

Writing German in the Time of Brasilidade (1937-1945)

By

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Dissertation

Submitted to the Faculty of the

Graduate School of Vanderbilt University

in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in

German

December 12, 2020

Nashville, Tennessee

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## **DEDICATION**

To my mother, for her infinite support, love, and encouragement.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This work would not have been possible without the financial support of Vanderbilt University, the German Department, Center for Latin American Studies or the Max Cade Foundation.

I would like to thank Barbara Hahn, the chairperson of my committee, for seeing and encouraging my topic and subsequent research. As my professor and adviser, she has inspired me to think unconventionally and conceptualize problems differently. I am grateful to the German Department for a program that is conducive and encouraging of interdisciplinary studies, and equipped me to take on the research and writing of this dissertation. Thank you to Professor Jeffrey L. High for the invaluable advice that allowed me to stay the course.

None of this would have been possible without the love and support of my family. I want to thank them for the care packages, encouragement, and late-night chats. For those family members that have moved on, I thank you and remember you. A huge thank you to my best friends, Corinna and Katie. The counsel, laughs, and virtual girls' nights were balms for my soul. Lastly, thank you Meow for your companionship throughout this entire process.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ENBA	Escola Nacional de Belas Artes (National School of Fine Art)
MES	Ministério da Educação e Saúde (Ministry of Education and Health)
MESP	Ministério da Educação e Saúde Pública (Ministry of Education and Public Health)

## CHAPTER 1

### Introduction

The year 2006 found a new research project, *Literatura Brasileira de Expressão Alemã* (Brazilian Literature of German Expression) underway at the Instituto Martius-Staden in São Paulo, Brazil. The project, a collaboration between University of São Paulo researchers and the Instituto Martius-Staden, entails recounting the literary works of more than 20-plus German-Brazilian authors, who recorded their short stories, poems, essays, and theater pieces in German, and translating these literary texts into Portuguese for purposes of domestic and international scholarship.<sup>1</sup> According to project coordinator, Celeste Ribeiro de Sousa, the project consists of multiple stages. The initial stage is to locate the literary texts that are spread over a large number of almanac books (Kalenders) primarily published in the German settlements. The next phase includes creating a type of clearing house to serve as a central source for information on the subject matter to avert repetition and facilitate access of researchers to online material and lastly, chronicling the history of Brazilian Literature of German Expression.<sup>2</sup> These literary voices, that had flourished in the German settlements, had been muted under President Getúlio Vargas and his Estado Novo (New State) regime (1937-1945), and only recently, some 60-plus years later, have these voices resurfaced as a group of scholars began the task of not only translating, but transporting these generations of literary works into modern Portuguese and into modern Brazil. In uncovering and translating these literary productions, the researchers make room for these previously unknown voices to be a part of and take part in discussions on national literature(s), and debates surrounding discussions of (national) identity and alterity. The recovery and translation project is part of a larger effort by the institute to document and research the history of German immigration to Brazil, and German genealogy by way of an expanded corpus of primary and secondary texts, which the Martius-Staden Institute has collected and housed for scholarly and public use. Ultimately, the story of these literary productions and their authors is a

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<sup>1</sup> As of 2020, the number of authors has expanded to more than 100+ ranging from fiction to travel narratives.

<sup>2</sup> Carlos Haag, "Brazilian Theme, German Accent," *Pesquisa FAPESP Online*, January 2010, <https://revistapesquisa.fapesp.br/en/brazilian-theme-german-accent/>.

reexamination of ideas vis-à-vis national identity, and what constitutes a national literature. The appearance of these works also raises the question as to how and to what end these silenced voices can work their way into these discussions as inclusionary elements.

Traditionally, national literatures have a two-fold function in how, and what they communicate but with the same purpose, nation building with the intent to articulate a vision of the culture. Internally, national literature constructs and disseminates an image of the country and its future course. Externally, it telegraphs a national ethos, and the values that define the nation's identity. What that vision of Brazil would be became the center of debates, uprisings, and directed governmental policies in a long running culture war. Two noted nineteenth-century intellectuals, literary critic and poet Sílvio Romero, and author Machado de Assis had a number of exchanges over the notion of national ethos, and its tie to Brazilian literature initially centering around authenticity, specifically what elements would result in an authentic Brazilian literature. For Romero, he imagined using literature to define national character resulting in literary productions that would reflect said ethos. A constellation of flora, fauna, and inhabitants, would be distilled down to common attributes to yield a group of works that would be presented, and consumed as Brazil's identity. For Machado, such an approach reflected the obsession of the country's intellectuals and elite on the external perceptions of Brazil, and he rejected the idea of any identity communicated through literature as being representative of national character. He argued for more organic representations that sought to understand human complexities and motives versus imported European tropes of Brazil draped in nationalistic elements. Fast forwarding to the 100<sup>th</sup> commemoration of Brazil's independence, the nation saw a cultural pushback led by modernists, who broke with old traditions governing the arts and how nationalism was expressed. They argued for an alternative to practices rooted in European norms which reflected and were extensions of Europe resulting in Brazilian cultural products that, as Machado had argued earlier, were imitations essentially relocating Brazil and its people to Europe as opposed to a true organic cultural production that was uniquely Brazilian.

Early desire for immigration in the post-independent Brazilian Empire was economically, philosophically, politically, and socioculturally driven and as such informed policy. The Imperial court pressed for the aggressive recruitment of Germans with initially little success owing to the climate, hostility, immigrant mistreatment, and the high African slave population with the last factor being the impetus for the urgency in European recruitment. Eugenics by means of

immigration was the key to Brazil's racial and cultural transformation, and future economic prosperity where desired traits believed to be inherent to Central Europeans would purge the country of its African genetic pool, and closer align it with Europe. The Empire believed the immigrants would expand and diversify the country's sources of revenue post enslavement, and transform the agrarian heavy economy to one primarily of exportation. They also sought to utilize immigrants to secure the southern frontier against the expansionist policies of neighboring countries, and impart desired traits to the larger Brazilian population thereby transforming the face of the country.

During the time of Estado Novo (1937-1945), President Getúlio Vargas and his administration set about to systematically centralize Brazil. The centralization was not just in the name of consolidating or transferring political power from regional oligarchs to the federal government, but also centralizing a Brazilian identity by defining what it is to be Brazilian or *brasilidade*. This constructed and codified Brazilian identity is the result of a cultural war launched by the government to create a national identity uniting all the inhabitants of Brazil as Brazilians, which could then be exported to the rest of the world. Explicit in this construction of *brasilidade* is that it was meant to replace or supersede all other identities, whether that be local, regional, ethnic, or cultural. Implicit in this construction is a pattern of exclusion, inclusion, amplifying and silencing voices that do or do not fit into the state designed concept of *brasilidade*. "Under the stewardship of a small number of political and cultural elites . . . the Vargas regime built a network of federal institutions of cultural management that acted as sentinels in the larger struggle to control *brasilidade*.<sup>3</sup> In order to control this identity, they would have to set parameters as to what defined Brazilianess, and conversely, what did not. When employing use of the words exclusion and inclusion, it is in reference to this process of integrating, incorporating, and appropriating elements the Vargas government deemed appropriate to *brasilidade* on the one hand, and the rejection of others in order to produce an identity. As the scene of *brasilidade* is being played out, an identical story of identity construction is and has been unfolding along similar lines within the German immigrant communities in southern Brazil. Through institutions such as churches and schools, as well as print media, there is a concerted effort and desire to retain Germaness or *Deutschtum*. Exactly

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<sup>3</sup> Daryle Williams. *Culture Wars in Brazil* (Durham: Duke University Press), 52.

what this *Deutschtum* looks like runs parallel to what Vargas is attempting to do with *brasilidade*. An identical pattern of exclusion, and inclusion with the intent of creating an identity for those of German ethnicity that resided on Brazilian soil by way of immigration or birth. Attempts at defining this *Deutschtum* reach back to the first waves of immigrants from German states, who although speaking varying dialects and hailing from various regions, shared a common ethnic identity. An integral marker of *Deutschtum* was the German language, which was spoken at home, served as the language of instruction in schools, in Protestant church services, local commerce, and written texts be it newspaper, or literary works. This dissertation only touches on, and will not enter the conversation of politics within cultural production, instead resources such as Daryle Williams' *Culture Wars in Brazil. The First Vargas Regime, 1930-1945* serves as a valuable resource. Culture in Williams' discussion includes various components that express national ethos and the focus here is rather narrow, concentrating on the end effects in terms of national literature, and German immigrant literary production as carriers of identity. To that end, politics will only be discussed in passing as it pertains to institutions that are founded to manage, influence, and shape culture.

Under Vargas, the definition of *brasilidade* was narrow and codified so as to be in accordance with a prescribed exportable national image of the country and its citizens that could compete with the rest of the world. After the fall of the military dictatorship government in 1985, Brazil opened up economically, politically, and scholarly. The academic world had already been abuzz for seven years with the publication of Edward Said's, *Orientalism* with its myriad of narratives such as: marginalized groups, gender, economics, race, national identity, and alterity to name just a few under this new area of study. The recovery and translation of these German-Brazilian works allows Brazil to have this internal discussion in terms of their own history and practices. It also fosters the growing interest in the study of its immigrant history, communities, and their contributions to the country. As a result, contemporary writings on the subject of immigrant literature speak more to the inclusion of different immigrant groups as part of the larger collective Brazilian history and identity, and the availability of these works not only to scholars but also to classrooms and, libraries makes these pieces of Brazilian history available to all citizens of Brazil.

## CHAPTER 2

### The Debate of National Literature and National Character

*Quem examina a atual literatura brasileira reconhece-lhe logo, como primeiro traço, certo instinto de nacionalidade. Poesia, romance, todas as formas literárias do pensamento buscam vestir-se com as cores do país, e não há negar que semelhante preocupação é sintoma de vitalidade e abono de futuro.<sup>4</sup>*

*Anyone who examines current Brazilian literature immediately recognizes, as a feature, a certain instinct of nationality. Poetry, novels, all forms of literary thought seek to dress in the colors of the country, and there is no denying that such interest is an indication of future vitality and authentication.*

#### 2.1 Brasilidade in Literature

Before the first significant wave of German immigrants reached its shores, Brazil was mired in a sometimes-contentious debate over its emerging national identity, led by and between two of its most significant nineteenth century thinkers and literary figures, Joaquim Maria Machado de Assis (writing under the name Machado de Assis) and Sílvio Romero. Machado was a novelist, poet, and playwright, whose own success as a writer had come under great criticism from Romero for its lack of national ethos. Instead, Machado's work reflected a realistic and somewhat pessimistic tone to critique and expose the contradictions, and dysfunction of nineteenth century Brazil, to which Romero insisted, "were incompatible with an authentic Brazilian . . . soul and that his [Machado] novels were insipid, artificial attempts to imitate the humor of the eighteenth-century English novel".<sup>5</sup> Romero held that such imitation was harmful to domestic production, as it delayed the development of an authentic Brazilian literature, but this was more than just about national literature, this was about a people, its character, and

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<sup>4</sup> Machado de Assis, "Notícia da Atual Litteratura Brasileira. Instincto de Nacionalidade," *O Novo Mundo*, March 24, 1873, <http://bndigital.bn.br/acervo-digital/novo-mundo/122815> .

<sup>5</sup> G. Reginald Daniel. *Machado de Assis: Multiracial Identity and the Brazilian Novelist* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University, 2012), 154.

culture being mediated through literature for domestic and foreign consumption. This conviction with regards to a national literary ethos is borne out through Romero's repeated attacks against Machado's work as insufficiently nationalist, and his attempts to mandate the elements of authentic national literature and by extension, define the country's character both inside and outside its borders. Machado's push back against ideas of an identity conveyed via literature as representative of national character is an unambiguous rejection of external notions of Brazil and of its internal homogenization. It is this tension of national ethos, literature, and the external lens that prompts José Carlos Rodrigues, the publisher and editor of *O Novo Mundo*, an expat magazine publishing in New York on the political, and cultural happenings in Brazil to, in 1872, reach out to ascertain the state of the cultural and literary environment in Brazil.

*De: José Carlos Rodrigues*

*New York, 22 de setembro de 1872*

*Ilustríssimo Senhor Machado de Assis:*

*Dou-lhe os parabéns pelo brilhante sucesso da sua Ressurreição, que li há dias e de que hei de dizer por extenso o que penso nalgum do próximos números do Novo Mundo.*

*Este jornal (que tem chegado agora ao 3. ano a salvamento) precisa de um bom estudo sobre o caráter geral da literatura brasileira contemporânea, criticando suas boas ou más tendências, no aspecto literário e moral: um estudo que, sendo traduzido e publicado aqui em inglês, dê uma boa ideia da qualidade da fazenda literária que lá fabricamos, e da escola ou escolas do processo da fabricação. Como sabe, se não escrevo bem sobre assunto nenhum, muito menos sobre literatura, nem tenho tempo de ir agora estudá-la. Querirá o amigo escrever sobre isso? — Não posso dizer-lhe de antemão quanto lhe pagarei pelo trabalho; mas digo-lhe que desejo muito ter esse artigo e que hei de retribuir-lhe o melhor que puder, regulando-me sempre pela qualidade, não pelo tamanho do escrito. Talvez possamos fazer algum arranjo efetivo para trabalhos deste gênero. Em todo o caso estimaria ter uma ideia de quanto espera receber por seu trabalho.*

*No correr de 1873 vou publicar aqui traduções inglesas de dois romances nacionais bem conhecidos. A tradução é feita por um autor dos mais distintos que hoje escrevem no inglês.*

*Desjando-lhe muita saúde e mais bênçãos cristas, fico  
De Vossa Senhoria  
patricio e criado obrigado  
J.C. Rodrigues<sup>6</sup>*

*From: José Carlos Rodrigues*

*The Most Illustrious Gentleman Machado de Assis:*

*I congratulate you on the brilliant success of Resurrection, which I read a few days ago and which I will offer my thoughts in full in some of the upcoming issues of New World.*

*This newspaper (having now been successful for three years) is in need of a good study on the general state of contemporary Brazilian literature, criticizing its good or bad trends, from a literary and moral frame of reference. The study will be translated and published here in English, to give a good idea of the quality of literary material we produce there, and the school(s) of thought. As you know, I don't write well on any matter myself, much less about literature, nor do I have time to study it. Friend, would you want to write about it?—I cannot tell you beforehand how much you will be paid for the work; but I can tell you that I really want to have this article and I promise to repay you the best I can as always governed by quality, not the length of the writing. Perhaps we can effectively make some arrangement for this sort of work. In any case, I would appreciate having an idea of how much you expect to receive for your work.*

*Sometime in 1873, I will publish an English translation of the two most well-known national novels. The translation will be done by a most distinguished author who today writes in English.*

*Wishing you health and many blessings, I remain,*

*Your compatriot and servant*

*J.C. Rodrigues*

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<sup>6</sup> Sergio Rouanet. *Correspondência De Machado De Assis: Tomo II, 1870-1889* (Rio de Janeiro: Academia Brasileira de Letras) 78-79, 82-83,  
<http://academia.org.br/abl/media/Correspondencia%20Machado%20de%20Assis%20-%20TOMO%20II-1870-1889%20-%20PARA%20INTERNET.pdf>) Translated by Tanya Doss.



