

THE AMAZON AND THE LITERATURE OF THE NORTH: CRITICAL REVIEWS IN 19th CENTURY

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Resumo: Esse trabalho propõe que a criação da assim chamada literatura amazônica de Inglês de Souza está diretamente associada à valorização crescente das províncias do Norte por parte da crítica, científica e literária, que, naquele momento, via a região como berço dos tesouros culturais brasileiros. Evidências do contexto histórico no qual o Norte passou a ser encarado de modo positivo, durante a década de 1870, podem ser colhidas em artigos publicados nos jornais e periódicos semanais, onde as primeiras resenhas tratando das narrativas de Inglês de Souza foram publicadas. As resenhas críticas e os escritos de Franklin Távora são exemplares do esforço em encorajar escritores do Norte, oferecendo-lhes espaço na imprensa do Rio de Janeiro. José Veríssimo é outro crítico cuja atuação editorial e resenhas bibliográficas na *Revista Brasileira* desempenharam papel central na afirmação de diversos autores das províncias nortistas. Considera-se que ambos contribuíram para a disseminação da dita Literatura do Norte no Rio de Janeiro após o romantismo.

Palavras-chave: Amazonas; Franklin Távora; Inglês de Souza; literatura brasileira

Abstract: This paper argues that the creation of the so-called Amazonian literature by Inglês de Souza is directly related to a growing critical and scientific appreciation of the provinces of the North, which was thought, at the time, to be where the true gems of Brazilian cultural treasures originated. Evidence of the historical context surrounding the positive way in which the North was viewed during the 1870s can be gathered mainly from articles published on the daily press and weekly periodicals, where some of the reviews on Souza's novels were published. Franklin Távora's critical reviews and literary writings are both examples of a concerted effort to encourage writers from the North by publishing their work in Rio de Janeiro's press. José Veríssimo is another literary critic whose reviews and editorial activity, particularly in *Revista Brasileira*, played a key role in the rise of several authors from the North. This paper also argues that both critics were instrumental in the dissemination of Northern literature in Rio de Janeiro after the romantic period.

Keywords: Amazonas; Franklin Távora; Inglês de Souza; Brazilian literature.

During the last decades of the 19th century there was significant growth in the interest shown towards the Amazon Region, both in Brazil and in Europe. This is evidenced in the editorial market, where a number of new scientific publications were made available following naturalist expeditions to South America by Alexander von

Humboldt, Von Martius, Spix, Charles Darwin, Alfred Wallace, Baron Langsdorff and others.

Scientific expeditions within Brazilian territory were authorized as part of negotiations for the marriage of D. Pedro I to Empress Maria Leopoldina, from Austria. After their marriage, international agreements eased the way for foreign visitors wishing to enter the country and travel through Brazil. Books, magazines and journals by geographical societies are examples of the editorial production resulting from some of the scientific exploratory expeditions to the banks of the Amazon River and its creeks. Upon returning to London after his journey to South America, Alfred Wallace published six essays, including *On the Monkeys of the Amazon*, and two books - *Palm Trees of the Amazon and Their Uses* and *Travels on the Amazon*. English naturalist Walter Bates (1825-1892), who accompanied Wallace in his expedition and did field work for eleven years, published *The Naturalist on the River Amazon* in 1863.

Disseminating, across the world, the physical and human nature of the tropics, however, was not the exclusive realm of specialized articles and scientific publications. Illustrated journals also played an important part, reaching a significantly broader audience. Articles, drawings and photography stimulated the curiosity of the layman, for whom reading illustrated magazines and journals allowed for an enjoyable imaginary trip to the jungle. Similarly, fiction books were not kept afar from this pleasure-motivating *phenomenon*. The same topics and subjects that occupied the minds of those involved in scientific investigations also permeated through novels, chronicles and short stories. Foreign explorers and naturalists' own travel journals set an interesting writing style whereby social and cultural traditions were reported in a hybrid format that combined scientific and literary writings.

The fact that literary narratives opened themselves to scientific discourse was, it seems, an important strategy in the gradual process of rejection of romantic writings' philosophical basis, thus allowing, from 1850 onward, the growth of a new form of writing based on empirical observation methods. To the analysis of the extent to which scientific and literary narratives on Amazonia interchanged a few questions based on published data on production, circulation and critical writings on the so-called Amazonian literature, Herculano Marcos Inglês de Souza is an important axis.

To better understand the changes that led the so-called Amazonian literature to be welcomed further South during the 19th century, one must bear in mind the matters being addressed by the Brazilian press at the time.¹ The significant increase in the number of Amazon-related articles in the papers was a direct result of the growing symbolic appreciation of the North. Analysing articles published by some of the writers that helped shape a positive vision of the North on weekly magazines, drawing special attention to editorial work by Franklin Távora and José Veríssimo, will allow us to familiarise ourselves with the changes that occurred in the way the North was perceived during that period.

1 The North

From a purely geographical point of view, during the 19th century the term The North described a vast territory occupied then by the provinces of Amazonas, Pará and Maranhão, including what is today known as the Northeast, all the way from Ceará to Bahia. Some of those Provinces, such as Amazonas and Pará, shared common characteristics that clearly distinguished them from the South of Brazil, where Rio de Janeiro, the capital at that time, was located.

