

The Carnivalization of Death in the Chronicle “*A tragédia do cordão Estrela de Dois Diamantes*” [The Tragedy of the Star with Two Diamonds Carnival Block], by Luís Edmundo / *A carnavalização da morte na crônica “A tragédia do cordão Estrela de Dois Diamantes”, de Luís Edmundo*

Fabiano Dalla Bona*

Carolina de Castro Wanderley**

ABSTRACT

The article intends to demonstrate when the carnival chronicle at the beginning of the 20th century in Brazil was a tool for a national cultural project under bourgeois, univocal and European canons, comparing its occurrences with the carnivalization seen in the chronicle “*A tragédia do Cordão Estrela de Dois Diamantes*” [The Tragedy of the Star with Two Diamonds Carnival Block], by Luís Edmundo.

KEYWORDS: Carnival Chronicle; Carnivalization; Rio de Janeiro

RESUMO

O artigo pretende demonstrar quando a crônica carnavalesca no início do século XX no Brasil foi ferramenta para um projeto nacional de cultura sob cânones burgueses, unívocos e europeus, confrontando suas ocorrências com a carnavalização verificada na crônica “A tragédia do Cordão Estrela de Dois Diamantes”, de Luís Edmundo.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Crônica carnavalesca; Carnavalização; Rio de Janeiro

* Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro – UFRJ, Faculdade de Letras, Departamento de Letras Estrangeiras Neolatinas, Campus Cidade Universitária, Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil; <http://orcid.org/0000-0003-2195-8835>; fdbona@gmail.com

** Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro – UFRJ, Faculdade de Letras, Departamento de Letras Estrangeiras Neolatinas, Campus Cidade Universitária, Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil; CAPES, Proc. 88887.837019/2023-00; <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4466-1172>; contato@carolinawanderley.com.br

There has been a time when Carnival was not a national topic, did not feature advertisements across the country and worldwide, and was not even part of the typical definition of the Brazilian people. Samba did not even exist! On the contrary, the great discussion was which foreign Carnival model would be adopted in a Brazil that had just emerged from the imperial and slave-based regime.

Just like the ethnic formation of the Brazilian people, so were the available influences for building the festivity: *maracatus*, African *afoxés* and *cucumbis*, festive dances and indigenous *caboclinhos*, *zé pereiras* and Portuguese *entrudos*.

In the mid-19th century, however, these influences were not combined, but rather conflicting. There was a declared war waged by the elites and the press against the *Entrudo*, which consisted of a prosaic game in which revelers threw at each other small wax spheres filled with water, perfumed liquids, paint, and sometimes also dubious substances.

The taste for the *Entrudo* was broadly shared by the lower classes, but the practice was also occasionally well-accepted by some wealthy families and, especially, by the Emperor, his family and his entourage. In fact, this was the main reason why the Brazilian literary class, abolitionist and republican by definition, fiercely attacked the *Entrudo*: because it represented a “monarchical and antiquated” practice. These arguments were enough at the time for the press to lead a massive campaign against the carnival event, supported mainly by the chronicles of the literary figures of the time.

It is regarding the chronicle, widely used in this final period of the Monarchy in Brazil that Antonio Candido (2003, p. 89) says that “[...] its unpretentiousness humanizes,”¹ to the extent that by speaking of mundane facts, in a peculiarly banal way, it manages to create one of the most faithful portraits of reality. The author continues:

This is because it has no pretensions to last, since it is a child of the newspaper and the machine age, where everything ends so quickly. It was not originally made for books, but for that ephemeral publication that is bought one day and the next day is used to wrap a pair of shoes or cover the kitchen floor.

[...]

As in the evangelical precept, what wants to be saved ends up getting lost; and what is not afraid of getting lost ends up getting saved. In the

¹ In Portuguese: “[...] sua despreensão, humaniza.”

case of the chronicle, perhaps as a reward for being so unpretentious, insinuating and revealing. And also because it teaches us to live intimately with the word, ensuring that it does not dissolve completely or too quickly in the context, but gains relevance, allowing the reader to feel it in the strength of its own values (Candido, 2003, p. 89).²

And this same “literary tool,” precisely the one that served to fight the *Entrudo* (and the monarchy and slavery as well), served to later try to forge the cultural model that was desired for the country. Leonardo Pereira, in *O carnaval das letras* [The Carnival of Letters], states that:

Bilac and Coelho Neto are no exception: the 1880s saw the transformation of Carnival into a subject of great interest for many of the poets and columnists who wrote for the major newspapers in Rio de Janeiro. Although their participation in a certain type of revelry had already been noted since the 1850s, when writers such as José de Alencar and Manuel Antônio de Almeida founded the first known Carnival society, it was only many years later that it was incorporated as a theme. Authors such as Raul Pompeia, Valentim Magalhães, Artur Azevedo and even the already experienced Machado de Assis were never tired of discussing the days of *Momo* in their chronicles – in texts probably often written still hungover from the previous day’s frolics. From public amusement to the theme of a literary generation that was trying to consolidate national literature, Carnival established itself as one of the major issues of the period (Pereira, 2004, p. 5).³

It is true that the chroniclers did not write only for the love of mayhem. As already mentioned, there is a consensus among the works that deal with the literary moment of

² In Portuguese: “Isto acontece porque não tem pretensões a durar, uma vez que é filha do jornal e da era da máquina, onde tudo acaba tão depressa. Ela não foi feita originariamente para o livro, mas para essa publicação efêmera que se compra num dia e no dia seguinte é usada para embrulhar um par de sapatos ou forrar o chão da cozinha. (...) Como no preceito evangélico, o que quer salvar-se acaba por perder-se; e o que não teme perder-se acaba por se salvar. No caso da crônica, talvez como prêmio por ser tão despretenhosa, insinuante e reveladora. E também porque ensina a conviver intimamente com a palavra, fazendo que ela não se dissolva de todo ou depressa demais no contexto, mas ganhe relevo, permitindo que o leitor a sinta na força dos seus valores próprios.”

³ In Portuguese: “Bilac e Coelho Neto não são exceções: a década de oitenta do século XIX assiste à transformação do carnaval em assunto de grande interesse para muitos dos poetas e cronistas que escreviam nos grandes jornais do Rio de Janeiro. Se sua participação em um certo tipo de folia já se fazia notar desde a década de cinquenta do século XIX, quando escritores como José de Alencar e Manuel Antônio de Almeida fundavam a primeira sociedade carnavalesca conhecida, só muitos anos depois ele foi incorporado como tema. Autores como Raul Pompeia, Valentim Magalhães, Artur Azevedo e até mesmo o já experiente Machado de Assis não se cansavam de tratar em suas crônicas dos dias de Momo – em textos provavelmente escritos muitas vezes ainda com a ressaca das brincadeiras de véspera. De divertimento público a tema de uma geração literária que tentava consolidar a literatura nacional, o carnaval se afirmava como uma das grandes questões do período.”

Carnival that both the chroniclers and the reporters and columnists were aligned with the construction of a new image of the country, recently freed from the rule of the emperor. For a long time these writers were aligned with abolitionist ideals, but at the end of the 19th century, having both the republican and abolitionist agendas been covered, they saw their portfolio of ideals emptied. They then began to focus on creating a new model of Carnival, in which the wet and lemon-scented games of *Entrudo*, considered barbaric, were replaced by festivities inspired by the Carnivals of Nice, Venice and Rome, with their luxurious parades.

For a long time, writers and the government fought against Carnival. With the definitive extinction of the popular *molhadelas*, it became clear that the agenda did not only attack the prank, considered hostile and violent, but mainly the most popular manifestations of Rio's carnival, misaligned with the nation's modernization project (Cunha, 2001, pp. 154-155). This can be confirmed when we observe that the chronicles aimed at a new target, before it was the *Entrudo* and now the popular *cordões* [carnival blocks], which appeared in abundance on the streets of a Rio de Janeiro that wanted to be a metropolis and, if possible, an European one, exactly along the lines of the Pereira Passos Urban Reform, in turn inspired by the modernization of Georges-Eugène Haussmann in Paris (Cunha, 2001, p. 151).

This bias towards adapting the festivities to new canons can be seen in carnival chronicles. Analyzing the chronicles of the first decades of the 20th century, Eduardo Coutinho (2004, p. 2) states that they “[...] guaranteed to the forms of entertainment of the ‘common people’ a space free from police persecution, while fitting them into the civilizing project of the elites.”⁴ Or, at least, they tried to do so! This is because at times the daredevil nature of the chronicler was clear, and the affirmation of a civilized ideal was impossible. Coutinho himself states:

The god of deceit appeared in the Brazilian press in the second half of the 19th century as a symbol of that “civilized,” Venetian carnival that was intended to be created in Rio de Janeiro to replace the “barbaric” traditional festivities. He appeared alongside the characters of the *commedia dell'arte* in the aristocratic salons of carnival clubs and in the rising entertainment sections of newspapers. However, as a

⁴ “[...] garantiu às formas de divertimento do “populacho” um espaço livre da perseguição policial, ao mesmo tempo em que as enquadrou no projeto civilizatório das elites” condenando as práticas populares.

consequence of cultural circularity, in the same way that the elites assimilated the popular *maxixe*, the people soon appropriated *Momo* and mixed him with the devils, indians, *Zé Pereiras* and the shepherdesses of the carnival of small societies.

This social plurivalence of the irreverent god of revelry is the characteristic political-ideological trait of the columns dedicated to him. Such columns had, like Janus, two faces: one, disciplinarian, civilizing, bourgeois, that shaped the carnival demanded by the beautiful and aristocratic *Avenida Central*; another, critical, parodic, democratic, which included in the national festival the allegories and fantasies of the “*arraia-miúda*.” There were texts that stated in no uncertain terms that the king was naked, and others that seemed like true editorials, more realistic than the king himself, condemning popular practices (Coutinho, 2004, p. 2).⁵

What is perceived in the carnival chronicles of the period in Rio de Janeiro, mainly, is that the transgressive character of the popular carnival is the object of combat when the chronicle openly seeks to exalt the elites and their refined ways of partying and when it is ideologically aligned with these elites who, it should be repeated, wished to forge the image of modern Brazil through their carnival practices.

On the other hand, when the chronicler presents the poetic, multivocal face of transgression, the festivities of the less privileged strata of society are valued and become chronicles of great literary quality. This is the example of João do Rio, a writer from Rio de Janeiro from the beginning of the 20th century, who writes in *Cordões*:

- But what do you think? The *cordão* is Carnival, the *cordão* is delirious life, the *cordão* is the last link of pagan religions. Each of these howling black men has on their velveteen the dyschromic reflection of the sequined millennial traditions; each drunk black woman, dispelling her wide hips in the crumpled tarlatans, recalls the delirium of the processions in Byblos during the spring season and the rabid fury of the bacchantes. When I see them passing by, drumming, rattling, shouting,

⁵ In Portuguese: “O deus da burla surge na imprensa brasileira na segunda metade do século XIX como símbolo daquele carnaval ‘civilizado,’ veneziano, que se pretendia criar no Rio de Janeiro em substituição aos ‘bárbaros’ folguedos tradicionais. Aparece juntamente com os personagens da comédia dell’arte nos salões aristocráticos dos clubes carnavalescos e nas nascentes seções de entretenimento dos jornais. Porém, como consequência da circularidade cultural, da mesma forma como as elites assimilaram o *maxixe* popular, o povo logo se apropriou de *Momo* e o misturou com os diabos, índios, *zé pereiras* e as pastoras do carnaval das pequenas sociedades. Esta plurivalência social do irreverente deus da folia é o traço político-ideológico característico das colunas a ele dedicadas. Tais colunas tinham, como Jano, duas faces: uma, disciplinadora, civilizadora, burguesa, que modelava o carnaval exigido pela bela e aristocrática *Avenida Central*; outra, crítica, paródica, democrática, que incluía na festa nacional as alegorias e fantasias da ‘*arraia-miúda*.’ Havia textos onde se dizia com todas as letras que o rei estava nu, e outros que pareciam verdadeiros editoriais, mais realistas do que o próprio rei, condenando as práticas populares.”

dragging the immeasurable apotheosis of Rumor, I feel like respecting them, intoning in their praise the classical “prosody” with the phrases of Pindar – hail, flowering groups, flowering branches of life... (Rio, 2012, p. 190).⁶

Whether they are detractors of the carnival or defenders of mayhem, the chroniclers merely translate in their texts the spirit of that time: a marked conflict between ideological models desired for the image of the nation. The article “*A literatura brasileira e a arte do Carnaval*” [Brazilian Literature and the Art of Carnival], by Fred Góes, discusses the confrontation between popular cultures and new models of national culture of the time:

It was believed that the popular universe was full of cultural survivals that needed to be eradicated to make way for “progress” and “civilization.” There were reprehensible habits in the ways of living, dressing, working, having fun, healing, etc., many of them even more “abominable” because they were manifestations of black cultural roots disseminated among the popular classes.

[...]

The carnival that was desired at that time, as already observed, was one that resembled that of Nice and Venice, with harlequins, dominoes, pierrots and columbines, in which emotions were restrained, without the excesses of the *cordões* dressed as Indians, the *batuques* and *cucumbis* of African origin (Góes, 2005, pp. 64-65).⁷

It can be seen that the desire for a new carnival model eliminated the multiplicity of voices, seeking a bourgeois, lukewarm and European univocal. For this reason, it is not wrong to say that the chroniclers who best presented the Rio carnival of the early 20th century were those who admitted it under the polyphonic, polysemic and transgressive

⁶ In Portuguese: “- Mas que pensas tu? O cordão é o Carnaval, o cordão é a vida delirante, o cordão é o último elo das religiões pagãs. Cada um desses pretos ululantes tem por sobre a belbutina e o reflexo discrômico das lentejoulas tradições milenares; cada preta bêbada, desconjurando nas tarlatanas amarfanhadas os quadris largos, recorda o delírio das procissões em Byblos pela época da primavera e a fúria rabida das bacantes. Eu tenho vontade, quando os vejo passar zabumbando, chocalhando, berrando, arrastando a apoteose incomensurável do Rumor, de os respeitar, entoando em seu louvor a ‘prosódia’ clássica com as frases de Píndaro – salve grupos floridos, ramos floridos da vida...”

⁷ In Portuguese: “Julgava-se que o universo popular estava repleto de sobrevivências culturais que precisavam ser erradicadas para abrir caminho ao ‘progresso’ e à ‘civilização.’ Havia hábitos condenáveis nas formas de morar, de vestir, de trabalhar, de se divertir, de curar etc., muitos deles mais ‘abomináveis’ ainda por serem manifestações de raízes culturais negras disseminadas nas classes populares. (...) O carnaval que se desejava então, como já observado, era o que se assemelhasse ao de Nice e Veneza, com arlequins, dominós, pierrôs e colombinas, em que as emoções fossem comedidas, sem os excessos dos cordões fantasiados de índios, dos batuques e cucumbis de origem africana.”

approach of hierarchical relations and the rule of moderation of the carnival according to the European canons of Nice, Rome and Venice.

Mikhail Bakhtin (2009, p. 11) says in this regard that the “[...] a second life, a second world of folk culture is thus constructed; it is to a certain extent a parody of the extracarnival life, a ‘world inside out.’”⁸ This turned upside down world, in the case of the Brazilian carnival of the late 19th century, is the one that insubordinates against well-behaved bourgeois moderation.

It is Bakhtin who also brings the concept of degradation, relating it to popular carnival, where there is “[...] the lowering of all that is high, spiritual, ideal, abstract; it is a transfer to the material level, to the sphere of earth and body in their indissoluble unity” (Bakhtin, 2009, pp. 19-20).⁹ In other words, he relates the festivities to a very peculiar way of dealing with physical, psychological and social pain, with the material and emotional limits that life presents and with the way of elaborating these limits through the body, laughter, mockery and celebration.

All this happens, according to Bakhtin (2009, p. 128), through the application of a carnivalesque worldview, or a perception of reality in a carnivalesque way, which contemplates (i) a familiarity between the participants of the festivities located in a public space, (ii) an eccentricity of previously reclusive themes, (iii) a *mésalliance*, where previously conflicting themes can be dealt with on the same occasion, in a calm and peaceful way and (iv) a profanation, which is the carnivalesque treatment of sacred, respectful and feared themes, now in an indecent, ironic, parodic, sacrilegious or profaning way.

The theoretical resources provided by Bakhtin lead to the understanding that popular carnivals are a dialogical reaction to the positions of public authorities and the law, to the growing racist and classist repression, to the violence of the modernized big city, to poverty, hunger, the lack of social options after the abolition of slavery, to the pains of love and death, parodying the established white models. The chronicles that have the virtue of portraying this relationship are those that, in fact, speak of the festival itself, in a way that is free from prejudice.

⁸ BAKHTIN, Mikhail. *Rabelais and His World*. Transl. Helene Iswolsky. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009.

⁹ For reference, see footnote 8.

An example of a carnival chronicle that well expresses the full power of the festival and portrays the social issues repressed by laws, daily life, poverty and also death, is the one written by Luís Edmundo, the subject of this study.

Luís Edmundo, or Luís Edmundo de Melo Pereira da Costa, was a journalist, columnist, poet, memoirist, and a member of the Brazilian Academy of Letters between 1944 and 1961. In three volumes called *O Rio de Janeiro do meu tempo* [Rio de Janeiro in my Time], he presented chronicles of the city in the early 20th century, its people and their way of life. Obviously, he could not forget Carnival, and he did so at a specific moment, when a confrontation between rival carnival *cordões* took the lives of two revelers from *Cordão Estrela de Dois Diamantes*.

According to newspapers of the time, notably *Jornal do Brasil* [Paper of Brazil], during the 1902 carnival, precisely on February 10, two popular carnival *cordões* met at around eight o'clock in the Botafogo neighborhood: the “*Flor da Primavera*” [Spring Flower] and the “*Estrela de Dois Diamantes*” [Star with Two Diamonds], when a conflict between members of the groups resulted in the death of two revelers from “*Estrela*.” (*Jornal do Brasil*, 1902)

The news reports gave sometimes sensationalist, sometimes realistic information, almost always riddled with racism and classism. But in any case, they reported in detail what happened, from the fight in the street, through the collection of the bodies at the Municipal Morgue, the arrest of an alleged murderer, the investigations and various police scenes.

The news coming from conservative journalism portrays the deaths as an interruption of the party, a limit given to it by the convulsion of the festivities themselves:

As we said in the detailed news item published in the morning edition, the joy that reigned yesterday at 8:00 pm among those who were enjoying the Carnival festivities was suddenly interrupted by the revolting bloodbath that resulted in the death of two young workers, with many others somewhat seriously injured, as will be seen in this news item.

As soon as the sad scene took place, the news spread to every corner of the elegant neighborhoods of Botafogo and Cattete.

[...]

THE AUTOPSY

At 9:00 am, Dr. Moraes e Britto, the police forensic doctor, arrived at the morgue and, assisted by Lieutenant Mendes, the administrator,

began the autopsy of Angelino Gonçalves, alias *Boi*, of brown skin, presumably 25 years old.

Gonçalves was at the first table, on the left, and was wearing a black suit. Cause of death: hemorrhage following injury to the left lung.

The autopsy was then performed on Jorge Nunes dos Santos, 23 years old, single, a bricklayer, resident at Pedro Americo Street, number 20. Cause of death: hemorrhage following injury to the right lung.

- The burial of the *Boi* was in charge of his brother-in-law Alfredo Pinto da Silva.

- The following floral wreaths were to be placed on Francellino's coffin, with the following inscriptions: "Sorely missed, from his father and brother," "Sorely missed, from the Ribeiro family to Jorge" and "Sorely missed, from his sisters, brother-in-law and niece."

The burial will be conducted by his brother Jorge Nunes dos Santos.

- Both burials will take place today, at 4:00 pm, at the cemetery of S. João Baptista da Lagôa.

The Children of the *Estrela de Dous Diamantes* will go to the Morgue to place the Guild's banner and the wreaths they have received on the coffins of the two murdered men (Jornal do Brasil, 1902).¹⁰

In the same vehicle, a chronicle signed by João Guedes goes a little further: it presents a baroque construction to honor one of the murdered, nicknamed among the carnival-goers as "*Boi*," where the young man's burial, which had a large number of attendees and was notable for its commotion, is emphasized more strongly:

This year's carnival left me a strong and lasting impression.

It was the *Boi*'s float, as was titled by his companions the funeral of Antonio Angelino Gonçalves, who was murdered in the fight between the *Primavera* and the *Estrela de Dois Diamantes* groups.

This funeral ceremony was so original that I couldn't resist the desire to write about it. I would like to believe that in recent times, among us,

¹⁰ In Portuguese: "Como dissemos na minuciosa notícia que publicamos na edição da manhã, foi, de subito, suspensa a alegria que reinava hontem ás 8 horas da noite, entre aquelles que se entregavam aos folguedos do Carnaval, pela revoltante acena de sangue, que trouxe a morte de dous rapazes trabalhadores, ficando muitos outros feridos mais ou menos gravemente como se verá desta notícia. Logo que se deu a triste scena a noticia repercutiu em todos os cantos dos elegantes bairros de Botafogo e Cattete. (...) A NECROPSIA. Ás 9 horas da manhã chegou ao Necroterio o dr. Moraes e Britto, medico legista da policia, que, auxiliado pelo tenente Mendes, administrador, deu começo á autopsia de Angelino Gonçalves, vulgo Boi, de côr parda, com 25 annos presumiveis. Gonçalves estava na primeira mesa, á esquerda, e usava terno preto. Causa mortis: hemorragia consecutiva a ferimento do pulmão esquerdo. Em seguida foi autopsiado Jorge Nunes dos Santos, de 23 annos, solteiro, pedreiro, morador á rua Pedro Americo n. 20. Causa mortis: hemorragia consecutiva a ferimento do pulmão direito. - Do enterro do Boi encarregou-se seu cunhado Alfredo Pinto da Silva. - Para serem depositadas sobre o feretro de Francellino, mais as seguintes corôas com os seguintes disticos: 'Saudae de seu pae e irmão,' 'Saudades da familia Ribeiro a Jorge' e 'Saudades de suas irmãs, cunhado e sobrinha.' O enterro é feito por seu irmão Jorge Nunes dos Santos. - Ambos os enterros terão logar hoje, ás 4 horas da tarde, para o cemiterio de S. João Baptista da Lagôa. Os Filhos da Estrella de Dous Diamantes irão ao Necroterio depositar o estandarte do Gremio e as corôas que eles têm recebido sobre os feretros dos dous assassinados."

there has not been an event so outstanding, so separate from the others, which bore us so much with their eternal monotony.

And what is remarkable about this event is not simply the forms in which it was taken, forms that were at once touching and grotesque. The note that most resonated and caught the public's attention was the character of respect and dignity that presided over the entire burial, from the moment the body left the morgue until the last shovel of earth was laid in the cemetery.

[...] Seen and respected in this way, it was only natural that his death, motivated by the audacity that made him always feared, superior and dominant, would cause all this pageantry of glory with which he was taken to his final resting place.

And readers should note that this burial was not insignificant at all. *Boi's* coffin, accompanied by the banners of the carnival societies, funeral-wrapped in crepe, managed to stifle the joy of many people who would have been capable of anything but sadness on that day.

For me, this event assumes such proportions that, I am certain, it will remain vivid in the memory of many people for many years to come [...] (Guedes, *Jornal do Brasil*, 1902).¹¹

As can be seen, the chronicler records the great impact he personally suffered when witnessing the reveler's burial, which he describes as touching and grotesque at the same time. And at a certain point, the chronicle mentions that the death of "Boi" stifled "[...] the pleasure of many people who would be capable of anything, except sadness on that day" (Guedes, 1902, p. 13).¹²

By treating those present by the coffin with complete impersonality and even with a certain distance and disdain, the chronicler confirms death and effectively portrays it, putting an end to the people's joy and the festivities of the popular carnival that year. He

¹¹ In Portuguese: "Do carnaval deste anno me ficou uma impressão forte e persistente. Foi o carro do Boi, como intitularam seus companheiros o enterro de Antonio Angelino Gonçalves, assassinado na luta travada entre os grupos da Primavera e Estrella de Dois Diamantes. Esse acto funebre, com effeito, foi revestido de tanta originalidade, que não resisto do desejo de escrever sobre elle. Quero crer que nos últimos tempos, entre nós, não houvesse um acontecimento tão destacado, tão a parte dos outros, que tanto nos aborrecem com sua eterna monotonia. E o que ha de notavel nesse facto não são simplesmente as fórmulas de que se revestiu, fórmulas ao mesmo tempo tocantes e grotescas. A nota que mais vibrou e chamou a attenção publica foi o character de respeito e a dignidade que presidiu todo o enterro, desde a sahida do Necroterio até a ultima pá de terra no Cemiterio. (...) Visto e respeitado assim, era muito natural que a sua morte, motivada pela audacia que o fez sempre temido, superior e dominante, causasse todo esse apparato de glorias com que foi levado á ultima morada. E notem os leitores que não foi nada insignificante esse enterramento. O caixão de Boi, acompanhado pelos estandartes das sociedades carnavalescas, funeralmente envoltos em crepe, conseguiu abafar o prazer de muita gente que seria capaz de tudo, menos de uma tristeza n'aquelle dia. Para mim assume tal proporção este acontecimento que, estou certo, por muitos annos ele ha de permanecer nitido na memoria de muita gente."

¹² In Portuguese: "[...] o prazer de muita gente que seria capaz de tudo, menos de uma tristeza n'aquelle dia."

even mentions that the coffin was clothed with respect and dignity, therefore, in accordance with the ritual expected for a burial.

Although we are analyzing an extreme situation here, of death during Carnival, the tone of the treatment of the revelers is the same as in the vast majority of Carnival chronicles of the time, in which the elite's *cordões*, *ranchos* and parades were praised and the popular demonstrations were criticized. In other words, there is no form of carnivalization in the reports cited, especially in Guedes' chronicle, which clearly states that everything happened with the necessary solemnity, according to the dominant rites.

Thus, reports about *cordões*, *ranchos* and popular masquerades were not only lacking in detail, but also criticized. The parades of non-bourgeois individuals were always viewed with greater scrutiny, as Maria Clementina Pereira da Cunha portrays:

In a short time, despite their peaceful nature and their relations with the old leaders of popular Catholicism, these parades began to be portrayed as groups of troublesome black men, dressed as Indians, who performed in the carnival *cordões* or in the last *cucumbis* of the Rio Carnival. Apparently, once the abolitionist impetus and enthusiasm for the cause had cooled, the African tambourines and movements should have been relegated to oblivion (Cunha, 2001, p. 2).¹³

The opposite happened, however, with the analyzed text by Luís Edmundo (1902), which narrates exactly the same event: a dispute between two carnival *cordões* made up of less wealthy people, mostly black.

The chronicler deals with the same event. He describes the route that had been outlined by the *Cordão Filhos da Estrela de Dois Diamantes* [Children of the Star with Two Diamonds Carnival Block], and speaks of the members "[...] filling a tram that is heading towards Botafogo, beating tambourines, scraping *réco-récos*, dancing, singing, full of the most lively satisfaction and carelessness" (Edmundo, 1965, p. 89),¹⁴ who are deliberately ambushed by members of the rival *cordão*. The succession of events begins to move at an intense pace:

¹³ In Portuguese: "Em pouco tempo, apesar de sua índole pacífica e de suas relações com as velhas lideranças do catolicismo popular, tais desfiles passaram a ser pintados como bandos de negros desordeiros, fantasiados de índios, que se exibiam nos cordões carnavalescos ou nos últimos cucumbis do Carnaval carioca. Ao que parece, arrefecidos o ímpeto abolicionista e o entusiasmo da causa, os adufes e meneios africanos deveriam ter sido relegados ao esquecimento."

¹⁴ In Portuguese: "[...] enchendo um bonde que caminha para Botafogo, batendo pandeiros, raspando réco-récos, dançando, cantando, cheio da mais viva satisfação e descuido"

It is a stupid and bloody brawl. The men fight like beasts. With knives. With bullets. They roll around in circles. They bleed. Even women get involved in the conflict, which takes on the proportions of a fierce battle. When tempers calm down, the streets are a torrent of blood. There are dead, and the number of wounded and bruised is enormous (Edmundo, 1965, p. 89).¹⁵

After the pace of the narrative becoming lively for the carnival and then slowing, bloodily, until death, the chronicle could end as previously mentioned. The traditional and dramatic rites would have been observed, obeyed. There would be no carnivalization, inversion, questioning. There would be no fun, ultimately. But Luís Edmundo continues, reporting the removal of the bodies of the two dead from the morgue:

The ones of the “*Estrela de Dois Diamantes*” leave the morgue, organizing the funeral procession, with their banner wrapped in crepe, the ruff boxes theatrically in funeral, although the members are inside the most scandalous and garish costumes. The coffins, black and poor, go first. Next, in a motorcade, are flowers, applause, wreath and garlands. It is a simple but touching tribute (Edmundo, 1965, p. 90).¹⁶

The simple nature of the departing coffin is consistent with the humble origins of the dead. Black, or mixed race, as stated in their autopsy report exhaustively transcribed in the reports, accompanied by party partners, this is the narrative common to the other texts. However, by recognizing the popular festival as an opportunity to reorganize the rule, in this case the rule of death and finitude, Luís Edmundo directs his account of the event to the opportunity to carnivalize this same death, through the power of the *cordões* with their portentous names. And he does so, then, through the Rio carnival itself:

There goes the silent and mournful group, moving along the sidewalks of Largo da Glória, when suddenly, appears in front of them, carrying carnival banners, drums, *bombos* and *tambores*, a waving, enormous

¹⁵ In Portuguese: “É uma refrega estúpida e sangrenta. Os homens batem-se como feras. A faca. A tiro. Rolam aos bolos. Sangram-se. Até mulheres entram no conflito, que assume proporções de uma feroz batalha. Quando serenam os ânimos, a rua é uma caudal de sangue. Há mortos, e o número de feridos e contusos é enorme.”

¹⁶ In Portuguese: “Os da ‘Estrêla de Dois Diamantes’ deixam a morgue, organizando o préstito mortuário, com o seu estandarte envolto em crepe, as caixas de rufo teatralmente em funeral, embora os sócios, dentro das fantasias as mais escandalosas e berrantes. Os caixões, negros e pobres, vão à frente. A seguir, numa carreata, flores, palmas, coroas e grinaldas. É uma homenagem simples, porém tocante.”

crowd. There are several similar groups that, in their entirety, also want to pay homage to the heroic fighters of Momo, on the field of “Honor” and “Duty” taken by Death... The newspapers of the time give the names of these associations. They are: “*Filhos do Poder do Ouro*” [Children of the Power of Gold], “*Destemidos Catete*” [Fearless Catete], “*Maçãs de Ouro*” [Golden Apples], “*Rainha das Chamas*” [Queen of Flames] and “*Triunfo da Glória*” [Triumph from Glory]. It is a magnificent spectacle. A true mobilization of masked people. Hundreds and hundreds of men wearing the most garish and eccentric Carnival costumes, with painted faces, bags of confetti slung over their shoulders, bundles of serpentine under their arms, multi-colored banners unfurled in the air, violent and joyful patches of color in a scene of mourning and sadness (Edmundo, 1965, p. 90).¹⁷

Edmundo then once again assumes the cadenced, presto rhythm of Carnival in his story. And he informs the reader that the inversion, the lowering of the rule of death, would start with the bodies of those present at the burial, who begin to sound a funeral drum on Carnival percussion instruments. Soon, a “mysterious voice” is heard, singing magnificently, and joined by wind instruments. Once again, through the music, through the chronicle’s narrative construction sonority, the author gives power to the event portrayed, as he soon informs that the coffin becomes more and more emotional, wet with tears, until it explodes: “It takes shape. It ascends. It transforms the rhythm of the solfa, which slips into a syncopated motif. Now joyful. And profane. And *mômico*. And scoundrel. It is samba!” (Edmundo, 1965, p. 93).¹⁸

The degradation of the funeral act and its ritual intention into a moment of happiness is consistent with Bakhtin, who states that this type of distortion of the socially expected ritual is an effective way of creating a rebirth. The grotesque version of the rite is a way of denying death and dressing the tragic situation with life: “Grotesque realism knows no other lower level; it is the fruitful earth and the womb. It is always conceiving”

¹⁷ In Portuguese: “Vai o bando lúgubre e silencioso roçando as calçadas do Largo da Glória, quando, súbito, surge-lhe pela frente, carregando pendões carnavalescos, caixas de rufos, bombos e tambores, um povaréu enorme, que ondula. São várias agremiações congêneres que, em pêso, querem, também homenagear os heróicos batalhadores de Momo, no campo de ‘Honra’ e do ‘Dever’ colhidos pela Morte... Os jornais da época dão o nome dessas associações. São elas: ‘Filhos do Poder do Ouro,’ ‘Destemidos Catete,’ ‘Maçãs de Ouro,’ ‘Rainha das Chamas’ e ‘Triunfo da Glória.’ É um espetáculo magnífico. Verdadeira mobilização de mascarados. Centenas e centenas de homens vestindo as mais berrantes e excêntricas indumentárias de Carnaval, com a cara pintada, com sacos de confeti a tiracolo, pacotes de serpentina debaixo do braço, estandartes policromos desenrolados no ar, manchas violentas e alegres de côr num cenário de luto e de tristeza.”

¹⁸ In Portuguese: “Toma corpo. Ascende. Transforma o ritmo da solfa, que resvala para um motivo sincopado. Já alegre. E profano. E *mômico*. E canalha. É o samba!”

(Bakhtin, 2009, p. 21).¹⁹ To this extent, when a funeral turns into a carnival, death is carnivalized and a new life is created for the characters in the chronicle who, dead, return to enjoy the carnival! Death is profaned, ultimately, contradicting the intellectual consensus sought in a bourgeois party.

The chronicler ends resoundingly, in a passage where the narrative of the event and fiction flirt, as if the truth wore a costume just as those present at the funeral:

When the damp and cold grave receives the bodies that are buried and crossed in the air with confetti and serpentine, the cemetery is filled with masks, fantastic figures, who move around, a colorful mass that spreads out, talks, laughs, makes noise, cackles, among stone crosses, cypresses, marble angels that bless, slates, funeral urns and willows... And there are those who sing. And those who dance...

Magnificent Sabbath! Momo dominates his much-loved children, proud and colossal, from his invisible throne. It is when you see a reveler representing the figure of Death, in his black and sinister attire, holding a silver crucifix in his left hand and a tibia in the other, perhaps authentic, perhaps found on the spot, climbing up to a granite mausoleum, shouting loudly to the carnival-goers who greet him, as if he were the very soul of Rio de Janeiro that was shouting there, full of sincerity and vigor:

- Long live Carnival! (Edmundo, 1965, p. 94).²⁰

It should be noted that the inhospitable aspect of the bodies being deposited in the cold and inert tomb, is contrasted in an expressly opposite way by an explosion of life, by a “mass of color,” by the colors of carnival. This atmosphere is not a cemetery atmosphere, because it “noises” joyfully among the funereal landscape of cypresses and stone images, willows, and tombstones. It is a carnivalization that gives new meaning to the environment, the rite, the mood, the speeches, and the feelings.

¹⁹ For reference, see footnote 8.

²⁰ In Portuguese: “Quando a cova úmida e fria recebe os corpos que se enterram e cruzam no ar confeti e serpentinas, o cemitério está coalhado de máscaras, de fantásticos alacres, que se agitam, massa colorida que se esparrama, fala, ri, barulha, gargalha, entre cruces de pedra, ciprestes, anjos de mármore que abençoam, lousas, urnas funerárias e salgueiros... E há quem cante. E quem dance... Sabbath magnífico! Momo domina seus muito amados filhos, soberbo e colossal, do seu trono invisível. É quando se vê um folião representando a figura da Morte, na sua negra e sinistra indumentária, tendo na mão esquerda um crucifixo de prata e na outra uma tibia, talvez autêntica, talvez achada no lugar, subir para um mausoléu de granito, gritando forte aos carnavalescos que o saudam, como se fôsse ele a própria alma carioca que ali estivesse a gritar, cheia de sinceridade e de vigor:
- Viva o Carnaval!”

Thus, Edmundo's chronicle not only portrays Carnival, as seen. And it does not only carnivalize the text. It gives an example of the carnivalization of death in Carnival, of the profanation of the funeral rite, of an unbridled joy that is subversive of the sadness of burial. The cemetery, a public space, is taken over by the people, but the meaning of their occupation is inverted: they did not go to cry, they went to samba. But by sambaing, they pay homage to the dead, in such a way as, by swaying the body, they invert the predetermined ritual. It is the lowering of the social rite and the conventions of funerals, it is doing what is not expected and what is not appropriate, it is laughing at the moment of crying, all to give rebirth to the joy of the dead.

When discussing the forms dictated for the funeral rite in this period at the beginning of the 20th century, Ariès (2013, p. 77) mentions them as “hysterical” mourning, sometimes even insane, an “ostentation beyond the usual.”²¹ which can be reflected in the inversion of a carnival beyond the usual in the holy ground, by holding a carnival in the cemetery. Nothing is less usual than the effusive joy in the holy ground, nothing is less expected than the costume worn at the moment when the reality of death is ostentatious.

The rules of behavior regarding death are openly questioned in Edmundo's text and the result is a powerful chronicle, which uses the musical paces of a carnivalesque *cordão*, *crescendoing* and slowing down and *crescendoing* again to end with the emblematic figure dressed as Death on the mausoleum, holding a crucifix in one hand and a possibly authentic tibia in the other, praising Carnival. The spirit of the city, as treated in the chronicle, carnivalizes death after all.

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Translated by Alice Salomão – alicesalomaoguerra@gmail.com

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Statement of Author’s Contribution

I hereby inform you that Fabiano Dalla Bona was responsible for the substantial critical review of the intellectual content and approval of the final version and that I, Carolina de Castro Wanderley, was responsible for the conception, research and writing.

Research Data and Other Materials Availability

The contents underlying the research text are included in the manuscript.

Reviews

Due to the commitment assumed by *Bakhtiniana*. Revista de Estudos do Discurso [*Bakhtiniana*. Journal of Discourse Studies] to Open Science, this journal only publishes reviews that have been authorized by all involved.

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Review I

The article presents a very relevant object of study, establishing a clear relationship between the theory, its critical reading and the context in which the work in question was published. It takes a good approach to Bakhtin's theory of carnivalization and reaches very interesting conclusions. It is therefore an important contribution not only to literary criticism, but above all to the study and understanding of Brazilian popular culture. However, I would like to highlight the need to revisit some concepts throughout the text, as indicated in the notes. There is some confusion in the discussion proposed up to the middle of the article, which, in my opinion, needs to be revised. Furthermore, the article presents potential for discussion that could very well be explored by the authors. Finally, it is necessary to rethink the way in which Bakhtin's theory is presented in the article after contextualizing the object of study, since, in my opinion, it appears as an abrupt cut. Perhaps it would be more appropriate to address it throughout the discussion, as necessary. The discussion needs revisions, as indicated in the notes of the evaluated file. There are syntax issues that need to be corrected. I conclude this opinion in favor of publishing the text, after reviewing the points indicated above. APPROVED WITH RESTRICTIONS [Revised]

Matheus Victor Silva – Universidade Estadual Paulista “Júlio de Mesquita Filho” - UNESP, Faculdade de Ciências e Letras de Araraquara – FCLAR, Araraquara, São Paulo, Brazil; <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2852-4469>; matheus.victor@unesp.br

Reviewed on October 02, 2024.

Review II

Title: The title of the article is appropriate, accurately covering the theme and central objective of the work. It provides a clear indication of the focus of the research, being consistent with the content developed throughout the text. Objectives: The objectives set out in the work are coherent and well-defined. They are addressed throughout the development of the text, so that the articulation between the initial proposal and the development of the research remains consistent. Articulation between Theories and Sources: The article demonstrates a consistent and productive articulation between theories and sources, which are selected in a relevant manner to support the purpose of the research. The references used are appropriate and up-to-date, favoring the theoretical and methodological foundation of the work. Original Reflection: The reflection presented in the article is original and offers a significant contribution to the field of knowledge in which it is inserted. The author advances a discussion that enriches the academic debate and can generate new developments in the area. Language and Structure: The text is well structured and uses language appropriate to the rigor of scientific research in the field. The presentation is clear, the arguments are solid, and the conclusions are constructed in a consistent and creative manner, demonstrating authorship and originality. Recommendations: Although the article presents a relevant contribution and a well-founded development, a linguistic and grammatical review is recommended to correct specific errors and improve standardization, ensuring the fluidity and clarity of the text. APPROVED

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Gabrielle Leite dos Santos – Universidade Federal Rural do Semi-Árido – UFERSA, Caraúbas, Rio Grande do Norte, Brasil; <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0945-6576>; gabriellegabi@gmail.com

Reviewed on September 20, 2024.

Review III

I missed only one issue in the last evaluation. I think it is strange to say “the chroniclers [...] who admitted it under a Bakhtinian approach,” because Bakhtinian is the line of analysis, the approach established by Bakhtin to study polyphony, which in turn is an independent phenomenon, that is, it exists and can be analyzed beyond the theory woven by Bakhtin, even though he was the one who coined the term itself. I would suggest, so as not to create confusion, that the term be changed to “polyphonic approach.” The same can be said of the expression “Bakhtinian carnivalization of the environment.” Apart from this, the text complied with the other points made previously. APPROVED

Matheus Victor Silva – Universidade Estadual Paulista “Júlio de Mesquita Filho” - UNESP, Faculdade de Ciências e Letras de Araraquara – FCLAR, Araraquara, São Paulo, Brazil; <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2852-4469>; matheus.victor@unesp.br

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Editors in Charge

Adriana Pucci Penteado de Faria e Silva
Beth Brait
Bruna Lopes
Maria Helena Cruz Pistori
Paulo Rogério Stella
Regina Godinho de Alcântara