *Poesia e Composição*, the truest measure of a poet’s capabilities resides in the ability to respond to external phenomena, or in other words to provoke dialogue: “[N]o autor identificado com seu tempo não será difícil encontrar a mitologia e a linguagem unânimes que lhe permitirão corresponder ao que dele se exige” (Melo Neto *Poesia* 737). The poem should not be the invention of a self-centered authorial ego where “o indivíduo que escreve tende a suplantiar em interesse a coisa escrita” (Melo Neto *Poesia* 730). Such an author fails to “compreende[r] que sua riqueza só pode ter origem na realidade” (Melo Neto *Poesia* 736). In order to provoke dialogue with reality, Cabral proposed the reader must play an indispensable role in completing the process of composition. The reader is the “contraparte essencial à atividade de criar literatura e daí, à existência de uma literatura” (Melo Neto *Poesia* 735).

Cabral’s literary philosophy had much in common with his approach to his professional vocation. Unlike other poets who had “uma certa repulsa ao sentido profissional da literatura” (Melo Neto *Poesia* 730), Cabral openly associated writing to the exercise of a skilled office in which the quality of his poetry was directly related to the amount of physical effort applied: “O artista intelectual sabe que o trabalho é a fonte da criação e que a uma maior quantidade de trabalho corresponderá uma maior densidade de riquezas” (Melo Neto *Poesia* 733). In his interview with Vinicius de Moraes, Cabral explained this relationship:

Outra coisa: escrever é para mim trabalho braçal, e se eu não tiver um estímulo exterior qualquer, não levo o meu trabalho ao fim. Já me tem acontecido ficar dois anos sem escrever uma só linha e sem sentir a menor necessidade de escrever poesia. (Moraes)

Cabral's writing process, whether thematically concerned with the poet or the impoverished, consisted of intense analysis and study, sparked by an intellectual curiosity in existent phenomena, leading to the guarded construction of a tangible product—the poem.

The daily grind of conscientiously exercising his diplomatic profession coincides with the author's methodical approach to writing. At the consulate, Cabral was specifically in charge of all repatriation issues and correspondence in Portuguese as well as overseeing, as chancellor, all general adjudication duties. In an official letter to the Ministro das Relações Exteriores sent on May 16, 1947, Osório Dutra clearly delineated Cabral's duties at his first post:

Ao Vice-Cônsul João Cabral de Melo Neto, conforme determinam as instruções de serviço em vigor, passei a direção de todos os trabalhos de chancelaria. Além disso, ficaram a seu cargo, o controle das verbas de “Aluguel” e “Expediente,” repatriação e correspondência em língua portuguesa. (*Distribuição*)

These duties, especially those of “repatriação e correspondência em língua portuguesa,” not only indicate the prominence of literal dialogue in his profession, but also provide experiences to be used for developing a poetic dialogue between his intellectual and sociopolitical concerns. According to his duties outlined in the quote above, Cabral was

responsible for drafting all the previously cited letters concerning immigration and repatriation.

The dialogue that emerges with the publication of *O cão sem plumas* is inextricably linked with the portrayal of a collective consciousness. The poet is aware of the sociopolitical challenges facing his native region of Recife while also expressing a universal angst bound to individual existence. In a conference address given in 1954 at the Congresso Internacional de Escritores, Cabral emphasized the usefulness of including artistic concerns alongside sociopolitical ones in his poetry. Cabral's conference address is a contestation of what he perceived as a Eurocentric perspective of Latin America proposed by the French anthropologist and USP professor Roger Bastide (1898-1974). Cabral criticized Bastide's depiction of a homogenous view of the New World by Europeans: "Pode-se dizer que, apesar de ter tido o cuidado de distinguir as [duas] Américas vistas pelos europeus," described by Cabral as "América Saxônica" and "América Latina," "Bastide desprezou as diferentes espécies de europeus que vêm essas Américas" (*Como a Europa* 759). Cabral countered Bastide by proposing that he had encountered at least two different European perspectives of the New World while working in Spain:

Nos meus anos de Espanha—primeira fase da minha vida na Europa—, tive oportunidade de conhecer melhor as duas classes de indivíduos: os intelectuais, com os quais convivia por força de preferências comuns, e os trabalhadores, operários e gente do campo, com os quais estava em contato diário, por força de minha função consular. (*Como a Europa* 762)

While Cabral explained that those individuals he considered to be intellectuals had, as a general rule, a limited vision of Latin America, he proposed that the common workers he interviewed at the Brazilian consulate had “uma visão muito mais realista da América Latina” (*Como a Europa 762*). For Cabral, the Spanish intellectual, despite pretensions to worldliness, was unaware of the real issues facing Latin America: “Com exceção daqueles que, por força de sua atividade profissional, mostravam conhecer aspectos especiais da vida americana, a regra geral me parecia a ignorância e a indiferença por tudo quanto nos diz respeito” (*Como a Europa 762*). Such “ignorância e indiferença” demonstrated that “é em geral no intelectual, que nunca cogita a emigrar, que persiste aquela visão aventureira dos primeiros séculos do descobrimento, em que a América valia como o continente do enriquecimento rápido e da luta violenta pela existência” (*Como a Europa 762*).

In contrast to his view of the European intellectual, Cabral considered the common workers, whom he interviewed on a daily basis, to be the “portadores de opiniões a nosso respeito de muito mais transcendência” (*Como a Europa 761*). While commenting that he did not recall encountering “qualquer visão ideal ou simplesmente aventureira de possíveis eldorados americanos” (*Como a Europa 762*) among the more common Spanish, he emphasized the validity of their perspectives to understanding Latin America:

[N]os trabalhadores, candidatos à emigração para o Brasil, a quem entrevistei e dei vistos em passaportes durante anos. . . Encontrei, sim, uma atitude consciente, nascida de uma visão realista e informada da realidade brasileira. . . uma visão concreta que a muitos pode parecer

limitada e superficial, mas que existe indiscutivelmente e com a qual é indispensável contar. (*Como a Europa* 762)

The author's exposure to this "visão realista," which he found in the Spanish desiring to emigrate to Brazil, served as an important catalyst towards ending the author's two-year silence between the publication of *Psicologia da composição* and *O cão sem plumas* referenced in his previously-cited interview with Moraes.

Lying at the root of the dichotomous relationship that Cabral constructed between the Spanish intellectual and his more "common" counterpart, one encounters the crux of the author's transformation in Barcelona. As he consolidated, along with his methodical approach to writing, a new thematic perspective which represented, through an act of cultural ambassadorship, not only an intellectual stance but also incorporated the voice of the poor inhabitants of the Capibaribe River, he valorized the plight of the common Brazilian in the same way that he appreciated the Spanish workers' "visão realista e informada da realidade brasileira. . . a qual é indispensável contar" (762). The themes contained in *O cão sem plumas* make space not only for the intellectual hovered over a desk in existential angst, but also include the poor, "plantados na lama. . . como cães sem plumas" (*O cão* 108).

In his essay *Poesia e Composição*, Cabral further considered the obligation of poets to bridge this gap between purely intellectual concerns and sociopolitical ones:

O trabalho de arte deixa de ser essa atividade limitada de aplicar a regra, posterior ao sopro do instinto. Também não se exerce nunca num exercício formal, de atletismo intelectual. O trabalho de arte está, também, subordinado às necessidades da comunicação. (Melo Neto *Poesia* 737)

Beginning with *O cão sem plumas*, Cabral's poetry begins to represent a dialogue with intellectuality and reality. In a letter written to Cabral in 1951, Manuel Bandeira recognized almost immediately the universal qualities of *O cão sem plumas*. In this letter, Bandeira characterized Cabral's poetry prior to *O cão sem plumas* as, "Exercícios, estudos como são em música os de Chopin, Debussy, e outros" (Sussekind 126). After which, Bandeira confides to the author: "No *Cão sem Plumás* você já sentiu habilitado a fazer a técnica servir ao seu sentimento e não, como antes, pôr ao seu sentimento no aperfeiçoar a técnica" (qtd. in Sussekind 126).