The North-South divide, however, was not limited to topographical differences. It was marked by significant historical differences, with the North, more so than the South, being home to successive rebellions against the Monarchy. The years between 1836 and 1838 saw several rebellious movements that gained the support of the people of the North – for example, Cabanada in Pará, Sabinada in Bahia and Balaiada in Maranhão. Similarly, during the reign of D. Pedro II, several liberal rebellions took place in the North, including the well-known Revolta Praieira (1848). With the decline in sugar and cocoa production and a severe draught in the region, particularly in Ceará, and the resulting financial difficulties faced by the region, complaints against D. Pedro II's political stands in the North gained momentum during the second half of the century, despite not always leading to the

¹ This paper owes a great deal to Azevedo's book on *Ilustração Brasileira* magazine.

use of force. Differences between the North and the South seemed to grow every year. In the eyes of a group of distinguished graduates from Recife Law School, whose views were being shaped by what Silvio Romero called “a bunch of new ideas”, with influences from materialism, positivism, evolutionism and Darwinism, comparisons were inevitable and placed those who lived under the burning sun of the North in clear disadvantage.

In his article on the novel *O Cabeleira* by Franklin Távora, written for *Diário de Pernambuco*, Maciel Pinheiro, a graduate from Recife Law School, wrote:

Influências de ordem política têm concorrido para que mais se caracterize e acentue a diferença entre o Norte e o Sul do Brasil. No Sul está o governo, a cujo influxo imediato tudo se anima e desenvolve, a cujo contato vivificam-se as indústrias, com cujo fomento as forças naturais fazem a riqueza do país. Como quem está mais perto do fogo melhor se aquece, tem o favor do governo levantado no Sul empresas de melhoramento que desenvolvem a iniciativa e a fortuna.

²

Maciel Pinheiro acknowledged that, unable to compete with farmers from other countries, farmers from the North still lived and worked in the same traditional ways that were used before industrial advancement was introduced in Brazil but considered it unfair that the North should pay the same taxes as the South, which benefited from official assistance from the government. The Law on Taxes stipulated that the same dividends were to be paid by farmers throughout Brazil, thus deepening the contrast between the South, a region that received help from the government, and the North, whose population already suffered from poverty and famine.³

Lawyer A. Bandeira, who graduated from Recife Law School, expressed similar feelings towards the lack of attention given to the problems suffered by the provinces of the North in his review of the book *Ligeiro Estudo Sobre o Estado Econômico e Industrial do Maranhão*, by tax attorney Fabio A. de Carvalho Reis. In his bibliographical review for *Ilustração Brasileira* magazine, Bandeira argued that all the provinces of the North faced severe difficulties, suffering from poor investments by the government and a lack of workmen to work the land. According to him, little was

² L.F. Maciel Pinheiro. “Literatura”. *Diário de Pernambuco*, Recife, 11 de outubro de 1876. (Apud AGUIAR 1997.)

³ *Idem*

being done to ease the hardships that troubled the region's economy, despite the patriotic efforts of some well-respected Congressmen.

O Norte tem ficado sempre menos beneficiado quando se trata de promover os grandes melhoramentos sociais; e se, como cremos, não há desígnio especial nessa espécie de abandono, a coincidência de se encontrarem sempre obstáculos a qualquer grande empreendimento para aquela parte do Império, quando para o sul caminha o Governo à frente dos seus desejos, dá muito que pensar aos homens do Norte, e quase que os faz persuadir de que há, na nossa política duas bitolas: a da progressão geométrica para o Sul, e da progressão aritmética para o Norte⁴

Without drawing conclusions, Mr. Bandeira questioned, above all, immigration policies that seemed to privilege farms in the South in clear detriment of those in the North. In that same review he made reference to a recent publication prepared for the Ministry of Agriculture by Nicolau Joaquim Moreira, a member of the Committee that organized the Brazilian presence in the Universal Exhibition of Philadelphia, in 1876. Bandeira made extensive compliments about the quality of the “Report on immigration in the United States of America” written by Moreira, who was a member of the Imperial Institute of Agriculture, after his visit to the USA, in which he compared the successful American immigration policy to Brazil's policy. In Bandeira's opinion, Brazilian laws inhibited civil weddings and the naturalisation of foreigners, therefore working against spontaneous immigration, which he felt to be the only form of migratory movement which would result in foreigners setting up residency in Northern lands. Bandeira's views were that if Brazil wished to enter the civilized world, of which the United States were clearly a part, it should free itself from archaic standards and systems that hindered progress. Bandeira was concerned not only about the necessary encouragement for foreigners to move to Brazil, but also about their permanent stay in the country. He acknowledged the government's efforts to encourage the arrival of foreigners to Brazil and was in favour of their naturalization, without which, he felt they were deprived of political rights.⁵ He questioned the argument that unfavourable climate was the main impeding factor to the presence of immigrants in the North and pointed, in contrast, to political reasons derived from Brazilian leaders' conservative view.