*Para: José Carlos Rodrigues*

*Rio de Janeiro, 25 de janeiro de 1873.*

*Illustríssimo Senhor Doutor José Carlos Rodrigues,*

*Aperto-lhe mui agradecidamente as mãos pelo seu artigo de Novo Mundo a respeito do meu romance. E não só agradeço as expressões amáveis com que tratou, mas também os reparos que me fez. Vejo que leu o meu livro com olhos de crítico, e não hesitou em dizer o que pensa de alguns pontos, o que é para mim mais lisonjeiro que tudo. Escrevera-lhe eu mais longamente desta vez, se não fora tanta coisa que me absorveu hoje o tempo e o espírito. Entretanto não deixarei de lhe dizer desde já que as censuras relativas a algumas passagens menos recatadas são para mim sobremodo salutares. Aborreço a literatura de escândalo, e busquei evitar esse escolho no meu livro. Se alguma coisa me escapou, espero emendar-me na próxima composição.*

*O nosso artigo está pronto há um mês. Guardei-me para dar-lhe hoje uma última demão; mas tão complicado e cheio foi o dia para mim, que prefiro demorá-lo para o seguinte vapor. Não o faria se se tratasse de uma correspondência regular como costume fazer para a Europa; trata-se, porém de um trabalho que, ainda retardado um mês não perde a oportunidade.*

*O nosso João de Almeida tinha-me pedido em seu nome um retrato que lhe entrego hoje e lá irá ter às suas mãos. Não me será dado obter igualmente um retrato seu para o meu álbum dos amigos? Creia-me, como sempre,*

*Seu amigo, patricio admirador*

*Machado de Assis<sup>7</sup>*

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

To: José Carlos Rodrigues

Rio de Janeiro, 25 de janeiro de 1873.

The Most Illustrious Gentleman Doctor José Carlos Rodrigues,

*I am grateful and thank you for your New World article on my novel. I not only want to express my gratitude for the kind words you have shown my work, but also for your observations. I see that you read my novel with the eyes of a critic and did not hesitate in expressing what you thought of some of the issues, which I find flattering. I would have written to you in greater detail this time if so many things did not absorb my mind today. However, I will say that the objections concerning some of the less modest passages are particularly helpful to me. I hate scandal literature, and sought to avoid such in this book. If I have forgotten something, I hope to set it right in the next essay.*

*Our article will be ready in a month. I had set it aside to finalize today, but the day was so arduous and full that I prefer delaying it until the next steamer [ship]. I would not normally do this if it were a regular correspondence as I usually do for Europe. However, it is a work that despite being delayed one month will not miss the occasion.*

*On your behalf, João de Almeida had asked me for a picture that I will hand over today and will make its way to you. Can I expect your picture for my friends' album? As always,*

*Your friend, and admiring compatriot*

*Machado de Assis*

In answer to the initial request and subsequent correspondence with José Carlos Rodrigues, Machado de Assis, penned the essay, “Notícia da Atual Literatura Brasileira Instinto de Nacionalidade” (Instinct of Nationality: Report on the Current State of Brazilian Literature) in 1873 in which he addresses the state and deficiencies of Brazilian national literature. When referring to a national literature in this context and in this time period, the definition put forth by William Ellery Channing seems apt in so much as it speaks to the intimacy and connections of national literature to a nation’s, “public interests”

We mean the expression of a nation’s mind in writing. We mean the production among a

people of important work in philosophy, and in the departments of imagination and taste. We mean the contribution of new truths to the stock of human knowledge. We mean the thoughts of profound and original minds, elaborated by the toil of composition and fixed and made immortal in books. We mean the manifestation of a nation's intellect in the only forms by which it can multiply itself at home, and send itself abroad. We mean that a nation shall take a place, by its authors, among the lights of the world<sup>8</sup>

Keeping that definition in mind, the “welfare or well-being of the general public” aspect of national literature, Machado de Assis’ examination on the state of national literature also reports on the condition of the people and the nation itself. He opens this well-known essay with a critique of what he refers to as a common thread running through the nation’s literature. What is significant is how he describes the country’s literature with phrases and words such as “dressed up”, “preoccupation”, and “symptom”. Being an author, the selection of loaded terms points to what he saw as the pervasiveness and excessive concern with a body of literature set on and characterized by the presentation of, “images, characters, and symbols of national identity”.<sup>9</sup> Machado states it is so obvious, anyone who peruses a poem, work of fiction, theater piece, etcetera would be immediately struck by how enveloped the work is in conveying, “emerging bourgeoisie as being representative” of the nation.<sup>10</sup> His voice of concern is not solely on a literary note, it is also one of a still emerging nation where the public interests of a rising middle class with its materialistic and respectability concerns were becoming the dominant voice and the literary face of the nation. His commentary on the state of Brazilian national literature is notable because of his standing in the literary community as a noted and respected author of the nineteenth century, and also for his encouragement of a literature that pivots away from the reliance on nationalistic elements created and fostered by European tropes, to more organic artistic representations. Barely twenty years into independence from Portugal, still in the throes of slavery, in the midst of the first wave of European immigration, and attempting to define the face of Brazil, this hyper focus on the glorification of nature, nationalism, and use of colloquial language points outwardly to Brazil’s own entry into romanticism and literary nationalism. Much

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<sup>8</sup> William Ellery Channing, *The Importance and Means of a National Literature* (Edward Rainford: London, 1830), 3-4.

<sup>9</sup> Machado, “Notícia da atual literatura brasileira.”

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

of this jingoistic flavor stems from Brazil's roots in the long history of, "institutionalized, and administrative relationship between the state and culture" traceable directly back to the flight of Queen Maria I and Prince Regent João of Portugal from Napoleon's march on Lisbon.<sup>11</sup> Long standing and enforced restrictions were lifted so as to facilitate forms of cultural productions that would mirror the court's accustomed practice. However, the court's appearance did not mark the introduction of European intellectual and artistic thought to the former colony, such a distinction belongs to the sons of the former colony's elite. These young men, who studied at the University of Coimbra and throughout Europe, had already been importing these ideas back to Brazil to shape the country's social, political and intellectual climate. As had been the case in Portugal, "[l]earned societies, princely collections, schools, hospitals, and military installations funded by royal ecclesiastic, and private patrons were the institutional homes for scholarly thought, scientific experimentation, artistic expression, and technological innovation in Portuguese America."<sup>12</sup> Machado's criticism may seem to denote at the very least a rejection of romanticism, and nationalism at most, but it requires a more subtle reading especially given his concern on the over dependency of these nationalistic elements as markers of Brazilian literature. He argues that, "the portrayal of national types and symbols should not be the main criterion with which to determine the originality of a literary work," and against "the strong claim that national literature must always address national themes," instead he sees the purpose of the novel as the empathetic understanding of human motives and feelings.<sup>13</sup> As Brazil moved towards the turn of the century, what Machado longed for was a type of national literature focused inwardly to examine the complexities of individuals, societies, and situations in Brazil. He lamented, "the examples of Brazilian novels that offer persuasive analysis of passions and character are few and far between. This kind of literary exploration ranks among the most difficult achievements of a novelist, but also marks the superiority of the genre."<sup>14</sup> That the original inquiry of national literature and by extension, those elements attributed to Brazil and its people originated outside

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<sup>11</sup> Williams, *Culture Wars in Brazil*, 26.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Efrain Kristal and José Luiz Passos, "Machado de Assis and the Question of Brazilian National Identity," in *Brazil in the Making: Facets of National Identity*, eds. Carmen Nava and Ludwig Lauerhass, Jr (Lanham: Roman and Littlefield Publishers, 2006), 19.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid, 20.

of Brazil, by way of *O Novo Mundo*, allowed for a broader audience, both expatriates and foreigners to Machado's redefinition and refinement of those complicated, nuanced elements that comprise a national literature and by extension, its people. His critique is made all the more fascinating and pointed given in a little more than ten years, slavery would be legally abolished and the mass influx of European immigrants would begin. What could have been a treasure trove of material in which to explore the complexities that Machado spoke so much of, would not materialize even as the turn of the century neared and as romanticism gave way to naturalism. In a sense, the literature did turn from the glorification of elite cultures and bourgeois society, which had vexed Machado to no end. What emerged was a writing that looked inwardly, but it was also attempting to evoke a feeling of *brasilidade*, and form the new face of the nation by pivoting away from those elements that had long identified it with slavery and as a former colony. The manner in how to achieve both would find itself in the great immigration push endorsed by the oligarchs, which only complicated a national literature still struggling to define itself. At the other end of the ideological spectrum was Silvio Romero, a noted critic, folklorist, and historian of Brazilian literature. He sought to define Brazil, and its identity through a literary lens, and ascribed its national ethos as the element of authentic Brazilian national literary production. Such literature, he argued, would be reflective of not only Brazil's unique flora and fauna, but also its people, culture, and identity. He extended this concept into prescribing how a writer's style, "ought to conform to one's personality, offering a seamless continuum between physical and cultural traits."<sup>15</sup> Romero's approach suggests that these traits were homogenous, resulting in writers and works reflective of a particular but universal Brazil, and Brazilian mindset. His idea was not far-fetched given the number of foreign, domestic scholars, scientists, and philosopher's attempts to characterize and explain this relatively new independent country with a unique ethnic and cultural admixture. Romero's seminal work, the two volume, *Historia da Litteratura Brasileira* includes the application of ethnology, anthropology, geology, biology, and others to analyze varying social, racial and cultural theories as they were applied to the new world, particularly Brazil and specifically about degeneration. From this, Romero surmised why, "the literature in Brazil, the literature in all of the Americas have been a process of adaptation of European ideas", namely, the premise of inferiority and the longing for acknowledgment on the

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid, 21.

world stage.<sup>16</sup> Romero confronts this Eurocentric reading of the new world against his own understanding and interpretation of Brazil and its ethos, notably its unique culture of miscegenation. “All Brazilians are mixed race, if not by blood, then by ideas. The agents of this initial fact have been: the Portuguese, the black, the indian, physical environment and foreign imitation.”<sup>17</sup> Romero contends all these elements are culturally and socially intrinsic, which would then seem to bolster his argument that any national literature would be reflective of those same components. He pens in the opening pages of *History da Litteratura Brasileira*, “I intend to write a naturalist work on the history of Brazilian literature. Equipped with both popular and ethnic principles to explain our national character, I will not forget the positive evolutionary conventions and the new social philosophy when dealing with Brazil’s noted relations with humanity in general.”<sup>18</sup> His intertwining of identity, culture, and literature has a two-fold effect. He engages these prevalent ideologies, and in doing so is adding his voice to an existent European centered narrative designating the Americas, its people and cultures as inferior, and he is using their very framework to push back, even elevating Brazil to that of Europe, demonstrating that Brazil can contribute intellectually as well as culturally.

## 2.2 Deuschtum

It is characteristic of the Germans that question “what is German?” never dies out among them.  
—Nietzsche

A visitor paints the scene of a picture perfect German village in 1933, “clean curtains fluttered in front of polished, white-framed windows, and a flower garden bloomed in front of every house. . . . [t]he flowers of grandmother’s *Heimat* grew there.”<sup>19</sup> The beautiful idyllic German image this visitor encountered was not in a small village in southern Germany, but in a settlement in Brazil. Why was it there? How could something so identifiable with Germany find

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<sup>16</sup> Silvio Romero. *Historia Da Litteratura Brasileira* (Rio de Janeiro: H. Garnier, 1902), 10. Translation by Tanya Doss.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid*, 4.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid*, 7-8.

<sup>19</sup> Krista O’Donnell, Renate Bridenthal and Nancy Reagin. *The Heimat Abroad. The Boundaries of Germaness* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 2005), 1.

itself some 5800+ miles away in South America? What or why did this picturesque settlement conjure thoughts of Germany? The answers to these questions are at once simple, but a bit complicated, and all find their origins in the complexity of German identity and *Deutschtum* (Germaness).

### 2.2.1 Heimat and Heimat Preserved

In their book, *The Heimat Abroad. The Boundaries of Germaness*, historians Krista O'Donnell, Renate Bridenthal, and Nancy Reagin posit German emigration, the larger German diaspora, and their Heimat (homeland) re-creation as central and center of the creation of German national identity itself for those living within its borders, and as an expression of *Deutschtum* for those living abroad. In relocating to lands where language, customs, and practices were disparate, German immigrants become aware of their own alterity, but also hyper-aware of their natal identity, and strove to reproduce those things reaching back across the Atlantic to touch their villages, cities, and country. Immigration to South America, and in particular Brazil began notably in the early nineteenth century attracting those from far flung parts of German speaking lands, with many settling in enclaves reminiscent of childhood recollections, and fond memories of home. Although separated by land and sea, through the practice of establishing communities that mirrored those they left, they were calling and building on a collective memory of Heimat (home) and *Deutschtum*.