Certainly, no one was more aware of this new approach in *O cão sem plumas* than the author himself. Just before its publication, Cabral confessed to Bandeira in a letter dated December 3, 1949:

Ando com muita preguiça e lentidão trabalhando num poema sobre o nosso Capibaribe. A coisa é lenta porque estou tentando cortar com ela muitas amarras com minha passada literatura gagá e torre-de-marfim.

Penso em botar com epígrafe aqueles seus dois versos:

Capiberibe

– Capibaribe. (Sussekind 114)

The two distinct spellings of the word Capibaribe in the would-be epigraph of *O cão sem plumas*, similar to the dual perspectives of Latin America he encountered while in Barcelona, evoke a dialogue between the intellectual and the commoner. The former spelling of the river with an *e*—"Capiberibe"—was its proper orthography at the time, while the latter with an *a*—"Capibaribe"—was the written expression of its popular pronunciation (Sussekind 115). Just as Cabral proposed two different ways of perceiving

the Capibaribe, he also attempted, for the first time, in *O cão sem plumas* to bring together the regional with the universal, as well as the intellectual with the social. The dialogue created in *O cão sem plumas* is its most important element, leaving an indelible mark on the author's subsequent poetry and initiating "a phase in which earlier techniques and themes are restated and developed in new ways" (Tolman 58).

Much more than a political denunciation of the deplorable social circumstances of the Capibaribe's impoverished inhabitants, *O cão sem plumas* contemplates, within the paradigms of modernity, the fate of the individual faced with the irrevocability of his/her communal identity. On the 17th of March, as Osório Dutra continued to study "minuciosamente" Medeiros's case, Barcelona received further information about his case from the Brazilian Embassy in Madrid: "Octavio de Medeiros reside em Espanha como cidadão brasileiro, sendo filho de pai português e mãe brasileira" (*Letter, March 17, 1947*). Yet, Dutra deemed the information provided by the embassy in Madrid insufficient to authorize Medeiros and his family's passage to Brazil.

From the start, Dutra had been skeptical of Medeiros's claim to citizenship. On March 22, 1947, Dutra writes to Medeiros requesting more documentation, "afim de estudar devidamente seu caso, rogo a V.S. informar-me. . . qual é o documento existente em seu poder, comprobatório de sua nacionalidade" (*Letter, March 22, 1947*). The letter also requested to know: "Si o certificado de matricula lhe foi dado regularmente e anualmente renovado, como é obrigatório, para que lhe fosse possível conservar os seus direitos à nacionalidade brasileira" (*Letter, March 22, 1947*). Medeiros responds in a letter dated March 28, 1947 writing that "documentação suficiente com retratos, assignaturas, impressões digitais e demias datos" could be found at the Brazilian

Embassy in Lisbon (*Letter, March 28, 1947*). Demonstrating his obvious frustration with the situation, Medeiros inquires:

Então, um brasileiro que não tomou carta de naturalização noutra país
 ?deixa [sic] alguma vez de ser brasileiro? Si é assim, ?de [sic] que me
 serviu renunciar ao cargo de informador do Turismo espanhol para não
 desprezar [sic] a minha nacionalidade de origem? Bastaria esse facto
 indiscutível para reforçar os meus direitos de brasileiro, mais valioso,
 creio eu, ante o nosso governo, que uma simples inscrição em qualquer
 Consulado. (*Letter, March 28, 1947*)

Medeiros, choosing to maintain his national identity, could not feasibly remain in Spain and still secure the financial means to provide for his family. But, the Brazilian consulate was unwilling to immediately accept him as Brazilian because of lack of proper bureaucratic “documentação.” In this way, Medeiros was impeded from exercising his full rights as a Brazilian citizen and return to Brazil.