⁴ BANDEIRA, A. “Bibliografia”. *Ilustração Brasileira*, n. 36, 15 de dezembro de 1877, p 6.

⁵ BANDEIRA, A. “A Grande Naturalização”. *Ilustração Brasileira*, n.º. 38, fevereiro de 1878.

There was intense debate on immigration on the daily press. The general public's interest on the subject grew since the approval of *Lei do Ventre Livre* (28th Sept 1871). The need to gradually replace African slaves with free labour, preferably white catholic workers, led the government to run recruiting campaigns outside of Brazil. the universal exhibitons were excellent opportunities to attract immigrants and promote the country, as seen in london (1862), paris (1867) and vienna (1873) (Sussekind 1990). The Universal Exhibition of Philadelphia, which celebrated the Centennial of American Independence, in 1876, mobilized the government more than ever before. Given the wish to show Brazil as a modern and civilized, albeit young, nation on a clear path towards industrialization, D. Pedro II put even greater personal effort in the planning of the Brazilian Pavilion. Under the emperor's instruction, the government welcomed support and sponsorship proposals for various scientific studies and was able to show the results during the Exhibition. Next to traditional agricultural products sent by the provinces, such as cotton and coffee, new telegraphic and train lines were also shown at this particular Exhibition. Indigenous artefacts, timber and natural fibbers, as well as various medicinal plants were sent from the Amazon. The effort to demonstrate to the world the country's resources resulted in a show that included the exhibition of products, machinery, art objects and printed materials on recent statistical data proving the levels of technical progress achieved in Brazil. The publication *O Império do Brasil na Exposição Universal de 1876* is proof to that.

It is within this spirit of glorification of Brazilian civilization that we see the sons of the North, resentful of being left out of the monarchy's modernizations initiatives, publicly claiming more respect and consideration. In an initiative similar to the creation of the provinces of the Amazon in 1850 and Paraná in 1853, in 1873 the Brazilian Senate was asked to vote on a proposal to create the province of the São Francisco, with the clear objective of allowing improvements to reach remote areas in the Sertão. For that to happen, an expansion of train and river transportation systems was needed. The proposal, however, was not approved and the new train line connecting the coast of Pernambuco to the Sertão was never built. The famous *Madeira and Mamoré Railway* train line, which would, from an economical point of view, benefit Brazilian and Bolivian landlocked areas giving them access to the

Atlantic Ocean, was yet another unsuccessful attempt to build a rail network in the North.

The partnership between Brazil and Bolivia, a country that had become landlocked since its separation from Peru, had resulted in the signature of the *Treaty of Friendship* in 1867, when engineers Joseph Keller and his son Franz Keller-Leuzinger were hired to run a feasibility test for the construction of a train line in the banks of the Madeira River. After an initial exploratory visit through the Amazon, engineer, illustrator and photographer Franz Keller-Leuzinger wrote an account of what he had seen (SANSON 1998).⁶ He published his report in Germany, seven years later (1874), under the title *Vom Amazonas und Madeira*. The book was translated that very same year into Italian, English and French. The prestigious magazine *Le Tour du Monde* printed a summary of his travel journals with some of the original illustrations (Azevedo 2010: 151).⁷ The *Ilustração Brasileira* magazine published selected chapters of Keller-Leuzinger's book in 1876, as did *O Vulgarisador*, in 1877.

With readers' growing interest in indigenous communities living in the jungle, a favourable editorial environment quickly presented itself. Both travel narratives and ethnographical studies provided plenty of materials, including illustrations, to feed the local as well as the international interest in the subject. In 1875, whilst living in Campinas, where he settled after taking part, together with Adrien Taunay, of an expedition organized by Russian consul Baron Langsdorff, French illustrator Hortence Florence (1804-1879) published the complete version of his travel journal *Viagem Fluvial do Tietê ao Amazonas Pelas Províncias Brasileiras de São Paulo, Mato Grosso e Grão Pará (1825-1829)*. In that same year visitors to the National Exhibition in Rio de Janeiro, set up in preparation for the Universal Exhibition of Philadelphia, were able to see photos of indigenous communities and the Amazonian landscape by George Leuzinger's studio. It was, for many, their first visual contact with the people and the

⁶ Franz Keller took on his father-in-law's family name. Swiss George Leuzinger owned Casa Leuzinger since 1840. Originally a stationery shop, Casa Leuzinger was later a printing, lithography and typography cabinet and was the first and more important photographic studio of Rio de Janeiro, selling panoramic photos of the city.

⁷ Franz Keller-Leuzinger. *Voyage d'Exploration sur l'Amazonas et le Madeira*. Texte [...] traduit et extrait de l'allemand par J. Gourdault. *Le Tour du Monde*, Nouveau Journal de Voyages. Paris, 28:369-416, 2^{eme} Semestre 1874. F.Keller. *The Amazon and Madeira Rivers*. New Edition with Sixty-Eight Illustrations on Wood. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott and Co., 1875. (Apud Azevedo:151.)

landscape of the Amazon. Leuzinger's studio pioneered the sale of images of indigenous people in the 1860's (Turazzi 1995: 143). Photographs by Marc Ferrez, taken during the Imperial Geological Expedition, an initiative by Canadian geographer Charles Frederick Hartt, were also shown during the National Exhibition. Ferrez's pictures would later be printed in Paris as part of the book *Brésil*.

D. Pedro II lended official support to the expedition and to the creation of a Geological Commission directly linked to the Ministry of Agriculture. Charles Hartt, a professor at Cornell University, became famous after taking part in the Thayer Amazonian Expedition led by Louis Agassiz, in 1865 and in the Morgan Expedition, between 1868-1870, from which resulted his book *Geologia e Geografia Física do Brasil*, considered the first scientific work on Brazilian geography. Materials gathered during the four trips Hartt made to Brazil offered enough scientific resources to enable significant geological, paleontological and archaeological findings, which later reverberated throughout the academic world.

The quantity and the quality of the material gathered more than justified the emperor's support to the Commission. Under Hartt's leadership, the commissions' works were presented with immense impact at the National Exhibition and formed the basis for the Brazilian Pavilion at the Philadelphia Exhibition in 1876. For the Centennial Exhibition in America, Hartt organized the minerals' section and handed over photos taken by Marc Ferrez (Freitas 2002). Newspapers and magazines ran notes on the works of Hartt's group. Reports from the exploration of the basin of Pará, especially on the Northern side of the Amazon, had indicated the likely existence of coal rocks, which was seen as an excellent prognosis for Brazil's attempt at industrialization.

The findings were celebrated by Emilio Augusto Zaluar, author of articles about The National Exhibition published on *O Globo* (Zaluar 1875). Zaluar was also editor of *O Vulgarizador* (1877-1880) magazine, a 'useful knowledge journal', aimed at disseminating results from scientific studies as well as industrial advancements. Some of the articles on *O Vulgarizador* were accompanied by drawings by Jorge Hartt, brother of Charles Hartt, who worked for New York journal *Graphic* using modern printing techniques. Translated pieces on astronomy, telephony, train lines, chemistry

and physics were seen alongside articles disseminating investigative work by graduates and self-taught men from the North. Francisco José de Freitas's study on the geological formation of the Trombetas river, J. M. da Silva Coutinho's work on the Munducurús tribe and an entry on Cumarú, a legume found in Pará, Maranhão and Amazon, originally written by Mr Caminhoá for the *Compêndio de Botânica* are all examples of such pieces. The legume itself was seen at the 1875 Exhibition. Readers were able to see its drawing in the magazine. The editor of *O Vulgarizador* seemed committed to educating readers, trying to familiarise them with the new spirit while delighting them with the so-called modern literature, at the same time.

An illustrated extract of George Leuzinger's expedition to the Amazon intitled "Encontro com os índios Caripunas" was published on the magazine's first edition in 1877 alongside the opening chapter of *O Retirante*, a novel about the drought in Ceará, by Araripe Jr. There was a clear and unequivocal intention by the editors to promote a realistic literature, based on social observation rather than fiction, which was felt to be a more fitting match to scientific explanations about social life. Post-romantic literature was viewed as corresponding to ethnographic studies about the people, the culture and the traditions of the North. General Couto de Magalhães, one of Brazil's ethnography pioneers, was a regular collaborator in various studies and revisited the provinces of Mato Grosso, Pará and the Amazon Banks in 1873. On behalf of D. Pedro II, he ran ethnographical expeditions in preparation for the Philadelphia Exhibition. Ex-governor of Mato Grosso and Pará, Couto de Magalhães familiarised himself *in loco* with some of Tupi language's variants and was able to gather stories and myths, publishing his conclusions under the title *Selvagem* (Magalhães 1875). He considered the region's natives as well as their culture and language a living monument, a heritage to be incorporated by the rest of the country. In 1874 Couto de Magalhães presented the scientific thesis that constituted the second part of his book at the IHGB (Instituto Histórico Geográfico Brasileiro), where ethnographical discussions about indigenous population had always taken place, in the form of debates between founding partners like Januário da Cunha Barbosa, Joaquim Norberto, Varnhagem, Gonçalves de Magalhães and Gonçalves Dias. Their views on the survival of so-called native people had played an important part in the construction of an historical narrative based on an idealisation of the natives

(Monteiro 2001). Couto de Magalhães's new ethnography was aligned less with romantic authors' indigenous nationalism and more with the new nationalistic trend that valued the North as the birthplace of authentic native traditions since, as explained earlier, there was a clear wish to portray Brazil as a modern country. A new nationalist narrative was being written by the so-called "1870s generation", for whom concerns about men and the surrounding environment had become pressing. It was at that time that writers - poets, novelists and folklorists - embraced the idea of picking the roots of popular culture to create a form of literature that was marked by the native population's environment and traditions.⁸

It is no coincidence, therefore, that during that period regional literature gained force and was embraced by those eager to reverse the negative image of the North. Poets and novelist threw themselves into an attempt to transform the less favoured region into the birthplace of a more authentic Brazil, where they believed resided the true popular face of the country, given that it had not been impacted by European civilization (Ribeiro 2003). The strategy to symbolically acknowledge the North as the place for genuine nationality seemed to compensate for their feeling of isolation and their distance from the political centre of the country. Poets, short story writers and folklorists added their effort to identify, transcribe and promote oral traditions to a similar movement being made by novelists from the North. They could now see the results of racial miscegenation and were thus able to bring to fictional writing a degree of veracity similar to those found in natural and social sciences. Their literary production reached Rio de Janeiro thanks to persistent initiatives and efforts by Franklin Távora.

2 Franklin Távora and the "sons of the North"

Born in Ceará, Franklin Távora grew up in Pernambuco and graduated from Recife Law School in 1863. While studying for his degree he became close to Silvio Romero, Tobias Barreto and Celso de Magalhães. Together, they read and discussed

⁸ Indicative of this approach are works by Maranhão born (*Lendas e Canções populares*, 1865; *Cenas populares*, 1871) Celso de Magalhães (*Um Estudo de Temperamento*, 1879), as are works by Ceará born José de Alencar (*O Nosso Cancioneiro*, 1874; *O Sertanejo*, 1876), and Araripe Júnior (*Luizinha*, 1878), and Sergipe born critic Silvio Romero (*Cantos*, 1883; *Contos populares do Brasil*, 1885).

Comte and Litté, Spenser's evolutionism theories and Taine's determinism writings. After graduating, he wrote for *Jornal do Recife* and was a director at Instrução Pública. However, Távora is best remembered for being in the centre of two controversies: the first, about the famous *Questão Religiosa* involved Bishop D. Vidal and ended up on the pages of *Jornal do Recife's* Masonic newspaper *A Verdade*, of which Távora had been a founder and chief editor (1872-1873); the second controversy saw him caught in the middle of a heated exchange between José Feliciano de Castilho (Cincinato) and novelist José de Alencar, also known as Sênio. Using the alias Semprônio, Távora wrote *Cartas a Cincinato* (1872) expressing strong opinions against the representation of characters such as those on *O Guarani*, considered by him to be idealised, 'pale visions, deformed creatures, uncoloured, confused and in clear contrast to the natural and ethnographic truth'. In his letters, Távora accused Alencar of resorting too much to his own imagination when writing *O Gaúcho* and *Iracema*, while creating unrealistic characters. The idea that a novel should be the result of an objective observation of the surrounding reality, or at least the result of an historical knowledge and a familiarity with literary traditions, was widespread.

In Franklin Távora's view, a writer should not create anything new, but simply choose which real facts he wished to refine in order to achieve what was considered beauty. The mimetic characteristic that the art of writing had in Távora's letters is evident in his use of metaphors on daguerreotype and photography, modern equivalents to the old mirror and painting (Martins 2011). Távora's biographer, Claudio Aguiar, saw his very public attacks on José de Alencar, the most famous Brazilian writer at the time, as a means of attracting attention to himself. Clóvis Bevilacqua, on the other hand, credited Távora's reactions on his resentment towards Alencar's lack of response and praise when Távora sent him his book *Os Índios do Jaguaribe* (1862), when it was first published. In any case, this altercation, according to Azevedo, led Távora to an invitation to work in *Ilustração Brasileira*, a pro-D. Pedro II publication. D. Pedro II himself had become a source of discontent for Alencar, since his frustrated nomination for the Senate. On Henrique Fleiuss's magazine, Franklin Távora was put in charge of the "Boletim Bibliográfico" section, writing most of the reviews printed. On its eighth edition, *Ilustração Brasileira* ran an enthusiastic review on Távora's recently published *O Cabeleira*, printed by Tipografia Nacional (1876).

Soon afterwards, a long article signed by Flavio de Aguiar, himself a writer and ethnologist, ran detailed commentaries on the book.

Written in the form of a letter addressed to a friend living in Switzerland, Távora's book simulated a voyage through Brazil. The opening chapter of *O Cabeleira* was seen, by many, as a true manifesto. In the book, Távora protested at what he described as the abandonment of the Amazons "onde vemos unicamente águas, ilhas, planícies, seringais sem-fim" and wondered about the improvements that work, capital and civilization could bring to the region. The arguments seen in the book's introduction summarise Távora's proposal to create a Literature of the North:

As letras têm, como a política, um certo caráter geográfico; mais no Norte, porém, do que no Sul abundam os elementos para a formação de uma literatura propriamente brasileira, filha da terra.

A razão é óbvia: o Norte ainda não foi invadido como está sendo o Sul de dia em dia pelo estrangeiro.

A feição primitiva, unicamente modificada pela cultura que as raças, as índoles, e os costumes recebem dos tempos ou do progresso, pode-se afirmar que ainda se conserva ali em sua pureza, em sua genuína expressão.