### 2.2.2 The German Diaspora, Migration and Evolving *Deutschtum*

O'Donnell, Bridenthal, and Reagin point out the obstacle in defining who or what is German particularly, tackling the notion of how to describe those living outside of Germany. Do we describe them as migrants? Are they ex-colonists? What about ethnic minorities or enclaves? Could we consider them a diaspora?<sup>20</sup> These questions emerged as scholars attempted to account for the variances in the meaning of the features of diaspora. Robin Cohen argues in his book, *Global Diasporas. An Introduction*, that diaspora's greek roots, the verb, *speiro* (to sow) and preposition *dis* (over) when applied in the ancient world denoted migration and colonization, but when applied to other civilizations (e.g. Jews, Africans, Palestinians, and Armenians), the

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<sup>20</sup> O'Donnell, *Heimat Abroad*, 5.

expression took on a more cruel and sinister tone where trauma, exile, and/or banishment were the collective experience.<sup>21</sup> Decades of academic scholarship has gone into this field of study, and is beyond the scope of this work which will not leap into the midst of an ongoing debate. Instead it is being used to set up the framework and to carefully define the use of the term (diaspora) as it will be applied in this work pertaining to the German emigrant collective, and specifically Deutschtum in global terms. While the classic definition of diaspora has historically been tied to the idea of dispersal or scattering, recent scholarship has sought to expand and refine it to include many groups of people living outside their country.<sup>22</sup> Of importance is clarification of what is meant by diaspora as it pertains to later discussions of identity and Deutschtum. Many scholars have proposed varying features differentiating a diaspora from an immigrant enclave. Cohen posits in order to qualify as a diaspora, there are certain basic compulsory attributes present the groups should share: “dispersal from an original homeland; a collective memory, myth, and idealization of homeland; a commitment to its maintenance or creation; the development of a return movement; strong ethnic group consciousness sustained over a long period of time; a troubled relationship with host society; and empathy and solidarity with co-ethnic members in other countries.”<sup>23</sup> But O’Donnell, Bridenthal, and Reagin point out, such a stringent definition is problematic in that some communities would meet those qualifications while others would fall short. To remedy this void, in regards to German immigrant communities, they look to the historical existence of German diaspora.<sup>24</sup>

Territorial expansion and contraction as the result of political uprisings, conquest of eastern European lands, and even short-lived colonial empires explain much of the origins of German diaspora. In Europe, shifting borders from war, treaties, etcetera, saw many identifying with the German confederation even while living outside of its borders. Though separated from their geographical center, what united them among each other, and to the confederation is what historian, Michael Rowe, calls a national reawakening spurred, in part, by events leading up to and including the French Revolution and Napoleonic wars. He argues that nations are

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<sup>21</sup> Robin Cohen. *Global Diasporas. An Introduction* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1997), ix.

<sup>22</sup> O’Donnell, *Heimat Abroad*, 5.

<sup>23</sup> Cohen, *Global Diasporas*, 26.

<sup>24</sup> O’Donnell, *Heimat Abroad*, 5.



communities bound by mutual obligations, and of most importance to sustaining said communities is collective memory.<sup>25</sup> In this case, collective memory was French occupation, subjugation, and the later political pushback against Napoleon and French influence. It created a type of political nationalism wielded as a means to legitimize, and as call to arms to eject French authority. In, *The Wars of German Unification*, historian Dennis Showalter takes the idea further by asserting besides political nationalism, the wars were also an impetus for a common culture thereby providing another way for those loyal to the confederation to identify and unite. He points out in both the political and cultural, these were negative identities constructed around the refutation of French ideals whether political, intellectual, or cultural.<sup>26</sup> However important the wars were in the development of national identity, Showalter looks to another force spreading across Europe which, along with the wars, allowed the emergence of a common cultural nationalism and identity. Aufklärung (Enlightenment) having arrived a bit later to the German Confederation, as opposed to the rest of Europe, provided a two- prong opposition to French ideals by means of intellectual and artistic expression, and a different expression of nationalism. In shifting away from nationalism and national identity as governmental rhetoric and propaganda authored by political elites, Showalter credits Aufklärung, notably philosophy that “addressed questions of identity in the contexts of community” by creating a space for communal identity, and of unity in diversity.<sup>27</sup> Dramatic increases in demand for books, made possible by lower production costs, fed a voracious middle class augmenting literacy rates. Historically most books initially had been religious in nature, but Aufklärung saw the emergence of printed materials ranging in various interests such as science, philosophy, and literature increasing in popularity. As German came into its own right as a literary language, and writers increasingly used German themes and backdrops, some cultural homogenization expressed by diverse inhabitants of the confederation started to materialize. It is this uniqueness in comparison with, for example, England or Spain that accounts for the deviation from Cohen’s table of diasporic characteristics. Germany’s origins as a confederation and later movement towards political and cultural

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<sup>25</sup> Michael Rowe. *From Reich to State the Rhineland in the Revolutionary Age, 1780-1830* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 2.

<sup>26</sup> Dennis Showalter. *The Wars of German Unification* (London: Arnold, 2004), 2.

<sup>27</sup> Showalter, *Wars of German*, 1.

unification were not the norm, in fact, the only other nation that shares some similarity is Italy. Therefore, Germany may or may not fit the stringent requirements of diaspora since Cohen did not take this particular differentiation into account when typing diaspora versus other designations. It is also material to note that these descriptors be they enclave, diaspora, migrants, etcetera are neither static nor all encompassing, and the German diaspora, “like others, does not involve all communities and individuals equally, nor is it unchanging over time.”<sup>28</sup>

### 2.2.3 Heimat Recreated

Dispersal from homeland, whether via political exile as seen with failed rebellions and protests (e.g. the Revolution of 1848), emigration for the sake of a better life, or colonization, may have separated them from the center of German culture, but not from the culture itself. In domestic spaces, women made sure cultural ties were maintained through fidelity to markers such as holidays, language, and literature. An anecdotal example is cited in, *The Heimat Abroad* where a mother ties specific cultural criterion to German identity.

She had one passion, it was clear, when she declared that “my children should stay German! Therefore, I have to teach them myself. On Sunday mornings we practice reading and writing.” She showed me a thick, well-worn volume—Grimm’s Fairy Tales. “The children want to hear these stories again and again,” she said. “And then they ask about everything [in the stories] which is unfamiliar to them because they don’t see it here . . . [a]nd I tell them about German *Buchenwald* and about Christmas in Germany, and how things were in my Heimat.”<sup>29</sup>

Although it is simple to point to specific cultural attributes in German culture as markers of identity, it does not quite explain the role of Heimat as a physical space outside of its geographical German center. Memories passed on to succeeding generations, raised away from the original physical and cultural center, then points to other attributes making Heimat, and German identity viable outside of its native location. Beyond the celebration of specific holidays, language and literature functioned as a means to connect members of the diasporas with one another, and with what would later become Germany. Works such as Grimm’s Fairy Tales, written by Wilhelm and Jacob Grimm, were a repository of German national culture where pride

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<sup>28</sup> O’Donnell, *Heimat Abroad*, 5.

<sup>29</sup> O’Donnell, *Heimat Abroad*, 2.

of a heritage, and its people could be recovered and celebrated after a long political and cultural French occupation. Through the volumes of folk tales, the brothers, who were scholars, and linguists, were able to create a space where readers could experience the pairing of lost German heritage artifacts via folk tales, and its language. In doing this, readers from communities all over the world were connected to Heimat physically, linguistically, and culturally. Two other elements, besides the familial and linguistic, are communal customs (e.g. holiday observances, celebrations), and institutions fashioned after their German counterparts, both being detailed in a later section. The import of these components is although they are specific cultural markers as identified by emigrants, they are occurring outside of their native geographical center which effectively de-centralizes German identity and allows for different ideas of Deuschtum.

### 2.3 Heimat

In, *Heimat: A Critical Theory of the German Idea of Homeland*, Peter Blickle, explains the German relationship to Heimat is similar to how we understand and define time. A person thinks they know what time means as long as no one asks them but admits, “as soon as someone asks and I want to explain, I don’t know anymore.”<sup>30</sup> The scene painted by the settlement visitor earlier in the chapter speaks of Heimat born from seemingly banal, but explicit referents evoking a feeling of nostalgia and transports her back to a particular place and time. The assumption on her part is the inhabitants of the place in which she is observing these objects as well as those reading her account share the same symbolic relationship to the word. Blickle’s anecdote represents a different Heimat that carries a more nebulous frame, where any instance of Heimat does not come about from or necessitate a symbol, or a collective of referents, rather it is an individual and intimate valuation so special, it is unexplainable. This frame hints at a prevailing opinion many German speakers, scholars, and writers have long held plaguing the word; Heimat is an undefinable term. Blickle tackles the term’s central presence in self-perception by tracing its development and its variations as the nation itself underwent political, cultural, and social changes. Central to his study is the manner the term has been made and remade depending on its consumption, and how said instances of Heimat, especially in its idealized form have resulted in exclusion. In this study is a helpful detailed discussion of what he calls the fallacy of Heimat

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<sup>30</sup> Peter Blickle. *Heimat: A Critical Theory of the German Idea of Homeland* (Rochester: Camden House, 2002), 1.

being untranslatable, and the difficulties in trying to pin down its definition. To address this, he offers up the analogy of window shopping to demonstrate, how differently Heimat can be shaped and exhibited; how differently it can be looked at, tried on, and tested; how different the framework can be; and how different angles, different methods, and different sensitivities participate both in the production and in the consumption of Heimat.<sup>31</sup>

Theoretically speaking, Blickle's linguistic framing of Heimat is reminiscent of Ferdinand de Saussure's theory of LINGUISTIC SIGNS.<sup>32</sup> Saussure hypothesized the relation between language (*langue*) and speech (*parole*), notably, "what we can do with speech and what we do with language when we speak," as the basis of his infamous theory of the SIGN, later adopted as the basis for semiotics.<sup>33</sup> According to Saussure, a SIGN is, "anything that stands for something other than itself," which is shared, "by a community with others", and it is the components of SIGN that are crucial to the relationship between, "a sign and its users".<sup>34</sup> These two elements, SIGNIFIER and SIGNIFIED are in turn governed by two linguistic principles that can explain the many instances of "Heimat" and all words in general. Before delving into the two principles, it is pertinent to grasp the elements they control, SIGNIFIER and SIGNIFIED. Saussure, in defining these terms, along with SIGN, wanted it understood language is fluid, but that within that fluidity there are some firm set structures in place. He states a SIGN does not link a name and a thing, but rather an acoustic image (SIGNIFIER) and a concept (SIGNIFIED).

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<sup>31</sup> Blickle, *Heimat*, 2.

<sup>32</sup> LINGUISTIC SIGNS also known as SIGNS will be formatted in different lettering in keeping with the practice of differentiating the theoretical use and meaning and the commonly understood meaning of the term. The same principle will be applied to SIGNIFIER and SIGNIFIED.

<sup>33</sup> Gordon, W. Terrence. *Saussure For Beginners (United States: For Beginners, 2015)*, Loc 179, Kindle.

<sup>34</sup> Terrence, *Saussure*, Loc 271.

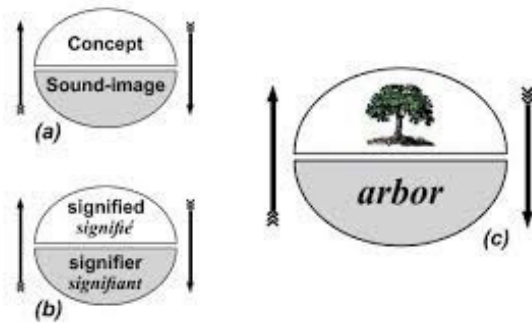


Figure 1 The Linguistic Sign

Saussure’s first principle states: LINGUISTIC SIGN is arbitrary, meaning there is no native connection between any sound or sequence of sound and any idea.<sup>35</sup> This creates fluidity allowing speakers to associate acoustic images (SIGNIFIER) and ideas (SIGNIFIED), and even over time to change the SIGNIFIER/SIGNIFIED combination to replace a previous combinations or to add to the number of possible combinations (Bickel’s multiplicity of referents). Combination(s) in Saussure’s sense means the link established by the speaker between SIGNIFIER and SIGNIFIED. This same first principle of arbitrariness follows that no one combination of SIGNIFIER/SIGNIFIED has a necessary preference over another, which in turn allows for changeable SIGN combinations. There are a few caveats to this first principle, which appear to be contradictory, and that is where the rigidity, expressly, the rules that dictate how a speaker (individual or community) can use SIGNS comes into play. “Once the link is made, neither the individual speaker, nor the whole community of speakers are free to undo it.”<sup>36</sup> The second caveat says speakers (individual and community) cannot replace that link with another. On the surface, this seems to be contrary to Saussure’s principle of arbitrariness, restricting if not outright prohibiting any new combinations of SIGNS . However, when viewed by means of an example (the sign “top”), it becomes clear how fluidity and rigidity work in synch to allow a robust and living language. The SIGN “top” is a sequence of sounds denoting the idea of the highest part of an object (something that other languages have done as well), and it is permanent, meaning its existence cannot be undone. Doing so would require persuading all speakers of

<sup>35</sup> Ferdinand de Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics*, trans. Roy Harris (Chicago: Open Court, 1986), Loc 1615, Kindle.

<sup>36</sup> Terrence, *Saussure*, Loc 264.

English to start using some other way of expressing the idea of “top”. This is the rigidity of linguistics, it cannot be changed, but does allow for language change via new combinations of a SIGN (e.g. “Mouse” small rodent/hand held input device). The second Saussurean principle, which is not as pertinent for this discussion, nor is it discussed in the same detail as the first principle, maintains the SIGNIFIER is linear, which works in concert with the principle of arbitrariness. Here, more complex SIGNIFIERS, more than one sound, occurs sequentially over time. Saussure says this principle of linearity keeps us from hearing SIGNIFIER and SIGNIFIED all at once, and though he failed to go into any specific detail or analysis, he insists that language depends on that operation.<sup>37</sup> While the two principles work in harmony with one another, they play distinct roles. “The big difference between *linearity* of the SIGNIFIER and the *arbitrariness* of the SIGN is that the *first* is like a *chain*, but the *second* is just one *link*.”<sup>38</sup> For Heimat, this expresses there are and will be factors shaping its various manifestations history, and importantly, it helps explain how a SIGN figures so prominently in self-perception.

One of the more intriguing parts of Blickle’s work is his analysis of Heimat as an, “unconsciously perpetuated omnipresence”, finding its different instances in a variety of disciplines and eras. Its myriad of referents sees Heimat in presentations as sentiments of it in German Lieder (songs), used to push political agendas, reunification, traditional theme in mid twentieth century film, and featured heavily as both narrative and motif in German literature.<sup>39</sup> To Blickle’s dismay and a focus of his analysis is past scholarship’s reduction and confinement of Heimat to distinct areas of specialization instead of a cohesive whole. He laments literary scholars reduce Heimat to literary phenomenon treating it as case studies, sociologists engage with Heimat as a, “functionally defined space with social, emotional, and institutional elements and neglect its philosophical, gendered, and imaginary aspects”, while historians see the, “Heimat topos as a mobile term in progression of German provincialism into German nationalism”, and finally psychologists, in the tradition of Sigmund Freud, find Heimat, “placed in an Oedipal context”.<sup>40</sup> Given Heimat’s omnipresence, its place in the German psyche, and its

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<sup>37</sup> de Saussure, *General Linguistics*, Loc 1660.