Throughout the twentieth century to the present, the social circumstances that have given the *recifenses* inhabiting the shantytowns of the Capibaribe their regional identity embody a similar paradox to that encountered by Medeiros. The river which gives life to these “homens plantados na lama” is also the same force that imprisons them. The river possesses: “Algo da estagnação do hospital, / da penitenciária, dos asilos, / da vida suja e abafada / (de roupa suja e abafada) / por onde se veio arrastando” (*O cão* 107). They are, as the infirm of the “asilos” and the inmates of the “penitenciária,” on the outskirts of society. Furthermore, if these “homens plantados na lama” chose to move, like Medeiros, to some other region of Brazil in search of better possibilities, they would

inevitably leave some intrinsic part of them behind: “Porque é na água do rio / que eles se perdem / (lentamente e sem dente)” (*O cão* 109).

In the poem, the Capibaribe is depicted as it flows through Recife until it arrives at the Atlantic Ocean. Throughout this journey, the poem offers a bird’s eye view of the many life forms—human and otherwise—which surround and inhabit the river. This “kind of omniscient eye” (Tolman 57) binds the organic entities together through a series of metaphors. While speaking with Vinicius de Moraes, Cabral proposed the importance of these metaphors in the poem:

- “O Cão sem Plumas” já é o rio Capibaribe, não é, João?

- É O Capibaribe visto de fora. Mas a existência do assunto é clara.

Evidentemente a linguagem é ainda cifrada. A verdade é que naquela época eu não me tinha libertado ainda do preconceito de que poesia é a transplantação metafórica da realidade. Grandes trechos do “O Cão sem Plumas” são construídos com metáforas. (Moraes)

As the poem’s narrative viewpoint emanates from an outsider’s perspective, it recognizes the paradox in which the Capibaribe’s inhabitants live. Understanding the poem as “a transplantação metafórica da realidade,” these marginalized individuals incapacitated by their social circumstances become trapped in the *margens*, as it were, along the banks of a river which “tinha algo, então, / da estagnação de um louco” (107). In this way, there is a sense of inevitable failure engendered by Cabral’s portrayal of these inhabitants: “Entre a paisagem / (fluía) / de homens plantados na lama, / plantadas em ilhas / coaguladas na lama; / paisagem de anfíbios / de lama e lama” (*O cão* 108). The coagulating mud is a

metaphor of the Capibaribe's worsening fate, corralled by society at the banks of the river.

The paradox of citizenship is that nations are not able to grant total individual autonomy while also ensuring communal stability. Indeed, one cannot do what s/he wants whenever s/he would like without eventually entering into conflict with another individual with the same ideal. The marginalization of some, to a degree, ensures an acceptable *status quo* for others. As a result, certain individuals or groups are unavoidably marginalized—whether explicitly by the law, as in the case of Medeiros, or by some other force, as in the case of the impoverished along the banks of the Capibaribe. Thus, Cabral describes this interconnectedness in his poem through the imagery of the river wherein the fate of one is inevitably tied to the fate of others:

Na paisagem do rio
 difícil é saber
 onde começa o rio;
 onde a lama
 começa do rio;
 onde a terra
 começa da lama;
 onde o homem,
 onde a pele
 começa da lama;
 onde começa o homem
 naquele homem. (*O cão* 110)

As it becomes impossible to decipher the metaphorical point where the river ends and its inhabitants begin, it likewise becomes impossible to understand the universal reach of these archetypal *recifenses* without also inscribing them within the parameters of nationality. According to Roderick Barman, the nation is an inescapable paradigm of modernity:

[T]he concept of the nation has expanded to engulf the entire globe and to become the standard and unavoidable form of political and social organization. We cannot, in truth, envisage a viable model of political and social existence other than the nation-state. (3)

Since the nation is the universal framework to which modern societies adhere, the regional struggles of the *recifenses* are iterated interminably across national borders. The nation's breadth, like that of the Capibaribe River, permeates all strata of existence, from the inanimate mud to the "homens plantados na lama" (*O cão* 108). Within the poem the expression of this universality of the nation begins with the metaphor of the Atlantic Ocean as a flag:

(Como o rio era um cachorro,
o mar podia ser uma bandeira
azul e branca
desdobrada
no extremo do curso
– ou do mastro – do rio. (111)

The flag is an inextricable symbol of nationhood, and, even more importantly, in the poem, it is the crowning height of the river, being not only located at the "extremo do

curso,” but also crowning its “mastro.” If the river is the metaphor of these “homens plantados na lama” (*O cãõ* 106) and also the mast of the flag, then the ocean is the metaphor of the limits of their identity. It is the all-encompassing symbolic flag to which their identities are attached. But it is also possible to interpret the flag described by Cabral not as a national flag, but as a regional one. Since the colors of the ocean—“azul e branca” (*O cãõ* 111)—are also the principal colors of the Pernambucan state flag, the verse bears in its subscript a regional history of conflict with competing regional and national ideologies. For the *recifenses* along the banks of the Capibaribe, this identification with the ocean is thus also potentially violent. “Depois, / o mar invade o rio. / Quer / o mar / destruir no rio / suas flores de terra inchada” (*O cãõ* 112). Like the Capibaribe, the nation, paradoxically, guarantees the individual a place within its organization while also limiting, whether geographically, politically, and/or socially, the individual’s movement and “O rio teme aquele mar / como um cachorro / teme uma porta entretanto aberta” (*O cãõ* 112).

The metaphor of the ocean also shares another important relationship with Brazilian history. The ocean is Brazil’s most definitive geopolitical boundary, representing its entire Eastern border. Resting opposite the shores of Europe and Africa, Brazil’s shoreline is symbolic of its complex colonial history and cultural ties to both continents. The importance of the ocean to Brazil’s history is as important as the Capibaribe River to Recife and, in this way, the flag as the ocean takes on this double significance, national and regional.

Yet, because the poet-narrator is not limited to an endogenous viewpoint impeded by the limits of borders, the poet-narrator of *O cãõ sem plumas* is able to contemplate

these limits imposed by the Atlantic. Without such an outsider's perspective in the poem, it would be impossible to locate these "homens plantados na lama" (*O cão* 108) within a global context. From Spain, Brazil becomes clearer for Cabral. In his interview with Jon Tolman, Cabral summarizes the existential aspect of his compositional philosophy which connects individual struggles to those of entire communities, regions and nations. He describes the philosophical aims of portraying the archetypal realities of the destitute inhabitants of the Capibaribe:

É importante ressaltar que em minha literatura social apenas recobro a experiência da miséria, a minha própria experiência, enfim. Não proponho soluções, nem se adapta a poesia a programações ideológicas. Para mim, a realidade pernambucana, com toda sua angústia, não é um problema que se propõe estudar e sim uma expressão individual que se tenta encaixar dentro da problemática filosófica universal, numa linguagem poética individual. (Cabral qtd. in Tolman 67)

O cão sem plumas captures the harsh social realities of the poor inhabitants of the shantytowns found along the shores of the Capibaribe river, flowing through the author's native Recife. Similarly, it also provides justifiable grounds for a reading of national identity. Yet, beyond these concerns, *O cão sem plumas* is also the reading of an existential dilemma, seeking a common thread which courses through humankind independent of region or nationality. In the words of the poem: "Junta-se o rio / a outros rios / numa laguna, em pântanos / onde, fria, a vida ferve" (113). For Cabral, "O homem, / porque vive, / choca com o que vive. / Viver / é ir entre o que vive" (*O cão* 114).

On April 9, 1947, the consulate in Barcelona determined Medeiros case was far too complex for them to decide on their own concerning his repatriation. The consulate turned his and his family's case over, with all pertinent correspondence, to the Secretaria de Estado das Relações Exteriores in Brazil. Enclosed as part of the package to the Secretaria is a copy of the letter to Madrid, dated April 2, 1947, in which Osório Dutra confessed his misgivings about the case:

Como poderá verificar Vossa Senhoria, o interessado gastou muita tinta para nada me dizer de concreto ou de positivo. O que se deduz das suas explicações, é que não tem ele em seu poder atualmente nenhum documento comprobatório da sua nacionalidade. . . Tratando se de um caso extremamente complexo—já que o Senhor Octavio de Medeiros prestou por largo tempo serviços ao governo espanhol e só agora se lembrou de que é brasileiro, penso que o mais acertado será levá-lo ao conhecimento da Secretaria de Estado das Relações Exteriores, para que ela o resolve como melhor entender” (*Letter, April 2, 1947*)

In the cover letter to the Secretaria, Dutra continued to display his incredulity by describing Medeiros as a “pessoa suspeita, cuja longa permanência em Espanha foi sempre um tanto misteriosa” (*Letter, April 9, 1947*). One month after turning the case over to officials in Brazil, João Cabral de Melo Neto conferred the receipt of a letter written on May 8, 1947 from the Lisbon consulate, communicating to Barcelona that “o Senhor de Medeiros não está inscrito na matricula deste Consulado Geral, onde também nada consta a seu respeito” (*Letter, April 9, 1947*). It appeared, at this point, that Dutra's suspicions had been confirmed. But, such a conclusion does not account for the

previously-cited telegram sent on the 24th of July 1947 that granted repatriation to Medeiros. On May 27, 1947, João Cabral de Melo Neto conferred the receipt of yet another letter from the Lisbon consulate. This new correspondence rectified the observations of the previous letter by including Medeiros's middle name:

Octavio Gonçalves de Medeiros está aqui matriculado desde 23 de dezembro de 1915, tendo sido expedido em seu favor três passaportes brasileiros em 1919, 1926 e 1935. . . Fica, pois, esclarecida e justificada a situação do Senhor Octavio Gonçalves de Medeiros perante este Consulado Geral. (*Letter, May 27, 1947*)

Whether Medeiros and his family did in actuality board that ship to Brazil set to leave on August 4, 1947 is not revealed in the Barcelona *Ofícios* of 1947-1950. Yet, such information, although interesting, is in reality of little importance to the study at hand. What is important is that Medeiros's Brazilian identity becomes the mechanism for trapping him in an intense conflict between physical necessity and citizenship. Medeiros was simultaneously Brazilian, Catalanian, and an intellectual, but not any of them entirely. His case is, of course, similar to that of Cabral's "homens plantados na lama." In the same way that Medeiros proposed Spain was "velha, desgastada e de duvidosas perspectivas" (*Letter, January 19, 1947*), the Capibaribe was, for its inhabitants, unable to provide for the necessities of life "como um cão / humilde e esquivo" (*O cão* 108).

Literature and diplomacy both often embody a call to represent specific social groups and identities and both likewise facilitate communication across borders, real and imagined. In *O cão sem plumas*, transcendent qualities apropos of the situation of stranded Brazilian expatriates and oppressed Catalanians were made comparable to those

of struggling *recifenses*. For João Cabral de Melo Neto, diplomacy provided the means through which his writing could abstract universally recognized themes founded in national analogies, replicated across borders through the expression of the needs of specific groups and individuals before their respective nations. In *O cão sem plumas*, “a realidade pernambucana” (Cabral qtd. in Tolman 67) is simultaneously depictive of, while also being deformed from, its distinct political, social and economic framework. As poverty marginalizes the inhabitants of the river, their rights to full-fledged citizenship are severely limited. These sociopolitical limitations confronted by those inhabiting the river find their parallel on an existential plane to the degree that Cabral expresses “a experiência da miséria” as a “problemática filosófica universal” (qtd. in Tolman 67).

Chapter 8

Conclusion

As I have linked the fields of literature and diplomacy through local and global perspectives, in this dissertation, I have endeavored to provide a theoretical and historical framework to explain the writer-diplomat tradition in Brazil. The analysis of specific literary texts within the context of certain authors' diplomatic careers such as João Guimarães Rosa, Vinicius de Moraes and João Cabral de Melo Neto has demonstrated that literature and diplomacy function in parallel systems of identity negotiation, both evoking a symbolic politics of national representation in the international arena. Thus, Brazilian literature and diplomacy, characterized by similar dialogical processes, have historically relied on an economy of politico-cultural exchange across.

Just as the Tratado de Tordesilhas and the Tratado de Madrid represent a middle ground established between sovereign powers, Brazilian literature also defines itself by its ability to elaborate and negotiate its identity in relation to others. Similar to those treaties, literature is a written document which establishes through narration the political and cultural relations of nations. Brazilian literature and culture exist, just as the nation to which they belong, through interdependence with other national literatures and cultures, becoming a dialogical result of exchange. For this reason, border negotiations, such as those undertaken by Rio Branco, during the *belle époque*, and those of João Guimarães Rosa in the 50s and 60s, not only emblemize the nature of Brazilian diplomacy, but also represent the Brazilian literary process.

Nonetheless, the antagonisms inherent between the different political economies of the two fields create a space in which identity is configured through negotiation. Diplomacy functions in a zero sum game, where one's increase is almost inevitably another's loss; whereas literature, being in part a cultural capital, is ideally capable of being mutually shared without loss. Through the navigation of these antagonisms which involve the paradox of looking both outward to other national literatures and inward to the historical and cultural specificities of Brazil, writer-diplomats assert Brazil's singularity, allowing a national literature to take shape. In this way, the conclusion can be made that the ever-evolving process of establishing a local identity only has meaning within the greater context of the international system.

In Brazil, literary institutions such as the Instituto Histórico Geográfico Brasileiro as well as the Academia Brasileira de Letras have played an important role in this negotiation. These institutions have served as a means to consolidate the identity function shared by both literature and diplomacy. The recognition of the role of diplomats in these intellectual institutions articulates national identity within a specific historical context developed within postcolonial and neocolonial paradigms since Brazilian independence. On one hand, the travels connected to the IHGB of earlier nineteenth century diplomats embody the overwhelming influence exerted on the newly independent country by Europe, the cradle of nationalism and also the home of the old metropolises. In contrast, the writer-diplomats of the mid-twentieth century, such as Vinicius de Moraes, João Guimarães Rosa and João Cabral de Melo Neto, utilized their experiences abroad to enlarge the scope of a national literature to be, although turned towards, not

subject to, the homogenizing national discourses of a European aesthetic apropos of the Brazilian Empire and the First Republic.

If Vinicius de Moraes and João Cabral de Melo Neto did not explicitly work as diplomats on the fixation of borders, as would João Guimarães Rosa and others, these two writers still engaged, as did Guimarães Rosa, in defining the realities of Brazil within the emerging postwar international system. Thus, writer-diplomats' expressions of national identity take on distinct characteristics which parallel the dialogical aspects of Brazil's diplomatic history while still reflecting the specificities of the period in which these literary expressions are conceived. In my next project, I will demonstrate how the relationship between literature and diplomacy continues in Brazil today with the work of João Almino and others. In the words of Almino, from an interview entitled "Diplomat and Writer: Two Sides of Joao [sic] Almino," it is important to understand that his literature "be not of roots, but of routes always open to interpretation" (par. 18).²⁰ Embodying the nation, writer-diplomats, through the symbolic discourses of literary narrative, political representation and travel, construct at the conflux of literature and diplomacy a national identity independent of, yet inextricably related to, the literature and diplomacy of other nations.

