

CULTURAL REPRESENTATIONS IN THE WORK *CAATINGAS E CHAPADÕES*, BY FRANCISCO DE ASSIS IGLÉSIAS (1912-1919)

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ABSTRACT

The text explores the construction of cultural representations of the Brazilian Sertão in the early twentieth century, highlighting how authors and scientists from the South of the country shaped a stereotyped view of the region. The work "Caatingas and Chapadões" by Francisco de Assis Iglésias is analyzed, offering a vision of the Sertão that mixes agronomic and cultural observations, in addition to discussing the power of representations and national identity.

Keywords: Cultural representations, Sertão.

INTRODUCTION

The representations of the social world thus constructed, although they aspire to the universality of a diagnosis based on reason, are always determined by the interests of a group that forges them. [...] Perceptions of reality are by no means neutral discourses: they produce strategies and practices (social, school, political) that tend to impose authority at the expense of others, despised by them, to legitimize a reforming project or to justify, for the individuals themselves, their choices and behaviors³

Every discourse is a manifestation of power, no discourse is neutral and no author is a blank page, representing the world according to their social place. It is in this scenario of representations and writings about oneself and the other that the present research aims to work with the work *Caatingas and Chapadões* written by Francisco de Assis Iglésias, with

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³ CHARTIER, 2002, p.17.



the spatial and temporal cut of the present article set in the early years of the twentieth century. while the South of the country, favored by development and economic conditions, began to look at this region with the aim of mapping it and integrating it into the national identity.

The search for this identity arises in a scenario of recent transformations that shaped the country's scientific environment, such as the end of slavery, the crisis of sugar production, the beginning of the Brazilian industrialization process, the Drought of 1877, the cangaço and the Proclamation of the Republic. These changes directed attention to the South, while the Sertão remained hostage to its own social organization until that moment. As Durval Muniz rightly said, the Sertão region, "until the mid-1910s, the Northeast did not exist. Nobody thought about the Northeast, the Northeasterners were not perceived, nor criticized as people of short stature, different and poorly adapted."⁴

The spatiality of this territory would carry with it unique themes stereotyped by the literary and scientific productions made by the South, where cangaço, messianism, misery, drought, and lack of hygiene would be characteristic issues of the Sertão. Literary and journalistic works such as the production of Graciliano Ramos, *Vidas Secas*, Euclides da Cunha with *Os Sertões*⁵ that reinforce these guiding points and fed national attention to the region, as Brazil sought to create a national identity, taking great strides towards progress and modernity. The need for these two topics to achieve these ideals and create this nationality was reinforced, and in addition to them, the issue of hygiene and sanitation also circulated with great importance.

The real and the literary are entangled in the work of representing the Sertão, along with the construction of literature, scientific trips were made to map specific issues of the region. They can be considered important objects of analysis in the social sciences and history. Since they seek to understand how these travelers, doctors, scientists and naturalists, built images of nature and the population that helped form their own social imagination about the country. These travelers, in addition to their specialist themes, included verses about family, food, clothing, housing, work, cultural, social and economic contrasts, European influence, nation-building, civilization, modernization, and the country's development.

⁴ ALBUQUERQUE JÚNIOR, Durval Muniz de. *The Invention of the Northeast and Other Arts*. 6. ed. São Paulo: Editora Massangana, 2011. p.6

⁵ RAMOS, Graciliano. *Vidas Secas*. São Paulo: Record, 1938.; CUNHA, Euclides da. *Os Sertões: campanha de Canudos*. São Paulo: Editora Brasiliense, 1902. QUEIROZ, Rachel de. *The Fifteen*. Rio de Janeiro: José Olympio, 1930.



The travelers who stood out for working on health and the Sertão at the beginning of the twentieth century were promoted by the Oswaldo Cruz Institute (IOC), the expedition carried out by Arthur Neiva and Belisário Penna, to the North and Northeast of Brazil in 1912, at the request of the Inspectorate of Works against Droughts, an agency of the Ministry of Industry Affairs, Road and Public Works. "In the report, the populations of the interior of the country were characterized by images of disease, isolation, geographic and cultural, illiteracy, poverty and vocation to regress."⁶ Their travel report is the pillar to think about the conditions of the sick Sertão, because in addition to being specialists, they recorded with photos the ills present in the Northeast.

At the same time, the main traveler analyzed in this article is Francisco de Assis Iglésias⁷ with his work entitled "*Caatingas e Chapadões (1951)*"⁸ which carries possibilities of representation and reconstruction of the backcountry landscape, as well as approximations between History and Health, a field still little explored in terms of the History of Piauí. In his work, cities such as Parnaíba, Teresina, Floriano, Santa Filomena, Uruçuí, among others⁹, stand out, he sails aboard the ship "Brasil" that transports him from Rio de Janeiro to Fortaleza, a place that gives access to the Parnaíba River and follows a cage¹⁰, the means of transport was perfect for the conditions of the North, since the river was too narrow for large vessels. His notes go beyond the agronomic study, as Iglésias made a point of exposing right at the presentation of the book, "In addition to the agronomic observations that interested me more closely, I did not miss the opportunity to gather information about the way of life of man in the regions I visited".¹¹ Thus, he clarifies that his writing would be marked by curiosity and attention to record a little about the culture of the Piauí man.

Thus, the natural, urban and everyday landscapes are also described by the writer, in a tone of memory and record, in the form of a romanticized narrative, which opens the door to dialogues between his work and the conditions of health and hygiene in the Sertão.

⁶ NEIVA, Arthur; PENNA, Belisário. Scientific trip through the north of Bahia, southwest of Pernambuco, south of Piauí and from north to south of Goiás. *Memórias do Instituto Oswaldo Cruz*, Rio de Janeiro, v.8, n.3, p.74-224. 1916.

⁷ It is useful to expose the biography of the writer, he was born on January 6, 1889, in the city of Piracicaba and died on July 13, 1969, was the son of Spanish immigrants, and graduated as an agronomist. His training earned him work in sectors related to the issue of maniçoba and later in the management of land of the union within Piauí, and it was on these journeys through the Sertão that his travel diary to the Brazilian northeast would be born, passing through several cities in Piauí.

⁸ IGLÉSIAS, Francisco de Assis. *Caatingas and plateaus: notes, impressions and reminiscences of the Brazilian mid-north (1912-1919)*. São Paulo: Companhia Editora Nacional, 1953.

⁹ Other cities such as Oeiras, Amarante, Bom Jesus, Coroatá, Barra Grande.

¹⁰ "Cage" - in popular nomenclature. It is a medium-sized vessel, which carried people or goods, passengers usually slept in hammocks on deck. It was mainly used when crossing narrow rivers

¹¹ IGLÉSIAS, Francisco de Assis. *Caatingas and plateaus: notes, impressions and reminiscences of the Brazilian mid-north (1912-1919)*. São Paulo: Companhia Editora Nacional, 1953. p. 23



Therefore, to exemplify these passages written by the author, the "high vanity of the people of Parnaíba" is initially highlighted¹², which even with the lack of sanitation, continuing, in his first contact with the capital of Piauí, highlighted how it would be "the least favored by progress"

The works cited carry a descriptive richness and a sociological analysis, which often emphasized the brutality and aridity of the sertão, contributing to the stereotyped view of the region as a space of backwardness and misery, which are synthetic and abstract concepts that seek to account for an intellectual generalization, an enormous variety of effective experiences. To speak and see the nation or the region is not, strictly speaking, to mirror these realities, but to create them."¹³ element. In Iglésias' narrative, stereotyped themes are also present when the author, at the beginning of the book, declares, "The narratives of the facts and things I saw, as well as in the comments I added, I always tried to be as simple and clear as possible, so that the truth, my supreme ideal, would not be sacrificed"¹⁴

In other words, he declares to report the truth¹⁵ beyond the precepts and prejudices already established in his cultural baggage, since he had a privileged education and is the son of immigrants, with his work in which he declares: "In addition to the agronomic observations that interested me more closely, I did not miss the opportunity to gather information about the way of life of man in the regions I visited" ¹⁶

For History, their speeches are the object of problematization and their silencing, too. Therefore, to contrast with the author's view, the government reports from the years 1912 to 1919 are used to dialogue with the author's statements. In this context of looking at the Brazilian Sertão, countless trips from the South were made with different missions, doctors, engineers, architects, each with a goal, but all working to help understand a part of Brazil stereotyped by the literary and scientific creations of the South.

To guide this article, we take as a map the work "Caatingas e Chapadões" by Francisco de Assis Iglesias, which, in the form of a romanticized narrative, reports his

¹² IGLÉSIAS, Francisco de Assis. Caatingas and plateaus: notes, impressions and reminiscences of the Brazilian mid-north (1912-1919). São Paulo: Companhia Editora Nacional, 1953. p. 42

¹³ IGLÉSIAS, Francisco de Assis. Caatingas and plateaus: notes, impressions and reminiscences of the Brazilian mid-north (1912-1919). São Paulo: Companhia Editora Nacional, 1951 p.38.

¹⁴ IGLÉSIAS, Francisco de Assis. Caatingas and plateaus: notes, impressions and reminiscences of the Brazilian mid-north (1912-1919). São Paulo: Companhia Editora Nacional, 1951. p.419.

¹⁵ Truth, as discussed by Adam Schaff in "History and Truth," is a process of knowledge in which the subject, the goal of knowledge, and knowledge as a product interact, making truth subjective and socially constructed. Schaff argues that knowledge is an infinite and cumulative process of partial truths established in various historical phases. Thus, social facts can have different meanings for different groups, making a universal truth impossible. Therefore, the truth presented by Iglésias is limited to his own paradigms and worldviews. Reference: SCHAFF, Adam. History and Truth. 1. ed. São Paulo: Martins Fontes, 2000. p.97.

¹⁶ IGLÉSIAS, op.cit. 1953, p. 67



trajectory in the Sertão between the years 1912-1919, Iglesias, as well as the French travelers, documents the battles against natural and social adversities, offering a relevant perspective on the identity of the hinterland, with the objective of problematizing the culture reported by the author in his years in the Sertão, locating its place and its collaborations with History

IGLÉSIAS AND THE SERTANEJOS: PLOTS OF POWER AND DAILY LIFE

The traveler leaves his region, with his precepts and prejudices resulting from his environment and moves on to a new bubble of experiences, in which the people with whom he has contact present a new reality within the same country. This new reality causes strangeness and learning to the engineer, which are evidenced to the reader of the work through small romanticized greetings that establish a relationship that breaks time and space.

The author is very far from his home and adopts a posture that can be interpreted as stoic¹⁷, because when he says, "Whoever travels, especially those who travel in these parts, needs to equip himself with a large dose of patience, it is necessary to have sportsmanship. Receive things as they present themselves, trying to make the best of the situation. That's what I did."¹⁸element. The cultural sphere in which it was inserted was completely new and having this sporting spirit is having, or at least, passing on to the reader who is aware of cultural differences and their own limitations, being open-minded to get the best out of what the experience can provide.

In the meantime, with a notion of the cultural diversities between the author and the Sertão and the different concepts about culture, it is necessary to expose the definition adopted in the present research to begin to delve into its appearance in *Caatingas and Chapadões*. First, culture is composed of different layers and individualities unique to each group that compose it, there is the culture of the elites, the culture of the people, the Brazilian culture and the culture of a certain specific group.

Thus, some authors approach the definition of culture adopted by the present researcher. Roger Chartier in his work "Cultural History: between practices and representations"¹⁹ says that Cultural History works to identify the way in which at different times a certain social reality is constructed, thought, given to read. With classifications,

¹⁷ Stoicism is a philosophical doctrine founded by Zeno of Citium (334-262 B.C.) and is characterized by an ethic in which imperturbability, the extirpation of passions and the resigned acceptance of fate are the fundamental marks of the wise man.

¹⁸ IGLÉSIAS, Francisco. op.cit. 1953, p.378.

¹⁹ CHARTIER, 1990.



divisions, delimitations that organize the way the group will interpret, represent and experience the real world."²⁰ And these representations of the world, "thus constructed, although they aspire to the universality of a diagnosis based on reason, are always determined by the group interests that forge them." ²¹

The representations of culture, present in *Caatingas and Chapadões*, are not uniform, since the dominant culture in the Sertão is different from that of Iglésias, the interiorized schemes, the categories and classifications structured by the sertanejos diverge from the interpretations formulated in the South. By analyzing the work, through the author's experience and interpretation, it is possible to have contact with the cultural structure of the different groups present in Piauí.

At the moment when the cultures of various social groups are considered, the hierarchization of individuals comes into play. Because the elite has different interests in relation to the less favored, when taking this issue into consideration, another essential author for the conceptualization of culture is the sociologist Zygmunt Bauman²², in his work "Essay on the Concept of Culture".²³ It separates some layers that are decisive for the validation of the representations of the groups.

Because culture would have the hierarchical sphere, which due to its power in the social pyramid would have unique values and wills in order to grow its power in relation to others, a second pillar would be culture as a watershed, as it produces social differences between peoples, whether they are from the same region or from different regions and the third pillar would be the analysis of the individual who creates by himself, interprets and gives meaning to experiences.

For Bauman, culture would be "the only facet of life and the human condition that the knowledge of reality and the human being's interest in self-improvement and fulfillment merge into one".²⁴ Reality is something subjective to the human gaze and the environment in which it is inserted fills it with cultural roots inherited from the influences of the social group it is part of and interpreted by the individual.

²⁰ Ibidem. p.17.

²¹ Ibidem.

²² Zygmunt Bauman (1927-2017) was a Polish sociologist, thinker, teacher, and writer, one of the most critical voices in contemporary society. He created the expression "Liquid Modernity" to classify the fluidity of the world where individuals no longer have a standard of reference. Zygmunt Bauman (1927-2017) was born in Poznan, Poland, on November 19, 1925. Son of Jews, in 1939, along with his family, he escaped the invasion of Nazi troops in Poland and took refuge in the Soviet Union. He enlisted in the Polish army on the Soviet front. In 1940 he joined the United Workers' Party – the communist party of Poland. In 1945 he joined the Military Intelligence Service, where he remained for three years.

²³ BAUMAN, Zygmunt. Culture as praxis in: Essays on the concept of culture. Rio de Janeiro: Zahar, 2012.

²⁴ Ibidem, p.300.



Entering into the experiences of Iglésias in *Caatingas and Chapadões*, a cultural element provided by the nature of the Sertão and present to the present day within the representations of the people is the moment in which he exposes his considerations about Cajuína,

A small explanation is appropriate at this point, without underestimating the knowledge of botany of the amiable reader. What we commonly call fruit, in cashews, is the stalk, fleshy, juicy; The fruit itself is the part that encloses the chestnut, in the shape of a Phrygian cap. In fact, in the language of our Amerindians, cashew means succulent peduncle. "But why, you ask me, is the cashew stalk juicy?" Here is the answer: - the cashew tree certainly not, he thought of the man's gluttony when he made a swollen peduncle, filled with a sugary liquid to support the tiny fruit; it acted according to the environment, that is, it sought to guarantee, despite the drought, the life of the seed destined for the perpetuation of the species. The same ecological phenomenon, *mutatis mutandis*, can be noticed in the umbu tree or imbu tree. This essence accumulates an appreciable amount of water in certain roots in order to survive prolonged droughts. But man, always man, who knows this trick of nature, squeezed by thirst, pulls out the roots, squeezes them out and drinks the liquid thus obtained.²⁵

Cajuína was "From cashew juice", it was not common in the South of the country and the author found it a "delicious drink, without alcohol, of a beautiful amber-yellow color, whose manufacture required special care so that it would not spoil".²⁶ In this way, this drink is a cultural creation valued in the North and is present to this day. The fact that the author gave space to comment on this drink is one of several examples of cultural passages that are preserved in his work.

At another moment, the author experiences a new custom, "unused in the south of the country",²⁷ a cultural practice about death in which loved ones were buried in the backyard of houses and a tree was planted in their grave.

The two leafy cashew trees, in the shade of which I was calmly enjoying my lunch, wrapped with their roots the graves of the green-eyed brunette's grandparents. And everything there went on normally, as if the dead had not died. And in truth they were present in the bright green of the leaves, flowers and fruits, fruits that make possible the prodigy of consubstantiation.²⁸

Cultural differences vary even in the relationship between social groups with death. By perceiving this practice present in the North and absent in his experience in the South, the author again reveals the cultural richness that Brazil has, where each aspect of life and social relations is represented in different ways.

Beliefs and creeds were also in evidence throughout the work when he was present on a farm, he witnessed a boy filtering pequi liquor full of ants, with knowledge or not the

²⁵ IGLÉSIAS, 1953, p. 373.

²⁶ Ibidem, p.374.

²⁷ IGLÉSIAS, 1953, p. 394.

²⁸ Ibidem.



sertanejo was helping to give an "increase in the vision of the caboclada",²⁹ the idea that eating ants, or drinking them, helps to improve vision was from the repertoire of the sertanejos and Iglésias with their technical knowledge, he was amazed by the culture of drinking liquor with ants and explained to the reader, "better than the bite of a rattlesnake, because its victim is blind and the liquor due to the large dose of formic acid that it must contain, after the camoeca, will increase the view of the caboclada Thankfully"³⁰

The author, at a certain point, meets the figure of cowboys on a farm, and is surprised to see the violence of the profession, and the imminent danger when cattle escape, or agitate during grazing. When asked if there were already cases of injuries during the process, the cowboy answers:

- It has already happened, Mr. Dotô, from cowboy breaks ribs, open his head and try to die. What is the cowboy going to do? It's the way. And with this "it's the way", of a stoic conformism, the cowboy went to finish his task. , What is most surprising about the cowboy is that the apparent sleepy apathy, in the face of a case like the ones mentioned above, is transformed as if by magic: · The bold and intrepid, haughty and even elegant figure of the bearer of wild beasts appears.³¹

The surprise of the author and the "sleepiness" of the sertanejo also reveal the cultural constructions of everyday life, which makes it a dangerous task, normal for the cowboys and new to Iglésias who was not used to that situation. The author was immersed in a new range of experiences, which under his lens, take shape and value to the reader.

The North, as discussed earlier, was predominantly rural with some urban landscapes. Despite this, it was a living organism that "within a radius of more than thirty leagues it is known that there are strange people in the region".³² Iglésias affirms to the reader that his romanticized comments go beyond egoic passages, even with his commentary, his technical observations on the problems of the Sertão, indirectly placing the North as a place without knowledge, because this know-how, which the author had due to the privileges of his training, helps him to see solutions to the daily challenges of the Northeast without the same conditions.

As it was said in this passage, "I do not report these episodes to highlight my modest collaboration, but rather to reveal to the patient reader the nature of our sertanejo: brave as the jaguar, wounded in his self-love and docile as a child if touched in his heart by the magic wand of kindness".³³ Therefore, he tried to represent his vision of the culture of the

²⁹ Ibid., p. 401.

³⁰ Ibidem.

³¹ IGLÉSIAS, 1953, p.413.

³² Ibid., p. 470.

³³ Ibidem, p.529.



North and his experience with the Northeasterners categorized them as people to be helped, respected and resilient.

This knowledge comes from his hierarchy and culture, which completely diverges from the situation present in the Sertão during the beginning of the twentieth century. To exemplify a moment where the author classified his higher education in relation to that of the Sertão, it was when teaching the sertanejo about his culture of "Take the hat off the head" and "Do not spit on the ground", Iglésias says that "Everyone also knows that people with less careful education, have the habit of spitting on the ground, wherever they are. Well, they are two ugly things, or rather, one is ugly, the other is unhygienic and dangerous."³⁴

His speech shows that he categorized country education as something caricatured and felt in the mission of teaching good manners to the caboclo.

The caboclo, a little shy, accepted the invitation and entered, but entered with his leather hat buried in his head. After a few sentences that denounced the real reasons for the visit, I ventured, with good manners, the following question: - Do you know how to read? - No, no. - What a crime - I exclaimed smiling. If his friend knew how to read, and pointed out the letters on the wall, he would know what is written there - "TAKE YOUR HAT OFF YOUR HEAD". Unconsciously, in a quick movement like a snake's attack, the sertanejo took his hat off his head and placed it at the foot of the chair. Then I explained this act proper to civilized man, which reflected a respectful attitude, and added: When you saw me, didn't the terreiro touch the hat? Didn't I respond in the same way? For with all the more reason should we show appreciation within the house of the friend who hosts us. I myself, when I enter my house, take off my hat. I'll give you 100\$000 if you find me inside the house with my hat on my head. Besides everything it is a very good custom, because it refreshes the head. The saying goes: "Warm feet and a cool head are a sign of health"³⁵

His culture and custom bring Bauman into the discussion. This difference in simple habits, present in everyday life, are examples of how man is able to attribute meanings to simple gestures such as taking off a hat, this meaning and value are part of culture and build important symbols within social relations, because,

Man is the animal that produces tools, speech and symbols. Only he laughs, only he knows that he is going to die; only he denies mating with his mother and sister; only he invents visions of other worlds to live in what Santayana called religions, or prepares those modeling clays of the mind that Cyril Connolly called art. Not only is he gifted with ... thought, but of consciousness; not only of needs, but of values; not only of fears, but of scruples; Not only of a past, but of a history. Only he has culture.³⁶

³⁴ Ibidem, p.539.

³⁵ IGLÉSIAS, 1953, p.540.

³⁶ BAUMAN, 2012, p.133.



No other animal present in nature recognizes this gesture and attributes value to it as something of respect and education, only man. And not even all men, because this culture had not yet entered the Sertão, a place where it had its own values and habits that were the result of cultural heritage. In this way, each society has a root that grew and was formed within social relations, forming a web of relationships that, as Bauman characterized, are interdependent, developed and sustained by human interactions³⁷.

For Zygmunt Bauman, culture is fluid and directly linked to social structures that are capable of interpreting experiences and categorizing them with senses and meanings. As Iglesias expresses, when portraying a moment where the sertanejos sing and tell him about a bird that in the North had an "ominous" meaning, while in other regions they did not have such an attribution.

General belief among the inhabitants of the sertão, that the acauã is an ominous bird, and many anecdotes or "causes" I have heard about it. I wrote down the following: - I have already met one - told me the old woman who one day called her owner's name, and it was not long before he died. Afterwards, don't you know that the acauã speaks? Speak, now, yes!: a parrot to speak. The old lady may forgive me: I do not believe that the acauã speaks, because those who have been under my eyes have never uttered a peep that could be translated by a word, even a monosyllabic one. In these things, as in many others, I am like St. Thomas: I want to see it to believe it.³⁸

The beliefs of the region, which were respected and feared by the inhabitants, did not have much value for Iglésias, since his cultural background was different, the meaning he carried in the minds of the sertanejos did not reach the engineer. For the natives, "When the caboclo hears the song of the acimã, he trembles with terror, feels the chill of death, and, as if he were already in front of a shrouded body, he looks, with his eyes shallow with tears the song of the acauã sounds to his ears like a mournful *de profundis*: go grave, go grave".³⁹ While the author, having technical knowledge about animals, could not understand the foundation of the belief, because for him the bird did good for the population by the fact that it eats snakes.

Man is the only living being capable of representing reality from his subjectivity, opening the door to a rich and diverse cultural structure that acts to a greater or lesser degree within societies. It is the result of the way in which the individual expresses himself and relates to others. Because of this diversity, different groups have different cultures and comparing them is a flawed act, as each culture was generated in a different environment and context. The traveler, unaware of the heritage of the North, could not share the same

³⁷ Ibid., p. 215.

³⁸ IGLÉSIAS, 1953, p. 509.

³⁹ Ibid.



feeling as the natives when living folklore, since the culture, based on the moments written by the author, are loaded with feelings and struggles that the sertanejos came into contact with.

Despite the cultural differences, Iglesias' work preserves a space of Piauí culture in various layers of society, by portraying the political festivals present in Teresina, the festivals and popular sayings in Santa Filomena. *Caatingas and Chapadões*, because it did not only have the author's conceptions, that is, it was not restricted to the elite of the time, entered into the New Cultural History which, as historian Sandra Pesavento said⁴⁰ in her work *História e História Cultural*⁴¹.

Sometimes, the expression New Cultural History is used, remembering that before there would have been an old, old or traditional Cultural History. Conceptions of Marxist bias were set aside, which understood culture as an integral part of the superstructure, as a mere reflection of infrastructure, or even of culture as a superior manifestation of the human spirit and, therefore, as the domain of the elites.⁴²

History is too big to be reduced to the structures of those in power. In the North of Brazil, during the first half of the twentieth century, the elites commanded history and the way it was presented to citizens, as they had control of the media and the livelihood conditions of the residents. However, this veil of power has not been completely broken, since the traveler is part of the elite and has experiences with ordinary people and gives them a place of memory from his perspective and his writing, being unable to portray the sertanejo culture in its entirety, but even so, he gives voice to everyday characters of the time.

⁴⁰ He holds a degree in History from the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul (1969), a master's degree in History from the Pontifical Catholic University of Rio Grande do Sul (1978) and a PhD in Economic History from the University of São Paulo (1987). He held three postdoctoral studies in Paris. Visiting professor at several foreign institutions. Full Professor at the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul in the Department of History and in the Graduate Program in Urban and Regional Planning (PROPUR). She works in the area of History, with an emphasis on Brazilian History, working with the following themes: cultural history, urban cultural history, imaginary and representations, history and literature, heritage and memory. IA researcher at CNPq and national coordinator of the WG in Cultural History at ANPUH.

⁴¹ PESAVENTO, Sandra Jatahy. *History & Cultural History*. Belo Horizonte: Autentica, 2003.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p.8.



BETWEEN SCHUBERT AND MANÉ DO RIACHÃO

For Sandra Pesavento, culture would be a set of meanings shared and constructed by men to explain the world⁴³, being a form of expression and translation of reality that is done in a symbolic way, that is, they give meaning to things and social actors that are part of the experiences in society. Cultural History, then, would have to turn to problems from other fields and themes, in addition to those of the elite, so that History would not be reduced to just one perspective.

Cultural differences were reflected in all the scenarios in which Iglésias delved, including musical tastes. On a night in the city of Santa Filomena he puts classical songs on a record player for the residents to share their leisure time together,

Then wait a minute; After dinner, friends will hear the machine called a record player talk and sing. In the evening I ordered the people to be assembled: men, women and children, among them the outsiders. Everyone sitting on the floor looked intently at the bell of the record player. I put on a record of Caruso singing *Una furtiva lacrima*. Silence in the auditorium. I put it after the Series/can to Schubert. The same silence. I put on an album of a challenge by Mané do Riachão. A whisper of joy covered the singer's first verse. When the album was finished, everyone was radiant with joy, and one of them sentenced: - this one who speaks in spirit". Mané do Riachão had beaten Caruso! It is a question of artistic sensibility, of education of the sense, of aesthetics, the kind reader will say, and I will agree. But how is it that the singing of the birds enraptures the scoundrel and ecstatic, at the same time, 'the civilized man'? Nature's secrets⁴⁴

This attempt exposed the cultural differences regarding music and the author's opinions in relation to positioning himself as a "civilized man" and the sertanejo as a "matuto" incapable of being sensitive to the beauties of the classical erudite world, hostage to his still backward tastes. And nature, in the author's opinion, takes its place as the thread that connects these two types of man. Again, Sandra Pesavento gains space in the discussion, as she also explains the importance of the representation that is observed in the author's experience because by putting the music of Mané do Riachão, as it is part of the culture of the Sertão, to be recognized and represented in their cultural and social formations, they bring them meanings and feelings that Schubert's music does not reach them since it is not something familiar, and therefore devoid of representations and feelings.

To represent is, fundamentally, to be in the place of, it is the presentification of an absent person; It is a presentation again, which shows an absence. The central idea is, therefore, that of substitution, which replaces an absence and makes a presence sensible. The representation is not a copy of the real, its perfect image, a kind of reflection, but a construction made from it. Representation involves processes of perception, identification, recognition, classification, legitimation, and exclusion.⁴⁵

⁴³ Ibidem, p. 8-9.

⁴⁴ IGLÉSIAS, 1953, p. 544.

⁴⁵ PESAVENTO, 2003, p.30.



In this context, the representations involve the experiences inherited and experienced by each society, carrying a symbolic meaning that has hidden meanings for those who do not have the same culture. They are socially constructed and present themselves as something natural for those who are part of them and something that causes strangeness for those who are outsiders, "they carry hidden meanings, which, socially and historically constructed, are internalized in the collective unconscious and present themselves as natural, dispensing with reflection.

To this extent, the strength of representations is not due to their value of correspondence of discourses and images with reality, even if representation includes the exhibition of evocative and mimetic elements."⁴⁶element. *Caatingas and Chapadões* is a work full of moments like this and because the reader is subject to the vision of Iglésias, it is necessary to reflect to verify that he is a foreign body in a living organism and all the strangeness felt by him is mutual because it also causes me strangeness to the natives. His privilege on account of social place shaped the way the experience of the trip was represented, the way he was received, treated and respected was part of the package of power he contained.

In the example of music, social representation was not achieved by classical music, since that part of the population did not have access to a record player and let alone contemplate music from other countries, but this is not all bad, the classical songs of "erudite" people are a copy of the culture of other countries, that do not carry the essence of a culture created in Brazil. The lively and happy style of the songs in the Sertão are part of a social construction made in the region since they did not have access to influences from outside and followed their own trends, the past took on these discursive and imagetic forms through which the sertanejos expressed themselves and the world. A culture different from that of Iglésias and which represented the customs of the North.

In this way, the author makes clear his opinion about his culture being erudite and that of the local people being more rustic. However, the traveler at times is also enchanted by the way the sertanejos led their lives. Iglésias experiences São João do Norte and finds interesting the custom of "jumping the bonfire"⁴⁷ and the meaning that this act carries, "in which the bonds of friendship, those of marriage, are strengthened"⁴⁸ and last until the next day. He also says that cowboys have "subtleties that are practiced without discrepancy"

⁴⁶ PESAVENTO, 2003, p.31.

⁴⁷ IGLÉSIAS, 1953, p.596.

⁴⁸ Ibid.



the example he uses to bring his words to life was the way sertanejos use the word "Bichinho"⁴⁹

The cowboys, in general, all sertanejos have subtleties that are practiced without discrepancy. For example: to indicate, more or less, the height of an animal, they spread their hand in a vertical plane and say: the calf is this height: if they refer to a human being, they indicate with their open hand in a horizontal plane: my pet" is at this very height. "Bichinho" has an affectionate meaning. Many times I heard the sertanejo ask for water to drink: - "Bichinho, - addressing some boy of the house - bring a little bit of water 'O, bichinho". This affectionate expression is used even in the different circles of the cities in familiar language. :E: pronounced with such an inflection of voice that there is no one who can resist the request: "Pet, bring a little bit of water there, pet".⁵⁰

These two examples show that even considering oneself as an erudite culture, there are traits in the North unknown to the author that deserve admiration. Both in the festivities and in the ways of expressing oneself through language, culture manifests itself within everyday experiences. In this way, the imaginary of Iglésias did not have an image formed in his mind about the representations of the Sertão, in the words of Sandra Pesavento, "the imaginary is a system of ideas and images of collective representation that men, in all times, have built for themselves, giving meaning to the world."⁵¹

The habits experienced by the sertanejos and present in the work of Iglésias would be a fragment of the perspective of how the Northeasterners lived and interacted with reality, this reality in which the author is not part is "a system of collective representations that gives the idea that it is the construction of a parallel world of signs that is built on reality, as it points to the fact that this construction is social and historical".⁵² Following the reasoning, it is as if the author entered a new world, not only physical, but also cultural, where the practices and experiences were the result of the historical and cultural conditions that Piauí went through.

The concept of imaginary discussed by the historian also highlights that "The imaginary includes beliefs, myths, ideologies, concepts, values, is a builder of identities and exclusions, hierarchizes, divides, points out similarities and differences in the social".⁵³ It is a know-how that organizes the world, producing cohesion or conflict. Mystical beliefs are also present in *Caatingas and Chapadões*, some examples of this were when the author talked to a sertanejo about a child who was born prematurely. The way the native dealt with this information brought out his beliefs:

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibidem, p.568.

⁵¹ PESAVENTO, 2003, p.31.

⁵² Ibid., p.32.

⁵³ Ibid..



- Last week, Aniceto's wife gave birth to a monkey-like child. And God forgive me if I speak badly: the child even had a stump of his tail half a palm long. He had only a few hours to live. God be praised. "What did they do to her?" I asked, taking an interest in the case. - They buried it close to the house, - next to a large jatobá. "I'm sorry I wasn't aware of this, because I would have asked his parents for permission to keep the little monster in alcohol. - For what, Mr. Dotô? - For scientific studies, and then keep it in a museum - Wow, you dotô but they didn't give it, no. They are keeping a secret. - But everyone is poking around (an intrigue, gossip): some say it's the devil's dog art and others, our people, that Aniceto's wife, when she was pregnant, went to the fountain and, without waiting, came across a bunch of monkeys. She got a big fright, and then the monkey-like child was born. - Nature has these sad surprises. In any case, if another monkey-boy is born out there, let me know in time to keep the "bug" in alcohol, if we don't have alcohol, the cachaça will do. - Everyone welcomed my joke with good humor - great predisposition for sleep.⁵⁴

The beliefs of the sertanejos about the child with early birth show a little about their faith and precepts. At another moment, when the weather was threatening to rain, the culture and paradigms of the residents come to life and stand out in the work of the traveler:

In the afternoon the weather began to change: dense black clouds, cumulus of bad weather, roadside announcements, humble thatched houses, the residents. They waved at us, inviting us in. "The storm is very high: it doesn't take long for the rain to hit," said an elderly caboclo, who seemed to own the house, kindly. - It doesn't rain, no. I've already made my mandinga; I've already pulled the strings. The clouds will pour elsewhere. - Vixe! Don't say that, no. In this, the blinding lightning meanders between the black and bulging clouds. Despite this eloquent warning, I, foolishly, continued the march. Barely fifteen minutes had passed, a foot of water came out that looked more like a formidable waterspout⁵⁵

In this part, the receptive culture of the Northeasterners gains an agenda, always offering shelter to those who were passing through and at the same time shows a language about "mandinga" to ward off the rain that, even without effect, says a little about the culture of the place. The imagery and representations of northern popular culture were manifested in the simplest situations that the traveler witnessed. In conversation with a caboclo, the man lies his name and tells Iglésias that the reason is fear of the "idea makers".

My name is Santiago (accentuated the i)How? You naturally mean Santiago, don't you? - To tell you the truth, I'm not even Santiago in Santiago, my right name is Norberto. - But, then, what is this mess? - I'll explain to you, boss: I'm only from the Gerais bands, and we're very afraid of the goats from the caatingas, who are idea makers. Then I thought: arriving in the caatingas, I say that I am Santiago; after the goats, having an idea in Santiago, they don't do it on me, because I'm Norberto. I couldn't contain the laughter that broke out in a delicious laugh, a laugh that everyone followed, including the smart and suspicious carapina. To make an idea or idea, as Norberto pronounced, dear and patient reader, is to do sorcery, and even many good people are afraid of sorcery.⁵⁶

So, with these examples taken from the traveler's perspective, magic and religion are core beliefs within the North, for in a land of constant challenges, faith and miracle were

⁵⁴ IGLÉSIAS, 1953, p.493.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Ibidem, p.417.



sources of hope for improvement. With this, the feeling and sensibilities experienced by the sertanejos and the author enter into discussion. The concept of sensibilities would be, as Sandra Pesavento said, a primary nucleus of perception and translation of the human experience in the world, it is the sensitive knowledge of a way of understanding the world that springs not from the rational or from the elaborated mental lucubrations, but from the senses, which come from the depths of each individual.

The beliefs in magic, mandingas and sorcery would be an example where feeling, in this case faith, stands out against logic and shows through words "the ways in which individuals and groups give themselves to perceive, appearing as a stronghold of translation of reality through emotions and senses, using magic, or their belief in its existence as a path of interpretation and validation of the real world".⁵⁷

History, with interdisciplinarity as a companion, began to navigate several rivers, expanding its horizons. In this context, the history of the body was introduced after the Annales revolution. At the moment historians usually focus on the events and groups involved in the research, ignoring the problematization of the sensations and sensibilities that bodies are subject to during the period analyzed. The history of the body, on the contrary, seeks to understand how bodies are constructed and socially represented, how they experience power relations and how they are affected by historical and cultural transformations. This approach allows for a more complex understanding of society, by revealing the ways in which the body is a space of disputes and resistances.

For example, historian Michel Foucault analyzed how the body was disciplined and controlled during modernity, through institutions such as the school, the army, and the hospital. Another historian, Joan Scott, showed how the construction of the female body was linked to the idea of motherhood and domesticity in Western society and Durval Muniz addressed the importance of working with bodies within research. These authors represent the increased importance of research on the history of the body, which is a relatively new field of research, but which has been gaining importance in recent years. It offers an innovative perspective for understanding human society and culture.

Historian Durval Muniz is one of the main Brazilian authors to delve into the literature of bodies as a historical source, he argues in his work *"Weaver of Times (2019)"* that the body is a silenced element, and that this is wrong because within writing, behind the document and the mind that produced it there is a body, a body subject to experiences that guide the way writing conducts itself to written words." The body, although silenced in the texts, is never absent from the research scene. In the archive, the tactile encounter of the

⁵⁷ PESAVENTO, 2003, p.33.



researcher's skin with the surface of the objects occurs⁵⁸" In other words, the senses produce meanings within the written text. All of this is often ignored in history texts. However, these sensitivities are important as they can vary according to the society and social class of the individual and the group writing.

BODIES AND SPEECHES MADE BY WORDS: THE LAYERS OF LIFE IN THE WORK CAATINGAS E CHAPADÕES

Michel Foucault, in his book *History of Sexuality: The Will to Know* (1984) says that, "The body is not only the support of vital functions, but also the place of a symbolic inscription. It is the place where culture is inscribed in nature."⁵⁹ This quote highlights the importance of the body as an object of historical analysis. Foucault argues that the body is not only a biological object, but also a social and cultural object. The body is where culture is inscribed in nature, and it is a space where power relations are recorded.

While historian Joan Scott, when writing *Gender: A Useful Category for Historical Analysis* (1988) and says that, "The body is a place where power relations are recorded. It is a space of disputes and resistance."⁶⁰ emphasizes that the body is a space of disputes and resistance. Power relations are inscribed in the body, but they can also be contested and transformed. Once a little of these authors' views on the importance of the body have been exposed, it is necessary to relate the *Caatingas and Chapadões*

With this, the work of the traveler is a literature that Clio's gaze also brings the possibility of analyzing the sensibilities and sensations of the sertanejo bodies observed and represented by Iglésias. Since, during all the discussions made during the research, the author writes about himself and the other, about the moment and the subjects that make up the scene. So, sensations such as heat, hunger, drought, crying and laughter become alive and represented within the work and deserve to be debated, because, in addition to giving life to the northeastern bodies, they also pass the sensations of the bodies in moments that caught the author's attention. It is worth mentioning that the representations of these bodies are present within the author's literature, transforming them into something limited and directed on his perspective of the travel of the São Paulo elite coming to the north for the first time.

First, defining the body is essential for the research to go deeper beyond the author's words, this element is divided into two parts, the body, home of the mind and desire,

⁵⁸ALBUQUERQUE JÚNIOR, Durval Muniz de. The weaver of the times: new essays on the theory of History. São Paulo: Intermeios, 2019, p. 62.

⁵⁹FOUCAULT, Michel. History of sexuality: the will to know. Rio de Janeiro: Graal, 1988. p. 159.

⁶⁰SCOTT, Joan. Genre: a useful category for historical analysis. São Paulo: Paz e Terra, 1995. p.91.



individual and personal possession of each one, with freedoms and limitations according to the context and the body as something social, subject to norms and hierarchization. Denise Bernuzzi in her article on the body says that,

The relationship between the individual and his body does not always presuppose the awareness of possession. To have a body, it is necessary, first, that it presents itself as an object, as something defined, with its own contours. It is also necessary for man to become the subject of his body, its owner. This presupposes an autonomy, of the body and of man, a split that seems strange to a time when medicine, for example, favored a series of correspondences between bodily health and the balance of the universe. Some examples may be useful to us.⁶¹

In other words, with the modernization and evolution of health, they have brought standards that subject bodies and classify them as "healthy" or "precarious", serving as another means of social positioning that favors those who have access to knowledge and the right to health. As she comments, about the image created about the body as something of a desacralized and hierarchical order, "The imaginary of the organization of the machine thus serves as a model of thought when one reflects not only on the body but also on the city. The health of the body begins to be assimilated by the government of the cities and vice versa."⁶²

The body, although individual, becomes conditioned to integrate with the whole. In *the Caatingas and Chapadões*, marked by the time frame of a moment of transition between rural and urban, public health and the hygiene of bodies were an issue aimed at the elites, but little by little, through the elites and official sources, they began to gain space. Iglésias, who had already been subject to civilizing norms, tried to teach the sertanejos good manners, subjecting their bodies to unknown habits.

Among other situations, the reading of the author's work and the analysis of his dialogues with a civilizing content illustrates the power relationship between the individual body and the social body. The individual body is shaped by social norms and values, which can be explicit or implicit. By being subjected to unknown habits, the sertanejo body is subjected to a form of social discipline. This social discipline can lead to the improvement of the body, but it can also be seen as a form of control.

The sensations and sensibilities that the sertanejo bodies went through in the author's work. That is why the research is concerned with talking about heat, drought and laughter, sensations that within the context of that time, with the drought of 1915 have a lot

⁶¹SANTANNA, Denise Bernuzzi de. Body and history. Notebooks of subjectivity. Center for the Study and Research of Subjectivity – Graduate Study Program in Clinical Psychology – PUC/SP, 1995, p.245.

⁶²SANTANNA, Denise Bernuzzi de. Body and history. Notebooks of subjectivity. Center for the Study and Research of Subjectivity – Graduate Study Program in Clinical Psychology – PUC/SP, 1995, p.248



of historical significance and currently are very stereotyped themes in a prejudiced way to the Brazilian Northeast.

The first moment of heat felt by Iglésias was right at the beginning of his journey, when he discovers that in the capital of Piauí, the main furniture for sleeping is the hammock, for reasons of "very hot".⁶³ This warmth commented on by the local resident was felt on the skin at that moment and silenced during the rest of his journey, this warmth that afflicted the bodies can be related to the passages related to drought and hunger that, as one of his collaborators, the heat would have.

In this way, thirst and hunger were problematic that the author, in his privileged position, had no reason to worry, but within the scenarios in which he passed, it was inevitable to have contact with the sertanejos who did not have the same conditions and suffered daily to overcome the Sertão. A brutal scene that exemplifies this was when Iglésias refused a couple's son, the couple in question offered their offspring because they saw that with the São Paulo, their son "at least will not feel hungry, nor what thirst is or not have a rag to cover his body".⁶⁴ After that, the author reflects that this act may seem extreme, but it was a great proof of love, giving up the child so that he does not suffer at the same time it was sad that the helplessness and despair are so great to lead a family to want to donate their child to a stranger because of his social position.

The mental and physical suffering that plagued the couple and put them in that situation of helplessness, in that situation, the bodies of this family were purely collective, one suffered from the situation of the other and did not want the suffering in their whole being to afflict the child. Feeling thirst in the body, hunger was something so brutal that Iglésias during his journey, just thinking about going through this situation, is already grateful for all the refreshments he has already taken, that is, he is grateful for the privilege of not having to feel this pain on his skin.

I glanced at the landscape: everything dry and desolate; On the right, the abrupt cliffs of the plateau exposed their capricious figures of red sandstone to the burning rays of the sun. I checked the clock: 2 pm, so two hours of walking on the Vereda da Lagoa do Boi, and no house, not even a bucket in which we could quench our thirst. And we were walking along the Lagoa do Boi Path! Lagôa, where was this lagoon? And we die of thirst. Fortunately, the tordillo continued in its light march, although pouring sweat. Surely he was being whipped by the thirst. I don't know what can be compared to the torture of thirst. . I remembered the biblical parable that tells of a merciless rich man who was suffering, in the flames of hell, the torment of thirst, and, in despair, begged Father Abraham to have mercy on him, · and to bade Lazarus dip the tip of his finger in water to refresh him, the rich man, his withered tongue. I felt sorry for the poor rich man. I also had a dry tongue. The salivary glands

⁶³ IGLÉSIAS, op. cit., 1953, p.39.

⁶⁴ IGLÉSIAS, op.cit., 1953, p.284.



could not keep the oral mucosa moistened. I reviewed all the delicious refreshments I had in my life.⁶⁵

His comment shows how privileges favor the health of bodies, making the body something related to the capitalist structure that increasingly segregates the different types of bodies and sensations that were not part of the way aggressively imposed and desired by the elite. Nevertheless, his speeches about his fear of thirst served as an omen, as he ended up being fulfilled within this same journey, for having taken the wrong path during the trip, his body was exposed to a backcountry scenario without the protection of his privileges and comforts, a part of the daily challenge of the less favored. The author's luck was to have found a palm tree reflected in the water.

It can't be, he said to myself, I must be delirious, isn't it a mirage? I noticed that the horse hurried to walk; The path, slightly sloping, was marginalized by red ravines. I looked with my eyes for the top of the buriti tree and there it was, not far away, about 30 meters away. As soon as the horse turned into a small curve to the right, I saw the palm tree reflected in the water; I didn't want to believe it, I thought I was the victim of an illusion, caused by thirst. No, it wasn't madness, I was in front of a stream of crystal clear waters. I wanted to stop the horse to get off, but I couldn't: the tordillo wrapped up my chin and entered the stream. Jumped. I picked up a dry buriti leaf from the ground, placed it on the edge of the stream, in a place where the water runs clear between pebbles and sand, and, kneeling, I put my mouth in the water, and drank, animalically, like my horse. I drank, drank, feeling the freshness of the water in my nose.⁶⁶

Necessity meant that the good manners of hygiene and education that his body was used to were quickly forgotten, sharing the moment of drinking with his own horse. This example exposes how northeastern bodies could not be classified or stereotyped as inferior in relation to other bodies in Brazil, since they face daily challenges that affect the minimum conditions of survival.

Iglésias when he is reunited with his companions in this situation makes two noteworthy comments, the first is related to the harshness of thirst in the Sertão, "It is unbelievable how a day of thirst under the burning sun and disfigures an individual"⁶⁷ and the other was about the caboclos who were being the guides of the trip and ended up separating, the author said "The sertanejos are hard men, accustomed to these pampering of the Sertão"⁶⁸ recognizing the difficulty that it was to live in the Sertão under these circumstances on a daily basis, although, in the context, he seems to be praising the figure of the sertanejo, his tone opens the door to the problematization that, by saying "mimo" he is not mitigating the challenge that caused so many deaths in the Brazilian North? The

⁶⁵ IGLÉSIAS, op. cit., 1953, p.466.

⁶⁶ IGLÉSIAS, op.cit 1953. p.468.

⁶⁷ IGLÉSIAS, op.cit 1953. p.468.

⁶⁸ IGLÉSIAS, op.cit 1953. p.468.



present research will not delve into this, what is undeniably clear is the strength of the sertanejo who despite all these difficulties, such as government helplessness, hunger, thirst and heat, still finds moments and strength to smile.

The smile is a universal element in which all bodies at some point in their existence had to feel, so to expose that the author's sensations about the North are not limited to negative feelings, it is necessary to expose the joy shared between the author and the sertanejos. For example, when Iglésias hears a story with a police chief when they interview a sertanejo accused of having assaulted another man, they burst out laughing at the situation.

I'll tell you, your captain: it's not today that the goat came indicating with me. Well, yesterday, at the party of compadre João, he passed by me and told me some pillars - I did not answer; I think he thought I was afraid: I didn't want consumption for my head, your captain. And it was coming, it was arriving, it was coming and it was saying: the only thing missing was to call me a saint, and I didn't even arraise; Suddenly he called me Endebt, so I couldn't resist: I lowered the glass on the goat. Is your captain seeing how a family man disguises himself? - With great difficulty, the police chief managed to contain his laughter. And when Mr. Odilon Parente reproduced the case to me, we both laughed heartily.⁶⁹

Confusion and fights when heard through the people who participated and have their motives revealed cause a dose of humor, especially when imagining what these people felt when doing such acts. Therefore, Iglésias was amused by this story because he had, as he himself said, "it is strange how the misfortune of others instead of causing sadness, sometimes despairs laughter, every tragedy is afraid of comedy".⁷⁰ Another reason that made him laugh was the popular beliefs of a northeastern man who wanted a job with Iglésias,

Neither is Santiago, my right name is Norberto. - But, then, what is this mess? - I'll explain to you, boss: I'm only from the Gerais bands, and we're very afraid of the goats from the caatingas, who are idea makers. Then I thought: arriving in the caatingas, I say that I am Santiago; after the goats, having an idea in Santiago, they don't do it on me, because I'm Norberto. I couldn't contain the laughter that broke out in a delicious laugh, a laugh that everyone followed, including the smart and suspicious carapina. To make an idea or idea, as Norberto pronounced, dear and patient reader, is to do sorcery, and even many good people are afraid of sorcery.⁷¹

Situations of misunderstanding, the fear of magic aroused the author's laughter, even if they are examples that, for the reader, both in the book and in the present research, do not carry the same social weight. Living with the sertanejos was something new, loaded with sensations and experiences that affected both the body and the mind of both parties in

⁶⁹ IGLÉSIAS, op.cit 1953. p.193.

⁷⁰ IGLÉSIAS, op.cit 1953. p.161.

⁷¹ IGLÉSIAS, op.cit 1953. p.417.



Caatingas and Chapadões. Therefore, recognizing the importance of the bodies and the context in which they were inserted is essential to improve the analysis of the work and its nuances, since it gives more life to the examples and gives depth to the characters represented by the author. These characters, even though they were created from his writing, had smiles and sufferings similar to those described by the author, reinforcing the importance of problematizing and understanding the role of bodies as a historical source.

Language is assumed as another element characterized by culture, in which society is inserted. The sertanejo, in the words of Iglésias: "We know that our sertanejo has a lot of Amerindian, either in his blood or in the habits of understanding things. Like the latter, he always tries to designate an object according to a direct observation, even if it is sometimes erroneous, he finally tries, and succeeds, to give the name with a certain propriety."⁷² His statement is also observed again when, in a conversation circle, he hears a song and notices variations between the Northern Version and the Southern Version.

Batatinha when it is born Puts branches on the floor, Marquinho when it lies down. Put your hand on your heart," 383 This folkloric note made me go back in time and space: I was transported by thought to my hometown, at the end of Rua dos Pescadores, later baptized with the illustrious name of Prudente de Moraes; I turned the crank of time to the left and found myself at the age of six, in the shade of the flamboyants in front of the fabric factory on the right bank of the Piracicaba River; the workers, at the end of the day's task, with cotton flakes in their hair, would go out, like a flock of *baitacas*, humming, among other popular verses, this: "Batatinha quando nasce Bota folha pelo chão, Marquinho quando deita Bota a mão no coração." The same stanza, with a small variant, recited in regions thousands of kilometers apart from each other. The regions may be different, but the Brazilian soul is the same throughout Brazil. Comparing the two stanzas, we see that the northern version has more property: "Batatinha quando nasce bota rama pelo chão;" while the southern one says: "Batatinha quando nasce botada folhas pelo chão."⁷³

This popular song exposes the different layers that culture covers, as Iglésias brought with him his southern version and was able to perceive the regional changes that better adapt to the culture of the North, cultural regionalism shows that there were different types of representations within Brazil and that even with the differences they still had the same linguistic basis. In the same example, the author writing that music reminded him of his childhood shows how the sensibilities and the imaginary debated by Pesavento were acting in that situation, because he did not feel represented by everything that was manifested by the sertanejos, but, when he came into contact with the music and associated it with his reality, he was able to feel, imagine and represent a little of your culture there.

⁷² IGLÉSIAS, 1953, p.360.

⁷³ Ibidem, p.383.



In the Portuguese language, as Marcos Bagno said⁷⁴ in his book "Linguistic Prejudice", ⁷⁵Brazil would have a high degree of variability and diversity due to its territorial extension and different influences in each part of the territory that would cause these differences. However, the main reason for the author is "the differences in social status", ⁷⁶as the "cultured" Portuguese would be the result of school education that not everyone has access to. Therefore, "this is simply due to an issue that is not linguistic, but social and political."⁷⁷ It is important to consider:

So, if the phenomenon is the same, why is it that in the mouth of one it is "normal" and in the mouth of another it is "funny", "ugly" or "wrong"? Because what is at stake here is not the language, but the person who speaks that language and the geographical region where that person lives. If the Northeast is "backward," "poor," "underdeveloped," or (at best) "picturesque," then, "naturally," the people who were born there and the language they speak should also be considered that way⁷⁸

In *Caatingas and Chapadões*, the traveler does not explicitly express reproach or signs of prejudice, but these estrangements and cultural shocks can be interpreted as if he recognized his privileged social place and saw the sertanejos as disadvantaged people, trapped in the lack of education, public policies and modernity. By highlighting that this estrangement was mutual, as there was contact between different cultures, as in the example cited in which the residents did not know what he was talking about and were afraid, it serves to show how important it is to recognize that language and culture vary from one region to another, and must be respected, since they carry the historical-social constructions of the respective societies.

The slang and expressions are also immersed in the work and exemplify the cultural differences between the author and the residents. In a conversation held with a caboclo during a party, he comes across the expression "shot at the monkey".⁷⁹ Not knowing what it meant, she found the slang strange and then discovers its meaning, which is "woman who has not yet married".⁸⁰ The estrangement was mutual, on the same night, Iglésias, who had the privilege of having a camera, wanted to record the moment,

⁷⁴ Marcos Bagno is a professor of Linguistics at the University of Brasília (UnB), writer and translator, with dozens of books published in the field of sociology of language and the teaching of Portuguese, as well as works dedicated to children and young people, several of them awarded. Since the publication of *A Língua de Eulália*, in 1997, his first book in the field of linguistic education, he has become one of the best known linguists in Brazil, due to his militancy against all forms of social exclusion through language and in favor of valuing all multiple ways of speaking. He also works in research and in the proposal of new paths for education in the mother tongue, with emphasis on the notions of literacy and sociolinguistic re-education. For Contexto he is the author of the books *12 Faces of Prejudice* and *The Language of Eulália*.

⁷⁵ BAGNO, Marcos. *Linguistic prejudice, what is it, how is it done?*. 9 ed. Loyola. São Paulo, 2007.

⁷⁶ Ibidem, p. 15.

⁷⁷ Ibidem, p. 40.

⁷⁸ Ibidem, p. 42.

⁷⁹ IGLÉSIAS, 1953, p. 434.

⁸⁰ Ibid.



To keep a souvenir of the meeting, I asked them not to leave, as I wanted to take a photograph. I went to get the camera, and when I returned, more than half of the guests had disappeared. I asked what that meant, and the "flat head", smiling, informed: - They entered the brejo, it's like they say there: they fled. "They were thinking that this story of this portrait is to recruit soldiers for war. I made everyone see that I was a sincere friend of the sertanejo, and that my intention was only to keep a memory of them, and nothing more."⁸¹

Human beings in society have a subjective way of existence, they are capable of attributing names, values and meanings that vary according to the context, the simple speech of taking a photograph, at that moment, in the sertanejo culture took on another meaning in the face of the author's beliefs, he also did not know the slang and reinforces that the estrangements caused by the cultural shock were mutual.

Therefore, language needs to be analyzed. To support this discussion, Waldir Beividas⁸² and Tiago Ravanello⁸³, authors of the chapter "Reflections on discourse: language as a re-creation of the world", present in the work "Language(gem), text, discourse: between reflection and practice",⁸⁴ highlight that language and language are means of subjective interpretation of existence.

Since all the intersubjective exchanges that have taken place in our individual history, from material speech to the most varied discourses that trigger our imagination, our thought and our feelings, are expressed through language, "collective history, through societies, sociological, political, historical, economic discourses, the composition of values and ideologies are discourses of values produced and constructed through language and

⁸¹ Ibidem, p. 440.

⁸² He has a degree in Portuguese and French from the University Center Fundação Santo André; (1983) Master's Degree in Languages and Linguistics, University of São Paulo; (1992) PhD in Semiotics and General Linguistics from the University of São Paulo; (1998-1999) Post-doctorate at IHEAL- Institut de Hautes Études de l'Amérique Latine; (2016-2017) Postdoctoral fellow at the Alma Mater Università di Bologna (Italy). Academic performance: (1993-2006) Adjunct Professor IV in the Department of Psychoanalysis (Undergraduate) and in the Graduate Program in Psychoanalytic Theory at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro UFRJ Coordination of the Graduate Program in Semiotics and General Linguistics of the Department of Linguistics at USP; (2010-2013)

⁸³ She holds a degree in Psychology from the Federal University of Santa Maria (2004), a master's degree in Psychoanalytic Theory from the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro (2005), a PhD in Psychoanalytic Theory from the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro (2009), with part of her doctorate being carried out as a scholarship holder at the Centre de Sciences du Langage of the Université de Paris - X - Nanterre by the CAPES/PDEE program, and Post-Doctorate from the Graduate Program in Clinical Psychology of the Institute of Psychology of the University of São Paulo, under the supervision of Professor Christian Ingo Lenz Dunker. He is currently an Associate Professor at the Federal University of Mato Grosso do Sul - Faculty of Human Sciences, working in the Undergraduate Course in Psychology - Bachelor's Degree - and in the Graduate Program in Psychology - Master's Degree. He has experience in the field of Psychology, with an emphasis on History, Theories and Systems in Psychology, working mainly on the following topics: psychoanalysis, epistemology, language, semiotics and psychology.

⁸⁴ BEIVIDAS, W. Reflections on discourse: language as re-creation of the world. In: LARA, G. M. P. (Org.). Language, text, discourse. Between reflection and practice. Rio de Janeiro: Lucerne; Belo Horizonte: FALE/UFGM, 2006, p. 117-135.



its interpretation"⁸⁵. Therefore, in each context of realities, it is interpreted and subject to a subjective model that modifies and attributes alterations and meanings.

The variations go beyond the field of language, culture manifests itself in every corner that has the human touch. At the beginning of the work, the author has a strangeness with the architecture of the Hotel in which he was staying, because "they certainly did not have time to furnish"⁸⁶ and when confronting the manager of the establishment, the cultural issues become explicit,

I went to the manager, that is, the owner, and asked him if he had received our telegram, asking him to reserve the room for us. - This is the room, friend! :€ the best in the house . "Yes, I see." But what about the furniture? - You have rêder -We have. - Well, furniture here is a hammock. In bed there is no one who sleeps, it is very hot. Where are the networks? "In the suitcase," he said, putting them out. "Please." I'm going to arm them. They are networks from Ceará; very narrow, he was saying and arming them on the hooks. You need to buy Piauí networks, "Taguiran" hammocks, in which two people can sleep together. "Can't you at least get us a washbasin to wash your face?" - I'll find a way. 38 Half a daughter-in-law later came triumphant with the desired utensil. It was one of those iron washrooms, with a round basin and an oval mirror - a mirror that deforms the face of those who look at it - a washbasin, known in the interior of São Paulo as a "Turkish washbasin". The "Hotel 15 de Novembro" was a characteristic mansion of the place. The construction, although simple, obeyed an intelligent plan, which was to avoid the effect of high temperatures as much as possible. It was U-shaped. On the front and on one side, the guest rooms were installed; in the other arm were the hotel facilities: bathrooms, kitchen and pantry; at the back of the U was the dining room, whose large windows opened onto the patio - backyard. The bathrooms of a Franciscan poverty were common to all guests: they were nothing more than a tiled room⁸⁷

The environment was adapted to provide the best comfort within the context of high temperatures and they had the indispensable hammock as a tool that would help in this fight, in the same comment, the variations between different types of hammocks present within the Sertão itself are also discussed, clarifying how even in the same region the cultures vary and take their own shape, with a meaning that represents the historical heritage of the societies that compose it.

In *Caatingas and Chapadões*, it is possible, through literature, to relive traces of the cultural history of that time. As Sandra Pesavento says, "the relationship between History and Literature is resolved on the epistemological level, through approximations and distancing, understanding them as different ways of saying the world, which have different approximations with reality. Clio and Calliope participate in the creation of the world, as

⁸⁵ Ibidem, p. 126.

⁸⁶ IGLÉSIAS, 1953, p.39.

⁸⁷ Ibidem, p. 39.



narratives that speak of what happened and what did not happen, with reality as a referent to confirm, to deny, to overcome, to deform."⁸⁸

Preserving the subjective traits of the sertanejo culture in a historical time where the only culture was that of the elites and few achieved the privilege of education, reinforces the validity of the analysis of this work, which acted with different axes of inference and brings the reader, whether Brazilian or Piauí, closer to a portrait of the past reality under the vision of a traveler who only had the mission of, initially, to take care of the production of *Maniçoba* and ended up producing a place of memory full of problematizations and analyses worthy of Clio's gaze.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

By diving into the pages of *Caatingas and Chapadões*, we are taken on a journey through the political, economic, and cultural complexities of the Northeast at the beginning of the twentieth century. Through Iglésias' writings, we are led through landscapes full of contrasts and challenges, where the Northeast struggles to find its place in modernity.

The cultural and social representations present in the work *Caatingas e Chapadões* demonstrate how the northeastern hinterland is seen as a space of contrasts: between the sublime and the grotesque, misery and resistance. The vision of Francisco de Assis Iglésias dialogues with Roger Chartier's concept of representation, where narratives are constructions loaded with cultural and social meanings. The work shows that the social practices of the hinterland are not neutral, but loaded with strategies of legitimation and exclusion. Thus, the book presents itself as a literary record that goes beyond the descriptive, functioning as a lens that projects the social imaginary of Brazil at that time.

The analysis of bodies in Iglésias' work shows how historical and social conditions shape the perception of the sertanejo body. Using Foucault's concept, which describes the body as a support for vital functions and a place of symbolic inscription, the work portrays the physical pain and suffering caused by hunger, thirst and heat in the hinterland. Moments such as the author's despair when facing thirst show the brutality of living conditions and reinforce the resilience of the sertanejos. Language is presented as a reflection of cultural and social dynamics, varying according to the regional context. In the work, the language of the sertanejos is analyzed as an element that carries the collective history and values of the community, while the linguistic estrangements between Iglésias and the residents reveal the cultural distances between the North and the South. The work exposes how language is often marginalized by stereotypes and prejudices. Since these

⁸⁸ PESAVENTO, 2003, p. 66.



variations, the songs and local expressions reveal the linguistic richness of the hinterland, they are more than mere variation: they are marks of identity.

The work also reflects the social and economic changes of the early twentieth century, such as industrialization and the impact of public policies in the Northeast. Iglésias documents the interaction between the rural and the urban, highlighting the differences in social structures and cultural practices. The lack of infrastructure and the geographical isolation of the hinterland are contrasted with the vision of progress and modernity coming from the South. Where his work problematizes the marginalization of peripheral regions, showing that the narrative of Brazilian progress excluded a large part of the population.

The author invites us to recognize and value the cultures and representations of the cities of Piauí that have resisted time, preserved by the author's words and that are currently in a different way. It is as if he invited us to embark on a journey, opening our eyes to his strangeness in the picturesque and unique landscapes, provided by the natural and cultural richness that permeates this region. And the present research problematized the way the scenarios are exposed, seeking a middle ground between the fantasies of memory, fiction and the rigor of history.

His account has a place within the historical documentation, revealing itself as a work of appreciation of the cultural expressions found in the Northeast, during the beginning of the twentieth century, which can be read by all who wish to navigate back to the cities of Piauí of the past. By entering the pages of *Caatingas and Chapadões*, it is supported how cities are multifaceted and can be represented in different ways, based on their social place. Therefore, the present study is one of those sources that represent the importance of memory and personal narratives in the construction of a more inclusive and plural history.





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