<sup>38</sup> Terrence, *Saussure*, Loc 264.

<sup>39</sup> Blickle, *Heimat*, 4-5.

<sup>40</sup> Blickle, *Heimat*,

multivalent qualities, it speaks to how and why the term conjures a myriad of connections be they physical, sentimental, imagined, and even sacred. “The German idea of Heimat . . . enfolds the public with the private, the individual with the social, the self with nature, dream with reality, utopia with landscape; it seeks the preverbal in the verbal, the premodern in the modern, the noble peasant in the burgher, the inside in the outside.”<sup>41</sup> While it is true an all-encompassing study of Heimat would yield a more in depth understanding of the word’s evolution as it winds its way through German society and psyche, particular focuses or specializations help to zero in on particular aspects of Heimat (its referents) that may or may not be carried with Germans, particularly with immigrants and their descendants. To that end, we still need a workable definition or idea as we work along Heimat’s historical path up to the end of World War II, and how it informs German identity construction and Deutschtum itself up to German immigration to Brazil.

In, *Heimat A German Dream: Regional Loyalties and National Identity in German Culture 1890-1990*, scholars Elizabeth Boa, and Rachel Palfreyman offer up a core definition of Heimat as *home*, but not as in dwelling, rather in the sense of place or locality, and to emphasize this point, provide examples of its uses, uncovering the inherent difficulty in its translation into English, and other languages.

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<sup>41</sup> Blickle, *Heimat*, 12.

Heimat	home
Heimatstadt	home town
Heimatland	native land
Heimaterde	native soil
Heimatliebe	national/local patriotism
Heimatrecht	right of domicile
Heimatkunde	local geography, history, and national history

Table 1 The Varying Uses of Heimat

Much of this difficulty, according to the authors, arises from the troubled history of German speaking lands, specifically the shift from a confederation to a Prussian dominated unified Germany.<sup>42</sup> Underlying this transition were pronounced tensions between regional and national identity being driven, and intensified by extreme rapid industrialization and urbanization, which saw, for example, the population of Berlin double between 1815 and 1840 to 400,000; 1,000,000 by 1877; and 2,000,000 by 1910. The abrupt increase had an antagonistic effect and at its apex in 1890, was the impetus, in the arts, for initializing the use of the term *Heimatkunst*, to,” both advocate and categorize literature and other art forms dealing with provincial and rural life.”<sup>43</sup> Its use coincides with the appearance of the German Romantic Movement and its idealization of simpler times, and this critical connection speaks to the trope and narrative that will be built around Romanticism’s idyllic rural and provincial life. This sets up a dichotomy of Heimat (rural), and modernization; pitting the two against each other to determine and define the elements of German identity. That struggle is reflected in *Heimatkunst*, especially in literature, arising during this time. Heimat literature, expressing the tension between the new modern world and the provincial world, was described as, “practically reformist, in part idealistically utopian”, which Boa and Palfrey argue has caused it to sometimes be placed under the umbrella of

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<sup>42</sup> Elizabeth Boa and Rachel Palfreyman. *Heimat: A German Dream: Regional Loyalties and National Identity in German Culture 1890-1990* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 1.

<sup>43</sup> Boa, *German Dream*, 1.



*Heimatbewegung* (Heimat movement), as the literary counter to industrialization and urbanization.<sup>44</sup> The Heimat narrative, at least in the context of *Heimatbewegung*, is one of polarities: “country against city, province against metropolis, tradition against modernity, nature against artificiality, organic culture against civilization, fixed, familiar, rooted identity against cosmopolitan, hybridity, alien, otherness, or the faceless mass” other areas struggle with but one literature is able to reconcile and even ignore by way of nostalgia.<sup>45</sup> Even as they clashed with one another, these polarities also created a space, “as individuals struggled to find a stable ground from which to cope with rapid change, to forge a livable identity, and ‘to express a sense of national as well as local belonging and to celebrate, however superficially, a community of common purpose’”.<sup>46</sup> Again the idea of belonging is presented, but with the introduction of a new element, notably, coming together in the sense of a conscious collective identity. What this collective identity would then look like while still in the throes of that modernity/tradition dichotomy, is becoming increasingly expressed as plural identity, and is the subject of Celia Applegate’s, *A Nation of Provincials: The German Idea of Heimat*, particularly how Heimat bridges dual (regional and national) loyalties, and grounds a national consciousness post 1871 unification. Although her efforts are primarily articulated through a sociopolitical lens and would be seen as reductive in Blicke’s eyes, her work discusses Heimat as a term that has, “never been about real social forces or real political situations”, but a dual nature consciousness, and, “a myth about the possibility of a community in the face of fragmentation and alienation.”<sup>47</sup> Foremost to this consciousness is the navigation through questions of identity, and Deutchtum: “where it came from, what constituted it, what held it together, what were its consequences.”<sup>48</sup> It is in answer to these prompts Heimat becomes an instrument, acting as an imagined center from which to cultivate a national consciousness, and discourses about belonging and identity

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<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Celia Applegate. *A Nation of Provincials: The German Idea of Heimat* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 19.

<sup>48</sup> Applegate, *Provincials*, 3.

emerge.<sup>49</sup>

In examining the question of origin, we can look to Applegate's case study of the development of the local Pfälzer identity to reveal and extrapolate a larger pattern taking place, particularly in post 1871 unification and turn of the century Germany. Her study explores the modernization of socioeconomic and political terrains, its effect on natural and cultural landscapes, and its role as catalyst of social dislocation.<sup>50</sup> While the Pfälzer sense of self was primarily political in nature, Applegate points out the frequency of identities emanating from political, cultural, religious, and geographical sensibilities revealing what we will see across the country are similar groupings around specific sentiments coming to form the basis of the provincial or local Heimat self. These identities also tended to be negatively derived, they were borne out of grievances (e.g. food shortages, frustrated political/economic desires, etcetera), and in the case of the Pfälz, political radicalism and its tempering by, "the traditions, the celebrations, the literature folklore, and history writing" together giving rise to their sense of self perception.<sup>51</sup> To these aforementioned tempering elements, Applegate attributes, "some conjecture in the nineteenth century when they [traditions, celebrations, literature folklore, and history] were first revived, discovered, invented, and promoted and we understand by now that said conjecture revolved around some sort of social shift, notably rapid change occurring in Germany."<sup>52</sup> For the Pfälzers, as with other provinces, the supposition driving this discovery, renewal, and revival was social dislocation in the wake of industrialization, and reaction to it will be the vehicle by which Heimat by way of the Heimat movement is carried. Although antagonistic, Applegate asserts the Heimat movement was, counter intuitively, a participant in urban living, industrial employment, and consumerism trends by facilitating unification on a national level in its function as opposition to modernism.

It celebrated local diversity simultaneously with consolidation of central rule and the development of a genuinely national culture. It glorified in nature at a time when the city was changing the landscape, in ruins when new buildings were springing up everywhere,

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<sup>49</sup> Applegate, *Provincials*, 4.

<sup>50</sup> Applegate, *Provincials*, 59.

<sup>51</sup> Applegate, *Provincials*, 21.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*

in handicrafts when factory work predominated. The Heimat movement reflected the reality of centralization, urbanization, and industrialization by reacting against each one of them<sup>53</sup>

Anything amplifying and reclaiming localness, and/or increase its visibility nationally in the face of rapid modernization fell under the purview of the Heimat movement, and to that end saw the creation or growth of beautification, and historical societies; tourism with its emphasis on local flora and fauna; and restorations of ruins, all with the intent of fostering provincial pride and identity. This appears to back up Applegate's claim of Heimat enthusiasts not attempting to return to an earlier time or reject contemporary life or modernism, rather they were committed to asserting their provincial identity in present time be it through history, art, folklore, or nature.<sup>54</sup> Boa and Palfreyman point to a similar sentiment echoed by Friedrich Lienhard, first editor of *Heimat: Blätter für Literatur und Volkstrum*, who argued of Heimat enthusiasts firm footing in modern times. He contended that Heimat art is not, "a turn backwards against the modern world, rather it represents expansion and completion."<sup>55</sup> The operating belief was that in the face of unification, industrialization and its perceived decadence, the German sense of self had been made somehow lacking. Similar thoughts circulated of big city culture and its people casting off their provincial roots and those intrinsic and necessary sentiments of *Deutschtum* as the cost of modernization, hence those who advocated for the movement were anti-modernism. Lienhard states, "We want whole human beings inhabiting a whole and wide-reaching world of thought, spirit, and character, with at once modern yet traditional culture rooted in the people . . . we want town and country."<sup>56</sup> To be whole, to be German meant not only embracing the social, and technological changes nationhood brought, but also retaining those ties and identities that harken back to when the country was a confederation of provinces. The claim of assertion of identity is further supported in looking at the only other nation in Europe with a comparable history of identity and nationhood. A nation whose story of dual identity was also playing out and speaks to the persistence of local self-perception. Italy's nationhood is also fairly new, and scholar Donna

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<sup>53</sup> Applegate, *Provincials*, 62.

<sup>54</sup> Applegate, *Provincials*, 63.

<sup>55</sup> Boa, *German Dream*, 33.

<sup>56</sup> Boa, *German Dream*, 33-34.

R. Gabaccia notes a now familiar form of grouping, where self-identity stemming, “from the particular ties of kinship, to a universalizing religious faith, to the urban birthplace (*patria*) or its surrounding region—remained of greater salience.”<sup>57</sup> We are again reminded of the importance of organizing around particular beliefs and connect it to *Heimat*, and the *Heimat* movement via their discovered, rediscovered, and/or imagined kinship around a deemed local sentiment. This proves to be significant because while these groupings were built around the revived, recovered, imagined or re-imagined, they also served as a space that facilitated identity and *Heimat* to be diversely defined and redefined to fit both provincial sensibilities, and a changing centralized nation. Akin to how identity had been used as a rallying point against French occupation and interests in the nineteenth century, *Heimat*’s shift from the local to national level could be attributed to what Boa and Palfreyman describe as appropriation, and to what Roland Barthes refers to as myth-making. Barthes in referring to this process as myth-making argues, using the example of a lion, that,

the signifier already postulates a reading . . .it has a sensory reality, there is a richness in it: the naming of the lion . . . are credible wholes, they have at their disposal a sufficient rationality. As a total of linguistic signs, the meaning of myth has its own value, it belongs to a history, that of the lion . . . in the meaning, a signification is already built, and could very well be self-sufficient if myth did not take hold of it and did not turn it suddenly into an empty, parasitical form. The meaning is *already* complete, it postulates a kind of knowledge, a past, a memory, a comparative order of facts, ideas, decisions. When it becomes form, the meaning leaves its contingency behind; it empties itself, it becomes impoverished, history evaporates, only the letter remains<sup>58</sup>

For the new German nation, Barthes’ myth-making is borne out by the manner in which nationalism (national patriotism) is formed, propagandized, and disseminated. Much like the new German empire itself, this new national patriotism is a patchwork of varying articulations of *Heimat* and *Deutschtum*, where the inhabitants, “tended to espouse a nationalism of which the most important determinants were internal: a nationalism defined by its constituent parts, not by its opposing counterparts; by regions within Germany, not nations outside it.”<sup>59</sup> Similar to the

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<sup>57</sup> Donna R. Gabaccia. *Italy’s Many Diasporas (Global Diasporas)* (London and New York: Routledge, 2003), 29.

<sup>58</sup> Roland Barthes. *Mythologies* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1972), 117.

<sup>59</sup> Applegate, *Provincials*, 85.

Heimat movement, where recovery, and salvaging were the objective so as to retain regional identity, homogeneity was not the objective, rather it was the catalyst initiating the assertion of local identity in all of its instances. The movement, “was above all concerned with the disappearance of distinctive regional cultures within Germany, and all its efforts and energies went towards the preservation of that *Eigenart*”, and that helped to establish dual identity.<sup>60</sup> According to Boa and Palfreyman, the government was able to drain away what had been Heimat’s concrete regional meaning, appropriating it in service to politically driven rhetoric, and ultimately functioning as a means to inject nationalist ideology into the debate of Heimat and *Deutschtum*.<sup>61</sup> Returning to Saussure’s linguistic theory, Heimat, once a SIGNIFIER, becomes itself a SIGN, and has a new concept conferred on it, while still carrying remnants of its original meaning. Although politically expedient as it allowed for political, and economic centralization (Prussianization) of the former principalities, it also pushed into the cultural sphere forming, and conveying an identity and history of *Deutschtum*. An example of such is found in the government’s campaign of monument building where hundreds of monuments were installed across the German empire commemorating historical events with the intent of patriotic edification and indoctrination.<sup>62</sup> With the addition of officially sponsored cultural events and activities, there is a shift from individuals consciously grouping themselves around certain markers, to a forced politically driven grouping via codified national cultural policies around sentiments the government has determined to be elements of identity and *Deutschtum*.

In the book, *Fatherlands: State-Building and Nationhood in Nineteenth Century Germany*, scholar Abigail Green notes early nineteenth century concern had been to forge states out of disparate entities expanding during the Napoleonic era, for that reason, reforms were enacted to facilitate meaningful governing units and a system for its inhabitants.<sup>63</sup> It enjoyed wide spread approval, but was an indirect approach to an issue that many believed needed a more direct action. They saw the problem as merely one of ignorance as to what the confederation

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<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> Boa, *German Dream*, 3.

<sup>62</sup> Volker R. Berghahn. *Imperial Germany, 1871-1918: Economy, Society, Culture, and Politics*. (New York: Berghahn Books, 2005), 123.