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APPENDIX A

¹ These two institutions will also be referred to as the IHGB and the ABL, respectively.

² For a further discussion of intellectual life in nineteenth-century Rio, see U. Machado.

³ For a discussion of literature and diplomacy in Brazil including other writer-diplomats not mentioned, see Alberto da Costa e Silva's chapter "Diplomacia e cultura." (*O Itamaraty na cultura brasileira*. ed. Alberto da Costa e Silva. Rio de Janeiro: Francisco Alves, 2002.)

⁴ For a comparison of the original Spanish with an English translation of these three poems found in *Ternura*, see Le Guin.

⁵ I have modernized the Portuguese orthography.

⁶ Biographical and bibliographical information on all of the ABL writer-diplomats mentioned can be found on the ABL's official site: www.academia.org.br.

⁷ See also page 117 of Rouanet.

⁸ For a discussion of the discrepancies between opinions on the location of the Tordesilhas Line, see Fausto.

⁹ In general, the work of Vieira, especially his sermons, has been associated with the Baroque period. But, since I am not here explicitly concerned with Vieira's Baroque style, the focus of this chapter is to emphasize the concepts of nation and national identity

in Vieira's prophetic writings, ideas most readily associated with the conceptual panorama of the Enlightenment.

¹⁰ The two *Representações* were published in 1957 as *Defesa perante o Tribunal do Santo Ofício*. See Works Cited page for complete reference.

¹¹ The insignia of the Academia Brasileira de Letras reads: "AD IMMORTALITATEM."

¹² Athayde is quoting from Guimarães Rosa's short story "No prosseguir" found in *Tutaméia: terceiras estórias*: "As coisas, mesmas, por si, escolhem de suceder ou não, no prosseguir" (99).

¹³ Although my paper deals primarily with the articulation of death as it proposes the ABL's imagined infiniteness parallel with that of the nation, many of the ideas herein on the role of writing in constructing an "eternal" nation are indebted to *Nation and Narration* (edited by Homi K. Bhabha), as well as Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities*.

¹⁴ Cunha was tragically gunned down by his wife's lover less than a month prior to the signing of the treaty on August 15, 1909.

¹⁵ See Needell, Chapter 6.

¹⁶ For a discussion of the Ilha Brasil myth and its uses in Brazilian diplomacy, see Íris Kantor's "Usos diplomáticos da Ilha Brasil: polêmicas cartográficas e historiográficas" (*Varia história* 23.37 (2007): 70-80).

¹⁷ I also discuss the relevance of Gonçalves Dias's poem in chapter 3 in regards to transnational discourses and postcolonial perspectives of the nineteenth century.

¹⁸ Besides Sussekind, see also Fernandez-Medina.

¹⁹ In Medeiros's letter written in January 1947, he states there are six members of his family (Medeiros, his wife and four children). But, the telegram proposes that there are only five tickets awaiting Medeiros for the trip to Brazil. The reason for this discrepancy is not accounted for in the available documentation at Itamaraty.

²⁰ It should be noted that the narrative distinction drawn between contrasting literatures, represented, on the one hand, by "roots" and, on the other, by the corresponding homophone "routes" does help to explain Almino's further comments in the interview that Brasília represents a crossroads of both Brazil and the world:

Acho que Brasília se presta a isso, mais do que qualquer outro lugar. É uma cidade criada a partir do nada e contrasta com a realidade brasileira, dos vários "brasis:" construída por nordestinos, habitada por goianos, mineiros etc. Além de ser o grande centro político do país. (par. 18)

But, these homophones seem to be an invention by the translator or possibly an intervention by Almino during the translation of the interview, since the clever assonant alliteration between "roots" and "routes" does not appear at all in the original Portuguese: "Do ponto de vista filosófico, é importante que a minha literatura não seja de raízes, mas sempre aberta para interpretação" (par. 18).