The initiative to give voice to the literature of the North materialised itself in Távora's books *O Matuto* (1878) and *Lourenço* (1881). It seems that his ideas were also embraced by other writers such as Pará-born Herculano Marcos Inglês de Souza, who lived in São Paulo at the time, after having attended Recife's Law School. While studying in Pernambuco, Inglês de Souza wrote his first novel *O Cacaulista – cenas da vida do Amazonas*. The opening chapter was published in 1876 in the *A Academia de São Paulo*, a periodical edited by some law school students, and in the newspaper *Tribuna Liberal de São Paulo*, of which his father was editor. The book *O Cacaulista* would later be printed by the *Diário de Santos* typography. Under the alias Luis Dolzani, he published a second early novel intitled *História de um Pescador*. His third novel, *Coronel Sangrado* (1877) picked up on events narrated on *O Cacaulista*, forming a type of trilogy about the daily life of small rural communities and villages of the Baixo Amazonas region. The plot in *O cacaulista* is set in 1866 at São Miguel Farm, a cocoa producing private land, only a few miles from Óbidos, near the port. Located by the river, Óbidos municipality played an important role in the cocoa international trade, which was by then already facing a decline, serving as one of its main farming and trading

centres. The village of Óbidos and the rural landscape of its neighbouring cocoa farms were the setting for the trilogy that ended with *O Coronel Sangrado*. The cocoa fields, the Amazon jungle and the local rivers constituted the physical setting which predominated in the trilogy. The clear and well measured intent to document the environment, a concern shared with academics and travellers, is evident throughout the text in the various records of the different elements of the local flora and fauna. Setting the vegetation by the banks of the Amazon River was part of an effort to rebuild the physical reality by means of literature. Moreover, Inglês de Souza's narratives provided readers plenty of details about the habits and the way of thinking of the local population. It is noteworthy, according to Vianna Barreto, the writer's constant preoccupation with detailing, for readers' sake, local housing, fishing techniques, culinary habits, clothing, household utensils, working routines and also local myths and tales (Barreto 2003). In very much the same as it was done in ethnographic essays, in his novels, Souza documented the region's social and economic life through a descriptive inventory of both the landscape and the people of the rural area of the Province of Pará during the 19th century.

The documentary nature of Inglês de Souza's literary production was the source of attention by the press in São Paulo. In a review written for *Correio Paulistano*, poet Carlos Ferreira highlighted the photographic quality found in both *O Cacaulista* and *Coronel Sangrado*:

Tanto um como outro são dois trabalhos dignos de nota, dois cometimentos de fôlego que trazem em si a tríplice bondade do interesse no entreccho, de verdade no desenho dos costumes do norte e da simplicidade e naturalidade do diálogo e no estilo em geral. Ambos são admiráveis fotografias da natureza opulenta do Amazonas, caráter especial do povo e cunho pitoresco do seu viver íntimo e digno de ser devidamente poetizado.⁹

The critic emphasized the veracity of the work, which, in his view, gave the writer the place of a national treasure. Meanwhile, in Rio de Janeiro, the second edition of *Ilustração Brasileira* gave notice of having received from São Paulo a recently published collection, by an unknown author. In his short review for "Boletim Bibliográfico" Franklin Távora congratulated the young author and praised the detailed description of the landscape:

⁹ Apud Ferreira 2014.

As descrições de lugares, de costumes, e de fisionomias são tão apropriadas, há tanta verdade no colorido, tanta abundância de seiva em todos aqueles quadros, que, além de revelarem um belo e promissor talento, formam um lindo álbum de paisagens amazônicas, com toda a cor e sabor local. Seja bem-vindo o novo romancista; ocupará por certo posição distinta quem concebe tão bem e ainda melhor se exprime dispondo de primoroso estilo.¹⁰

Yet more praise greeted the novel *O Coronel Sangrado*.¹¹ In “Publicações da Quinzena” the reviewer assured readers that the author offered animated and accurate scenes depicted from real life. Quotations from the novel were proof of how faithful to the life of the people living near the Amazonas River, Souza’s descriptions were. His novels seemed to answer Franklin Távora’s call for writers from the North to dedicate themselves to their “northern muse”. Távora himself brought to light eight short stories under the label of *Lendas e Traduções Populares do Norte*, most of them related to the period of the Dutch invasion to Pernambuco.¹² The short stories recreated information gathered directly from the sources – oral narratives that passed on the stories and adventures of the people that fought for the lands of the North.

There is no doubt that *Ilustração Brasileira* was for Franklin Távora an important channel to disseminate and value the North’s literary production. In 1878, after the last issue of the periodical was published, Franklin Távora and some of his work colleagues from Secretaria do Império re-launched *Revista Brasileira*. According to Aguiar, Távora wrote to many of his friends and writers from the North asking for articles, studies, reviews and literary writings in general for this second phase of the magazine created by Nicolau Midosi.

¹⁰ “Boletim Bibliográfico”. *Ilustração Brasileira*, n. 2, 15 de julho de 1876.

¹¹ “Publicações da Quinzena”. n. 35, 1 de dezembro de 1877.

¹² The stories were published in the first half of 1877 as following: “O sino encantado” (*Ilustração Brasileira*, n.º. 13, Jan. 1st); “A visão da Serra Aguda” (*Ilustração Brasileira*, n. 14, Jan. 15th); “O tesouro do Rio” (*Ilustração Brasileira*, n. 15, Feb.1st); “A cruz do patrão” (*Ilustração Brasileira*, n. 17, Mar. 1st); “Chora menino” (*Ilustração Brasileira*, n. 18, Mar. 15th); “As mãos do Padre Pedro Tenório” (*Ilustração Brasileira*, n. 20, Apr.15th); “O cajueiro do Frade” (*Ilustração Brasileira*, n. 21, May 1st.); “As mangas do jasmim” (*Ilustração Brasileira*, n. 23, June 1st.). Apud Azevedo 2010.

3 The North in *Revista Brasileira*

In 1879 Távora's friend Nicolau Midosi, who worked in the same Secretaria do Império, reedited *Revista Brasileira*, a journal that had earlier been run by Cândido Batista de Oliveira (1857-1860). Under Midosi's supervision the journal was given a more literary and artistic direction, whilst before it had published mainly scientific essays. From June 1879 until December 1881 Franklin Távora was the editor in charge. Many chapters from his novel *Lourenço* were printed in its pages, as did chapters from Machado's *Memórias Póstumas de Brás Cubas*. This periodical also ran chapters from an unfinished novel by Maranhão-born Celso de Magalhães, *Um Estudo de Temperamento* (1879), which some critics considered a predecessor of naturalistic literature, with likely influences over young Aluisio Azevedo, whose *O Mulato* was reviewed by the critic Urbano Duarte, the author of an essay about "O Naturalismo" in *Revista Brasileira*. The literary section of the periodical published Brazilian novels, drama translations and short stories. In 1880 Inglês de Souza published a fantastic short story named *Acauã*, later included in his *Contos Amazônicos* (1893)

Until the end of 1880 Távora was still attempting to gain access to young unknown poets and writers from the north. According to Claudio Aguiar, he wrote to José Veríssimo, who had just arrived from Europe. Veríssimo sent him the article "A religião dos Tupi Guaranis", first published in 1878 as part of a study called "As populações Indígenas e Mestiças da Amazônia".¹³ Távora knew about Veríssimo's studies on indigenous people through João Barbosa Rodrigues. Botanist, ethnographer and folklorist Rodrigues had spent many years studying the provinces of Pará and Amazonas, to where he had travelled under the commission of the Monarchy in order to research the region's palm trees. His essay "Lendas, crenças e superstições" was also published in 1881 in *Revista Brasileira*. In 1884 Rodrigues founded the Botanical Gardens of the Amazons and was later a director at the Botanical Gardens of Rio de Janeiro. As a botanist, he played a key role in the scientific description of native species, a work that Martius had started. He also helped

¹³ The article untitled "Raças Cruzadas do Pará" was printed in *Primeiras Páginas* and was reformulated in the edition reproduced in *Estudos Amazônicos*.

the pacification of the Crichaná tribe. However, his views on indigenous people's beliefs and superstitions were not shared by Pará-born José Veríssimo.

In another article, written in 1883 and entitled “Os ídolos do Amazonas”, Veríssimo rejected Barbosa Rodrigues's argument that the amulet he had found in 1875 had its origins in the Amazon region. José Veríssimo compared it to the object he himself had acquired from someone who had found it in the port of Óbidos - his place of birth - and questioned the belief that the Amazon civilization had come from the North of Europe and from America. Because of his writings on Amazonian folklore and the economic aspects of the Amazons, during the time he lived in Pará, José Veríssimo became Franklin Távora's regular correspondent. They maintained a regular and stimulating correspondence despite having very different opinions on the future of national literature (Aguiar 1997: 277-282). In their rich exchange of letters, Távora explained to Veríssimo his editorial and literary objectives: to publish a book called *O Norte*, made up of ten sections on twenty or twenty-two authors. According to Távora, the book would adopt the same format as the column that he wrote for *Revista Brasileira*, called “Publicações Diversas”, and his aim was to write short biographies on writers from the Provinces. However, the book was never published and some say that he later burnt its originals.

Even after the magazine *Revista Brasileira* was last published in December 1881, Távora did not give up. Between 1882 and 1883 he sent to Vicente Quesada's periodical *Nueva Revista de Buenos Aires* articles introducing writers from the North to Argentine readers.¹⁴ A few years later, in 1887, Távora used his column in the weekly *A Semana* to praise other names from the North.¹⁵

José Veríssimo, on the other hand, wrote many other essays about the culture and the economy of the North while living in Pará and continued to do so after he moved to Rio de Janeiro, in 1891. The series of articles he wrote on the Amazonas and

¹⁴ He sent biographical essays on Inglês de Souza, Carlos Hipólito de Santa Helena Magno, Júlio César Ribeiro de Souza, José Veríssimo and José Coriolano de Souza Lima. (AguiaR 1997)

¹⁵ In *A Semana*, Franklin Távora wrote articles on Joaquim Serra, Celso de Magalhães, João Adolfo Ribeiro da Silva, Juvenal Galeno, Tomás Antonio Ramos Zany, F. G. Castelo Branco and Gonçalves Dias. (Aguiar 1997.)

Pará Provinces for the *Jornal do Brasil*, owned by Rodolfo Dantas, expresses his renewed efforts to draw attention to the region and reinforce the idea of a federative union in the new Republic, in opposition to the separatist tendency that was historically strong in that part of the country.¹⁶ When publishing the collection of articles *Estudos Brasileiros – segunda série (1889-1893)* in 1894, José Veríssimo included the speech he made for the celebrations of the Third Centennial of the city of Belém, in Pará. In it he declared his love for his birthplace while stressing that such feelings should be the basis for a patriotic love. The love that linked people to their birth community was, according to him, the basis for a desire for mutual union; in other words, patriotism and federalism, instead of regional separatism. José Veríssimo's concerns about the economic crisis in the Amazonas, which were the result of its total dependency on rubber exports and the difficulties brought on by the First World War are presented in another series of articles dedicated to the North and published between December 1914 and January 1915 in *Jornal do Comércio*.¹⁷ When writing in defence of an official financial help for the Amazonas, Veríssimo thought he was writing not in the interest of a specific region but of the whole country. As far as he was concerned, the problems of the Amazonas were relevant nationwide.

Once living in Rio de Janeiro, José Veríssimo taught at Escola Normal and at Ginásio Nacional, as Colégio D. Pedro II was known in the beginning of the first Republic. His articles ran on daily newspapers, such as *Gazeta de Notícias*, *A Notícia*, *Imparcial*, *Correio da Manhã*, and also in magazines such as *Kosmos*, *Revista Americana* and *Revista da Academia*. He took upon himself to re-launch *Revista Brasileira* and ran it between 1895-1898. Under his direction, the periodical was fundamental to the birth of the Academia Brasileira de Letras. As Franklin Távora had done before him, José Veríssimo followed closely all recent publications and wrote reviews for the “Boletim Bibliográfico” column. As a critic, Veríssimo expressed his opinions and recommended important literary titles. Most importantly, under his direction, *Revista Brasileira* printed unpublished works. The novel *Dona Guidinha do Poço*, by Manoel de Oliveira Paiva (from Ceará), and short stories by Afonso Arinos (an author from Minas Gerais), and Valdomiro Silveira (writer from São Paulo), are examples of the

¹⁶ These articles were reprinted in *A Amazônia (aspectos econômicos)*, 1892.

¹⁷ *Jornal do Comércio*, December 29th, 1914 and January 5th, 8th and 12th 1915.

so-called Brazilian “genuine literature” that *Revista Brasileira* promoted. Despite publishing mainly essays, the magazine praised a patriotic literary production, selecting narratives in which the traditions and pictures of inhabitants from the interior, such as the “caboclo”, the “sertanejo”, or the “caipira” were shown. In many ways, the nationalistic point of view represented by the literary pieces published in *Revista Brasileira* under the direction of Veríssimo followed certain notion of regionalism for which Franklin Távora stood. Because of Távora’s arguments, literary critics were drawn to discuss the validity of regional literature, in itself an impressive achievement.

4 Conclusions

Franklin’s Távora’s work, during the 1870s and 1880s, is key to anyone wishing to understand the repercussions, in Rio de Janeiro, of the literary production of the North, including Amazonian narratives, during that period. Távora’s efforts to identify literary talents, especially poets and novelists from the northern provinces of the country, were crucial to stimulate the renewal of romantic literature. Although often the source of controversies, his strong opinions and writings, and his literary studies have parallels in ethnographic, linguistic and anthropological studies on native communities, as well as in the geological and geographic expeditions led by scientists at the time. Sponsored by the imperial government, such investigations were important to promote the type of scientific research upon which an image of the country future’s industrial strength could be projected and disseminated at the National and Universal Exhibitions.

It is not a coincidence that journals and magazines such as *O Vulgarizador*, *Ilustração Brasileira* and *Revista Brasileira* published scientific essays based on recent discoveries in the Amazonian area, along with literary writings by the “sons of the North”. Problems faced by the provinces of the North were now a focus of attention mainly due to a new wave of criticism over existing immigration policies and economic challenges faced by the imperial government and were the subject of articles by lawyers and men of the letters who studied at Recife Law School.

This intellectual atmosphere favourable to the interests of the North can explain Inglês de Souza's pioneering initiative of writing stories inspired by the a new scientific look into the Amazon landscape and its people. It can, most certainly, also explain the enthusiastic and warm welcome that his narratives had in the provinces of the South, such as São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro. Praise given to Souza's descriptions of the Amazonas contributed to the widespread acceptance of his novels as photographic representations of life in the province. To this day, Souza's convincing realistic narratives are read as truthful images from the Amazonas.

Moreover, literary critics such as Franklin Távora and José Veríssimo played a pivotal role in promoting northern writers by preparing bibliographical reviews for periodicals in Rio de Janeiro. Both threw light on Brazilian nationalistic literature while paying special attention to writers from the provinces of the North. Despite having different opinions regarding the importance of the regionalist movement, their personal correspondence and critical writings left fruitful material for an analysis of Brazilian literary production after the romantic period.

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Artigo recebido em 07/04/2015. Aprovado em 27/07/2015 .