

Critique of culture in the feminine

Crítica de cultura no feminino

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ABSTRACT

The article analyses the inflections of gender upon the Brazilian intellectual field, in its interface with literary and cultural critique, from the 1920's to the 1960's. It focuses on the trajectory of three expressive women who achieved renown as critics of culture, essayists and writers: Lúcia Miguel Pereira, Patrícia Galvão and Gilda Mello e Souza. The three belong to distinct generations and cover the political spectrum of the time: from Communism to Socialism, for Patrícia Galvão, through the intellectual circles of Catholicism, for Lúcia Miguel Pereira, or else maintaining a certain distance from these issues and establishing an academic intellectual identity, in the case of Gilda de Mello e Souza. When taken as a set and in the context of the constraints that derive from gender relations, they delineate some of the possible fields for the intellectual activity of women at the time. So as to avoid essentializing social markers that only become analytically potent when placed in relationship, the article concludes by a comparison of the intellectual and theatrical fields, in order to contrast career opportunities and the distinct ways of making a "name" for oneself that were available to intellectuals and actresses at the time.

Key words: Intellectual field, Critique of culture, Gender relations, Modernism, Theatre, Work partnerships

RESUMO

O artigo analisa as inflexões de gênero no campo intelectual brasileiro, em sua interface com a crítica de cultura e literária, entre os anos de 1920 e 1960, por

meio das trajetórias sociais de três mulheres expressivas, que fizeram "nome" como críticas de cultura, ensaístas e escritoras: Lúcia Miguel Pereira, Patrícia Galvão e Gilda de Mello e Souza. As três pertencem a gerações distintas e cobrem o espectro político da época: do comunismo ao socialismo, no caso de Patrícia Galvão, passando pelos círculos dos intelectuais católicos, no caso de Lúcia Miguel Pereira, ou mantendo certa distância destas questões e firmando uma identidade intelectual de tipo acadêmico, como Gilda de Mello e Souza. Vistas em conjunto e em meio aos constrangimentos derivados das relações de gênero, elas delineiam alguns dos espaços possíveis para a atuação intelectual das mulheres na época. Para não essencializar marcadores sociais que só ganham vigor analítico quando postos em relação, o artigo se fecha com uma comparação entre o campo intelectual e teatral, com o propósito de contrastar as oportunidades de carreiras e as maneiras distintas de fazer um "nome" que se abriram para as intelectuais e as atrizes no período.

Palavras-chave: Campo intelectual, Crítica de cultura, Relações de gênero, Modernismo, Teatro, Parcerias de trabalho

The object of the present article is the construction of an analysis of inflections of gender in the field of Brazilian intellectualism from 1920 to 1960.¹ I center my work on the social trajectories of three women who gained a name as cultural critics, essayists and, to a greater or lesser degree, writers: Lúcia Miguel Pereira (1901-1959), Patrícia Galvão (1910-1962), and Gilda de Mello e Souza (1919-2005). The presence of these women in the Brazilian cultural scene of their times was marked and their careers are inseparable from those of their conjugal partners: the historian Otávio Tarquínio de Souza in the case of Lúcia Miguel Pereira; the modernists Oswald de Andrade and Geraldo Ferraz in the case of Patrícia Galvão; and the literary critic and scholar Antonio Candido in the case of Gilda de Mello e Souza.

The three women I look at below belong to different generations and their political alliances cover the entire spectrum of the times, from communism and socialism in the case of Patrícia Galvão, to Lúcia Miguel Pereira's flirtation with Catholic intellectualism, to Gilda de Mello e Souza – the only one of the three to attend university – who distanced herself from politics and affirmed an academic intellectual stance. All three were situated in the main centers of Brazilian intellectual production of the times: São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro. Gilda de Mello e Souza was rooted in the emerging Paulista metropolis and Lúcia Miguel Pereira resided in Rio de Janeiro, then the political and cultural capital of Brazil. Patrícia Galvão passed through both cities during her life trajectory. Accompanying these women as they lived their intellectual and emotional lives in these cities through the lens of a comparative perspective allows us to construct a matrix-like comprehension of the wider dynamics, structures and conditions which molded the Brazilian intellectual field. Among these we find university training, journalism, publishing houses, the diverse modes of public and private patronage for the arts, family networks and one's insertion in (or exclusion from) the networks of the managerial elite.

The present article's chronological cut has two justifications. The first is biographic in nature, as Lúcia Miguel Pereira died in 1959 and Patrícia Galvão in 1962. The second has to do with the internal characteristics of the Brazilian intellectual field. The intellectual profiles of such people as Patrícia, Lúcia and Gilda, who were known for traversing several different domains of cultural production, became rarer

as positions within the intellectual field – even those involving literary criticism – became ever more specialized in the 1970s and beyond (Ramassote 2006).

Finally, the choice of these three intellectuals has no intention of being representative of the woman population at that time. They are, in fact, exceptional women who inaugurated new modalities of insertion and action in the Brazilian cultural scene in the midst of lives marked by the tensions and conflicts of gender relations. Taken together, these three women's lives delineate some possible spaces which were open to the activities of female intellectuals of the time. This is what underlies my interest in looking at their life trajectories through a blow-up approach, while, simultaneously, not losing from sight the larger outlines of the Brazilian intellectual field of the 1930s and '40s, the period in which these women became public figures.

Context

Urbanization and industrialization, the twin signs of Brazil's increasing modernization, together with the unprecedented political and cultural ferment of the 1920s (a decade marked by an intensified labor struggle, the foundation of the Communist Party, Catholic political militancy and the *tenentista* movement), created the necessary conditions for closed segments of the Carioca and Paulista elite and their middle-class allies to produce a set of new modern cultural experiments. By "meeting European influences through a dive into Brazilian detail", the modernists promoted "a localist whirlwind" according to Candido (2006:127-129). In this fashion, Brazilian "deficiencies" became reinterpreted as unique and even perhaps superior characteristics. The mulatto and the black became incorporated as objects of study and the fiction novel became an instrument of human and social research, often coupled with the amateur historical essay. "The powerfully attractive force of literature was to interfere with a growing sociological trend – conceived more as a point of view than as objective research of the social reality – giving birth to that genre of mixed origins, the essay. The essay was created as a literary form at the point where history met economy and philosophy met art. It was a thoroughly Brazilian way of investigating and discovering Brazil" (Candido 2006:137-138).

Conceived in the 1920s, Brazilian modernist experiments were forged in "the dialectic of the local and the cosmopolitan" (Candido 2006:117) and promoted a renaissance of Brazilian culture along new lines. However, it was only in the following decade, after the Revolution of 1930, that these cultural experiments stopped being transgressive and began to undergo a "process of routinization and normalization" (Candido 1984:27). Intellectuals, tied up in the political ideologies of the times and polarized between fascism, communism and Catholicism, entered vigorously into the debate regarding Brazil's social problems and turned to the investigation and study of the country's reality. "Brazil began to touch itself", in the words of Candido (*apud* Pontes 2001a:6). The concept of a *Brazilian reality* became a key concept of the period and was often found in historical-sociological, political, geographic, economic and anthropological studies of the time. Marked by a passion for interpreting the national past, as well as diagnosing and explaining the country's present, these studies were mainly edited and divulged via the *Brasiliana* and *Documentos Brasileiros* collections (Pontes 2001b). The editorial market absorbed a significant portion of these studies and also created the conditions through which many of their writers became literary professionals.

Analyzing the period, Antonio Candido highlights the centrality of the Revolution of 1930 in the construction of this new cultural panorama. The Revolution projected, on a national scale, facts which were hitherto regional in nature. It acted as "a catalyst and an axis around which a certain modality of Brazilian culture revolved, bringing together diverse elements in a completely new configuration" (Candido 1984:27). This configuration was expressed in several different sectors of the country's cultural life: in public instruction, in the reform of primary and secondary education, in literary and artistic production, in the media of cultural diffusion and in the foundation of new colleges and the first Brazilian universities. Created late in comparison to those universities throughout the rest of Latin America (which had been founded during the colonial period) the Brazilian university system was born modern and in tune with international academic systems. In other words, it was the right idea at the right place and time.