<sup>63</sup> Abigail Green. *Fatherlands: State Building and Nationhood in Nineteenth-Century Germany* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 97.

was, and the citizen's relationship, and place in it. They argued that, "[t]here can be no true love of the Fatherland, where there is no knowledge of the Fatherland", and contended that purposeful policy must be enacted that would explicitly promote both, and foster patriotism.<sup>64</sup> Periodicals, for example, were a medium where contributors could engage history, geography, and natural history with the purpose of planting the state as the natural frame of reference for its inhabitants. By doing so, the citizens would identify and connect to these state prescribed ideas of local identity housed in notions of Heimat. Similar actions would take place post 1871 as the new government executed cultural policies with the intention of creating a similar frame of reference from which a national identity would be formed. One such policy was the monument construction campaign carried out by voluntary societies where hundreds were installed across the country commemorating historical events (e.g. Victory of 1870) with the intent of instilling knowledge of Fatherland. According to Green, it was a cultivation of culture many of the larger states had previously executed, "which celebrated the particular Fatherland", but that these endeavors produced a culture that was both genuine, and artificial.<sup>65</sup> Nonetheless, the two-tier concept of Heimat allowed for varied expressions of Deutschtum. There were those who sought to completely supplant the local Heimat, but many of those same local sensibilities were now vested and actively promoted via cultural policy in four areas designated important by the government: history, museums, monuments, and festivities.<sup>66</sup> This is reminiscent of the conscious grouping that proponents of the Heimat movement had brought about in an effort to assert their identity, and through which Deutschtum had been mediated.

A different conception on identity comes from political scientist, Werner Weidenfeld, who connects it to specific structures in place to facilitate both self- and communal awareness. He begins his discussion with a critique of past scholarship as clichéd academic analyses where culture in the mass industrialization age has been characterized as a series of crisis (e.g. culture crisis, modernization crisis, developmental crisis, orientation crisis, and identity crisis).<sup>67</sup> While

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<sup>64</sup> Green, *Fatherlands*, 97.

<sup>65</sup> Green, *Fatherlands*, 98.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>67</sup> Werner Weidenfeld, "Die Identität der Deutschen – Fragen, Positionen, Perspektiven," in *Die Identität der Deutschen*, ed. Werner Weidenfeld (München: Hanser Verlag, 1983), 11.

he focuses specifically from the industrial age on, his theory of German identity is still applicable here because of its link to German history and certain social and political structures. He addresses the prevailing belief that German identity is difficult to define and points to factors such as the ups and downs of German history complicating external discussions of it. Yet there have been and continue to be attempts to do just that and Weidenfeld's contribution centers a familiar concept of binary identity but instead of local/national, it is one that is simultaneously personal, and collective. He claims these two components come about from the process of self-definition where there is a feeling of belonging to a collective but also understanding oneself as an individual. Weidenfeld goes on to explain identity expression itself is parallel to the manner in which we think, according to a framework and societal design.<sup>68</sup> Its formation is itself, "...the sum total of the socially acquired frameworks of knowledge that orient individuals in the world—basic descriptions of the natural and societal environments, fundamental expectations about the future, values, and criteria for choosing among available options."<sup>69</sup> How can we better understand what this means for German identity formation? Weidenfeld breaks it down into two paths that are linked to each other, one of which is orientation knowledge, and the other is self-awareness. Orientation knowledge is the above-mentioned framework by which we interpret incoming information and its construction is made up of three components that are a mix of the influences of past, present, and future. He sums it up as history establishes identity, social and political localization in the present bestows identity, and future forms identity. People have a relationship to history via their recording of memories marking specific events, and these are carried forward. They also organize the world in which they live, and they connect isolated facts from that and construct their environment forming part of the framework by which they use to interpret their environment(s). It is this process of localization, he argues, in the present providing yet another avenue for the construction of identity by placing it, at least in part, in the present.<sup>70</sup> Lastly, "[p]eople anticipate future action and integrate the future in the present", by estimating what might happen in the future, they become the guide for the present."<sup>71</sup> The

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<sup>68</sup> Weidenfeld, "Die Identität der Deutschen", 13.

<sup>69</sup> Gerald Izenberg. *Identity: The Necessity of a Modern Idea* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016), 236-237.

<sup>70</sup> Weidenfeld, "Die Identität der Deutschen", 16.

<sup>71</sup> Weidenfeld, "Die Identität der Deutschen", 20.

second path to identity formation is self-awareness, and it is here Weidenfeld introduces the notion of a kind of simultaneous awareness. He says self-awareness should be thought of as not just only “I” but “we” because we become actualized in our relationships with others notably the quirk we experience in our exchanges with them, and the realization of being different from them.<sup>72</sup> As such we are becoming aware of our collective identity while simultaneously building our personal one. A German citizen, he claims, experiences community awareness from political parties, clubs, and organizations of all kinds, and that they know the “we” of their native community, their state, know the “we” of the federal republic of Germany, and is integrated in the awareness of a West-European community and an Atlantic alliance of a global society.<sup>73</sup> Although the context of Weidenfeld's study is identity as a whole through Germany's modern history, the concepts he outlines can also be understood and applied to earlier time periods (e.g. build up to and German unification). What stands out is the reliance on formal structures (political parties, organizations, etcetera) in Germany to facilitate the “we” on the local, state, and national level and the absence of the possibility of informal groupings that could take place and still foster communal awareness. The question then becomes how does this hold up outside of Germany or rather how do German immigrants experience “we” outside of Germany? Many of the formal structures that are in place in Germany which Weidenfeld depends on to foster communal awareness are not immediately in place in the settlements, yet in these spaces there is still a “we” identity. It is worthwhile to mention the existence of heterogenous settlements populated with emigrants from disparate parts of the German Confederation. They held varying religious beliefs which would weaken the idea of at least some of these formal structures surviving their crossing to Brazil. It suggests there were other factors at work that situated communal awareness in the colonies.

German historian, Walter Bußmann writes, “The pursuit of a national state certainly formed one of the dominant features within the framework of thought and social movements of the century.”<sup>74</sup> He is referring to nineteenth century national consciousness, characterizing its

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<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid.

<sup>74</sup> Walter Bußmann, “Das deutsche Nationalbewußtsein im 19. Jahrhundert,” in *Die Identität der Deutschen*, ed. Werner Weidenfeld (München: Hanser Verlag, 1983), 62. Translation by Tanya Doss.



development as emanating from a myriad of sources rooted in significant events in Germany, and the Prussian-protestant-idealism historical narrative. Like many scholars, Bußmann traces the origins of nationalism back to French occupation and Napoleonic hegemony in the preceding century, and identifying them as the precursor of German national consciousness. He claims rather than being homogenous, nationalism came in varying and competing forms of expression.<sup>75</sup> What these varying expressions shared was the framework of national consciousness and its essence as a product of, and shaped by Prussianism, Protestantism and idealism. He calls attention specifically to Prussian-protestant historiography as an indisputable factor in the shaping of national awareness of, "...a large part of contemporaneity in the nineteenth-century."<sup>76</sup> Beyond just alienating Catholics, it created a structure around which to cultivate, albeit for political purposes, a grouping around distinct beliefs thereby creating a sense of community in the face of French influence and authority. What is interesting about Bußmann's characterization is the tie to particular political historical events he credits as the impetuses of citizen driven nineteenth century national identity. The Wartburg Festival and Hambacher Fest although different time periods, 1817 and 1832 respectively, were open protests against existing repressive conditions and the French Revolution. The call, led by students at the Wartburg Festival and the civilian population at the Hambacher Fest, was the growing communal awareness of intolerable conditions and lack of individual freedoms as articulated in the French Revolution. Bußmann hypothesizes from these events, a sense of communal identity was forged. The other event of note he mentions is the Denmark Conflict where repeated attempts by the Danish government to consolidate the ethnic German and Danish populations in Schleswig-Holstein was met with resistance and hostility. The Danish government's last attempt in 1863 resulted in an uprising by the large German majority. The event brought Prussian and Austrian military intervention in an attempt to thwart Danish intentions, to protect and encourage the German population's call for independence and its closer relationship to the German Confederation. Under the banner of unity, a communal awareness formed among the citizenry of the confederation and ethnic enclaves, but will not be formalized politically until German unification in 1871. When the Prussian-protestant historical narrative is added, the complete

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<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

build-up of national identity in the Prussian cause for unity via the Austro-Prussian War in 1866, the Franco-Prussian War in 1870, and the opposition of the Catholic church to said unification under the Prussian kingdom is realized. Bußmann suggests this politically driven unity was essential and central to the formation of German national identity, and previous attempts had failed because of the lack of hallmarks (e.g. a common capital and political intellectual center) that had long existed in Paris and London.<sup>77</sup> How then does this affect immigrating Germans in terms of communal identity because like Weidenfeld's concept, the structures Bußmann references are not in place, and the sentiments that drove it in Germany are not a factor in Brazil. What does this mean for conceptions of communal and national identity in the German immigrant communities in Brazil given the repeated affirmation that politically they are loyal to Brazil? The political framework that Weidenfeld and Bußmann employ to argue their respective theories is centered around the physical space(s) that will become Germany. However, neither seemingly holds up when applied to those outside of this geographic center but who still claim a form of German collective identity. In examining the various theories: political, cultural, religious and geographical along with their respective lenses, and with each laying claim as the basis of the communal self, a commonality emerges. What is present and common is the seeming innate need to preserve a collective identity that has been activated by a hyper awareness of alterity broad enough to cover different instances of *Deutschtum* and by extension, German identity. If we return to the myth making theory with its notion of nationalism as a patchwork of varying ideas of *Deutschtum* and *Heimat* along with the assertion of the local identity to establish dual identity, we get closer to the essence of collective identity. At least it appears to get closer to what is happening in the settlements or can explain how communal identity is evolving. That formulation allows for more fluidity of what identity is and can be by allowing varying sentiments to ebb and flow as the basis of communal consciousness. It is this framework, along with their personal belongings that emigrants will carry with them to Brazil, a country itself at odds with its own identity.

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<sup>77</sup> Walter Bußmann, "Das deutsche Nationalbewußtsein im 19. Jahrhundert," in *Die Identität der Deutschen*, ed. Werner Weidenfeld (München: Hanser Verlag, 1983), 68.

## CHAPTER 3

### Cultural Nationalism

Silvio Romero and Machado de Assis initiated a fundamental discussion of the intersection of culture and national identity, and the country itself in their critiques on national character, cultural expression and its development. This dialogue reporting on the state of national literature, Brazil and its people was fundamentally one of cultural nationalism and tied Brazil and its people to its cultural production. Cultural nationalism,

generally refers to ideas and practices that relate to the intended revival of a purported national community's culture. If political nationalism is focused on the achievement of political autonomy, cultural nationalism is focused on the cultivation of a nation. Here the vision of the nation is not a political organisation, but a moral community. As such, cultural nationalism sets out to provide a vision of the nation's identity, history and destiny. The key agents of cultural nationalism are intellectuals and artists, who seek to convey their vision of the nation to the wider community. The need to articulate and express this vision tends to be felt most acutely during times of social, cultural and political upheaval resulting from an encounter with modernity. Cultural nationalism often occurs in the early phase of a national movement, sometimes before an explicitly political nationalism has appeared<sup>78</sup>

Kosaku Yoshino, in *Cultural Nationalism in Contemporary Japan: A Sociological Survey* extends the definition a bit further by linking it to the conviction driving the cultural nationalist, who believe that the culture itself is, "...lacking, inadequate or threatened."<sup>79</sup> He states that the intent of cultural nationalism is to, "regenerate the national community by creating, preserving or strengthening a people's cultural identity," which suggests there is a perception, at least with cultural nationalist, of some semblance of national culture. But it is being weakened and/or is under some type of outside threat posed to undermine or even prevent the nation from seeing its identity, the vision of what and who the nation is, from coming to fruition.<sup>80</sup> Though speaking

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<sup>78</sup> Eric Taylor Woods. "Cultural Nationalism: A Review and Annotated Bibliography", *Studies on National Movements* 2 (2014), <http://snm.nise.eu/index.php/studies/article/view/0202s/pdf> .

<sup>79</sup> Kosaku Yoshino. *Cultural Nationalism in Contemporary Japan. A Sociological Enquiry* (New York: Routledge, 1992), 1.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

distinctly of Japan, he lays out theories which can be extrapolated and applied with regards to general concepts of cultural nationalism notably its agents and their interplay. He notes key players or agents in the development of cultural nationalism: intellectuals or thinking elites, and intelligentsia. Though these two groups have distinct roles, they do interplay with one another with the former being credited with the formulation of ideas and values of the nation's cultural identity while the latter reacts to these ideas and values, and associates them to," their own social, economic, political and other activities."<sup>81</sup> In the case of the intellectual group, he assigns the term *nihonjinron* meaning 'discussions of the Japanese' and refers to the, "vast array of literature which thinking elites have produced to define the uniqueness of Japanese culture, society and national character," which is reminiscent of the writings and debates of Machado de Assis, Sílvia Romero and other contemporary intellectuals regarding Brazil and its national ethos.<sup>82</sup> It is important to note this term is with respect to literature (travelogues, folklore, contemporary news, etcetera) that itself focuses on the analyses of Japaness or being Japanese and in this way lends itself for borrowing in terms of linking the mechanics of culture, cultural production, and national identity. The intent here is not to draw parallels between disparate cultures but rather to highlight the broad characteristics found in any country attempting to establish their national identity in cultural terms. For these countries, it is the attempt to define the national character of the country by way of its cultural expression and production. With respect to a collective national identity, what is the process or means of the dissemination, and the broader society recognizing and accepting intelligentsia defined national character and cultural identity?

### 3.1 New Republic Nationalism

The time known as the New Republic (1889-1930) straddled the centuries bringing a number of changes socially (e.g. emerging middle class), demographically (e.g. urbanization), economically (e.g. emerging financial and manufacturing centers), and nationally (e.g. defined national frontier and addition of land to domain). The decade leading up to and shortly after the turn of the century also saw a golden age of literature featuring authors such as: Machado de

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<sup>81</sup> Yoshino, *Cultural Nationalism*, 2.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*

Assis, Lima Barreto, Graça Cunha, and Euclides da Cunha who would form the literary canon and define national literature in Brazil. The elevation of these authors and their works also saw a change in how nationalism in literature was expressed as it,

became less a series of isolated and erratic reactions to outside stimuli and more a philosophic impulse to develop the nation, to define the national character, and to project a favorable image abroad. In short, an aggressive or constructive nationalism was forming<sup>83</sup>

Up to the time of the New Republic, nationalism had been characterized as defensive and even idyllic, but with the coming turn of the century a series of events raised Brazil's profile on the world stage prompting a pivot from outside stimuli driving nationalism to a more internal reflection of what Brazil was and what it meant to be Brazilian. If these changes were the impetus to a new type of nationalism, intellectuals were its authors, advocates and driving force making the end objective clear. Their desire was to break with the past and forge a different idea of national character that was not reflective or attempted to emulate Europe, rather a domestic product of Brazil itself. The new nationalism was made most apparent in the events of 1922, notably the centennial anniversary of Brazil's independence, and the inevitable cultural backlash over its national ethos. The occasion of the one-hundred-year anniversary was celebrated by a commemoration of the past century's achievements with offerings in the form of cultural works (visual arts, literature, architecture, et al.), and commissions by the government featuring and revering the country's Luso-Brazilian colonial past. The moment was also the catalyst of a significant cultural response brewing in São Paulo. According to Daryle Williams in, *Culture Wars in Brazil. The First Vargas Regime, 1930-1945*, the reaction would culminate in a break with old traditions governing the arts, but also how nationalism was expressed culturally. This modernist driven pushback gave cultural figures in Brazil, "a green light to explore alternatives to the cultural heritage of colonialism and mimesis that continued to shape cultural development one century after independence."<sup>84</sup> The resistance was a challenge to not only the practices mirroring those governing the arts in Europe but also the sentiment that it was the only avenue by which to produce cultural goods of the nation. Being that these traditions were rooted in

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<sup>83</sup> B. Bradford Burns. *Nationalism in Brazil: A Historical Survey* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1968), 54.

<sup>84</sup> Daryle Williams. *Culture Wars in Brazil: The First Vargas Regime, 1930-1945* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001), 41.

European norms and reflected aspects of their culture, any Brazilian cultural products produced under this system were merely imitations. It was essentially taking Brazil and its people, and locating them in Europe but still expecting a uniquely Brazilian product. Instead of mimicry, the call was for organic cultural production and expression that reflected the nation. E. Bradford Burns points out in, *Nationalism in Brazil. A Historical Survey*, the inevitability of this opposition as the early decades of the twentieth century leading up to the centennial celebration saw the practices of intellectuals, many of them artists, pointing to an attitude shift and mood where they sought to, “break from the past, to end bucolic nationalism.”<sup>85</sup> Gone was the simple adoration of country, its flora and fauna, and in its place was the push to, “define and encourage the national culture.”<sup>86</sup>

### 3.2 Estado Novo (New State)

The 1930s brought a wealth of social, political and cultural changes marshalled in by Getúlio Vargas’ rise to power via an armed uprising led by the states of Minas Gerais, Paraíba, and Rio Grande do Sul. It was a coup following a succession of failed uprisings against the government as a result of a neglected military and desired social reform. Led by young military officers known as *tenentes*, the revolts, beginning in 1922, could not be easily suppressed by the government and threatened its stability. With the collapse of world economies in 1929, the utter crash of coffee export, the increase in national debt, the government’s unwillingness to address the crisis by way of economic policy, and the fight over presidential succession, the Brazilian government collapsed. The elections of 1930 were marked by growing discontent over the economy ultimately splitting the political elite between support for the government candidate Júlio Prestes, who had the support of the larger states and their political machines, and Getúlio Vargas, the governor of Rio Grande do Sul and former minister of the Treasury, who with the support of a coalition of smaller states, disgruntled military, opposition parties, urban liberals, industrialists, and a growing discontented public.<sup>87</sup> Vargas’ platform was one of reform and as

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<sup>85</sup> Burns, *Nationalism*, 60.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>87</sup> Williams, *Culture*, 3.

Daryle Williams explains did not balk at the expectation of, “protecting and promoting national interests.”<sup>88</sup> Prestes easily won the election amidst claims of election fraud, but before the new government could be inaugurated, the assassination of Vargas’s running mate, João Pessoa, triggered a revolt that began in Rio Grande do Sul and Minas Gerais but quickly spread to the Northeast. After a month of fighting, and with little support among the loyalist troops, President Luis was forced to step down, rebel troops marched into Rio de Janeiro, and installed Vargas as the chief of the Provisional Government. Once in power, Vargas and his regional allies began a process of centralization to expand and strengthen the powers of the federal government <sup>89</sup> To that end, existing agencies saw their powers widened and new agencies were created to facilitate national policies in the areas of education, health, labor relations, industrial policy, and commerce. The government adopted measures extending its presence into all spaces: home, school, hospital, and the work place. The regime justified its expansion of power as necessary for economic and political reform but was met with years of civil unrest from both sides of the political spectrum. The revolts culminated in the anti-leftist purges and false charges of communist collusion which was then used to justify the suspension of the 1938 presidential elections ushering in the era of Estado Novo (New State).

Vargas held that this new state would, “restore to the Brazilian people an organic political culture that had been corrupted by liberalism during the First Republic and threatened by communism in the constitutional period.”<sup>90</sup> However, outside threats to Brazil existed as well in the form of geopolitical tensions playing out in the period of time prior to World War II. The arrival of, “Jewish refugees fleeing persecution in Europe and fears of Nazi infiltration among German immigrant communities in the Brazilian South were continual reminders that instability in Europe could have a direct impact on Brazilian national security.”<sup>91</sup> Vargas attempted to remain neutral but was drawn into the war by Nazi attacks on Brazilian merchant marine vessels and would later supply troops in the battle to liberate Italy. Inside Brazil, another battle was brewing pitting the states and their regional autonomy against a centralizing federal government.

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<sup>88</sup> Williams, *Culture*, 4.

<sup>89</sup> Williams, *Culture*, 5.

<sup>90</sup> Williams, *Culture*, 6.

<sup>91</sup> Williams, *Culture*, 7.

In a ritual known as the *Queima das Bandeiras* (Burning of the Flags), the flags of all Brazilian states were burned as a show of national unity according to Vargas but in reality, was symbolic of the ever-growing power and reach of the federal government.

### 3.3 Cultural Management and Policy

Cultural management in Brazil during the Vargas era was a means to exert more social control over the populace. Williams in referring to culture management speaks of the institutionalized, politicized and codified administration of culture and Constance Devereaux, in “Cultural Management and the Discourse of Practice” explains it in terms of its objective. She writes that the term cultural management,

is used to designate a wide set of practices relating to the management of cultural organizations and cultural activities for achieving a variety of aims including production, distribution, exhibition, education, and other related activities within a variety of sectors including the nonprofit, for profit and public<sup>92</sup>

Combined with the growing desire to construct a national identity for domestic and foreign consumption in the shadow of an increasingly authoritarian and ardent nationalist state, cultural management in theory would not only serve as a gatekeeper of those artifacts deemed Brazilian (and conversely not Brazilian), but would also build and disseminate that culture. This national culture would then in time be the default by which people would refer to when thinking, discussing, consuming, producing, and participating in Brazilian culture. The word culture in its general meaning usually includes key words and phrases such as: values of the people, breeding, intellectual, and aesthetic training among others. But when typically discussing culture, we are referring to different types of culture and it is important to distinguish among its variations: high culture, popular culture, religion and science are among a few of its components. Of interest and focus here for the purpose of this discussion is high culture, namely national literature but in considering cultural management and policy all facets of culture come into play. Roland Corbisier, journalist and former Brazilian federal deputy, supplies the most apt use for this particular application. “In using the expression “Brazilian culture” . . . we do not want to refer

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<sup>92</sup> Constance Devereaux. “Cultural Management and the Discourse of Practice,” *Fachverband Kulturmanagement*, <https://www.fachverband-kulturmanagement.org/cultural-management-and-the-discourse-of-practice/> .



only to the intellectual, artistic, religious, literary or scientific aspects of our culture, but to all the vital manifestations which, as a whole, characterize and define the Brazilian people.”<sup>93</sup> As such, high culture, specifically (national) literature is only a small part of the national identity and culture equation but will still serve as a vehicle for cultural politics and management by which to include and exclude cultural artifacts that will stand as representative of *brasilidade*.

Much of the cultural policies and management during Vargas’ administrations are credited to him, and praise by some artists and political observers lauding him for political deliverance and “rescuing Brazilian society from descent into cultural confusion” lent credence to that notion.<sup>94</sup> In truth, Vargas had no interest in cultural programming, rather it was the Minister of Education and Health (MES) also known as Ministry of Education and Public Health (MESP), Gustavo Capanema, who managed and proposed cultural policy even though Vargas was more than happy to cultivate the idea of himself being the protector and patron of Brazilian culture. The concentration and centralization of power by the federal government reached into the cultural arena where Capanema reasoned the cultivation and preservation of high culture was a component of education, and one to be protected as the nation started to define itself internally and to the outside world.

If the educational task was more than the transmission of knowledge, the formation of mentalities, it was natural for the activities of the ministry to branch out into many other spheres beyond the simple reform of the school system. It was necessary to develop the country’s high culture, its art, its music, its writing. It was necessary to take action on the youth and the women to ensure the commitment of the former to the values of the nation being built, and guarantee the place of the latter in the preservation of its basic institutions. Finally, it was necessary to prevent nationality, still in its nascent stage of construction, from being threatened by open or hidden agents of other cultures, other ideologies and nations<sup>95</sup>

Believing such, Capanema spent a great deal of his tenure attempting to expand the purview of his ministry in the area of culture. Because the ministry was tasked with educational reform, he

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<sup>93</sup> Roland Corbisier. *Formação e Problema da Cultura Brasileira* (Rio de Janeiro: Ministério da Educação e Cultura, Instituto Superior de Estudos Brasileiros, 1959), 53. Translation by Tanya Doss.

<sup>94</sup> Williams, *Culture*, 13.

<sup>95</sup> Simon Schwartzman, Helena Maria Bousquet Bomeny, Vanda Maria Ribeiro Costa. *Tempos de Capanema* (Brazil: Paz e Terra, 2000), 97. Translation by Tanya Doss.

interpreted it as intellectual training and shaping the minds of Brazilians. For that reason, he saw and planned to use the “public educational apparatus as vehicle for social and cultural transformation,” and this mindset fell in line with a government that had been seeking new ways for social education and control.<sup>96</sup> This time also saw the constant interministry struggle between the MES, Ministry of Justice and others over who would control cultural management as that entity would regulate national culture. In order to manage culture, the newly expanded ministries utilized existing institutions and formed new ones they filled with appointees sharing their views on politics and/or culture. The selection of these appointees would sometimes ignite firestorms with respect to institutions like the National School of Fine Arts (ENBA) that pitted deeply entrenched traditionalists against practitioners of new forms of art. Still at the heart of the matter is who would control the type of expression representative of Brazilian culture. As to what these institutions or how they would affect literature production and national literature as a whole, we need only look at what types of works were being produced and garnering attention. Regionalist literature with its region-specific themes, language, and setting were at the forefront of literary production. But given the government’s push for more centralized power at the cost of regional autonomy, it would seem at least superficially that such production would not fit in line with the regime’s objectives with respect to national culture and identity. Looking closer, those themes, settings, and languages though different from region to region were still representations of Brazil. The flora and fauna were still unique to Brazil as was the language and issues that informed thematic content (famine, drought, misery, etcetera). That being the case, might there be room in this space for other representations of national ethos? The authoritarian government and mounting nationalism would signify there is not room but this question is complicated because the construction of identity and culture is deeply enmeshed in the political turmoil unfolding as Vargas’ regime took shape. At stake is the political direction of the country but also the direction of culture and identity. As it stood so far, the shaping of both was as much negative as it was positive, meaning exclusion was utilized as a means of building *Brasilidade*. While positive construction was also being used, the tone of policy was one that marked what *brasilidade* was not in contrast to other cultures, governments, countries, and any other perceived possible outside threat. In keeping in line with negative identity and culture construction, and the promotion of a Brazilian national ethos, a series of measures were implemented under the

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<sup>96</sup> Williams, *Culture*, 61, 62.

*Campanha de Nacionalização* (nationalization campaign). The purpose as outlined by the Estado Novo regime was to, “ensure better ‘integration’ of immigrant minorities such as Italian, German, Japanese and Jewish communities into Brazilian mainstream culture.”<sup>97</sup> The measures were introduced in three phases, with each phase being increasingly more restrictive for immigrants to exercise or express their cultural identity and basically dismantling their institutions of cultural preservation. The primary phase in 1938 mostly targeted immigrant community education and made the teaching of Portuguese obligatory, schools had to have Brazilian names, instructors had to be Brazilian born or naturalized graduates of Brazilian schools, class instruction had to be in Portuguese, foreign language classes for minors under fourteen and subsidies from foreign governments and intuitions were prohibited, and mandatory subjects in moral and civic education and physical education were instituted.<sup>98</sup> This was followed up in 1939 with new measures that prohibited speaking foreign languages in public spaces including religious services, forced cultural and recreational associations to shutter any activities that could be associated with other cultures, and marked the beginning of restrictions being placed on press in a foreign language.<sup>99</sup> The primary phase had already forced newspapers to employ a Brazilian writer who operated as an in-house censor, and to publish bilingual editions that featured patriotic pieces written by Brazilian writers. The final and most definitive phase came after Brazil’s entrance into World War II where outright repression intensified on those nationalities related to the Axis powers (Germans, Italians, Japanese) in the form of schools and newspapers being outright banned. These measures are significant because of their potential effects on cultural identity and the collective memory it is built on. The regime was attempting to strip immigrant cultural identity, especially the axis power immigrants during World War II, through institutions it deemed to be repositories of cultural artifacts. Not surprisingly, they are the same types of institutions they will employ to promote and disseminate *brasilidade*. These acts were violent; stripping away those markers of individual and collective identity that had been built on the very cultural products carried over and re-created such as language, traditions,

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<sup>97</sup> Marlen Eckl, “‘Everywhere Paradise is Lost’: The Brazilian National Myth in the Works of Refugees of Nazism,” in *KulturConfusão – On German-Brazilian Interculturalities*, ed. Anke Finger, Gabi Kathöfer and Christopher Larkosh (Berlin: DeGruyter, 2015), 224.

<sup>98</sup> Giralda Seyferth, “Os Imigrantes e a Campanha de Nacionalização do Estado Novo,” *Repensando o Estado Novo* (Rio de Janeiro: Fundação Getulio Vargas, 1999), 219-224. Translated by Tanya Doss.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*

and institutions. The erasure also signaled their hyphenated identity (German-Brazilian) had no place or space within a constructed *brasilidade* so narrowly defined that anything outside of it is excluded, erased and silenced. What this means for the affected communities is criminalization of their culture and by extension their identities. It is an attempt to silence and effectively cut them off from those collective memories that constitute their culture and its expression, and in its place impose a new cultural memory by forced assimilation that itself has been meticulously constructed.

In examining specific cultural policy some obstacles present themselves as outlined by Williams. The first obstacle is the congressional records of cultural policy discussion or debate as these sessions were closed to the public. This would not be so bad if the permanent archives of institutions especially during the *Estado Novo* were available. Sadly, they have disappeared so any analysis of policy and tension within the Vargas government is somewhat incomplete.<sup>100</sup> Rather, in their absence, Williams states discussions around national culture development require attention be paid to the political history of culture which examines the complexities of politics within cultural production.<sup>101</sup> While we are not privy to specifics with respect to policy discussions, debates, and differences, we can infer much from the stated objectives of the *Estado Novo* regime and its attitude with regards to culture. They held that: art should bring about the rebirth of popular traditions into works based on the canons of western culture, intellectuals should have a definite role in this political project (national culture creation), and that they should be involved in the architecture of a national culture.<sup>102</sup> According to the government, intellectuals were to achieve said national culture building by determining what artifacts, practices, traditions, etcetera should be stimulated, forgotten or repressed. They were then to tie popular and erudite culture with the purpose of, and in collaboration with the regime and its political new order, to create a ‘new man’ based on the roots of *brasilidade*.<sup>103</sup> For the *Estado Novo* regime, art’s role is seemingly narrow in its function as a means by which to transform popular traditions and practices into high cultural works that are in keeping with Western canons.

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<sup>100</sup> Williams, *Culture*, 82.

<sup>101</sup> Williams, *Culture*, 16.

<sup>102</sup> Victor Hugo Adler Pereira. *Política Cultural e Artes Cênicas No Brasil Durante o Estado Novo: (1937/1945): O Estado em Cena* (Chapel Hill: Duke University Press, 1993), 9.

<sup>103</sup> Pereira, *Política Cultural*, 9-10.

Art is not just the creation of aesthetic objects but a way to associate Brazil's practices and cultural offerings with that of Europe and North America. The tacit position of the government is the value of their cultural offerings is inherently inferior or lacks an element that would place it on par with that of Europe and North America. This view also seems to contradict the claim that nationalism had pivoted away from being reactive to outside stimuli (Europe) and from artistic practices championed by modernists that called for Brazilian aesthetics in cultural production. What this indicates is there was at least a divide or tension within the regime and intellectual community regarding the direction of artistic aesthetics and nationalism, and that policy itself, at least at the top, was crafted by those sympathetic to the traditions of Europe. Of additional importance is the admission of the Vargas government that the creation of a national culture is politically driven which lends credibility to the charge of the government's foray into culture and culture management as yet another means for further social control over the populace. The government also defined the role of intellectuals as collaborators in the construction of a new cultural memory. From that, a national culture blending the popular and erudite, would create a new type of Brazilian borne from the political new order (Estado Novo).

## CHAPTER 4

### Memory, Identity, Culture

In constructing a new national identity from a new cultural memory, the Vargas' regime was attempting to overwrite the existing cultural memory of both Brazilians and German settlement immigrants. With the help of intellectuals, the government sought to reinvent the country's image and identity, and along with specific cultural institutions act as gatekeepers of a new emerging *brasilidade*. This new instance of Brazilian identity would be consumed domestically and abroad, and be the *de facto* face of the country. But how could they overwrite an existing cultural memory? And what is its tie to a collective (national) identity? Does overwriting cultural memory also overwrite, negate, or alter identity? How or by what means will this cultural memory be transmitted to Brazilians, German immigrants, and future generations to ensure the continuance of both memory and identity? To address these questions requires a turn to the field of modern Memory Studies and its founder Maurice Halbwachs's theory of *mémoire collective*. Through his sociological analysis he explores how individual memory relies on social structures, how collective memory is imprinted on a group, how it is then transmitted (both immediate and intergenerational), and the concept of collective memory as the source of group identity.

#### 4.1 Cultural Memory

The term *cultural memory* is itself one of many terminologies used in the field of memory studies which include other terms such as: *mémoire collective* (collective memory), *cadres sociaux* (social frameworks of memory), social memory, *Mnemosyne*, *ars memoriae*, *loci et imagines*, *lieux de mémoire* (sites of memory), invented traditions, myth, *memoria*, heritage, commemoration, *kulturelles Gedächtnis*, communicative memory, generationality, post memory, among others.<sup>104</sup> The varying terminology owes itself to not being the object, “of one discipline, rather [a] transdisciplinary phenomena.”<sup>105</sup> The challenge for the field has been to agree on a singular notion from which to start but it has not stopped attempts at doing just that, and finding

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<sup>104</sup> Astrid Erll. *Kollektives Gedächtnis und Erinnerungskulturen: Eine Einführung* (Stuttgart: J. B. Metzler Verlag, 2017), 4.

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*

a working definition. Astrid Erll in the book, *Cultural Memory Studies. An International and Interdisciplinary Handbook*, defines cultural memory as, “the interplay of present and past in socio-cultural contexts.”<sup>106</sup> There are other definitions but given the context of collective memory within a particular social group and in working with Halbwach's theory of *mémoire collective*, Erll's definition best suits the use of the term here.

French sociologist Maurice Halbwachs held that individual memory relies on or cannot exist without social frameworks. “If we examine a little more closely how we recollect things, we will surely realize that the greatest number of memories come back to us when our parents, our friends, or other persons recall them to us.”<sup>107</sup> He states our social environment constructs the social framework inside of which we interact with others to create memory, and these same interactions summon our memory.<sup>108</sup> Out of this shared framework we recall, process, and interpret the past together, and these actions are what defines us as a social group. Because we at any given moment are in different social environments and have different frameworks, we can belong to any number of social groups. But central to this is the requirement of interaction for the recall the memory. Halbwachs illustrates this hypothesis in his seminal work *La Mémoire Collective* (The Collective Memory) with the story of a young girl found in the woods of France who had no recollection of her childhood. She provided details allowing authorities to deduce she had been born outside of Europe, possibly somewhere in the Americas. When she was shown Inuit artifacts, it elicited a response from her that indicated that she was from that location. Halbwachs in admitting to not knowing whether the tale was true or not nevertheless reasoned her reaction was the result of memory being recalled from social framework. A child of nine or ten years of age, he argued, would possess recollections both new and old, and the ability to recall said memory would seemingly be in question if she were abruptly separated from her family, and transported to a country where the language, appearance of people, customs and places were unfamiliar to her up to that moment.<sup>109</sup> He asserts because the child has left one

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<sup>106</sup> Astrid Erll, foreword to *Cultural Memory Studies: An International and Interdisciplinary Handbook*, eds. Astrid Erll, Ansgar Nünning and Sara Young (Germany: Netlibrary, 2008), 1.

<sup>107</sup> Maurice Halbwachs. *On Collective Memory*, trans. Lewis A. Coser (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 38.

<sup>108</sup> Halbwachs, *Collective*, 38.

<sup>109</sup> Halbwachs, *Collective*, 37.

society to enter into another, her ability to remember those things she had done and those things which had left an impression on her in the new society would displace the ability to remember the old, but that is not the case because the social framework from which the memory can be drawn from is still there. Being removed from the social environment did not remove the girl's ability to recall the memory because the social framework from which the memory was created and/or transmitted still existed, and could be called upon anytime the girl recalled memories associated to that time in that particular social environment. In the girl's case, the recreation is placing her back within that environment (be it family, community, or any social group), and she is experiencing the communication and interactions with fellow members of that social group in recalling a shared version of the past, which binds her to the group. At the core of Halbwachs's theory is his rejection of the then prevalent idea of memory and people as isolated beings who are detached from society. Instead, he argues society's central place in memory is not just as a catalyst to its formation but also where people recall, recognize, and orient their memories.

If we enumerate the number of recollections during one day that we have evoked upon the occasion of our direct and indirect relations with other people, we will see that, most frequently, we appeal to our memory only in order to answer questions which others have asked of us, of that we suppose they could have asked us. We note, moreover, that in order to answer them, we place ourselves in their perspective and we consider ourselves as being part of the same group or groups as they . . . Most of the time, when I remember, it is others who spur me on; their memory comes to the aid of mine and mine relies on theirs . . . There is no point in seeking where they are preserved in my brain or in some nook of my mind to which I alone have access: for they are recalled to me externally, and the groups of which I am a part at any given time give me the means to reconstruct them, upon condition, to be sure, that I turn toward them and adopt, at least for the moment, their way of thinking<sup>110</sup>

This illustrates how individual memory is always located within a social framework that acts as a filter by which to interpret and transmit a collective memory that is itself the, "shared knowledge and experience relevant to the group."<sup>111</sup> Because it is shared, it acts as an identifier for the group signifying their notions and along with other memories differentiates it from other social groups. This group, however, consists of individuals and the question turns to how are these individual memories of an event connecting together for this shared experience. Halbwachs explains this by

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<sup>110</sup> Ibid.

<sup>111</sup> ErlI, *Kollektives Gedächtnis*, 13.



way of localized memory, and the process of localization is better understood as components: group dynamic, individual memory relation to group memory, evoking group memory. We place our individual memories into the whole or entirety of the memories familiar to that group of people with whom we have a connection or relation, and that is the significant element because of what follows. Our individual memories become a part of the totality of memories for that group. When we, as individuals, call forth the entirety of the memories belonging to that group, we are effectively adopting the mentality that is common and standard to said group, and in evoking, we are regardful of the memories which are most important to the group.<sup>112</sup> To further illustrate the concept of collective memory Halbwachs applies his theory to analyze this event in three social groups: family, religious, and social classes. There are more than the three but they are the only groups he examined vis-à-vis the operation of collective memory. Each group though sharing the idea of collective memory, have their own specific characteristics and central functions that make them unique, but their shared traits allow us to understand how collective memory could play out in other respective social groups. Halbwachs' theory of memory and identity with its idea of it being the product of social interaction and frameworks is not the only idea with regards to the formation of group identity up to and including national identity. Another compelling argument comes from Benedict Anderson in, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, where he holds that national identity is constructed out of awareness that there are others that share a common set of features that bind them together even though we may never meet others in this group. Unlike Halbwachs' theory that sets group identity and memory as strictly a social phenomenon, Anderson sees it as a product of printing press capitalism. While acknowledging imagined communities are social, he credits print media as the impetus for community formation. He argues that in pivoting away from exclusive languages like Latin to the use of vernacular language, printed material was able to reach a wider and larger audience.<sup>113</sup> Media extended this reach by a generalization of sorts through images where an audience could imagine themselves as part of a group with those same features be they language, religion, etcetera. Anderson leans heavily on printed media's influence to explain group identity on a large scale (nation) which he then uses to account for

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<sup>112</sup> Ibid.

<sup>113</sup> Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (United Kingdom: Verso, 2006), 37-39.

national identity and nationalism. But this approach is not applicable to smaller groups or explains the phenomena of group identity formation pre-print media. This does not mean the German immigrant communities did not benefit from print media, because as we will see in a later discussion it is central to defending group memory from the ravages of time.

The German immigrant community in Brazil nor any immigrant community for that matter was a social group that Halbwachs examined, and as such we are left with extrapolating his analysis of the family, religious, and social class groups to analyze immigrant cultural memory dynamics and functions. While all three are a form of collective memory, they each have very specific traits and functions with regards to collective identity. The family group is an example of a 'lived' intergenerational collective memory that is formed through interplay and communication with its members. In contrast, religious memory goes beyond that of lived memory, and uses objects and topography to provide structure for memory because there are no living eyewitnesses, and within the social class group collective memory function centers around the group, its formation of convention provides the structure and system of traditional values and its transmission.<sup>114</sup> Halbwachs reasons the family social group collective memory is the result of interaction and communication that repeatedly recalls, mostly via oral stories, the family's past. The frequency of recollections allows members of the group who were not there to experience the memory first-hand to nevertheless share in it and by way of shared experience to reinforce group identity. He best illustrates the manner in which family group collective memory works by contrasting it with another mode of recall, historical memory. While both recollect the past, he sets them in opposition in terms of operation and framework. Described as mutually exclusive and irreconcilable, family group collective memory, and historical memory each have their own way in which to capture, construct, orientate, present, and transmit memory with the former being a lived oral recollection, and the latter a written universal record of events. In terms of time, collective memory goes back as far as the recall of the oldest member while written historical memory goes back beyond collective memory's time boundary and its living eyewitnesses. Other striking differences are their respective frameworks, meaning the beliefs that make up the framework, and the portrayal of past events. Historical memory, according to Halbwachs, is the neutral coordination of past events, meaning its recall is not one that is particular nor is its orientation geared to any specific group. Collective memory is quite the

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<sup>114</sup> Erl, *Kollektives Gedächtnis*, 14-15.

opposite in it is evaluative and oriented towards the needs of the group in the present, and for that reason is particular and restricted both chronologically (recollection of oldest member of the group) and spatially (in terms of attaching themselves to a particular place).<sup>115</sup> But Erll, who has done extensive research and work in the area of Memory Studies pushes back against this comparison, and even labels it unproductive. Acknowledging that Halbwachs's views on historical memory was and remains an area of contention, she points out the problems with his characterization because it sets cultural memory and historical memory in opposition with value charged terms, "practical meaningful versus abstract totalizing . . . good versus bad, organic versus artificial, living versus dead" among others.<sup>116</sup> Attaching such values to historical memory (artificial, abstract, etcetera) is problematic because as Erll points out the idea of a collective singular history is itself unclear in its own right let alone set in opposition to cultural memory. Instead she offers adopting the notion of different modes of remembering in culture. The premise behind this is, "[t]he basic insight that the past is not a given, but instead continuously [must] be re-constructed and re-presented. Thus, our memories (individual and collective) of past events can vary to a great degree. This holds true not only for *what* is remembered (facts, data), but also for *how* it is remembered, that is, for the quality and meaning the past assumes."<sup>117</sup> To further illustrate the notion of different modes by which past events are remembered, she uses the example of war. War, she states, can be remembered in a myriad of ways: as a mythic event (the war as apocalypse), political history (the First World War as "the great seminal catastrophe of the twentieth century"), traumatic experience ("the horror of the trenches"), family history ("the war my great-uncle served in"), a focus of bitter consternation ("the war waged by the old generation, by the fascist, by men"), and as such these are different modes of remembering.<sup>118</sup> When viewed in this manner, historical memory is just one of many ways in which to recall past events. As to the use of Halbwachs's comparison, it is strictly for use here in working towards carving out characteristics that define cultural memory as opposed to a full-throated approval or embrace of his characterization of historical memory and history. The manner in which Erll

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<sup>115</sup> Ibid.

<sup>116</sup> Erll, *Cultural Memory Studies*, 7.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid.

outlines the variance in remembering also explains how collective memory can become fictionalized. Due to the way in which it is curated, according to the needs and interest of the group, it causes the memory to become distorted, and is the reason collective memory does not and cannot supply a reliable representation of the past. The most significant difference between these two types of memory is what purpose or rather what does that type of memory centrally do; what is its core? While both recollect the past, for written historical memory that is its central function, whereas for collective memory it is identity formation. Halbwachs argues, it is a result of the process of regulation through customs, norms and ways of thinking that govern each social group and imposes themselves on the opinions and regulates the feelings of their respective members.<sup>119</sup> Halbwach likens this process to the religious practices of the group that are closed to outsiders. “(I)n the most traditional societies of today, each family has its proper mentality, its memories which it alone commemorates, and its secrets that are revealed only to its members.”<sup>120</sup> But it is more than just the sacred practices of family, collective memory is also didactic and indoctrinates members with the beliefs of the group. “They express the general attitude of the group; they not only reproduce its history but also define its nature and its qualities and weakness.”<sup>121</sup> When we recall, we are essentially expressing traits or qualities that are inherent to the group and express our identity as a group. In defining who we are via phrases or ideas that communicate, “we are this”, and “we don’t do this”, these markers pass from the group to its individual members. These markers can be physical (place or region of origin) or they can be other specific characteristics that become the de facto representation of the group.<sup>122</sup> As such, it is not only the group identity being established but also individual identity as belonging to or being a part of said group. Halbwach’s analysis of only three social groups leaves us with a gap in terms of collective memory and its operation in other types of social groups such as school, professional associations, recreational groups, immigrant communities, etcetera, and this could seemingly pose a problem when attempting to examine other groups. In looking, for example, at the German immigrant community group, there are similarities in the

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<sup>119</sup> Halbwachs, *Collective*, 59.

<sup>120</sup> Ibid.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid.

<sup>122</sup> Ibid.

characteristics they share with the family social group where it is possible to extrapolate his analysis to investigate the operations that are occurring within the colonies in their attempts to preserve their German cultural roots and cultural identity. Much of the components operating within this attempt mirror the family social group, namely orality, intergenerational transmission, and framework for group memory. This is not to deny or dismiss traits the German immigrant community in Brazil may share with the other two social groups Halbwachs analyzed, and there is an argument to be made that the community is an amalgam of the three but the parallels between them and the family group makes a more compelling argument as it sits somewhat more firmly in that social group than the other two. Also it is important to note that by their nature, the family social group organization and relationships create a unique group structure and have a dynamic not seen in other groups but the frame by which identity is imprinted and transmitted intergenerationally gives a pathway by which we can see forms of Deutschtum and its transmission to subsequent generations. As mentioned previously, a feature of the family social group is the constant recalling of memory as a means of remembrance, reinforcing identity and generational transmission for those that were not present to witness the memory first-hand. Similar to the family social group, the German immigrant community in Brazil utilized oral recall in the retelling of memories connected to and invoking Heimat and Deutschtum. While they also used written materials, orality was an integral part of transmission by members who had grown up in the German confederation with those cultural artifacts constituting German identity. Absent from the geographical marker of identity, they relied on other attributes to relay what it is to be German in those spaces outside of home where oral recall informed the formation, celebration and practices of family traditions related to Heimat and Deutschtum. In public spaces outside of home, oral recall allowed expression of different reflections of memory (Heimat and Deutschtum) thereby allowing different instances of the two which then informed cultural practices in Brazil within the larger immigrant community and subgroups such as associations, clubs, etcetera. It created a simple means to convey ideas of Heimat and Deutschtum to subsequent generations either too young to have a reflection of that memory or born and raised away from the home country as a means to sustain group identity, and reinforce it among members of the group. In the end, the purpose is to: form a connection to and express German cultural identity, to associate the group and by extension the individual within the group with Heimat and Deutschtum. To that end, similar to the family social group, the memories of

the German immigrant group are didactic in that they serve as elements in teaching and also as models and examples that demonstrate, instruct and imprint attributes of cultural identity. They are able to do this because according to Halbwachs theory, group memory develops the consciousness of members of the group. Group recollection cultivates the being of its individual members thereby tethering it to the group through cultural ties, practices, and the importance of its identity (recalling that the collective memory's central function is identity formation). In Halbwach's analysis of the family social group, he pointed out how the evoking of group memory is individual members remembering the common group memory (in the case of the German immigrant community, Heimat and Deutschtum) in her or his own manner. The common denominator is identity (Heimat and Deutschtum) and the recollections tied to them form the group mindset. Because individual members are tied to the group due to the group fostering its identity, it is not a stretch to say this group mindset or mentality imposes itself on the opinions and feelings of said individual members which in turn binds them back to the group. So as much as individual memory requires social structure for its recall, individual consciousness necessitates group membership. Expression of individual identity is also simultaneously an expression of group identity (to any number of groups), and within this lies the reproduction of history the group has passed to its members which is made up of various elements of group mentality and provides, like the family social group, the framework for group memory and ultimately identity. Where the German immigrant group deviates greatly from the family is that it did not just rely on orality for transmission and in fact made great use of written materials as a vehicle for group framework and the passing of group mentality, and identity. Almanacs, newspapers, books, and other written materials were also instrumental in preserving and conveying cultural identity by way of collective memory within the immigrant community as a means of connecting individuals to a larger collective group.

#### 4.2 Cultural Memory and Media

While orality has the capability to store, transmit, and circulate cultural memory, Halbwachs did note an issue with regards to its long-term ability to perform those functions.

When the memory of a series of events is no longer sustained by the group involved and affected by them, who witnessed them or heard about them from the actual participants; when a memory has become a matter for disparate individuals immersed in new social

settings where the events have no relevance and seem foreign [‘extérieurs’], then the only way to save such memories is to fix them in writing and in a sustained narrative; whereas words and thoughts die out, writings remain<sup>123</sup>

With displacement from the social group and/or the passage of time there comes not only a dilution of memory, if not outright loss but also because of cultural memory’s central function of identity formation, the possibility for loss in this area as well. To counter this, Halbwachs looks to media, specifically writing as a means of stabilizing memory for preservation, transmission, and circulation. By committing memory to a different medium (media), a social group can in theory ensure the survival of its collective experiences, events and by extension its identity. The belief that memory can be stored stretches back to antiquity with Mnemosyne, the goddess of memory and remembrance who was called upon, most notably in the oral works, *Iliad and Odyssey*, to aid the poet’s memory. In modern times, it is art and cultural historian, Aby Warburg, whose work with memory in visual art in the 1920s marks the concept of images as receptacles of memory. Termed, social memory, Warburg’s focus was to demonstrate that visual art is a symbolic representation of collective memory and as such had the capacity of storage since, according to his theory, “human products told and retold the functioning of personal and social memory.”<sup>124</sup> As a contemporary of Halbwachs, Warburg offered a distinctively different take on collective memory leaning heavily on the idea of art as a medium and a product of memory. His concept suggests that collective memory can and is condensed down to specific symbols and signs which can be used to recall, disseminate, and cue past experiences and events.

In her article, “Plentitude, Scarcity and the Circulation of Cultural Memory”, Ann Rigney frames the role of media and its operation as a creator of shared memories. Using Warburg’s theory as a starting point, she attempts to show how through specific processes, like memory convergence, media is not only able to store and transmit but also to create collective memory. A new component she introduces to the discussion that was not addressed in Warburg’s work is media’s effect on memory in its capacity as a carrier. Rigney acknowledges that media is not a neutral carrier, rather it shapes the way collective memory is stored, remembered, and conveyed.

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<sup>123</sup> Ann Rigney. “Plentitude, Scarcity, and the Circulation of Cultural Memory,” *Journal of European Studies*, 35, no. 1 (2005): 11-28. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0047244105051158> .

<sup>124</sup> Kurt W. Forster. “Aby Warburg’s History of Art: Collective Memory and the Social Mediation of Images,” *Daedalus*, 105, no. 1 (1976): 169-176.

To substantiate this claim she utilizes the ‘plentitude and subsequent loss’ model to frame her argument and to illustrate the ideal function of memory which involves,

looking at memory as something that is fully formed in the past (it was once ‘all there’ in the plentitude of experience, as it were) and as something that is subsequently a matter of preserving and keeping alive. Memory is thus seen as working at its best when a maximum number of original experiences is preserved for as long as possible. In practice, however memories constantly disappear as they are transmitted from generation to generation: like water transported in a leaky bucket which slowly runs dry, they are continuously being lost along the way. Following this ‘plentitude and loss’ model, then memory is conceptualized on the one hand in terms of an original ‘storehouse’ and, on the other hand, as something that is always imperfect and diminishing, a matter of chronic frustration because always falling short of total recall<sup>125</sup>

According to Rigney, this model informed the work of Halbwachs and influenced his characterization and understanding of collective memory where ‘lived’ memory with its oral storage and transmission was the preferred state but possesses a fragility whereas writing offers relative safety from the threat of loss because it is, “ a matter of salvaging memories when all other possibility of preserving them is lost. The written medium allows things to survive, then, but in doing so it aggravates the loss of original plentitude by carrying ‘lived’ or ‘internal’ memory into what Halbwachs calls the ‘external’ sphere of history.”<sup>126</sup> Recalling Halbwachs’ distinction between collective and historical memory, the move to the use of writing for the sake of preservation shifts the internal ‘lived’ memory to that of the externally stored historical memory and seemingly frees the social group from the requirement to commit experiences and events to internal recollection. This shift to the external marshals in a reliance on a medium that becomes instrumental to what a group collectively remembers or forgets. This dependence on media as a means to stabilize memory and identity loss brings up questions of how the dynamics of recording outside of orality (with its signs, symbols, and narratives of a collective past) work in terms of collective memory, its impact on how and what is recorded, and what determines which elements related to that event or experience is captured. All of these inquiries require we look at perceptions and realities of how we consume, capture and record the world around us.

Ann Rigney turns to Michel Foucault’s theory of ‘scarcity’ to shed light on how we

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<sup>125</sup> Rigney, “Plentitude, Scarcity, and the Circulation of Cultural Memory”, 12.

<sup>126</sup> Ibid.



might look at culture in theory and in practice in a broader sense.

This rarity of statements, the incomplete, fragmented form of the enunciative field, the fact that few things, in all, can be said, explain that statements are not, like the air we breathe, an infinite transparency; but things that are transmitted and preserved, that have value, and which one tries to appropriate; that are repeated, reproduced, and transformed; to which pre-established networks are adapted, and to which a status is given in the institution; things that are duplicated not only by copy or translation, but by exegesis, commentary, and the internal proliferation of meaning<sup>127</sup>

With this passage in mind, Rigney applies it to how we might read this regarding culture.

“[E]verything that in theory might be written or said about the world does not actually get to be said in practice. Culture is always in limited supply and necessarily so, since it involves producing meaning in an ongoing way through selection, representation, and interpretation.”<sup>128</sup> Even though Foucault is speaking generally of culture here, this concept is mirrored in cultural memory where even though the ideal is to record and circulate as many impressions as possible of an event, this is not what actually occurs. Memories are concentrated and distilled to selective signs and symbols, mnemonic objects, that then form the memory story. For example, we do not carry and circulate all the impressions of memories associated with World War II, rather specific symbols and signs have come to mark the event such as the Normandy Landings of D-Day, or the word *blitzkrieg*. This reductive process also affects valuation of these objects where the limited supply of signs and symbols, “do not have an absolute value, instead they acquire a value that is relative to their usefulness in given situations.”<sup>129</sup> The relative small amount of things that are recorded only have value assigned that is reflective of its usefulness to the group at the time, conversely, those elements that are judged irrelevant are excluded and forgotten. For the purpose of external recording and storage via media, this selective process is called memory convergence and associates memories to specific signs and symbols rendering mnemonic objects, be they images, written text, monuments, etcetera. While utilizing media does allow, “[t]he construction and circulation of knowledge and versions of a common past in sociocultural contexts,” it does

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<sup>127</sup> Michael Foucault. *The Archeology of Knowledge*, trans. A. M. Sheridan Smith (London: Routledge, 1972), 135.

<sup>128</sup> Rigney, “Plentitude, Scarcity, and the Circulation of Cultural Memory”, 16.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid.

not do so without imprint.<sup>130</sup> One would not be faulted for thinking of media as just neutral carriers that does not leave a mark of itself behind. In actuality, the external vehicle by which memories are stored directly impact what can be, and how it will be stored which then dictates how memory will be (re)constructed and interpreted. Media behaves similar to memory in that it, “does not simply reflect past reality, but rather offers up constructions of the past . . . [w]hat they seem to encode — versions of past events, cultural norms and values, concepts of identity — they are in fact first producing.”<sup>131</sup> Media does not operate simply as a vessel, rather its central ability to construct a narrative from those signs and symbols speak to its more complicated role and significance to cultural memory. Media shapes the way in which we experience and perceive, be it how we communicate, understand or remember. Sybille Krämer refers to this force as ‘mediality’ stating that it expresses our relationship to the world and to that end, “all of our activities and experiences, and is shaped (and we understand the world) by the possibilities for distinction which the media opens up and the restrictions they impose.”<sup>132</sup> In, *Kollektives Gedächtnis und Erinnerungskulturen*, Astrid Erll points to media’s cultural and social agency arguing it is the lens by which we understand the world and through which we depend on to navigate through the everyday. The images media circulates are themselves media constructs but this does not diminish the legitimacy of the memory, rather it is the recognition that it is the very environment from which cultural memory emerges.<sup>133</sup> Because media is a constructor of social realities, it inevitably leaves some trace of itself that we are not always aware of which Marshall McLuhan explains in his concept of ‘the medium is the message’. He reasoned, “a medium impacts human experience and society not primarily through content that it mediates but through its formal, technical properties as a medium . . . media itself as content, not just a vehicle or channel.”<sup>134</sup> To then understand how these properties of media leave an imprint, we turn to

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<sup>130</sup> Erll, *Kollektives Gedächtnis*, 135. Translation by Tanya Doss.

<sup>131</sup> Ibid.

<sup>132</sup> Sybille Krämer. “Was haben Medien, der Computer und. