

**SUFFOCATION AMONG THE HEIGHTS
ON “PÁRAMO” BY GUIMARÃES ROSA¹**

**SUFOCO NAS ALTURAS
SOBRE PÁRAMO, DE GUIMARÃES ROSA**

**APRIETO EN LAS ALTURAS
SOBRE PÁRAMO, DE GUIMARÃES ROSA**

**LE MAL DES HAUTEURS
DANS PÁRAMO, DE GUIMARÃES ROSA**

高空窒息：巴西作家吉马良斯·罗沙描述的恐高症

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ABSTRACT

This article proposes an interpretation of the tale entitled “Páramo”³ by the Brazilian writer João Guimarães Rosa. The tale was published *post mortem*, with the first edition released in 1969. Years after his experience in Germany, the author leads the reader to the heart of a traumatic memory: an encounter with death. Yes, an “*encounter with death. Not final death – equestrian, Grim Reaper, skinny and so unsettling, but the other one, that one*”. Death in the tale appears as psychological suffering (*pathos*) intensely experienced through *soroche* – altitude sickness – due to the thin air at high altitudes, but also through the deep depression experienced upon that period of thriving authoritarianism (*ethos*) in

¹ Rosa, João Guimarães (2001). “Páramo”, In *Estas Estórias*, Rio de Janeiro: Nova Fronteira, 2001, p. 261-290. The first edition dates from 1969, published posthumously in volume edited by Paulo Rónai e Vilma Guimarães Rosa.

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³ Term in Spanish used to refer to bleak uplands. It is also sometimes used more narrowly to refer to the northern Andes of South America and adjacent southern Central America, and in Portuguese figuratively refers to the heavens and the sense of a summit or highest point.

wartime Germany, expressed in countless genocidal killings. The approach proposes an intertwining of history, political culture and the clinical method.

Key Words: Political Theory, Literature, Guimarães Rosa, Psychoanalysis, the Clinical Method.

RESUMO

O trabalho propõe uma interpretação sobre o conto “Páramo”, do escritor brasileiro João Guimarães Rosa. Ele foi publicado *post-mortem*, sendo a primeira edição em 1969. Nele, anos após a experiência vivida na Alemanha, o autor conduzirá o leitor ao coração da recordação traumática: um encontro com a morte. Sim, um “*encontro com a morte. Não a morte final – equestre, ceifeira, ossosa, tão atardalhadora, mas a outra, aquela*”. A morte aqui veste o semblante do sofrimento psíquico (*pathos*) intensamente vivenciado no *soroche*, o mal das alturas, em função do ar rarefeito naquelas altitudes, mas também na depressão profunda experimentada a partir daquele período de autoritarismo vivo (*ethos*) da Alemanha em guerra, expresso em números genocidas. A abordagem propõe um entrelaçamento entre história, cultura política e método clínico.

Palavras-chave: Teoria política, Literatura, Guimarães Rosa, Psicanálise, Método clínico.

RESUMEN

El trabajo propone una interpretación sobre el cuento “Páramo”, del escritor brasileño João Guimarães Rosa. Él fue publicado *post-mortem*, la primera edición es de 1969. En él, años después de la experiencia vivida en Alemania, el autor conducirá el lector al corazón de la recordación traumática: un encuentro con la muerte. Sí, un “*encuentro con la muerte. No la muerte final – equestre, segadera, huesosa, tan perturbadora, sino la otra, aquella*”. La muerte aquí viste el semblante del sufrimiento psíquico (*pathos*) intensamente vivenciado en el *soroche*, el mal de las alturas, en función del aire rarefacto en aquellas altitudes, pero también en la depresión profunda experimentada a partir de aquel periodo de autoritarismo vivo (*ethos*) de la Alemania en guerra, expreso en números genocidas. El abordaje propone un entrelazamiento entre historia, cultura política y método clínico.

Palabras clave: Teoría Política, Literatura, Guimarães Rosa, Psicoanálisis, Método Clínico.

RÉSUMÉ

Ce travail propose une interprétation de la nouvelle *Páramo*, de l'écrivain brésilien João Guimarães Rosa, publiée *post-mortem* pour la première fois en 1969. Dans ce récit, des années après son expérience vécue en Allemagne, l'auteur conduit le lecteur au cœur du souvenir traumatique, à savoir une rencontre avec la mort. « Une rencontre avec la mort. Non pas la mort finale – équestre, faucheuse, osseuse, si déconcertante, mais l'autre, celle-là. » La mort revêt ici un semblant de souffrance psychique (*pathos*) intensément vécue comme un *soroche*, le mal des hauteurs dû à la raréfaction de l'oxygène en altitude, mais aussi comme une dépression profonde issue de la période d'autoritarisme concret (*ethos*) et de génocide de l'Allemagne en guerre. Notre approche propose de croiser histoire, culture politique et méthode clinique.

Mots-clés: Théorie politique, Littérature, Guimarães Rosa, Psychanalyse, Méthode clinique.

提要

本论文尝试对巴西作家若昂·吉马良斯·罗沙(João Guimarães Rosa)的短篇小说“恐高症”进行解读。作品于作者去世之后，在1969年初次发表。在小说里面，作者根据在二战时期的德国生活多年的经验，把带读者带到一个与死亡相遇的精神临界点。“与死亡面对面。不是死亡—肉体，大脑，躯干的缓慢死亡，而是另外一种”。在这部作品里，死亡就像一种精神病态(*pathos*)类似于恐高症的状况*soroche*，高空缺氧的窒息感觉，同时加上生活在高压统治之下的战争时期德国的极度忧郁状态(*ethos*)，这种忧郁可以从大量的屠杀死亡人数得到旁证。论文试图结合历史，政治文化和临床心理分析疗法等角度综合解读这部小说。

关键词：政治学理论，文学，吉马良斯·罗沙，心理分析，临床疗法。

For Lene, always together,
as always separated.

[...] knew the *sáurio*, a gecko, who, when old and blind, retreats to an east-facing hole, and when the sun comes up, looks up at it, straining to see and recover his sight⁴.

⁴ Carpentier, Alejo (1987). *A harpa e a sombra*, Rio de Janeiro: Bertrand do Brasil.

The year is somewhere between 1942 and 1944. João Guimarães Rosa (1908-1967), or “Joãozinho”⁵ as he is otherwise known, is feeling “*the world’s cold feet*”⁶, upon accepting the post of the second secretary at the Brazilian Embassy in Bogota, Colombia. There he would go on to produce a gem of universal literature strongly Latin American in style. On the roof of the *Cordillera*⁷, at the snowy heights of over 2,600 metres in altitude, “*in the jail of the Andes*”⁸, he would come to evoke in his fiction his terrible experience of the period spent as assistant consul from 1938 and 1942 in Hamburg, Germany. The tale, entitled “Páramo”, would exorcise the oppressive experience of *pathos* doubly inscribed in Baden-Baden where he was confined for one hundred long days after being called to Berlin along with other diplomats from the consulate in mid-1942 and having to wait for the moment at which they would be exchanged for Germans imprisoned in Brazil, finally declaring war on the Axis countries in August 1942. As assistant consul in Hamburg, Guimarães Rosa resisted Nazism and aided many persecuted Jews in a manner which was discrete, yet decisive.

Guimarães Rosa had taken the entry exam for the Ministry of Foreign Relations in Brasília in 1934. His first post was in Germany, where he met Aracy Moebius de Carvalho, who would become his second wife, and who he called by the nickname “Ara”. Aracy, from the interior of the Brazilian state of Paraná, spoke many languages and had lived with an aunt in Germany. She was hired by the Brazilian consulate in Hamburg. In 1938, the Secret Circular 1,127 restricting Jews’ entry into Brazil came into force.

*My mother decided to ignore the circular which prevented Jews from getting visas, and at her own risk and of her own will she went on forwarding the files against senior instructions at the consulate. As she also dispatched other matters with the consul-general, she slipped the visas in the middle of the papers. It was her initiative, although she had the discrete help of João Guimarães Rosa. As he was assistant consul, Guimarães Rosa did not sign the visas. But he knew what my mother was doing and supported her*⁹.

⁵ “Little João” as “zito” is a Spanish diminutive suffix.

⁶ Rosa, João Guimarães (2001a). “Páramo”. Op. cit. p. 263.

⁷ A term for an extensive chain of mountains or mountain ranges, derived from the Spanish diminutive for cord, “cordilla”. In this case it refers to the Andes mountain range.

⁸ Rosa, João Guimarães (2001a). “Páramo”. Op. cit., p. 264.

⁹ See the report by Eduardo Tess, fruit of Aracy’s first marriage, in Decol, René Daniel (2006). “Uma certa Aracy, um certo João”. In *Revista GOL – Linhas Aéreas*, Seção “Gente”, p.72.

In Hamburg, Guimarães Rosa and Aracy had already both separated from their former spouses. After the war, both had married by proxy in Mexico and soon after, Guimarães Rosa was summoned to Bogota, Colombia. Since 1946, the author had come to dedicate himself to literature. “Magma” [Magma] was published in 1936, and coinciding with the end of the war, came “Sagarana”¹⁰ in 1946. “Com o Vaqueiro Mariano” [With the Cowboy Mariano] came in 1947, “Corpo de Baile” [Corps de Ballet] in 1956 and “Grande Sertão: Veredas” [The Devil to Pay in the Backlands] in 1956, taking us up to the end of the 1950s.

Guimarães Rosa’s works open up an “osmosis between literature and geography and, by extension, an osmosis between mythology and morals, between speaking and writing and between past and present”¹¹. We believe that the expression “osmosis” used here refers to a reciprocal exchange between aesthetics, ethics and nature, despite the fact that the metaphor reveals a certain naturalism which is a biologist’s in nature and with which the social may be being referred to.

“Páramo”, however, was published *post-mortem* and first released in 1969. Years after his experience in Germany, the author leads the reader to the heart of a traumatic memory: an encounter with death¹². Yes, an “*encounter with death. Not final death – equestrian, Grim Reaper, skinny and so unsettling, but the other one, that one*”¹³.

Death in the tale appears as psychological suffering (*pathos*) intensely experienced through *soroche*¹⁴ – altitude sickness – due to the thin air at high altitudes, but also through the deep depression (*deep pression*)¹⁵ experienced upon that period of thriving authoritarianism (*ethos*) of wartime Germany¹⁶, expressed in countless genocidal killings. .

This article shall take the writing and the trauma of the characters as sources of observation for the concepts of *ethos* and *pathos*, referring to the experience of the central protagonist.

¹⁰ “Sagarana” is a hybrid word, joining “saga”, of Germanic origin and referring to a legend or heroic tale, and “rana” from the language spoken by the native Tupi people of Brazil, expressing similarity. “Sagarana” thus means something like “similar to a saga”.

¹¹ Torres Fierro, Danubio (2012). “Romance entre o arcaico e o moderno”. In *O Estado de São Paulo, Suplemento Sabático*, 18/08/2012, p.6-7.

¹² Cerqueira Filho, Gisálio (2011). “Amor & Morte em Arthur Schnitzler”. In *Passagens - Revista Internacional de História Política e Cultura Jurídica*, Rio de Janeiro, v. 3 n.1, jan./abr., p. 142 -164.

¹³ Rosa, João Guimarães (2001a). “Páramo”. Op. Cit, p. 264.

¹⁴ Santiago, Silvano (2012b). “Soroche o mal das alturas”, artigo instigante publicado in *O Estado de São Paulo, Suplemento Sabático*, 21 jun., p.2.

¹⁵ Cerqueira Filho, Gisálio (2006). “Dor e Medo na clínica em extensão”. In *Psicologia Clínica*, Rio de Janeiro: PUC-RIO, v. 18, n.1, p. 123-135.

¹⁶ Cerqueira Filho, Gisálio (2005). *Autoritarismo Afetivo: a Prússia como sentimento*. São Paulo: Escuta.

It must be remembered that “Páramo” – both a historical chronicle and a work of fiction – is still a relatively unknown tale. For this reason, we recommend a close reading, regardless of our interpretation or those of others. The reader must allow themselves to be carried by the enlightenment “*of this too-quick path which is suffering. Have pity for one another, brothers, is the prayer of the Miserere psalm. However, at the end of the test, the greatest happiness comes to follow*”¹⁷. The *pathos* is revealed here in its entirety as suffering, but also as the fruit of joy and perhaps, as means of registering the aesthetic.

This enlightenment which soaks up a person’s character by means of a funereal anxiety was not unfamiliar to Guimarães Rosa. In “*Meu tio o Iauaretê*”¹⁸, the Brazilian author had narrated the story of a mixed-race man of indigenous and Caucasian descent and his exemplary fate; “*a farmer’s assistant who has been sent to ‘desonçar’*¹⁹ *the far edges of the Brazilian backlands alone, comes to gradually reject civilisation and recognise himself in animals. He ends up preferring jaguars to humans, becoming a jaguar himself and killing humans*”²⁰ The natural completely consumes him²¹.

Ethos is the sociological construct for humans’ social nature, referring to both community and society. In this particular case, it refers to the characteristic features of those who live in the Brazilian backlands, but who also transcend them: features which refer to customs, culture, ideology - in short, the symbolic. They also undoubtedly speak to social identity. Greek in origin, the expression *ethos* also refers to ethics; ethics from the perspective of values, habits, customs and laws. For Max Weber (1864-1920), for example, the bourgeois *ethos* should be treated as a flaw or duty, and, in this case, related to the capitalist Protestant ethic. For Georg Simmel (1858-1918), social institutions and territory are highlighted in the formation of a society’s *ethos*. The *ethos* always has an accentuated normative character. *Pathos* is a psychological construct for humans’ psychological nature. It represents suffering, affective experiences, the emotions. The protagonist of “Páramo” accepts suffering as an unavoidable plight, an unappealable condemnation, although for an unknown reason. “*Debilitated and alone, having become*

¹⁷ Rosa, João Guimarães (2001a). “Páramo”. Op. Cit, p. 262.

¹⁸ “My Uncle the Jaguar” is the English title with “Iauaretê” meaning “true jaguar” in the language of the native Tupi people of Brazil.

¹⁹ The verb “desonçar” refers to the idea of freeing an area of jaguars, to “de-jaguar” an area.

²⁰ Veja-se Campos, Haroldo de (1970). “A linguagem do Iauaretê”. In *Metalinguagem*, 2. ed., Petrópolis, RJ: Vozes, 1970, p. 47-53.

²¹ Almeida, Leonardo Vieira de (2011). *Veredas do Grande Conto: a descoberta do sertão em Guimarães Rosa*, Rio de Janeiro: Ed. PUC-RIO & Uapê, p. 99.

*wholly vulnerable, unable to resort to some invisible support, one sees oneself compelled to this too-quick path which is suffering*²². *Pathos* is also an expression which is Greek in origin, and speaks to the imaginary, to feelings, to the unconscious emotions, to the affections and passions which mark and differentiate men and women from the Brazilian backlands as well as being a metaphor for deepest Brazil. *Pathos* is evocative of a suffering implied in feeling the pain present in the body and in the imagination. We intend to demonstrate here how to articulate *ethos* and *pathos* as specific constructs in “Páramo” based on the clinical method. Fundamental psychopathology, in proposing that *pathos* comes from outside and from far away, assumes an intimate articulation with *ethos*. This is particularly evident, for example, in Freud’s works on war neurosis or traumatic neurosis. The notions of observation and nature which govern the clinical method certainly include both concepts.

We may say that humans possess subjectivity and a psychological apparatus which features an unconscious dimension. The dynamic of this phenomenon is governed by *pathos* (suffering, passion, passivity), by affection. However, affection should not be simply confused with emotion. Affection contains emotion, without being reduced to it. Affection is a force, an intensely excessive passion. In Manoel Berlinck’s words, *pathos* is an “*afetão*”²³, or in other words, that which touches and alters the subject²⁴. Not all emotions provoke this change. In this sense, *pathos* designates the experience of that which is lived. It is a transitory state. We may then say that Fundamental Psychopathology is a discourse on affection, a passion which is lived through experience²⁵.

The essay entitled “Transference Neurosis: A Synthesis”, written by Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) between 1914 and 1915 but only discovered after his death and published in 1987, develops a theoretical construction founded both on a myth and a poetic epic, for the origins of psychoanalytical psychopathology from a phylogenetic perspective, coinciding with human subjectivity. Freud presents his concept that the human psyche is psychopathological based on the ice age catastrophe. He claims that the history of the development of sexual energy, known as libido, repeats a part of phylogenetic development much older than that of the self. He then goes on to speculate that what

²² Rosa, João Guimarães (2001a). “Páramo”. Op. Cit., p. 262.

²³ A “big affection”.

²⁴ Berlinck, Manoel Tosta (Org) (2005). *Obsessiva Neurose*, São Paulo: Escuta.

²⁵ Rodrigues, Márcia Barros Ferreira (2008). *Ethos e Pathos: Violência e Poder em Casa Grande & Senzala, de Gilberto Freyre*. Postdoctoral research (Universidade Federal Fluminense-UFF), Supervisor Prof. Gisálio Cerqueira Filho, Niterói.

today are neuroses were once phases of human development. The ice age thus threatened the survival of the species which found in transference neurosis creative forms of protection against this threat and which came to constitute the human psyche. For Freud, at least in this significant text, there is no way of separating body and psyche, especially not in distinguishing between subjectivity and psychopathology. There also is no reason to assume that psychopathological manifestations are not also somatic or different from subjectivity. For Freud, hysteria, perversion and obsession etc, are modes of subjectivity, or rather, subjectivities, as the subject is only constituted by this means. This is why it is possible to speak of a fundamental psychopathology, because what does not establish subjectivity by means of psychopathology produces extermination. Or in other words, our subjectivity has somewhat been constructed through fear²⁶.

From the perspective of the self, Freudian subjectivity would immediately refer to the strand of psychopathology known as fundamental, unlike the other, psychiatry, which is known as general psychopathology. Thus, from the Freudian perspective, subjectivity is only manifested by means of psychopathology, distancing it from Cartesian rationalism. In any case, the more primitive the passion (*pathos*), the more the patient finds themselves at the mercy of an action which originates in the Other²⁷.

We wish to study the articulation between these two features (*pathos* and *ethos*) referred to in "Páramo" as a metaphor for the circumstances experienced in Germany by João Guimarães Rosa and upon his arrival in Bogota, where he would perform the diplomatic role of second secretary at the Brazilian Embassy in Colombia. This undoubtedly deals with a more complex understanding of historic temporality inspired by a diachronic vision (suggested by Walter Benjamin) accentuating "*the idea of the survival (Nachleben) of topics and images from the past by means of an empathetic or pathetic sensitive relationship (Pathosformel) as a project carried out by Aby Warburg in "The Birth of Venus and the Spring of Sandro Botticelli", published in 1891*"²⁸. Warburg's project is

²⁶ See the thought-provoking essay by Ginzburg, Carlo (2006). *Medo, Reverência e Terror: Reler Hobbes Hoje*, tradução de Luiz Fernando Franco, Niterói, Laboratório Cidade e Poder (in *European University Institute, Max Weber Lecture Series - MWP - 2008/05* com o título "Fear, Reverence Terror: reading Hobbes today", (ISSN 1830 7036), *Badia Fiesolana, Italy*.

²⁷ Berlinck, Manoel Tosta (2010). *O Método Clínico: projeto temático de pesquisa*, São Paulo, CNPq. Mimeo

²⁸ Schollhammer, Karl Erich (2012). "A sobrevivência de Aby Warburg". In *O Globo, Caderno Prosa e Verso*, Rio de Janeiro, 08 set., p. 5. Ver Warburg, Aby (2012). *O nascimento de Vênus e a A Primavera de Sandro Botticelli* (1891), translated to Portuguese by A. Mourão, Lisboa: KKYM.

complex, demonstrating imagination and an eye for detail. His method is comparable to [...]

detective work on the history of culture in the details and intertwining of times, plays of differences, returns and anachronisms which follow something like an incessant trace, more inconstant than the coming and going of waves on the margins of time. As he said of God, time is also hidden in the details. One must insist on the search. Although cited with reverence and much referred to, Warburg's works remain relatively unread. His writing is both stunning and labyrinthine. It has been said of his publications that each page corresponds to five hundred manuscripts, thousands of notes and hundreds of books read²⁹.

Finally, if the methodology to be employed is that of the clinical method, known as Fundamental Psychopathology, it is no less true that this is related to what Carlo Ginzburg (Balzan Award, 2010, Italy) described as the evidential method, or in other words, that which operates based on the observation of signs, clues and hints, sometimes evading the eyes and the ears of the most rigorous of analysts. There is no doubt that in many circumstances we should point out that the limits and the rigour (flexible, as Ginzburg suggests) of the evidential paradigm leap to the eye. But Ginzburg does not believe in any interpretation presented on a painting or a text; or we might add, on any clinical case whatsoever. He often analyses the limits of tests in his conjectures and interpretative insights. However, *“it is in the very relation between conjectures and refutations by means of successive experiments by which the tests of risked hypotheses may be glimpsed, without which knowledge would be impoverished”*.³⁰

When interpreting the discourse of the Other, it must also be taken into account just how much this Other accepts the said interpretation. Very often, it is true that the non-acceptance of the interpretation appears as resistance. But when this Other does not have an alternative to the interpretation proposed, we are always faced with the enigma of having... no interpretation. And here the most acute challenges to innovation occur for studies on human beings.

Martin Heidegger and Jacques Lacan showed how the very construction of observation is a long path in the direction of the word and language³¹.

²⁹ Reguera, Isidoro (2010). “Abby Warburg: Inventor del museo virtual”. In *El Pais, Babelia*, Madrid, n. 962, 01 maio. See also Didi-Huberman, Georges (2009). *La imagen superviviente*, Madrid: Editorial Abada.

³⁰ Sobral, Luis Felipe (2012). “No rastro de Piero”. In *Revista Brasileira de Ciências Sociais – RBCS*, São Paulo, v. 27 n. 79, p. 220.

³¹ Heidegger, Martin (2003). *A caminho da linguagem*, Petrópolis, RJ: Vozes. Berlinck, Manoel Tosta (2010). Op. Cit.

Remaining with Warburg and the painting “The Birth of Venus”, we may resume our path with European thought: the transformation of funeral *pathos* into erotic *pathos*.

“Páramo” deals with the nightmare of death. Guimarães Rosa was working on the tale (perhaps finishing it, who knows?) when he met his end through a sudden heart attack in 1967, three days after his acceptance to the Brazilian Academy of Letters (ABL) and after having postponed his entry for four years. The acceptance speech was entitled “The Verb and the Logos” and included the phrase “*We die to prove that we lived*”. A day after he was buried, Carlos Drummond de Andrade wrote the poem entitled “Um chamado João”³², concluding, “*Ficamos sem saber o que era João/ e se João existiu/ de se pegar*”³³. We are left with the play on “o que é o que é...”³⁴ and the question-answer that we propose: *O que é/ o que é/ não se pega/ e tem pegada?*³⁵.

Do respond, dear reader.

In the end, and to pass the time, while he was confined in that oppressive Baden-Baden, Joãozinho adored participating in this game of questions and answers.

Now in an opposite movement and in Bogota, Colombia, the Brazilian author may evoke the difficulties and sufferings of a young foreign character among the summits of the Andes, experiencing “death in life” in the terms of a foreigner’s undying anxiety (a Brazilian in Bogota?!). This is why we believe it is pertinent to study “Páramo” both in its Portuguese original and in the translation to Spanish. So as not to speak in the language of decimated ethnic groups, death at those mountain summits must be thought of minimally in Brazilian Portuguese with a touch of the Portuguese of Camões³⁶, enriched by oral neologisms taken as new words, and – finally – in Castilian. The translation to the latter was carried out by Bairon Oswaldo Vélez Escallon as late as 2011, through a connection of the South American integration and solidarity (im)posed by the present time. We seek the signs of what ends up being said and done in the foothills of the *Cordillera*, which serve as a kind of prison. Marks, clues, hints are “*symptoms of all that is repressed in the construction of the explanatory reports which aim to award the value of the literary that the imaginary incorporates into existence, guaranteeing its lack of refinement, that is to say, its*

³² Roughly equivalent to “A Man Named João”.

³³ “In the end we could not grasp who João was/ and if João existed/ to be grasped”

³⁴ This is how riddles are introduced in Portuguese. Andrade was thus suggesting the riddle of Guimarães Rosa’s elusive nature.

³⁵ “What grasps but cannot be grasped?”

³⁶ Poet Luís de Camões.

*survival*³⁷. It is no surprise that these foggy heights witness the revival of the anxiety and suffering experienced in Baden-Baden, Germany. The Germanic expression suggests the repeated symptom and the double, replicated. The double to which we refer is present in the walk during which the protagonist imagines something within him of an imperfect death, but projected from him and returning to him as a heavy weight to carry. This double is thus successively represented: it refers to a “man who resembles a corpse”. He is further described as a “man who looks like a corpse”, a “man with a corpse’s fluids”, a “man with the presence of a corpse”, a “man cold as a corpse”, a “man with the air of a corpse” and a “man with an element of the corpse-like”. All of these expressions appear during the tale as a reference, in (psychotic?) special psychological circumstances in which his double as replica emerges as a death impulse, at once fateful and invigorating. All of this chimes with the phrase uttered at the ABL entry ceremony: “*We die to prove that we lived*”. Here there is a connection between death and resurrection. In the tale, a Jewish doctor intervenes and saves the protagonist from an imminent and sad death. The reborn are defined as: “*every creature is a draft to be endlessly retouched, until they are liberated by the arcane*”³⁸.

After saying that there was something of a premonition in that city among the heights to which the character had just arrived, he does not hide “*that he felt dazzled by life’s sounds, by error after error, between past and future – darkness and mists – and the mechanistic world*”³⁹. Past, present and future were shuffled together; darkness (Hell), mists (paradise, taking the heavens as a metaphor); the present refers here to the mechanistic world when Guimarães Rosa speaks of the “resentful slumber of the ores”, a famous verse from the poem “The World Machine” by Carlos Drummond de Andrade. And there is more. For Silviano Santiago, the unexpected verse points to a revision of the tale made by Guimarães Rosa in 1948, hence in the second journey that the author and diplomat made to Bogota; this time accompanying minister João Neves da Fontoura to participate in the 4th Pan-American Conference. Let us consider Rosa’s text alongside Drummond’s poem: There in the hidden corners, in the hardness of stone and the weight of pride in the earth, is Hell located in the resentful slumber of the ores?⁴⁰ And then the

³⁷ Vélez Escallon, Bairon Oswaldo (2012). “Intrusões: Guimarães Rosa-Bogotá: notas para uma tradução de Páramo”. In *Revista Tussaji*, v. 1, p.68.

³⁸ See Santiago, Silviano (2012b). Op. Cit.

³⁹ Rosa, João Guimarães (2001a). “Páramo”. Op. Cit., p 264.

⁴⁰ *Ibidem*, p 265.

fragment of the poem: [...] *tudo que define o ser terrestre/ ou se prolonga até nos animais/ e chega às plantas para se embeber/ no sono rancoroso dos minérios,/ dá volta ao mundo e torna a se engolfar, /na estranha ordem geométrica de tudo [...].*⁴¹

This is when the famous *Bogotazo* occurs, a series of riots sparked by the assassination of the liberal leader and candidate for president of Colombia, Jorge Eliécer Gaitán, under the government of Mariano Ospina Pérez. Gaitán had been due to meet that afternoon with Cuban leaders Fidel Castro and Rafael del Pino to discuss the Latin American Youth Congress. Gaitán was expected to make the closing speech. Upon leaving his office, he was shot twice in the head and then in the chest with a pistol at 13:15 outside the building. Taken to a local hospital, he died from his wounds some minutes later. Due to the Pan-American event, there were not just many political leaders present, but also diplomats, journalists and newspaper correspondents. Among those was Antonio Callado, who was a member of the Brazilian delegation. Surprised at not having seen Guimarães Rosa during the *Bogotazo*, Callado interrogated him at the earliest opportunity, enquiring if he had not seen the riots. It was a terrible vision. The number of deaths might be compared with the story of Augusto Matraga. But Guimarães Rosa was unperturbed, responding: “*Now Callado, what I have to write is all in my head. I don’t need to see anything. I’ve already written a book and I’m writing others*”. Unsatisfied, Callado asked where he had been and what he had been doing. Guimarães Rosa did not hesitate: “*I’ve been re-reading Proust*”⁴².

The response is stupendous. It is Marcel Proust who, in literature, guides us along joyous paths of subjectivity: ah! the taste of the *madeleine*.

And in certain opposition complementary to the Proustian saga [...]

*[...] if Freud interprets associations of ideas by means of what is hidden in his own interior; Proust equally shows how a small word reveals hidden elements in a character’s psychology. The same, in this case, as involuntary memories. The memory of the madeleine dipped in a cup of tea which reminds the hero of an analogous moment in his adolescence, when he similarly dipped a Madeleine in his tea, produces the image of Combray. As Proust writes: Combray came out of my cup of tea. This is a phenomenon of association and an exploration of the unconscious by Proust*⁴³.

⁴¹ Andrade, Carlos Drummond de (2002). “A Máquina do Mundo”. In *Folha de São Paulo, Mais!*, 27 out, p. 20. English Translation: “all that defines earthly beings/ or is extended even to animals/ and falls to the plants to be soaked up/ in the resentful slumber of the ores,/ travels around the world and comes to swallow itself, /in the same geometric order of everything.

⁴² See Costa, Ana Luiza Martins (2006) . “Memória seletiva - Veredas de Viator”. In *Cadernos de Literatura Brasileira*, Rio de Janeiro: Instituto Moreira Salles, n. 20/21, p. 25

⁴³ Tadié, Jean-Yves (2012). *Le lac inconnu - entre Proust e Freud*, Paris: Gallimard.

However, only three days after arriving in the city, he was already undergoing a radical experience of de-subjection: sick at the heights, but not at sea; by altitude high up from sea level...; the insufferable cold, a diffuse and sombre fog which never lifted, an unrivalled predicament. He was not from there, he had no name, love or home. He asked himself: would there be a body?⁴⁴ He could not “*manage to see the transient rigour which awaited me, through my clan-destiny, in the misunderstood journey, in-via, and which was the absolute cross, life concluded, for beyond all of human conversation, a return to bitterness*”⁴⁵. It is true that this would occur not via common customs, but via the “customs of the soul”⁴⁶. He experienced in advance what Hamlet had described centuries earlier as “the dread of something after death/ the undiscovere’d country, from whose bourn/ No traveller returns”.

Yet this was not all. Not yet! There was still the final shot of misery which would come as a “*jab*”⁴⁷. The famous boxing punch known as a “jab” here phonetically recalls Job’s biblical suffering⁴⁸. Then very popular across Latin America, in one swoop boxing links love with a sport widespread among the population, the suffering which, in this particular case, is linked with the pleasure of the struggles of boxing, and the everyday ills in a society marked by heavy social inequality. Popular religiosity is associated with a religious perspective on destiny, and *pathos* is thus highlighted as the acceptance of the sacrifices imposed by God and by religion. And in the end, the “jab” comes as a lack of air, a suffering which gave him the sensation of suffocating from himself. The fear of the dissolution of the “Self”. Dizziness, panic, everything seemed to crumble.

II

And death is within life⁴⁹. A feeling does run through the text as a whole, however. It is resentment, which Nietzsche (1844-1900) qualified as the “worst of feelings”, perhaps because we feel it as a dual or double emotion through its force. More than this, resentment is experienced as a strange sacrifice which smells of the past which we were

⁴⁴ Rosa, João Guimarães (2001a). “Páramo”. Op. Cit., p. 263.

⁴⁵ Ibidem, p. 263.

⁴⁶ Ibidem, p. 266.

⁴⁷ Ibidem, p. 267.

⁴⁸ Guimarães Rosa refers to the punch as a ‘job’, rather than ‘jab’. ‘Jab’ originated from a Scottish variation on ‘job’, meaning to “strike”, “pierce”, or “thrust”.

⁴⁹ In allusion to a phrase by the poet Fernando Pessoa.

unable to overcome as a plight of destiny which heralds discord by means of a not-altogether conscious process.

The character believes that this affection has been produced by hate, although transferred to another era by a mysterious extra-natural transformation. Thus, by means of a kind of self-illusion, although, through ideology, one is transported from the “*streets and alleys, from low houses, from a single pavement, uneven rooftops with dark gutters, houses in black and ochre, or great manors, cloistered buildings...*”⁵⁰, to “*the same streets, in the capital of the New Kingdom, of the Ombudsmen, the Vice-Kings*”⁵¹, or, in other words, to the colonial capital. Colonialism serves as a vector for the accumulated hate which comes to be associated with an old indigenous woman, travelling on a Bogota tram⁵². The trams were the pride of the Colombian city, “*beautiful and comfortable, of an unburnt red and with a silver roof. The tramway was very long and extended as far as the city’s outer edges*”. Although she had undoubtedly been offended by something only she knew about it, the old indigenous woman became enraged, without anyone knowing why. At each imprecation, her tone was so morally scathing that the memory would be forever marked in the character’s mind.

*She smelt the volumes of the affront, chewed it. Her eyes shone, and she laughed like a hyena. She was a dusky, wrinkled and perverse creature, an indigenous woman with deep eyes. She then began her curses and verbal attacks. Her livid logic possessed the energy of perverse beings, she was unforgiving. Her proclamations were uttered vociferously, with an unfocused tone, vileness and evil and abhorrent formulations, ceaselessly. For almost an hour, almost as long as the journey itself. Nobody dared look at her, she was the mouth to a channel by which more hate entered the world. The mad hurt, they despair. And then she alighted, disappeared, with a long shadow. That woman will stay with me forever. That hurts*⁵³.

The description is beyond harrowing. The woman expresses an unchecked rage unheard of in those climes; with a tone which is at once astonishing, marvellous and disconcerting. There was something extraordinary in that woman, something magical, something of an incontrollable, irascible outburst.

⁵⁰ Ibidem, p. 263.

⁵¹ Ibidem, P. 274.

⁵² Ibidem, p. 274.

⁵³ Ibidem.

Now, this behavior was not the protagonist's style, introspective in his isolation, although not private of conscience and reflection. But it is true that those enchanting trams, "of an unburnt red and with a silver roof", were the target of the city's fury during the Bogotazo riots. Many vehicles were burnt in high bluish-orange flames in a spectacle of rare and sinister beauty. Such was the mark of these trams, the trademark of imperialism amalgamated with colonialism, of resentment marked by the brutal exploration of peoples' Work by Capital. Those beautiful and comfortable trams, which marked an explosive upheaval by the miserable and working classes, were finally removed from circulation and later disappeared to be substituted by other means of transport.

Another terrible episode which suggests that the character's memory alludes to "Páramo" and which also refers to a central feminine figure, is the news of a woman being buried alive; a piece of news which seems to be adrift in the text, but which we shall interpret in a complementary fashion to the previous item. If for the former, we began with the original before moving on to the translation, here we shall begin with the translation to Spanish and move on to the original in Portuguese. It was the Colombian and Bogotan translator Bairon Oswaldo Vélez Escalón who first discovered this curious text by the author Cordovez Moure⁵⁴ offering an extreme example of cruelty. But let us first consider the original text in Spanish, a chronicle from 1899, entitled "Custody or the Walled Woman":

Not enough had been demolished to glimpse what existed at the back of that hollow, what came – the horror of it! – was a mummy partially wrapped in a disgusting shroud on top of a bed of excrement and among thousands of white worms which jumped around everywhere. The most disgusting of all in the repulsive spectacle was that it was in some way related to the human species, it made weak movements with its hands in a begging motion, imploring for compassion and conducting all of the pitiful and tender glances with unlit yet expressive eyes, from which flowed heavy tears⁵⁵.

Now we shall we consider the narrative according to Guimarães Rosa:

Here, many years ago, it is known that a woman, through some mysterious illness, kept a little girl walled in the darkness of a cubicle in her home, after having mutilated her various ways, slowly and atrociously. By means of a portal, she fed her crumbs of rotten food, and to drink, a minimal quantity of dirty water. There was no reason for this. And yet, when, at the end of a few months, she was discovered by chance, and the victim was released – the remains of what once had been a human being removed from the darkness and from a pile of vermin and her own excrement – the other woman's hate increased further⁵⁶.

⁵⁴ Cordovez-Moure, José Maria (1962). *Reminiscencias de Santa Fé y Bogotá*, Madrid: Aguillar.

⁵⁵ To see the quotation in Spanish *apud* Vélez Escalón, Bairon Oswaldo (2012). *Op. Cit.*, p. 67.

⁵⁶ Rosa, João Guimarães (2001a). "Páramo". *Op. Cit.*, p. 275.

What is the purpose of an obscene story like this if not to offer a glimpse of light that, as a symptom, would refer to other reminiscences?

The chronicle then goes on to say what the protagonist is reminded of: being walled in as a prisoner in custody (remembering Baden-Baden).

However, allow us to interpret in this “dog-eat-dog world/bizarre planet” chronicle the news of the barbarity of Nazism, especially against Jews (but not exclusively), which were being reported to shock around the globe. Hadn’t much of this barbarity been experienced by the author at close range while he was a diplomat in Germany? The imaginary *phantasmagoried* in its entirety [...] And we have just used a significant expression, a neologism which Guimarães Rosa would soon come to use. Some other neologisms also appear in order to suggest fear and the gloominess associated with death: *lugubrúvio*, *gelinvérnico*, *estranhifício*, *passadidade*, *clã-destino*, *discordioso*, *entreconsciente*⁵⁷.

And for the third time, it is a woman who appears on the character’s horizon, and not just any woman, but the very one that loved him. He knew from the handwriting on the small envelope. He received the letter at home, when one day he arrived exhausted by the implacable persecution of his double. “*In spite of everything, sadly I had to call it home*”.⁵⁸ A passage from the letter says: “[...] *sometimes I think of you, as though of someone who is very dear, but who has already died [..]*”.⁵⁹

Along the way emerged a singular and unique happiness. He bought a book for next to nothing and it then come to be known as *The Book*. It was probably a book of poetry. He had bought it in the first place to fill the tedious time he was experiencing, imagining that it might prove of use to him at some point. He later began to consider it almost as an object of salvific devotion, an amulet. From then on, he carried it around with him, without daring to read it. He carried it closed like a pledge, a hostage. Something mysterious was hidden within it.

⁵⁷ English approximations or explanations are as follows: “lugubrúvio”: a torrent of lugubriousness, “gelinvérnico”: the meaning of this term is unknown, “estranhifício”: “strangefice”, “passadidade”: “pastness”, “clã-destino”: “clan-destiny”, “discordioso”: discordful, “entreconsciente” – “interconscious”.

⁵⁸ Rosa, João Guimarães (2001a). “Páramo”. Op. Cit., p. 273.

⁵⁹ Ibidem.

III

The poet and novelist Jules Laforgue (1860-1867) wrote in French although he was born in Montevideo, and said the following of painter Arnold Böcklin (1827-1901): “*On reste stupéfait de cette unité dans le rêve, / de cet aveuglement dans le fantastique, / de ce naturel impeccable dans le surnaturel*”⁶⁰. And the two paintings – “A Ilha dos Mortos” [Isle of the Dead] and “Vita Somnium Breve” – referred to explicitly in “Páramo” are by Arnold Böcklin.

The Swiss painter was born and died in Basel and studied painting at the Dusseldorf Academy. He also spent time in Paris, Rome and Florence. For our interests, Böcklin was inspired by elements of nature present in the paintings of fifteenth and sixteenth-century Northern European painters such as Salomon von Ruysdael, Albrecht Dürer and Mateus Grünewald, and sought to link them with the themes of German Romanticism. This produced paintings such as 1880’s “Isle of the Dead”, one of his best-known works, and which he characterised as “an image to dream by”, even though the name by which the painting is known was given to it by an art dealer. All of these features, reinforced by the elements Böcklin took from the Symbolist movement in France, contributed to the influence exerted on Expressionist and Surrealist painters such as Salvador Dalí and Giorgio de Chirico. Böcklin’s work was developed in Basel and in Munich, and he was also involved in mural painting (such as the stairs of the Kunstmuseum in Basel) and portraits (such as of actress Jenny Jauschek). Some of his works may be found in the most renowned museums in Germany (Berlin, Munich), Switzerland (Basel) and the United States (New York).

In the first painting “*to the phantasmagoric and strangely painful mass of cypress trees [...] [...] goes the canoe with the obscure seated rower [...]*”⁶¹. It may be noted that the tomb-like cliffs are strongly lit by a source among the broken rocks. And under this strong light (where might it come from?) is a tall and erect figure wrapped in a white shroud indicating the entrance of the dead man in the mansion of the dead. He is carried in the canoe by the rower, where the light does not reach. The painting, as the author says,

⁶⁰ Translation from the French: “*One is stupefied by this unity in the dream, / of this bewilderment in the fantastic, / of the impeccable natural in the supernatural*”.

⁶¹ Ibidem, p. 271.

records a mixture of the “*intense black of the eucalyptus trees, their evocation of embalming, the particles of those scents*”⁶².

The light-dark tones are admirably combined in the painting, provoking a strong emotional impact. The waters in which the rower travels are dark, as are the sky and the clouds, as well as the stain of cypress trees. The mausoleums are light yellow per se, lending us the impression of “life” in the kingdom of the dead.

In the second painting, two small, naked children play on the green patch of grass by the side of a tomb. In the background is mausoleum with two highlighted figures. In the eyes of the character who is thinking of the painting, it serves as “*the remembrance of its melancholy masterpiece*”⁶³. It is not one of the artist’s masterpieces, but it is a masterpiece on melancholy, which justifies it. The master seems to be melancholia itself.

Arnold Böcklin’s images reach the protagonist in a state of drowsiness, torpor and sleepiness. They represent the fearful hours of the night when he is prisoner to insomnia. In both works, we may detect an *archaeology of pathos* referring to a “*dilated present in which the past grows before us and the future consists of a vision of the past by means of a perspective already seen in Warburg*”.⁶⁴ For this author, it is worth recalling that the pathetic forms (*pathosformel*) “*condensed figures and gestures, content and expressions, carrying primitive emotions and affections which might break with historic continuity in manifesting something at once original, new and the return to the repetition of the past*”⁶⁵. Didi-Huberman calls him a “historian at the edge of the abyss”⁶⁶ and Warburg calls himself a “seismograph of the soul”.

⁶² Ibidem.

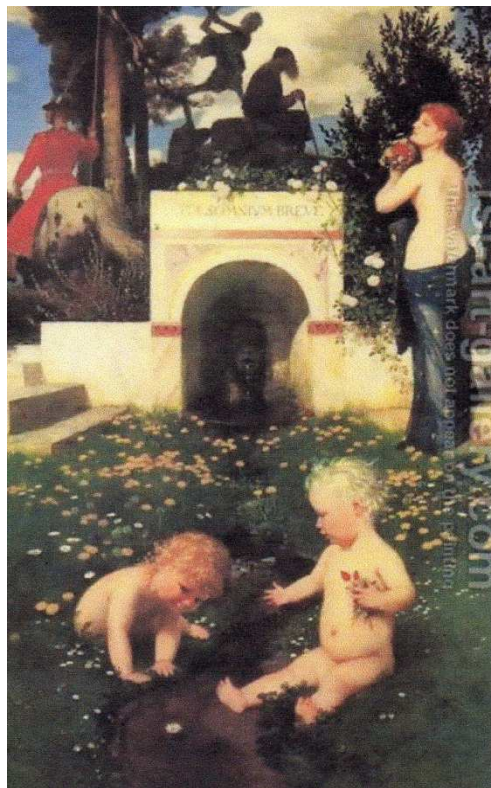
⁶³ Ibidem, p 273.

⁶⁴ Didi-Huberman, Georges *apud* Schollhammer, Karl Erik (2012). Op. Cit., p. 5.

⁶⁵ Schollhammer, Karl Erik (2012). Op. Cit., p. 5.

⁶⁶ Didi-Huberman., Georges. (2009). Op. Cit.

Arnold Böcklin (1827-1901) "Isle of the Dead"



Arnold Böcklin - *Vita Somnium Breve*

The way in which Arnold Böcklin's painting suggestively enters "Páramo" is worthy of a brief digression.

In 1897, Sigmund Freud was to join the teaching body at the University of Vienna's Faculty of Medicine. The process, however, was suspended for four long years at the Ministry of Culture due to the suspicion that Freud suffered from that old prejudice – perhaps anti-Semitic – and that there was a need for some kind of personal intervention at the ministry. Freud first went to Elise Gomperz, who had been a patient of his for fifteen years. She was the wife of Theodor Gomperz, the famous classical liberal thinker. It is interesting to recall that Sigmund Freud, while a student, translated Stuart Mill's essay "The Subjection of Woman" to German for the Germanic edition of a collection of Mill's work which was being organised by Theodor Gomperz. Gomperz was not personally involved however and his wife's intervention did not produce practical results. Freud worked arduously on the interpretation of the reasons for which he had been prevented from joining the university teaching body. He valued merit and sought an explanation inside himself, rather than in the Other. When he disconnected the request from the subject's autonomy and submission⁶⁷, he dared to fulfill and feed his desire; to ask for it. Freud thus sought protection from Baroness Marie Ferstel. She was a diplomat's wife and the daughter-in-law of Heinrich Ferstel, who had constructed the new university. The baroness mediated the relationship with the then-Minister of Culture, Von Harte, in Vienna. She was also analysed by Freud, acted quickly and entered into contact with Von Hartel. Upon making the request, she promised in exchange a painting by Arnold Böcklin for the "Modern Gallery" which was soon to be inaugurated and was Von Hartel's passion. This artist "*was accepted by the traditionalists as a classic realist and revered by the Secessionists as a pioneer of modernity, for his paintings linked to life and death*"⁶⁸. He served as a bridge between the groups he supported and those who rejected the painter Gustav Klimt. Arnold Böcklin's paintings undoubtedly fulfilled a political role. With the process still underway, the baroness was not able to acquire the dreamed-of painting and when the appointment was finally published by the emperor in March 1902, another

⁶⁷ See Schorske, Carl (1989). *Viena fin de siècle: política e cultura*, São Paulo: Companhia das Letras. Especially chapter IV "Política e Parricídio" ("Politics and patricide"), p. 179-201.

⁶⁸ See Schorske, Carl (1989). Op. Cit., p.235.

painting by Emil Orlik substituted the promised Böcklin. Orlik was one of the most conservative of Secessionist painters⁶⁹.

Freud learnt the news first hand from the baroness, who had been quickly informed by the minister. The interesting aspect is just how much Arnold Böcklin demonstrated the issue of life or death which was certainly intensely experienced by Freud due to his realisation of the desire to be a university professor and in relation to the figure of the father. The reference to Böcklin in “Páramo” is thus transformed into a powerful metaphor for desire and the ethics which it entails.

IV

Guimarães Rosa once said that “*stories do not want to be history*”⁷⁰, undoubtedly to mark the imaginary as a trait present in tales or novels, for example. He went on to say: “*books may be worth a lot due to what they cannot hold*”⁷¹.

Literary text and historic context influence each other in a reciprocal relationship, but are not reduced to one another. Jacques Lacan’s proposal is that reality results in the RSI trio (the Real, the Symbolic and the Imaginary). These three registers are related to each other like three interlinked hoops in which a bond broken between one hoop and another undoes all of the bonds and hoops and frees the links between them. We must, however, remember that reality is not the same as the Real⁷².

We must therefore highlight that text is not exhausted in the context. However, we might seek in the text features and traces of context, and vice versa for both of the circumstances. Perhaps, at a push, we might speak of something like present historical subjectivity, of story and history, so to speak, present in the historian’s task as an ever unobtainable goal.

Suffocation, being walled in, anxiety, death in life, exile and banishment all speak of the protagonist’s subjective experience and also seem to echo the volume of poetry

⁶⁹ Ibidem, ibidem.

⁷⁰ See the author’s Preface entitled “Aletria e Hermenêutica”. In Rosa, João Guimarães (2001b). *Tutaméia (terceiras estórias)*, Rio de Janeiro: Nova Fronteira, p. 29.

⁷¹ Ibidem, p. 40.

⁷² Quinet, Antonio (1995). “O espelho e o quadro”, ver “O imaginário: narciso e o espelho”. In *Imagem Rainha* (parte I), EBP, Rio de Janeiro: Sete Letras.

entitled “Death’s Return” by Tomás Vargas Osório (1908 – 1941) published in 1939 in the “Notes on Stone and Sky”, as suggested by Vélez Escalón⁷³.

Let us consider this fragment:

*[...] ¿De qué trémula linda
retorno, el corazón maravillado?
¿Qué boscajes ilímites me dieron
la fresca miel de sus rumores blandos?
¿Qué pájaros quebraron en mi oído
sus divinos cristales encantados?
-¿Viajero, de dónde vienes que así sonrías callado?
¿Qué canción escucharon tus oídos, qué fruto gustaron tus labios?
¡Ah, que no era el reinado de la larva obscuro, yerto y hórrido! Que no
era el negro paraíso del gusano, sino una deleitosa primavera!
Libre de ceño adusto y descarnada sonrisa horrible, era la muerte bella
como la esposa deseada que a una pasión más pura nos convierte
[...]*⁷⁴.

And, at the end of the poem:

*[...]¿Viajero, de dónde vienes, que así sonrías callado? ¿Qué canción
escucharon tus oídos, qué fruto gustaron tus labios?
-Vengo de la Comarca de la Muerte donde el rostro de Dios iluminado
se reflejó en mi corazón suspenso, por yelo y fuego suyos rescatado
[...]*⁷⁵

Interestingly for us, a glimpse of hope sustains this return of death, which is no more than imagined resurrection. Is this not what the character from “Páramo” ends up sustaining?

We believe that we can read “Páramo” from the point of view of the disquieting strangeness experienced by the protagonist, a foreigner and a clandestine, intrusive outsider to the territory of those heights. This is why we have considered the dialogue between the translation in Spanish and the tale in Portuguese. We are focusing on the reception of writing which is full of neologisms and new words invented by Guimarães

⁷³ Vélez Escalón, Bairon Oswaldo (2012). Op. Cit., p. 65.

⁷⁴ Osório, Tomás Vargas (2008). *Regreso de la muerte*, Bucaramanga: Dirección Cultural, p. 27-33. [...] Translated from the Spanish: “[...] From what shimmering border/do I return, marvelled heart?/Which limitless groves gave me/the fresh honey of their soft rumours?/Which birds broke in my ears/their enchanted divine crystals/-Traveller, where are you from with your silent smile?/What song have your ears heard, what fruit have your lips tasted?/Ah, if only it were not the reign of the dark, stale and horrid larva! If only/it were not the dark paradise of the worm, but/instead a delightful spring!/Free of dark frowns and horrible, stark smiles, it was the beautiful death/like the wife desired, that converted us to a purer passion [...]”

⁷⁵ Translated from the Spanish: “[...] Traveller, where are you from with your silent smile? What song/have your ears heard, what fruit have your lips tasted?/I am from the Region of Death where God’s illuminated face/was reflected in my suspended heart, rescued from his ice and fire [...]”

Rosa, as well as words in other languages and some anachronisms. There are also other non-phonetic signs to be received by the translator. Bairon Oswaldo Vélez Escallon, in fact, felt honoured as he was Colombian and from Bogota, but did not always recognise his Bogota in “Páramo”. The author thus has to deal with a certain ambivalence present in any foreigner which some wish to welcome and not turn back any more. A reproduction of the considerations made by Vélez Escallon at the end of his reflections published in *Tusaaji - A Translation Review* magazine, in Toronto, Canada is pertinent at this point.

*The intruder introduces themselves by force, by surprise or by cunning; in any case, without the right and without having been admitted beforehand. The **foreigner** always has something of the intruder, as without it he would lose his foreignness. [...] This is what we are thinking of and must therefore practice: if not, the **foreigner's** foreignness is reabsorbed before he has crossed the threshold, and it is no longer about it. Receiving the **foreigner** must certainly also be about experiencing his intrusion [...] [A certain] moral correction supposes receiving the **foreigner**, erasing his foreignness at the threshold: it therefore claims not to have admitted him absolutely. But the **foreigner** insists, and is introduced. It is not easy to admit, nor perhaps to conceive of⁷⁶.*

Now we shall substitute the word “foreigner” every time it appears with “death”:

*The intruder introduces themselves by force, by surprise or by cunning; in any case, without the right and without having been admitted beforehand. **Death** always has something of the intruder, as without it, he would lose his foreignness. [...] This is what we are thinking of and must therefore practice: if not, **death's** foreignness is reabsorbed before he has crossed the threshold, and it is no longer about him. Receiving **death** must certainly also be about experiencing his intrusion [...] [A certain] moral correction supposes receiving **death**, erasing his foreignness at the threshold: it therefore claims not to have admitted him absolutely. But **death** insists, and is introduced. It is not easy to admit, nor perhaps to conceive of.*

“Foreigner” and “death” are somewhat equivalent, and key to the issue at hand. Death always appears as an intruder; we do not wish for it, we do not want it. But it is invasive and imposes itself through its exteriority. Freud refers to this as *Das Unheimlich* which Paulo Cesar de Souza⁷⁷ has translated as “the disquieting strange”. The ambivalence with which the Hispanic translation receives a foreign text such as “Páramo” is the same as that with which each reader receives the experience of de-subjectivation experienced by the protagonist as “imperfect death”. For Marco Casanova, translator of *Zorn und Zeit* by Peter Sloterdijk, and following the etymological sense of the word:

⁷⁶ Nancy, Jean-Luc (2006). *El Intruso*, Buenos Ayres: Amorrortu, p. 11-13 *apud* Vélez Escalón, Oswaldo Bairon (2012). *Op.Cit.*, p. 71.

⁷⁷ Paulo Cesar de Souza translated Freud's works for Companhia das Letras, São Paulo.

[...] *humheinlich* refers to that which does not (un-) belong to the birthland (*Heim*), that in which we do not feel at home. For this reason, the term also spans the meaning of something unknown, lugubrious and disquieting, like something huge, giant. To preserve the richness of this term in its most original expression, we have chosen the word 'monstrous' because it also describes the experience of a confrontation with something extraordinary and embraces some of the meaningful nuances of the original⁷⁸.

This invasive character of "imperfect death", loyal to Guimarães Rosa's expression, has something of the monstrous about it. The experience of this death belongs to the deep experience of suffering which never ends, but which suddenly changes and is transformed into the most genuine of joys.

While this does not occur, there is anxiety. For Elias Canetti, "*hypochondria is the mute exchange between anxiety and anxiety, to distract oneself, seek and find names*"⁷⁹. However, for Manoel Berlinck, the "disquieting strange" appears in the clinic as "surprising obscure". And a certain relationship with this "surprising obscure" distances "objective knowledge, as well as distancing intuitive knowledge and knowledge through mystic fusion. Knowledge as a neutral, according to the author, presumes a strange *relationship* with all of the requirements of identity and unity, or even presence". Thus, [...]

[...] *to relate to the surprising obscure without unveiling it means precisely that the enigmatic in the neutral does not belong to the light. It belongs to a 'region' alien to it, the discovery made and in the light. The surprising obscure does not fall into one's gaze without however being hidden from the gaze: not even visible, not even invisible, or, more precisely, deviating from all that is visible and all that is invisible. The surprising obscure, that to which the clinic awakens us, is much more unpredictable than the future might be, even the 'unpredicted future', as, just like death, it escapes all apprehension, except speaking, but while the latter is not an apprehension, is not a capturing. The key to the clinical is thus: speak of the surprising obscure, embrace it in speaking, keeping it dark is the very act of not apprehending it, not understanding it, is refusing to identify it by means of this 'objective' capturing which is vision, which captures it, although distancing it. Living with the surprising obscure in front of you (which also means: living in front of the dark and in front of yourself as dark) is to enter this responsibility of speech which speaks without exercising any form of power, including this power we exert when we look, as, by looking, we maintain on our horizon and in our circle of vision – in the visible/invisible dimension – this and that which is front of us. To clinic is to connect yourself without a connection to the surprising and dangerous obscure, to the clinical case based in therapy and in psychopathological research⁸⁰.*

⁷⁸ See the translation by Marco Casanova of *Zorn und Zeit* by Peter Sloterdijk, São Paulo: Estação Liberdade, 2012. Especialmente p. 11 nota 1 do tradutor.

⁷⁹ Canetti, Elias Canetti (1988). *O outro processo (as cartas de Kafka a Félice)*, Rio de Janeiro: Espaço e Tempo, 1988. Ver ainda Zischler, Hanns (2005). *Kafka vai ao cinema*, Rio de Janeiro: JZE

⁸⁰ Berlinck, Manoel Tosta (2012). "O Neutro". In *Tempo Psicanalítico*, Rio de Janeiro, v. 44, n. 1, p. 183-199.

In the terms proposed by J. Lacan and in allusion to the clinic in intention (*intención*) versus the clinic in extension (*extensión*), might we say that a literary tale such as “Páramo” solicits of us as it connects us, without a connection, to the surprising and dangerous obscure of de-subjectivation as imperfect death?⁸¹

But we must remember that the *Annales* School proposed an approximation between *pathos* and *ethos* at the beginning of the twentieth century through the use of anthropology and sociology (Durkheim) and collective psychology (Charles Blondel). In “The Historian’s Craft”, Marc Bloch assures us of “*the taste for the strange and the voluptuousness of singular things which mobilises historical research and configures itself as a search for the Other within ourselves*”⁸².

*History [...] has its own aesthetic joys, which do not resemble those of any other discipline. The spectacle of human activities which forms its specific object is greater than any other deed for seducing man’s imagination. Especially when, thanks to its distancing in time or in space, its unfolding adorns itself with subtle deductions of the strange (...). We protect ourselves from removing from our science its element of poetry. We protect ourselves, above all, I have surprised some with this feeling, blushing about this. It would be a frightening absurdity to believe that, by exerting on sensitivity such a strong appeal, it should be less capable of also satisfying our intelligence*⁸³.

V

Feelings and words are multiplied to account for this “unconscious emotion”⁸⁴ involving an unknown funereal world of which you, however, cannot conceive. It is a dramatic contradiction, in which:

*Everyone punishes themselves. It is terrible to be dead, the way I know I am sometimes – in another way. With this absence of soul. I have difficulty breathing; the cold undoes me. It is like being in the prison of a mirror. A mirror in which my eyes collapse. The mirror which is just so “cislucid”⁸⁵. A mirror below zero*⁸⁶.

⁸¹ Cerqueira Filho, Gisálio (2006). Op. Cit.

⁸² Cerqueira, Marcelo Neder (2012). *História da Memória, Tradição Oral e Vídeo História: reflexões metodológicas*, PPGH/ICHF-UFF, Niterói. Mimeo.

⁸³ Bloch, Marc (2002). A Apologia da História ou o Ofício do Historiador, Rio de Janeiro: Zahar, p. 44 *apud* Cerqueira, Marcelo Neder (2012). Op. Cit., p. 28.

⁸⁴ Freud, S. (1996). “O Inconsciente”. In: *História do Movimento Psicanalítico*, trad. Jayme Salomão, Rio de Janeiro: Imago, v. 14, p. 165.

⁸⁵ “Cislucid”, a direct translation of Guimarães Rosa’s neologism, “cislúcido” would appear to contrast to “translucid” or “translucent” by use of the Latin prefix “cis” meaning “before”, while “trans” refers to the “opposite side” or “beyond”.

⁸⁶ Rosa, João Guimarães (2001a). “Páramo”. Op. Cit., p. 276.

Sometimes, however, we should be attentive to the absoluteness of solitude. It was not just circumstances and the experience of prison at those heights. It was more than that, it was the intensely-lived feeling of the tearing of the “Self”.

Among those which were mine, which had been in another time, so recently, something of mine – relatives, friends, companions, acquaintances – they were elsewhere, immensely in not, in nothing, immensely long, I had thought they were lost. And everything seemed like forever, trans much, behind through. I know that it was death – early death – an immobile and sad genius with an unlit torch turned to the ground, and in the hourglass, the slow turning of time; and, me, the sad boy that the night caressed⁸⁷.

Despite this, the hypothesis of overcoming may not be completely discarded. This is why the encouragement encounters “*under drizzling rain (...) a small priest, a little man, under a huge umbrella and dressed in a cassock (...) who, in his madness, only uses enormous objects. And shouted: Y olé y olé!*”⁸⁸ A funeral procession followed him, which in the imagination, would be composed of:

[...] thin-lipped confessors; the widow of the ravages; the assimilated horseman, the boy friar who cannot forget the woman he loves (...) the perpetually condemned prisoner in a dark prison; the men who collect the dead bodies of queens and princesses in the “podridero” of El Escorial⁸⁹; “o fabricôco de capuz”⁹⁰.

Not without reason, he proceeds to project a strong image: “*(...) I paint that of Tarot card XII, the hanged man – the voluntary sacrifice, generator of strength, this is who represents me*”. Tarot card XII contains complex symbolism, showing the image of a man suspended by one of his feet, tied to a wooden beam, supported between two trees, and each with six chopped branches referring to the material world. The most striking of all is the figure’s reflective air, which is always present in all of the card’s representations. The man has not been hanged by the neck, but rather by the foot, and keeps his eyes open, and in one swoop, breaks the sinister death by hanging. This produces the hesitation between the Tarot readers. See below Tarot card XII: the Hanged Man.

⁸⁷ Ibidem, p.269.

⁸⁸ Ibidem, p. 275

⁸⁹ “Podridero” is another of Guimarães Rosa’s neologisms, perhaps a Portuguese approximation of the Spanish “pudridero”, which is a decaying chamber. The Royal Seat of San Lorenzo de El Escorial is a historical residence of the King of Spain in San Lorenzo de el Escorial, Spain. The residence’s “pudrideros” may only be visited by monks. The remains of the deceased are placed in a small leaden urn, and after 50 years are transferred to marble sepulchers, when complete decomposition is thought to have taken place.

⁹⁰ Ibidem, p. 275. “Fabricôco” is another of Guimarães Rosa’s neologisms. It seems to refer to “farricoco” which is Portuguese for a pallbearer, which, when added to “de capuz” might be appropriated as “the hooded pallbearer”.



Tarot readers' interpretations vary: for some, the card is always negative, as it suggests a period of inertia or of hesitation. It also reveals attachment to pre-conceived ideas, and a distorted vision of things. There are, however, positive readings suggesting that the card refers to a period of reflection, or a time of recollection necessary to new definitions of destiny. This positive sense seems richer. Instead of death by the expected suffocation from hanging, the meaning is inverted in the reading of the card, just as the hanging figure is inverted. Placing the head below and not above, or turning the head things to the bottom may suggest both the loss of prestige in thinking and the need to look from another angle. In this sense, the distorted vision seen as a problem by the negative reading of the card may be positive by means of a new way of seeing it. (In my opinion) this reading better represents Rosa's text⁹¹.

⁹¹ Pereira, Maria Luiza Scher (2007). "O Exílio em "Paramo" de Guimarães Rosa: dilaceramento e superação". In *Psicanálise & Barroco – Revista de Psicanálise*, v.5, n.1, p. 18.

VI

“O samba é meu dom / É no samba / que eu quero morrer, / de baquetas nas mãos”⁹². Is this not the artist’s last wish? And the intellectual’s? Guimarães Rosa was the protagonist of this hidden side of the desire, but the character of “Páramo” is unable to, as after all, it was about “imperfect death”. The drumsticks are for the last beats of the Samba like the enigmatic book and the last reading consequently corresponds to the final breaths.

The character seems to ensure truthfulness to a redivivus Karl Marx. The thinker, philosopher and student of Political Economics had said that all of the dead generations seem to oppress the brains of the alive like a nightmare. Such is the feeling experienced by the protagonist at the heights of the Andes mountain range and for which the fog, wind, altitude, thin air and the anxiety of solitude compete. He would however become accustomed to such suffering. He sobbed, frequently. The Jewish doctor who treated him had expected this, as an effect of the *soroche*. He also said to him that, under the circumstances, it would be better not to hold in his tears, and that he should cry and walk around, taking small steps. This was to help him up at those heights. So he did as requested, and in spite of everything, if he still was not accustomed to the experience, he thought of the possibility of “*considering the matter closed, achieving an unshadowing*”⁹³. But hope would not let him. Not that! And unexpectedly, ever since the notion had been applied that a dead man cannot fear future adversities, but merely die even more... that was when he saw the guiding star, *his* guiding star. How does hope emerge? He would suffer still, but he had hope...⁹⁴. Doesn’t the Lacanian impossible of the Real appear at this point? During one of the spontaneous crying fits which always lessened the feeling of oppression on his heart, he took the form of a ghost, as his tears fell ceaselessly from his eyes and ran down his face and mouth abundantly. Suddenly he was spared from greater constraints. A small fuss of people, interrogatory questions and chatter showed that a funeral procession was coming down the middle of the road.

The opportunity to cry without shame or fear thus presented itself, as around 20 people were participating in this kind of funeral procession, with four carrying the small

⁹² Neves, Wilson das; Pinheiro, Paulo e Cesar (1996). “O samba é o meu dom”. In *Toque de Prima*, Rio de Janeiro: Velas. Faixa 12. English translation: “Samba is my gift/It’s in Samba/that I want to die,/with drumsticks in my hands”.

⁹³ Rosa, João Guimarães (2001a). “Parámo”. Op.Cit., p. 277.

⁹⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 277

coffin. But, in order to be discrete, he slipped in “*right at the back, after everyone, like a dog*”⁹⁵. Not a purebred dog, but one of those mutts which appear when we least expect them.

He represented the scene as a whole like “one of Goya’s *caprichos*”.⁹⁶ *Los Caprichos* refer to around eighty etchings by the Spanish painter Francisco Goya, serving as a strong satire on Spanish society at the end of the eighteenth century. And in some way, he was a part of that: differently dressed as he was, they were soon going to notice that he was a foreigner, from a different social class, without a hat and carrying a book. The protagonist absorbs all of the circumstances. “*Now, I cry for me, I cry for me because I am dead, (I cry) for all the dead and the buried [...]*”.

The presence of the protagonist in this walk, which, finally arrives at the Central Cemetery, ends up returning him his full conscience. Suddenly, in a fraction of a second, he is wide awake, and we notice him wanting to escape “*insaluto hospite*”⁹⁷. He then decides to slip off and thus defines the cemetery in which he arrives:

*The place where I had come to hide, my flight, was a closed area between the stones of a building and cypress trees, almost like a nest, just the necessary space, leaves and mausoleum stones, in an oblique light, and in short, peace. Everything there lost its external and human sense, even if I could have read the names of those buried there, timeworn as they were. No voices, no sounds. Yes, I had retreated to a sacred asylum, and I felt relief, nirvana, a taste of the end*⁹⁸.

We may presume that the tale has reached an end. The *imperfect death*, in the form of an endless anxiety, has formed a peculiar *pathos*. How was it that he felt calm? The final vision recalls Arnold Böcklin and his insular painting: the stones, the cypress trees in neat rows, the stone mausoleum, the light source. Might have Euripides been right when he said, “*It would not surprise me, in fact, if it was true: maybe life is a death, and death is a life?*”⁹⁹.

We are, in fact, faced with an anti-climax. He might just stay there, “at an infinite ease, unperturbed by men”¹⁰⁰. The protagonist then decides that the moment will come to open the book that he has brought with him and that, up to that point, he has not even

⁹⁵ Ibidem, p. 285

⁹⁶ Ibidem, p. 286.

⁹⁷ Rosa, João Guimarães (2001a). “Parámo”. Op.Cit., p. 287. Latin for leaving in hurry without saying goodbye to the host.

⁹⁸ Ibidem, p. 287.

⁹⁹ A quotation from Plato in *The Georgics* preceding Parámo.

¹⁰⁰ Ibidem, p. 288.

been able to leaf through. A book which he bought for almost nothing, mere cents. It was time to open it. What secret did it hold inside? What message did destiny have waiting for him? He considered all of this eagerly, but ends up resolutely saying: no... not yet; he would do better; he would make the sacrifice and abandon it. All of this without reading even one page. And that is what he did. He released the volume from the care of Böcklin's imagination, and left it in the shade of a dark green cypress tree and a funereal slab. He was finally ready to leave through the gate of the cemetery.

At this exact moment, one of the members of the funeral procession appeared, a man, who was "*tall, thin, young and with a flat and decided air*".¹⁰¹ The dialogue may be summarised by little less than a crucial enquiry: "*Sir, you've lost something...*"¹⁰². And it must be the book. Now, in spite of everything, the book was there, like a sphinx observing him. The character randomly opens the book and, surprisingly ...

[]
[]
[]

There is nothing written in Rosa's work. What follows is a blank space, which the author had not yet filled. The final phrases are: "*(...) I went back to what I did not even know was life or death. To suffering, always. Until the final moment, which apart from it, who knows?*"

The mystery of the book shall persist forever. What might the book be? Which page was open? Which fragment would be read in the Central Cemetery? Was this space left blank because Guimarães Rosa had no time to conclude and complete it, due to sudden death? Or the author intended to put an end to the suspense by allowing the reader to fill this lunar space. Is the book a blank notebook?

This ever-mysterious book may certainly be worth a lot due to what did not fit into it...

However, we shall return to the Plato quotation Euripides makes in *The Georgics*: "*it would not surprise me, in fact, if it were true: who knows if life is a death, and death is a life?*"

The *Georgics* are a set of four books written by Virgil (70 BC – 19 BC), each of them with around 500 verses. And it is Virgil himself who makes an indirect reference in the *Georgics* which many scholars have suggested refers to Lucretius (99 BC – 55 BC) and

¹⁰¹ Ibidem, p. 289.

¹⁰² Ibidem, ibidem.

the volume “On the Nature of Things” which he authored¹⁰³: “*Felix, qui portuit rerum cognoscere causas Atque metus omnis et inexorable fatum Subiecit pedibus strepitunque Acherontis avari*”¹⁰⁴.

Acheron may provide a clue to the final conclusion. It refers to one of the rivers of the “underworld” which both Virgil and Lucretius use as a symbol of life after death¹⁰⁵.

On 17 July 1899, Freud wrote in a letter to his friend and confidant Fleiss that he had chosen the motto, or in other words, the opening quotation, for his book “The Interpretation of Dreams” which would be published at the beginning of the twentieth century and would revolutionise scientific thought and even the social history of culture, especially that of the West¹⁰⁶. The quotation was the Latin *Flectere si nequeo superos, Acheronta movebo* (if I cannot bend the higher powers, I shall move Hell, or in other words, the River Acheron). These are words taken from Virgil’s Aeneid and pronounced by Juno, the divine protector of the Semitic Dido, against Aeneas, founder of Rome. Not managing to bend the higher powers of Jupiter, so that Aeneas might marry Dido, Juno invokes Alecto, the fury from Hell, to unleash seething passions of sex and military aggression in the camp of Aeneas’ allies. Virgil’s description is terrifying, of a bisexual monster or a phallic woman similar to a Gorgon teeming with twisted, black snakes. In “The Interpretation of Dreams”, Freud does not hide but rather signals that with this comparison to Virgil’s legend, he wishes to represent repressed impulses.

This quotation from Virgil, which serves as a kind of code to refer to the employment of threatening means with strong implications of change was previously used by the socialist thinker Ferdinand Lassalle, on the opening page of his book entitled “The Italian War and the Mission of Prussia” (1859). It is not known if Freud was a fan or had even read the work. In any case, in the aforementioned letter to Fleiss he mentions that he was taking Lassalle “on summer holiday” with him, and it is very likely that it was this work. Although Freud does not mention it directly, and only refers to Lassalle, the fact is that

¹⁰³ Virgil. The Georgics. 2490-92.

¹⁰⁴ “Fortunate is he, who is able to know the causes of things
And has stamped on all of the fears and the inexorable fates
And the growl of the cupid Acheron”.

¹⁰⁵ See Gale, Monica (2009). *Virgil and the Nature of Things: The Georgic Lucretius. And the Didactic Tradition*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press *apud* Stephen Greenblatt. *The Swerve: How the world became modern*. Winner of the 2012 Pulitzer Prize.

¹⁰⁶ Cerqueira Filho, Gisálio (2002b). “Freud, a cultura e a política”. In *Revista Pulsional de Psicanálise*, São Paulo, ano XV, n. 155, março, p. 55-66.

collections of Ferdinand Lassalle's political texts were in circulation during that time, and at least one, organized by Erich Blum, included the "The Italian War and the Mission of Prussia" and was published in Leipzig in 1899, when Freud was finishing the manuscript for "The Interpretation of Dreams" during his time spent near Grinzing, Vienna, at Bellevue Castle. Of course Freud did not need Lassalle to refer to Virgil, as he knew the "Aeneid" well, but it is still a suggestive clue, even as a symptom, according to that proposed by the evidential method. This elective affinity was between the activist and political militant Lassalle and the psychoanalyst doctor Freud, who, like Oedipus, was carrying out personal, moral and intellectual searches, apparently unconcerned with politics and the fact that Oedipus was a king.

It is precisely here, in the real, in the royal of royalty – what is more imaginary in this symbolic? – that the intricate "Lacanian" RSI triad (Real, Symbolic, Imaginary) appears, as one of the threads in this relationship between psychoanalysis and politics, Oedipus and power, *Oedipus Rex* in the fullness of Greek culture, a fracture exposed in Sophocles' tragedy. But the elective affinities between Lassalle and Freud were certainly not exhausted by the coincidence of the quotation evoking Virgil. In both, the political and psychoanalysis works are done and undone, encounter themselves and un-encounter themselves in terms, questions, preoccupations and political anxieties at the end of the nineteenth century attesting to Lassalle's cathexis and Freud's "political opinions"; inverted expressions thus consecrate the fluid interchange between political-ideological preferences and the affective experiences inscribed in the Oedipian matrix.

Our main hypothesis is the following: The protagonist of "Páramo" attests to "Joãozinho's cathexis"

However, the reader should feel completely at ease to write in the blank space which João Guimarães Rosa did not fill... A personal text which is stuck to the real, until death intervenes. On our part, it may well be a fragment of poem, which we happened to find and buy for a few francs by the River Seine in Paris. It goes like this:

Ghislaine

*Prénom germanique
qui signifie otage.
Les Ghislaine ne sont pas /
des martyres mais des fi-
gures de proue. /
Elles seront des modè-
les dans leur travail.
Une vie prometteuse
et remarquable.¹⁰⁷*

The poem came framed by arabesques in quill pen the colour of coal, with floral designs in violet, red, blue, pink, in flowers, petals and buttons. But the story does not end nor does not want to end. It wants to be a story and thus pulses in the hollow of the most hidden of desires, sustaining life.

Years later, one morning of one sunny day, in *Isla Negra*, the “sacred temple” of Don Pablo, I came across an explication for the expression “refrain”, reworked in the set of gargoyles which the poet collected over the course of his life and is today exhibited at the Pablo Neruda Museum.

They are female masks, some showing bare breasts, alluding to various figurative images, carved into the prow of old and modern ships. They refer to women destined to “open the paths of destiny” for boats and boatmen confronting dangers and dangers, real or imaginary, among the world’s rivers and seas.

“Les Ghislaine ne sont pas / des martyres / mais des figures de proue”. So I returned to Santiago, Chile, from Viña Del Mar. I took Neruda’s “The Capitan’s Verses” with me. I crossed the *Cordillera* with him, making my way to Mendoza. I was so eager that I almost dared to write a hesitant poem myself, to which I gave the name of “Figurehead” (Gargoyle).

This would be my contribution to help fill the rest of “Páramo” by João Guimarães Rosa...

Some models of gargoyles

¹⁰⁷ Translation from the French: “Ghislaine/German first name/meaning hostage./The Ghislaines are not/martyrs but fig-/ureheadsThey shall be mod/els in their work./A promising and/remarkable life.”



From left to right: Fig. 1 Jenny Lind, Fig. 2 Guilhermina; both photographs by Hilde Krassa; Fig.3 *Living* from Casa-Museo Isla Negra. All are postcards from Casa-Museo Isla Negra, Chile.

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