The University of São Paulo, founded in 1934 and made viable through the hiring of foreign professors, was born in this intellectual context of renewed interest in Brazil. The members of the French Mission arrived in the Paulista capital to breathe life into the University of São Paulo (USP) project. Meanwhile, in Rio de Janeiro (with the exception of the Federal District University, which had been closed at the beginning of the Estado Novo in 1937) the French Mission made its influence felt through official channels, with the blessing of President Getúlio Vargas. They were required to be linked to the Church and worked in a university environment which was under much stricter confessional control. The passage of the French Mission through the Federal capital was thus brief and had "a much more modest impact than that which it had upon USP." (Almeida 2001:236).

In São Paulo, the French contribution was decisive in implanting substituir por and consolidating the Faculty of Philosophy, Science and Letters. It was also crucial in creating a rupture with the juridical mentality which then held sway over the country's traditional institutions of higher learning, which had up to then produced "most of [Brazil's] important non-scientific and, especially, literary intellectual careers". At USP, students were to be "trained in the rules and customs of European intellectual competition" and the school strived to institute "a set of academic procedures, exigencies and criteria for evaluation and the granting of titles and promotions" (Miceli 2001a:101-102).

The mission was made up of young professors at the beginning of their careers. This was particularly the case of those who entered Brazil before the war, such as Maugüé, Lévi-Strauss, Monbeig and Bastide. These Young men had no great projection within the French intellectual scene. They taught in lyceus or non-Parisan colleges and generally published in the regions where they taught (Peixoto 2001:489). Brazil, for them, represented a possibility of creating a more successful academic career and also offered the social scientists in the group a original thematic specialization. As professors and researchers, the members of the French Mission helped construct a system of intellectual, university and academic production which was not deeply rooted in Brazilian tradition. The professors' youth was mirrored by that of the university and its students. Disappointments, stalemates, hopes and few certainties were deeply entwined with the emotions of both masters and students in this new system.

Claude Lévi-Strauss' memories of this time graphically illustrate the state of things as he found them in the recently created Faculty of Philosophy, where he was to occupy the Sociology chair from 1935 to 1937. Discovering in Brazil and at 27 years of age his calling as an ethnologist, Lévi-Strauss organized several scientific expeditions to Mato Grosso and the Amazon during his school holidays, where he

could retreat from the constant pressures of his students. According to the French anthropologist, the Brazilian youths under his charge "wanted to know everything".

Whatever the field of knowledge, [but] they believed that only the most recent theories deserved consideration. Fed up with the intellectuals of the past, which they only knew of by word of mouth, having never read the originals, they demonstrated an abiding enthusiasm for new dishes. Concerning them it was more appropriate to speak of fashions and not culture. Ideas and doctrines, to them, had no intrinsic value but were rather considered only as instruments of prestige which they must dominate. To share an already-known theory with others was the same thing as wearing a dress for the second time: one ran the risk of serious embarrassment (Lévi-Strauss 1981:97).

Acid and merciless, Lévi-Strauss' evaluation of his Brazilian students can today be read less as a primary source regarding the Faculty of Philosophy of the 1930s and more as an expression of the tumultuous emotional state of this apprentice professor and anthropologist. His observations regarding the students and the Brazilian educational system, thought ethnographically correct, reveal unanalyzed "pre-notions" with regards to the situation he encountered at the recently created USP. They suggest that, for those anthropologists trained in the centers of production of their profession's paradigms, it was still easier to explain indigenous societies which were truly "other" from the European point of view than societies such as the Brazilian which are simultaneously the prolongation and negation of those of the Old World. Above all, these anthropologists had a difficult time dealing with one very particular group that was native to these societies: the intellectuals.

Lévi-Strauss' difficulties in understanding Brazil as a culturally distinct intellectual system were not the result of personal idiosyncrasies. For this reason, his evaluation must be read as a condensed form of native speech – in this case European – regarding the impact and disappointments created by the attempt to transplant a system of work and thought which was not rooted in Brazilian native tradition.

Lévi-Strauss was far from the only person who expressed discomfort with what was going on in the Paulista university scene of the 1930s and '40s. The modernist Oswald de Andrade (1890-1954) also took the opportunity to express his ambivalent sentiments regarding its members, though for other reasons. Rejection and admiration, fascination and irony mixed in his writings as he described the "good lad", well-behaved style of the university students. Even on those occasions in which he was (very) surprised by their doings – as when in 1944, for example, he watched a production of Gil Vicente's play *Auto da barca do inferno*, Andrade couldn't resist tweaking the students. Referring to those who participated in the play in an article he published in the *O Estado de S. Paulo*, Oswald claimed that they had discovered their "brilliant refuge, perhaps their vocational passion. It is the theater. Who could have hoped that these partners, these sad employees of sociology, [...] would demonstrate that grand justice which they imposed [upon the piece]?" (Andrade 1972:65-66)²

With these compliments, the modernist author expressed his recognition that the "glory of this opening piece of the university group has raised Gil Vicente to the heights of 16th century intention". However, Andrade could not refrain from pointing out his feelings of irony with regards to the university education of the group's members, those "boring kids" and "sad employees of sociology". The roots of Oswald's discomfort reached beyond the idiosyncrasies of his admittedly overbearing personality and point to a more general aspect of the transformations which were then underway in the São Paulo intellectual field. The introduction of

new ways of conceiving of and practicing intellectual labor, promoted through the University, collided with the dominant pattern already established in the careers of the period's intellectuals, based as this was upon a meeting of journalism, politics, literature and everyday life.

Created in a cultural stew which mixed both the modernist movement and its routinization, modernist architecture, "Braziliana" collections, social and cultural intervention projects (such as the Culture Department and the Historical and Artistic National Patrimony Service³), the Faculty of Philosophy, Science and Letters of the University of São Paulo in a very short time became the axis around which revolved an entirely new academic system of intellectual production. This was due to the labors of the more expressive members of its student body during the 1940s and '50s. On the one hand, there was the *Clima* Group: Antônio Candido, Gilda de Mello e Souza, Décio de Almeida Prado, Paulo Emílio Salles Gomes, Lourival Gomes Machado and Ruy Coelho, among others (Pontes 1998). On the other, we find the social scientists reunited under the leadership of the sociologist Florestan Fernandes.

In order to measure the impact of the Faculty of Philosophy on the lives and careers of women such as Gilda de Mello e Souza who made their name as academic intellectuals, it is enough to point out that the faculties of law and medicine⁴, in which were enrolled the children of the period's ruling elite, were completely impervious to the presence of their female students, who never amounted to more than 5% of these colleges' student body between 1934 and 1949. By contrast, between 1936 and 1955, over 60% of the students of the Faculty of Philosophy were women (Miceli 2001a:96).

If the university had significant weight in the Paulista intellectual system and was decisive in the construction of feminine careers, in Rio de Janeiro its impact was nowhere near as important. In the Federal capital, the university coexisted "with other means of access to public life, being largely little more than an agency through which one obtained credentials in order to improve one's salary bracket in the upper echelons of public service" (Carvalho 2007:24).

As the nation's capital and a cosmopolitan city in its own right, Rio de Janeiro sheltered an intellectual scene which was quite different from that of São Paulo. Academies, bookstores, cafes, bars and the editorial boards of newspapers and magazines were all privileged spaces for the circulation of ideas and sociability. From the second decade of the 20th century on, Rio became "the central laboratory of a great and forceful project of political militancy, which situated the Church as one of the most important actors of the political and intellectual field" (Gomes 1999:30). In the 1930s and during the administration of Gustavo Capanema as Minister of Education and Culture (Schwartzman *et alii* 1984), Rio could also count on two poles of patronage for the arts: the State and the Felipe d'Oliveira Society, responsible for the period's most important literary award.⁵ Formed by a "heterogeneous set of intellectuals from diverse religious and ideological tendencies", whose common ground was the fact that they were "indisputably talented and possessed different power bases" (Gomes 1999:95), the Society published in the pages of its annual bulletin, the *Lanterna Verde*, authors of varying political stripes, ranging from Otávio Tarquínio de Souza, a high government employee and a self-taught historian, to communist authors such as Jorge Armado.

If state patronage and the intermixture in common networks and spaces of intellectuals from different political backgrounds set the tone of carioca sociability, in São Paulo, a city then becoming a metropolis, private patronage (Galvão 1981)

and a consolidating university system allied with the experimental theater, the social sciences, the arts and the cinema (Arruda 2001), in giving the city a particular cultural milieu. As Gilda de Mello e Souza shows, the theater pre-empted "the social sciences, undertaking the same tasks which were realized in the Northeast by the fiction novel". This phenomenon was rooted in the alterations which were taking place at lightning speed within the city's social structure. "At the same time that the old order was broken, urbanization began to occur in accelerated fashion. An entire socio-economic sector's entered into decadence [that of the agricultural oligarchy] and had its place usurped by another. The declining prestige of the farmer crossed the ascending economic and social fortunes of the immigrant. A constant and symmetric substitution of life-styles was taking place and the old world was not disappearing gradually, its agonies being lucidly comprehended and accompanied" (Mello e Souza 1980:110).

The re-translation of this social experience into the formal plane of language occurred in São Paulo through the theater and the social sciences and not through the medium of the fiction novel. Paradoxically more "modern" and more "provincial" than Rio de Janeiro, the city became the modernizing force behind the Brazilian theater, a status which was consolidated in 1948 with the creation of the Teatro Brasileiro de Comédia (Brazilian Comedy Theater), a group which obfuscated the rest of the dramaturgical scene for more than a decade .

But if São Paulo didn't produce novelists of the stature of those of the Brazilian northeast, it was in Rio de Janeiro that many of these writers found the subsidies necessary for them to practice their craft full-time. There they found publishing houses who were willing to invest in their books. José Olympio was the most famous of these and became the center of a social circle of several authors who were either well-known (Sorá, 1998) or linked "to the group of organic intellectuals recently co-opted by the regime and the central government, as well as an entire category [of authors] who obtained the publisher's seal of approval due to the fact that they were part of bureaucratic rings connected to various State bureaucracies" (Miceli 2001b:65).

Lúcia Miguel Pereira: a self-taught intellectual

Lúcia was the well-connected daughter of a well-known physician, Miguel Pereira (a professor at the Rio de Janeiro Medical College). She was also the second cousin of Antonio Candido de Mello e Souza and, on her mother's side, a member of a family of cultured women. "Her mother and grandmother were great readers, as were both of her great-grandmothers, a rarity in 19th century Brazil" (Candido 2004:128). Mostly known for her works as a critic and historian of literatures, among these *Machado de Assis* (1936),⁶ *História da literatura brasileira: prosa de ficção* (1950) and *A vida de Gonçalves Dias* (1952), Lúcia Miguel Pereira also wrote four fictional novels: *Maria Luísa* (1933), *Em surdina* (1933), *Amanhecer* (1938) and *Cabra-cega* (1954).⁷ Her first dive into literary criticism occurred at the age of 28 in *Elo* (1927-29). This magazine divulged the efforts of students and ex-students of the Notre Dame do Sion high school, a conservative institution linked to Catholic reactionary movements which was organized in Rio de Janeiro following Jackson de Figueiredo's conversion in 1916. Figueiredo was the founder of *A ordem* magazine (1921) and of the D. Vital Center (1922). He took as his inspiration 19th century European anti-revolutionary thought and was a fellow-traveler of the right-wing political movements which erupted in Brazil in the first decades of the 20th century. Jackson de Figueiredo was the principal mentor of a form of Catholic

thought which saw the political arena as crucial and which contributed to the invention of the Catholic public intellectual (Pinheiro 2007:35-36).

Lúcia's first works were published in the magazine of the school which she attended from first grade on in the same year in which the critic Alceu Amoroso Lima took over the leadership of the D. Vital Center. Attuned to Catholic thought, Lúcia followed "the established convention for a member of the elite, whether economic or social: she dedicated herself to discreet charitable works" (Mendonça 1992:xvii). She lectured at the Missão da Cruz and at the Sion school for poor children. She also occasionally wrote literary criticism and read and studied quite a bit. Self-taught, she did not attend university, but followed the career of literary critic, essayist and writer. Her insertion into carioca intellectual circles came about when she was 32 years old, when began to write regularly for the *Boletim de Ariel* (1933-37) and collaborate with the *Revista do Brasil* and the literary supplements of the *Correio da Manhã* and the *Estado de S. Paulo*.

Catholic and opposed to the materialist concerns of socialism, but also resolutely antifascist, Lúcia gradually withdrew from her initial religious positions during the course of her life, though she remained Christian in her personal convictions. Following the 1930s, "Catholic influence declined in her life, both in doctrinaire and in personal terms. She herself divorced and took up with a man who was separated from his spouse: multiple heresies for that day and age" (Mendonça 1992:xix). An intellectual who charted her own path and was recognized for her own merits, Lúcia also benefited from her partnership with historian Otávio Tarquínio de Souza (1889-1959). When she married Otávio in 1940 in a ceremony in Uruguay (one of the few countries which, at the time, recognized divorces and allowed separated people to remarry), Lúcia was a mature woman of 39 – 12 years younger than her husband. Well-positioned in the political and intellectual life of the times, Otávio was president (1918-32) and minister (1938-43) of the Federal Tax Court (Tribunal de Contas da União). He was also the first president of the Brazilian Writers Association (Associação Brasileira de Escritores), the director of the *Revista do Brasil* (1938-43) and of the *Documentos Brasileiros* collection published by José Olympio. Among the most published authors in this collection, one finds Sérgio Buarque de Holanda, Gilberto Freyre, Otávio Tarquínio de Souza and Lúcia Miguel Pereira, the only woman to achieve this distinction in a markedly masculine system of intellectual production (Pontes 2001b:472).

Towards the end of the 1950s, Lúcia was preparing "a courageous book which dealt with the feminine condition in Brazil from a historical perspective" (Candido 2004:129). This work, however, was never published as the author had declared in her will that no writings of hers "should be published after my death except by Octávio Tarquínio de Souza, who will take charge of my manuscripts. When he dies, my heirs should burn all my papers, both literary and intimate, whatever they may find" (Pereira 1992:339).⁸ After her death with her husband in a plane crash, Lúcia's will was carried out by her family.

Though we cannot know the contents of her last work, we can garnish some clues about it through a careful look at Lúcia's essays and fictional works. Far from being public declarations of feminism, these works reveal both her fascination with the topic and the critical distance she maintained from it. As a self-taught intellectual, especially during her more Catholic phase, Lúcia refused to reduce her explanation of women's situation to considerations of gender. An example of this can be seen in her article "Critique and Feminism" ("Crítica e feminismo"), published in 1944 in the newspaper *Correio da Manhã*. In this, she evaluates Virginia Woolf's *A Room of One's Own* as: "delicious with a Grace of spirit and fineness", with "extraordinary resources of malice and liveliness" in spite of "all the deficiencies given to the work by its feminist character". The English author's efforts to demonstrate the

limitations that women face, being "excluded from all that is good in life" contain, in the opinion of the critic, a dimension of untruthfulness and obsolescence. They seem "as distant from us as long skirts, fans and fainting. They are out of fashion, even though they are gracious, and complement well Virginia Woolf's mixture of sophisticatedly feminine fragility and self-assurance". Emphatic in her restriction of the author's general postulate regarding the condition of women, Lúcia affirms that Woolf confuses the social and psychological orders in her essay. Because of this, "those conditions which she establishes as the only ones which are indispensable to feminine intellectual labor – freedom of thought and a minimum of material welfare – are not the fruit of so-called feminine conquests. Rather, they are the essential rights of any human person, man or woman, artist or laborer" (Pereira 2005:114).

This critique was published eleven years after Lúcia's first fictional novel, *Maria Luísa* (1933), published by Augusto Frederico Schmidt, her friend and a Catholic intellectual and poet with ties to the Dom Vidal Center. Published in the same year as Patrícia Galvão's *Parque industrial*, the book eschewed the feminist discussions and the social and political questions which were engaging Brazilian intellectuals at the time. It also did not utilize any of the formal innovations introduced by the modernists and was received without enthusiasm by the critics. *Maria Luísa* is interesting as document created by the author in her apprentice attempt to fictionalize the experiences of the women who made up her social circle through distancing rather than identification mechanisms.

The book centers around the life of Maria Luísa — "a good daughter, exemplary wife, zealous mother and excellent housekeeper". Catholic, the protagonist attends church and does charity work out of force of habit and recognition of the duties expected of a woman of her class and social condition. Maria Luísa marriage with Artur is marked by the routine of domesticated affection until one day a trivial event makes her feel for the first time that a yawning abyss exists in her conjugal life. This feeling continues during the family's holiday in Petrópolis. Artur returns to Rio to work and encounters a childhood friend, Flávio, who had been overseas for several years. Artur takes advantage of his wife's absence to go on the town and postpones his return to Petrópolis with an excuse about unexpected and unavoidable commitments. These supposedly oblige him to cancel the weekend trip in which he was going to take Flávio meet his family. Artur stays in Rio and Flávio goes alone to meet Maria Luísa and the children at the hotel. Surprised by the news that her husband isn't coming and taken aback at meeting Flávio under the circumstances, Maria Luísa slowly accedes to the other man's enchantments, agility and cosmopolitanism.

In the book's second part, the holidays end and Maria Luísa has returned to her house with her husband and children, changed and alarmed by what has occurred between her and Flávio. The sexual aspects of their encounter are only insinuated. After realizing that it is all simply a seductive game, Maria Luísa breaks with Flávio in order "to save the shreds of her dignity". From there on, the book dives into the devastating crisis which rocks the protagonist's life. The affair with her husband's friend, originally lived as an intense discovery of "an unsuspected world, a free, colorful and brilliant world" while the only other sexual-affective relationship which she had hitherto known "seemed to be wilting", awakes in Maria Luísa "an unknown woman in revolt against life's sameness, someone vibrant with mad aspirations". But what was originally discovery quickly becomes self-flagellation. Maria Luísa, who always was sure of what was morally right and wrong, sees her world shattered. She alternates between prostrate depression and compulsive domestic work and dedication to her children.

The book's banal plot and conventional language is compounded by the overbearing presence of the narrator, who tries to distance herself from the

protagonist and who constantly interrupts the novel's flow with long and energetic commentary regarding Maria Luísa and the other characters. The book is thus a failure as a work of literature, but is of some interest for what it reveals of its author's distance in relation to the women of her class and generation who lead insipid lives in the mold of Maria Luísa.

Aware of the social limitations which were imposed upon her and having overcome several of these due to her talent and the obstinate way in which she threw herself into work, Lúcia re-evaluated her position regarding women as her life went on. What remained the same, however, was her refusal to think of herself as a feminist. "I am not [a feminist] and never was", she said in an article from 1954, in which she admitted that she was "forced to recognize that Virginia Woolf was right, when she claimed in *A Room of One's Own* that the world of men's culture is one from which women are excluded". The best proof that the English author was right was in how female authors, tolerated as intruders in the world of literature, "were received with [what was considered to be] the supreme compliment for a woman's efforts": that it "seemed to be written by a man" (Pereira 1954:24).

This re-evaluation appears at the end of the article, which is centered on women in Brazilian literature. Written by request, the article begins with a question as to how to best broach the subject: does one deal with women or with fictional female characters? Lúcia solved this dilemma with a well-aimed argument which focused on the existence of points in common, affinities and analogies, "between literary heroines and the historical female flesh and bone creatures who work in the field of literature". These commonalities were the result of "the feminine social status, which is equally reflected in fiction and in everyday existence, in the intrigues of the romance novel and in the places which are conceded to women in society, in the desires of fictitious characters and in the destinies of real young women, principally those of yesterday" (1954:17-18).

An inveterate reader and a competent historian of Brazilian literature, Lúcia exercised two skills in the course of her article, written four years before her most important book, *História da literatura brasileira: prosa de ficção* (1950), which was as good as – and for many better than – anything which had been written about the topic up to that point. With an agile pen, Lúcia raided the repertoire of Brazilian feminine literary characters and demonstrated their connections to real women's lives. "These sweet little damsels, frisky and foolish; these acidic maidens who, not finding a husband must go live with relatives and vegetate in their homes as if they were handmaidens; these wives, fearful of their husbands or slyly betraying the same; these decisive matriarchs, often despotic... These women compose the society which populates our fiction" (1954:22).

The author's style shows how much she has absorbed from her readings of Machado de Assis and Gilberto Freyre, two authors of which she frequently. She contributed, for example to the *Gilberto Freyre: sua ciência, sua filosofia, sua arte* (1962) collection and among the 64 collaborators whose works make up the volume we find some of the biggest names of the Brazilian *intelligentsia*, from Antonio Candido to Carlos Drummond de Andrade. Among these, there are only two women: Carolina Nabuco and Lúcia, who wrote the article "The value of woman in Gilberto Freyre's historical sociology" ("A valorização da mulher na sociologia histórica de Gilberto Freyre"). Seen from this angle, the work of the Pernambucan anthropologist was understood as a pioneer effort and Lúcia's treatment of it – chary as she was of the simplistic frameworks and rigid oppositions which dominate so much of gender analysis – gives Freyre's work new life and depth. The positions taken in this essay were light-years away from those expressed by the annoying narrator of Lúcia's first novel.

Patrícia Galvão: from girl to modernism's invented muse

Polemic, irreverent, emancipated: these are the adjectives used to describe Patrícia Galvão as she was constructed in the public's imagination. Patrícia was better known as "Pagu", a nickname poet Raul Bopp bestowed upon her when she was 18. The young woman became widely known by her nickname in 1920 when, still in high school, she became something of the mascot for Paulista modernism as well as Tarsila and Oswald de Andrade's own little "doll"⁹. This insertion in the artistic vanguard of the times occurred before Patrícia's whirlwind romance with Oswald, the birth of their child in 1930 and the couple's entry into the Communist Party in 1931. A series of events which were to mark Patrícia's life followed in quick succession. In 1932, she moved to Rio de Janeiro. In 1934 she travelled around the world (a trip which also marked her first work as a reporter). She lived in Paris (together with Oswald and her son) where she was arrested as a foreign communist. Repatriated, she returned to Brazil in 1934, where she was imprisoned two further times in 1935 and 1938.

But before all this had occurred, Pagu had made her initial debut as a writer of fiction, with the publication of her book *Parque industrial* when she was 23 years old. This novel is considered to be the first work of Brazilian proletarian fiction.¹⁰ Published under the pseudonym Mara Lobo and on order of the Party, the book had a small initial run which was paid for by Oswald de Andrade. Not well received by the critics, it was ripped to shreds by the Catholic poet Murilo Mendes who, in a review published in the *Boletim de Ariel* (1933:317), affirmed that the work was "a piece of petit bourgeois impressionist reporting, created by a person who wants to jump, but hasn't yet [...]. It seems that the author wants a revolution in order to resolve the sexual question".¹¹

This book's initial reception would be revised as the political passions of the period receded and recognition of Patrícia Galvão's innovative perspective became more widely established, situating the novel as a story of urban São Paulo which brought together class struggle and the war between the sexes. Of uneven literary quality, the book often slides into political rants which highlight the evils of capitalism. It is important, however, as a "social and literary document which contains a unique feminist and modernist perspective of São Paulo" (Jackson *apud* Galvão 2006:9).

The novel transposes Patrícia's experiences as a communist militant concerned with the transformations produced in the city by industrialization, immigration and by the change in the patterns of sociability and interaction between the classes. Unfortunately, the book mixes observations which were quite daring for the times with puerile phrases regarding the need for social struggle. Taking advantage of its feminine protagonists' class situation and localization within urban and industrial space, *Parque industrial* presents a simple plot in which characterizations of the social types living and moving through São Paulo seem to be more important than the story itself: "While the bourgeoisie females come down from Higienópolis and their rich neighborhoods in order to see the spectacle of the *garçonnières* and the *clubs*, the humble maids, in cap and apron, conspire in kitchens and in the yards of mansions. The exploited masses are tired and want a better world" (Galvão 2006:106).

Seven years after the publication of *Parque industrial*, Patrícia no longer held the vision of the dynamics of social struggle expressed by her initial foray into fiction. Poor and very thin as a result of her time spent as a political prisoner of the Vargas regime, she left the Communist Party in 1940 and married Geraldo Ferraz (1905-1979), with whom she lived with for the rest of her life and with whom she truly entered the cultural scene of the nation.

From this marriage was born her second son, Geraldo Galvão Ferraz, who became a journalist like his parents and who is principally responsible for the publication of his mother's autobiography, written in 1940 in the form of a letter. This was released in 2005 under the title *Paixão Pagu: a autobiografia precoce de Patrícia Galvão (Pagu's Passion: The Too-Early Autobiography of Patrícia Galvão)*. Reading this, one gets the impression of a woman who is far more complex than the vision of her that has been constructed since the 1980s when, after a period of relative obscurity, Pagu was brought to the public eye once again by the concrete poet Augusto de Campos. His book *Pagu: vida e obra*, organized and published in 1982, brought Patrícia back to the cultural and political scene as an emblematic figure of the feminism of the first half of the 20th century, a symbol of emancipated womanhood, a concretist writer who was "*avant la lettre*", a tireless defender of freedom of expression – in short as a sort of modernist icon. With the publication of Campos' book, Pagu's fame reached into unexpected corners of Brazilian culture. According to Geraldo Galvão Ferraz (2005:13) "Pagu multiplied in balls and theater pieces. She loaned her name to cultural centers, bookstores and even beauty salons".

It was predictable that this increasing fame would cover up part of Pagu's history – and the personality which made it – by replacing it with fabulous myths. In this new reading of her life and work, Patrícia passed from girl- to liberated womanhood in one swift jump, a transformation which was not conducted by herself as protagonist, but by her interpreters which have turned Pagu into heroine of their own stories. Not that she wasn't a heroine and a protagonist, but this myth-making loses sight of the fact that her situation was not at all something she boasted about. The proof of this is in her auto-biographical letter to Geraldo Ferraz, written when she was 30 years old at the height of the suffering provoked by her four years behind bars during the dictatorial regime of the Estado Novo. Written with furor and passion, the letter is an attempt to settle her debts with the past, her family, her marriage to modernist Oswald de Andrade and her political militancy as a communist cadre.

There are many possible readings of this "too-early autobiography" written by a suffering woman who saw her childhood self as an "impossible brat", living along the edges of other peoples' lives, waiting for a "chance to get away" (*apud* Ferraz 2005:57). This opportunity came before her insertion into the modernist social whirl. At 13, in the midst of a bland romance, Patrícia consummated the first "conscious act" of her life: "giving up my own body", which she "gave" in the widest sense possible, as a gift of herself and not simply in search of sexual pleasure.

Both "above" and "beneath" erotic experience, love was not born out of the carnal acts Patrícia engaged in with her first boyfriend, although she did become pregnant by him at 14 and aborted the baby. She also did not love Oswald de Andrade, a man for whom she nurtured contradictory feelings of admiration, repulsion and attraction. She categorically affirms in her letter that she did not love him even at the beginning of their romance. Because she "didn't think the sexual act to be important", she gave herself to Oswald "with indifference and maybe some bitterness". What connected the two was an immense curiosity, unending conversations, their militancy in the Communist Party, and their son, Rudá de Andrade.

Maternity was an unsettling and unenthusiastic experience for Patrícia. Her love for her son was full of ambiguities and was subject to the needs of the political struggle and the Party's agenda. Many times Rudá was cared for by Oswald while Patrícia, neck deep in political militancy, absented herself from the family's home for long stretches. There's not enough space in the present article to register all of

her voyages, changes and absences during this period. It is important to note, however, that though Patrícia's successive shifts put her beyond the conventional pale of the times in terms of maternal and amorous experience, this does not mean that she lacked feelings of love or motherhood.

Although hidden, these emotions appear in a strange place, unexpected in the life of a woman who made her fame and name as a symbol of sexual and cultural emancipation. They can be found in Pagu's intense and deliberate search for a way to transcend herself through sacrifice. It is in this emotional complex, for centuries a salient part of the life of saints and nuns, that we find the dense knot which joins together the thread of her political militancy and her life as lover and mother. Here, we find this complex has shifted away from the religious focus which customarily gives strength to its feelings (Pagu was and remained agnostic throughout her life). Instead, it has migrated into the profane realm of politics. Class and political struggle were the focus of Pagu's militancy throughout the 1930s and this was coupled with a strict obedience to Party doctrine which mirrors the prescribed "normal" gender role of woman as one who subjects and muffles oneself.

As the impassioned and painful autobiography takes form in Patrícia's letter to Ferraz, more links become apparent between "sequestered" sexuality, broken motherhood and political militancy as a transcendent exercise rooted in self-sacrifice. A lacerated woman appears and this self-portrait begins to overshadow the languid Patrícia/Pagu, the modernist Paulista icon of the 1920s, with her mysterious, cloudy eyes, full head of hair and red lipsticked mouth. It forces us to re-evaluate the social imagery which has since sprouted around her. In her letter, submission and self-sacrifice appear as the two central axes of her life up until the end of the 1930s. It is precisely this fulfillment in suffering which seems to give meaning to the ways in which Pagu lived love, politics and maternity. Quite a shock to the reader who is accustomed to seeing Patrícia Galvão through the lens of the libertarian image created of her during the 1980s!

Patrícia launched herself, body and soul, into the cultural militancy of the 1940s and beyond with the same intensity with which she gave herself to political militancy during the first part of her life. This shift of her energies did not occur in the universalist abyss of psychological abstractions. To the contrary: it was rooted in the intellectual and cultural soil of São Paulo in the 1940s. Her first step was writing for the *A Vanguarda Socialista*, a Trotskyite newspaper opposed to the Communist Party. Patrícia played an important role in this publication, working as a literary and cultural critic while the majority of the other contributors – Geraldo Ferraz among them – busied themselves with writing about social and political issues.¹² Situating herself as opposed to Stalinism and socialist realism in her cousin, Patrícia often defended "the independence and liberty of the author, above all else", criticizing the "contingent servility that the Party [imposes] upon its militants" (*apud* Facioli 1985:150).¹³

With the end of *A Vanguarda Socialista*, Patrícia Galvão and Geraldo Ferraz threw themselves into a new challenge: the Literary Supplement of the *Diário de S. Paulo*, created by the couple in 1946 and finally closing in 1955. The Supplement charted São Paulo's metropolitization and also created new links between journalism and the city's erudite cultural *avante garde* (Neves 2005). Patrícia was quite active in this back-and-forth between the press and the wider cultural scene, illuminated by the loving and working partnership which she maintained with Geraldo Ferraz. The Supplement was not the first time in which they worked together on a joint project. A year earlier, when they had still been part of *A Vanguarda Socialista's* stable of writers, the couple published a co-written fictional novel, *A famosa revista*. It was in the *Diário de S. Paulo's* Literary Supplement,

however, that both writers' drive to divulge the happenings in the city's cultural, literary and artistic scene took on its most professional and collaborative form.

Different from the young students (among them Gilda de Mello e Souza) who launched *Clima* magazine in 1941 and who would be one of the main topics of discussion of the Literary Supplement by the end of the decade, neither Geraldo Ferraz nor Patrícia Galvão attended university. One of the reasons for this is that they simply lacked the material conditions to do so. Ferraz, for example, had a difficult childhood and was made an orphan early on. The main problem in Pagu's case, however, seems to be lack of social conditions, being that the expectation of her family – quite common for the times – was that a girl of her class and social standing wouldn't need education beyond the high school level (Patrícia would graduate from high school at age 18 in 1928).

Married to Patricia and well established in his daily routine as a journalist, Ferraz would dedicate himself to art criticism throughout the 1930s and especially in '40s. As a professional journalist, he published his opinions about non-academic painting. At the same time, he participated in the organization of important art events, wrote the prefaces to exposition catalogs and interviewed painters. Beginning in 1946 in the pages of the Literary Supplement, Geraldo Ferraz dedicated himself to full-time art criticism and the championing of modern architecture. Meanwhile, Patrícia Galvão stuck to literary criticism. Together, the couple would contribute to grounding these two journalistic activities on a more solid and professional basis.

Throughout the 1930s and especially the '40s, as the pioneers of an admittedly short-lived cultural supplement, Ferraz and Galvão forged a loving and work partnership which is admirable even in the light of today's norms. This partnership marks "the transit in two different directions of a journalist-intellectual couple, representatives of the vanguard, who sought recognition in the cultural milieu outside of the routines of the newsroom, something which occurred, in contradictory fashion, in great part due to their work as journalists" (Neves 2005:22).

Gilda de Mello e Souza: academic essayist

Patrícia Galvão and Lúcia Miguel Pereira were self-taught intellectuals whose cultural production was initially nurtured by the radical political climate of the 1930s – Communist Party membership in the case of Pagu and participation in the Catholic renovation movement in the case of Lúcia. By contrast, Gilda de Mello e Souza gained recognition as an intellectual in a scenario marked by the confluence of the influence of Mário de Andrade, the modernist "Pope" of São Paulo (and Gilda's second cousin) and the education she received at the College of Philosophy of the University of São Paulo. An academic intellectual, Gilda made her mark through the books and essays which she authored and not in articles published in the press. Her situation was thus quite distinct from that of the other two women whom we've dealt with above and who made their names as intellectuals in the fields of journalism and literary criticism.

Recognized particularly as a cultural critic, Gilda de Mello e Souza first came out as an author in *Clima* in 1941. As a member of the magazine's editorial group, she occupied (together with the group's other members) a singular position in the Paulista cultural system. This position was the result of the group's recovery of elements which were central to intellectual activities in the past – the writing of

essays and critiques – and their renewal of these elements within the academic mold. As critics, the group was different from the modernists – writers and artists in their majority – but shared with these a taste for literature and for esthetic and cultural innovation. As university students, the group contributed to the intellectual sedimentation of the modernist tradition. As critics and university students, they differed from social scientists in a strict sense, not only in their choice of themes but also in the way they treated their chosen material. Instead of monographic specialized studies, they wrote wide-ranging essays which localized cultural objects within an ample system of linkages and correlations (Pontes 1998).

When she was a young lady, Gilda tried her hand at fiction. In 1941 she published her short story "Week-end with Teresinha". The main character was a girl from the country who was about to turn 10. She was situated within a scenario bounded by family relationships, friendships, latent sexuality, the duties and tedium provoked by her piano lessons and her desire to be a ballerina. Teresinha anxiously awaits her 10th birthday party, which is ruined by a sudden rainstorm. Mixing psychological characterization with objective descriptions of Teresinha's middle class family and life, Gilda weaves the theme of the frustrated birthday party with her pre-adolescent character's mutating sexuality. The story's title seems to have been chosen with a point in mind, "obeying the author's liking of hidden angles and decentralized composition, it seems to hold out future... promise" (Arêas 1996:25).

Gilda de Mello e Souza's initial work of fiction contained the promise of the full-fledged writer which the woman might someday become. This was not recognized, however. While her friends and colleagues at *de Clima* were toasted and praised for their important contributions as cultural critics, Gilda's work received only one single evaluation from the modernist Sérgio Milliet. According to this critic, the "newest" generation was showing "great promises for victory" as essayists and critics but not as writers of fiction.¹⁴ This unfavorable review of Gilda's work did not have the paralyzing effect which Milliet perhaps hoped for, however. At the end of 1941, Gilda published her second short story, "Armando deu no macaco", which focuses on the dilemmas and frustrations of a civil servant who dreams of escaping his banal and repetitive everyday life. The third and last short story which Gilda wrote for *Clima* was published in April 1943. In "Rosa Pasmada", the author describes a couple's disagreements. Roberto, the husband, wants to escape his suffocating marriage, but is unable to do so. His wife Lúcia, on the other hand, holds on ever more tightly to the memories of the couple's past. Through her use of an oblique point of view, the author shifts, by almost imperceptible degrees, the stories point of view from the masculine to the feminine, making "both rationalizations ambiguous" and pushing "the solution to the conflict into a dead end" (Arêas 1996:26). In this story, Gilda demonstrated a capacity for extracting, from a slight fragment of daily life, all the psychological implications which permeate a romantic falling out, allied with a talent for presenting the theme in a tight story-telling format. This was not enough, however, for her to continue on in her career as a writer. 15 years would go by and new times would dawn before she would publish her fourth and last short story: "A visita", released in 1958 in the *O Estado de S. Paulo's* Literary Supplement.

Insecurity may have lead Gilda de Mello e Souza to abandon fiction during her time with *Clima*. But if that was the case, it cannot be understood as a personal problem. Rather, such a feeling was the condensed expression of the situation in which the women of her generation lived. The access to a formal education which women had at the College of Philosophy and the sociability of the university scene permitted many of them to reorient the social role to which they had been educated: no longer did they see themselves as simply mothers and housewives. The College's renovating impact was enormous, especially upon those women who actively sought to create another destiny for themselves, as was the case with

Gilda. But these advances came at the cost of conflicts, insecurities and specific dilemmas, especially at the beginning of the period in question, when women still did not feel socially secure enough to invade what was considered to be a masculine field of endeavor.

It was in this context of redefinition of intellectual work and transformation in gender relations that Gilda abandoned fiction. Her gesture had a very precise meaning: a refusal of the position which her colleagues at the magazine attributed to her. Gilda's revolt against the two modalities of intellectual expression which were open to the women of the times – poetry and fiction – was perhaps her "first act of liberty" (Mello e Souza 1981-84:147), even though this may not have had the impact which she intended. If the *Clima* group was well known for producing successful love affairs, few of the couples which came out of it were able to realize parallel careers with the same degree of success as Antonio Candido and Gilda. When the magazine was launched in 1941, Gilda had only written two prior works of literary criticism and had never touched upon the arts in general, for all her formal educational background in philosophy and sociology. Lourival Gomes Machado was the magazine's art critic and Antonio Candido was its literary critic. These positions did not simply express an internal division of labor at *Clima*, however: they also expressed the way in which gender relations were lived within the group. The men were in charge of dealing with "noble" themes such as culture and politics and were also responsible for writing the magazine's permanent columns. The women, by contrast, were responsible for editing and cleaning up the written pieces and worked as collaborators, contributing poems and short stories. They were only occasionally writers; for all that they were the main characters of a masculinized fictional universe.

Gilda became *Clima's* official fiction writer. Following the advice which Mário de Andrade had given her in 1941, she accepted her cousin's suggestion that it would be a good thing if the magazine had a permanent short-story writer, someone who dedicated themselves exclusively to writing fiction. She rapidly discovered, however, that the job's prestige was not enough to overcome the ambivalence of her feelings regarding it. The envy and resentment Gilda felt for being regulated to literary production while her friends directed their energies to "thinking matters" left her at odds with *Clima*. This was certainly the case in terms of her self-representation within an intellectual project in which she initially felt insecure. This insecurity was not so much personal in nature as it was founded on questions of age and gender and represented quite well the difficulties women encountered, both within the group and in society at large. This was particularly the case of those women who, like Gilda, did not know exactly what they wanted to be but were very clear about what they did *not* want to be: "simply mothers, married with children, running a home, receiving and paying visits and living submissively in the shadow of one's husband" (Mello e Souza 1981-84:147).

Gilda also revolted against the destiny which was traditionally reserved for non-conformist educated women in Brazilian society: that of being a poetess or writer of fiction. She preferred to realize her ambitions "as would a man" (*idem*), in other words, as an essayist, academic intellectual and professor of the College of Philosophy, where she graduated in 1939 before becoming Roger Bastide's assistant. Under his orientation, Gilda defended her doctoral dissertation in the sociology of esthetics, *A moda no século XIX (Fashion in the 19th Century)*, in 1950.

Gilda's interest with the universe of letters – acquired early in life as an avid reader and reinforced by the influence of her cousin Mário de Andrade – would revive due to the intellectual exchange with her husband, Antonio Candido (who also researched the 19th century in his book *Formação da literatura brasileira*) and to

the mentoring she received at the hands of Roger Bastide, a sociologist interested in all types of symbolic manifestations of social life, including art and literature. This interest was at the root of Gilda's qualities as a writer, which so irritated Florestan Fernandes that he complained that her work was "an abusive exploitation of freedom of expression", incompatible in his eyes "with the nature of a sociological essay" due to its "lack of empiric documentation in some of its more suggestive and important explanations" (Fernandes 1952:139).¹⁵

Seen today, the characteristics which Florestan complained about in 1952 in the pages of *Anhembi* magazine are precisely the high points of Gilda's work. On the one hand, there is her expository style; on the other, the ease with which the author moves between the sociological and the esthetic. In her writing, Gilda showcased her sterling abilities at interweaving the written testimony of other authors and the analytical arguments which form the backbone of her work. Moreover, her gimlet eye picked apart fashion as a symbolic language which was plastic enough to express diffuse ideas and feelings while marking belonging and highlighting social distance and distinction. Recognizing fashion's commitment to social injunctions and admitting up front that "form is in large measure sanctioned by society", Gilda still does not let go of esthetic analysis for its own sake, seeing in fashion a special form of art. In order to decipher this art form, it was necessary to have both an intimate knowledge of the topic and a wider understanding of how symbolic forms were sustained and expressed by art in general (Pontes 2006). Gilda was a rare example of an expert in both of these fields.

In spite of her obvious mastery of the subject, the theme of her dissertation was understood by many people to be futile and silly "women's stuff". In the terms of the academic and scientific hierarchy of the times, which decided not only which objects were worthy of study but the forms in which their study was to be expressed, Gilda's work was understood to be "a detour from the norms which predominated in the University of São Paulo's dissertations" (Mello e Souza 1987:7). This, of course, was an eloquent sign of a double estrangement. On the one hand, it demonstrated the diffuse asymmetry which marked women's lives in the intellectual and institutional arenas which were then being constructed within the university.¹⁶ On the other, it was a sign of how the conception of sociology which was then dominant was far removed from many of Gilda's concerns. This sociology was animated by a scientific "spirit" and imbued with a positivist ideology which understood research to be synonymous with the systematic analysis of reality. In its most concrete incarnation, in the work of the exemplary sociologist Florestan Fernandes, it rejected both the essay and the esthetic dimensions of social phenomena. Gilda's shift to the area of aesthetics in 1954, along with Antonio Candido's move to Assis in 1959, after 16 years of work in the field of sociology (He would later return to São Paulo in 1960, but as a professor of literature) are extremely significant indications of the opposition which was established between culture and science during at the College of Philosophy of the University of São Paulo this period.

Partnerships, work and works

Using different resources and means of expression, Lúcia, Patrícia and Gilda reflected upon the social and psychological containment of women's lives – themselves, their contemporaries and the generations of women which had preceded them. In her initial work of fiction, *Maria Luisa*, Lúcia Miguel Pereira sought to distance herself from the title character and from the limited horizons in which she – and by extension middle class, married, Catholic, non-professional

women in general – lived. The narrator’s incessant voice, as imbued with certainties as the title character’s life, though in a completely opposite direction, transformed over time into the reflective, argumentative and astute authorial voice with which Lúcia tackled the thorny problem of the female condition.

Patrícia Galvão, as we’ve seen above, grappled with this theme through a discussion of urbanization and class struggle and through the prism of the lives of the female characters in *Parque industrial*, especially those who were engaged in political struggle, the women with whom she most identified. Aside from dealing with the female condition in fictional form, Patricia was the woman, amongst the three dealt with here, who most expressed a radical aversion to the dominant conventions of the day regarding morality and sexuality.

Gilda de Mello e Souza, by contrast, outlined with an acutely analytical eye the condition of women in both fiction and a doctoral dissertation regarding fashion, a key component of which she understood to be frustration. Gilda’s fascination with frustration permeated both of her expressive endeavors – fictional and academic – and she felt that under certain historical and social conditions, frustration was “an inalienable part of feminine destiny” (Arêas 2007:131)¹⁷. For this reason, Gilda went beyond sociological and esthetic implications when dealing with 19th century fashion. As the only “licit means of expression”, fashion offered the bourgeois woman a means to “discover her individuality”. Uneasy and unsatisfied, “remaking her own body, exaggerating the width of her hips, compressing her waist, fixing the natural movements of her hair, [she] sought in her self – given that she had no other resource – for her own being, attentively researching her own soul” (Mello e Souza 1987:100).

These exceptional women were vigorous intellectuals and their life trajectories illuminate the resources which they mobilized and the spaces in which it was possible for them to insert themselves in the markedly masculine intellectual field. One of these spaces is delineated by work and love partnerships. If this is a common point in the lives of the three women analyzed here, given that all of them married prestigious intellectuals, we must also emphasize the significant differences which existed in these relationships which were, in turn, linked to greater or lesser symmetries in these relationships. Patrícia and Oswald de Andrade (the richest of the Brazilian modernists) are the most asymmetric of these couples, due to their different social origins and the brutal differences between their economic and cultural capital. At the opposite pole are Gilda and Antonio Candido, as well as Patrícia and Geraldo Ferraz. Here we find similar social origins, ideas, careers and intellectual interests which made these partnerships more egalitarian. Lúcia and Otávio Tarquínio de Souza relationship is somewhere in the middle between these two poles, with the male partner being much older and separated from an earlier wife.

Civil status could have enormous implications in the life of a woman like Lúcia: Catholic, upper class and an “old maid” until she was 39. But it had little impact on someone like Patrícia, a woman of humble origins who was ahead of her time and would marry twice, the first time with Oswald, a man who was already famous as a writer with an exuberant sex life and a marked disrespect for the moral patterns of the time.

Aside from the diverse asymmetries present in these relationships, we must also pay attention to the different expressive resources which each woman had or conquered during her intellectual life. This includes the way in which each one of them constructed a work with her own authorial diction and situated herself within the job market. Lúcia worked with various genres, moving from cultural criticism to

literary history, biography, fiction and even children's literature. She produced a large and varied body of work, fusing genres which were generally practiced separately by the intellectuals of the time, as was the case of her husband Otávio who restricted his work to historical biographies. Lúcia took advantage of her options and found means to make innovative contributions, inserting herself in the Carioca intellectual field as a versatile author who could competently produce fiction, literary history, journalistic columns or pondered contributions to prestigious collections. Patrícia, by contrast, moved from fiction to politics and then on to literary, theater and cultural criticism, taking risks on innovative projects such as a Trotskyite magazine or an innovative literary supplement for a major newspaper. Her greatest legacy was her life itself, which joined women's emancipation with unconditional support of freedom of expression. Finally, Gilda moved from fiction to sociology and then on to philosophy. Author of a small body of work when compared to that of Antonio Candido, her writings are easily as vigorous as those of her husband. Gilda contemplated a series of objects during her life – fashion, literature, painting, the cinema – and used them all to reveal, with analytical rigor, passion and top-notch writing, the symbolic forms of social life.

The "word" and "grace": some final considerations

A rapid comparison between the intellectual field in which Gilda, Pagu and Lúcia were situated and the field of the theater, taking as an analytic focus the social relations of gender, permits us to contrast the career opportunities and the different manners in which a "name" could be forged for actresses and intellectuals. In particular, it is useful to look at the actresses who were active in São Paulo during the 1940s and '50s — Cacilda Becker, Tônia Carrero, Maria Della Costa, Fernanda Montenegro, Nydia Lícia and Cleyde Yáconis, among others — when the city became a modernizing pole for the Brazilian theater, obfuscating the Carioca theater scene for over a decade (Brandão 1988). During this period, in the words of actress Maria Della Costa, "women ruled the theater"¹⁸ and, for this reason, were able to make "a name for themselves" earlier than in other fields of activity, garnishing prestige, authority and recognition (Bourdieu & Delsaut 1975).

The three intellectuals dealt with above were exceptional women in the sense that, upon entering the male-dominated intellectual field and suffering, to a greater or lesser degree, difficulties due to their sex, they were able to use their cultural capital, gained through study or through social relations in the field of cultural production, to achieve their goals. By contrast, the actresses mentioned above made a name for themselves and became artistic authorities in a much less cultured and schooled field of endeavor which was much more open to the feminine presence. There were no theater schools or colleges in Brazil when these women began practicing their craft and when the first of these – the School for the Dramatic Arts – was created by Alfredo Mesquita in the same year in which the Brazilian Comedy Theater was inaugurated (1948), some of these actresses, such as Cacilda Becker, immediately began teaching without ever having been students. They were the disciples of foreign directors who had been heavily imbued with the culture of the theater and the education which they received at these men's hands was filtered and restructured by and through the theater companies which they set up in active collaboration with their partners.

More "feminine" than the intellectual field during the 1930s and '40s, the theater illuminates, with its contrasts, the possible spaces traversed, resources utilized and difficulties confronted by Gilda de Mello e Souza, Patrícia Galvão and Lúcia Miguel

Pereira in their efforts to achieve recognition as essayists, cultural critics and intellectuals. This does not mean that gender was not an issue in the theater. Gender divisions were quite well established in the theater world of the times, though with different inflections. While both men and women could perform on the stage, for example, only men could be dramatists. Between the more "feminine" pole of acting, occupied by both men and women, and the more "masculine" pole of dramaturgy, occupied by male authors, one finds such positions as (male) directors and (female) rehearsal managers, with a clearly differentiated recognition being afforded to the first group. In the theater groups and casts, the leading lady, remodeled by modernist conceptions of the theater, continued to be the central figure, even when her name was not part of the company's. In order to maintain this centrality, women needed to employ the professional competence which they had gained as actresses, with the aid and support of their partners. It was not by chance that many of these women hooked their artistic names to those of the companies which they helped found.

This was quite a different situation from those people involved in cultural criticism, though these women's names (or pseudonyms, in the case of Mara Lobo/Patrícia Galvão) were also stamped on the works that they produced. It can also not be said that they couldn't rise to more solid positions of intellectual authority and authorship, as was clearly the case of Lúcia Miguel Pereira. However, the positions of control and prestige within the intellectual field were primarily occupied by men and, as Gilda de Mello e Souza life trajectory shows, these would only open to women much more slowly and in a more tortuous fashion than to their male professional colleagues.

These considerations are not offered up in an attempt to essentialize the social markers of gender and even less to encapsulate the life trajectories of flesh and blood women as anemic reflections of a supposedly common social condition of subjectification. What I have sought to do here is to set in relation trajectories, careers, partnerships, difficulties and the allocation of resources in specific social spaces (such as the fields of cultural production) marked by gender cleavages. I have done this in a manner which shows how these replicated, with specific contents, the cleavages which occurred due to their greater or lesser proximity to the political field. The more distant these phenomena are from the political field, the more their cultural activity becomes associated with the feminine. Meanwhile, as they draw nearer to the political, they become more and more understood as masculine and are associated with principles and styles that are socially defined as masculine. If I am correct in my surmise, this procedure explains the ways in which and reasons why the intellectual field and the field of the theater are more or less refractory to the activities of women. Both fields are inscribed in the same cultural texture, marked by the expansion of the metropolises of Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo and by the convergence of the "word", the "gesture" and "grace".¹⁹

Notes

¹ This article is much indebted to my readings of the studies of intellectual life in other social formations, in particular the works of Auerbach (2007), Bender (1993), Bourdieu (1984, 1992), Chadwick & Courtivron (1993) Elias (1995), Sarlo (2003), Schorske (1998) and Williams (1982).

² Cf. Oswald de Andrade, "Diante de Gil Vicente", *Ponta de Lança*, 1972, pp. 65-66, my emphasis. (Reproduction of an article published in 1944 in the newspaper *O Estado de S. Paulo*).

³ For a deeper analysis of the cultural politics of this period, see Rubino (1991) and Schwartzman *et alii* (1984).

⁴ Regarding the institutional and intellectual profile of these colleges, see Schwarcz (1993).

⁵ Among the authors and books which this society awarded we find: "Gilberto Freyre, with *Casa grande & senzala*, in 1933, Lúcia Miguel Pereira, with *Machado de Assis*, in 1939, Rachel de Queirós, with *As três Marias*, José Lins do Rego, with *Água mãe*" (Gomes 1999:90).

⁶ The revelation of Lúcia's name occurred with the publication of *Machado de Assis (estudo crítico-biográfico)* in 1936. This book was reviewed by or commented upon by several important intellectuals and critics such as Alceu Amoroso Lima, Álvaro Lins, Manuel Bandeira, Monteiro Lobato, Augusto Frederico Schmidt and José Lins do Rego, among others. With this biographical work, Lúcia won "the greatest literary prize of the times, given out by the Felipe d'Oliveira Society". "[...] without a doubt, the book was a renovation of the ways in which biographies were written, but mainly it was a reopening of the studies of Machado [...] adding to and even sometimes reifying the path opened by such pioneers as Alcides Maya and Alfredo Pujol, but above all else by Lúcia Miguel Pereira and Augusto Meyer". Cf. "Dados biográficos da autora (nota da editora)". In: Pereira (1988a:12).

⁷ Lúcia Miguel Pereira's fictional works were republished in 2006 in a single volume, *Ficção reunida*, thanks to the initiative of the Federal University of Paraná.

⁸ Part of this Will can be found in Lúcia Miguel Pereira's posthumous book, *A leitora e seus personagens*, published in 1992, which brought together articles which she had published in periodicals (1931-1943) and in books. The volume has an interesting preface written by Bernardo Mendonça and an extensive bibliography researched by Luciana Viégas.

⁹ The words are those of the artist Flávio de Carvalho and are reproduced in "Roteiro de uma vida-obra" included in Campos' book (org.), 1982, p.320.

¹⁰ for a deeper discussion of the proletarian fiction novel, see Rossi (2004).

¹¹ In this same review, Mendes counterpoises Pagu's novel with Jorge Amado's *Cacau*. According to the critic, the Bahian author's novel has "another conscience entirely. The author examines the life of the workers on a cacao plantation and brings deep insight to the problem without sacrificing the interests of human drama to the picturesque." (Mendes 1933:317). I would like to thank Luiz Gustavo Freitas Rossi for his indication of this review.

¹² In this sense, see "Entrevista com Edmundo Muniz" (one of the men who founded *A Vanguarda Socialista*, together with art critic Mário Pedroso) in Facioli (1985:129).

¹³ Cf. Patrícia Galvão, "A sementeira da revolução", originally published in *A Vanguarda Socialista*, ano I, n.6, October 5th 1945, reproduced in Facioli (1985:150).

¹⁴ Milliet's evaluation, published in August 1941 in the bi-weekly *Planalto*, was reproduced in *Clima magazine*, n.3, August 1941.

¹⁵ For an analysis of the implications of this review in the context of the tensions and disputes within Paulista sociology, see Jackson (2007).

¹⁶ For an exhaustive analysis of the situation of women at the College of Philosophy, see Trigo (1997).

¹⁷ In this essay, Vilma Arêas once again confirms the acuity of her reflections on Gilda's fictional works, showing that these should not be treated as something apart from the author's later essays and critical works. Rather, they must be seen as integrated within a subtle theme which connects all her works and which involves frustration– "Gilda de Mello e Souza's great topic" (Arêas 2007:131).

¹⁸ Part of an interview given by Maria Della Costa to the newspaper *A Tribuna de Santos*, in 26/02/1984.

¹⁹ If in some contexts the relationship between the theater, university and the city signals diverging fields (Schorske 1998), in others, it signals converging paths which express formal and social similarities such as those which I sought out in *Intérpretes da metrópole* (Pontes 2008).

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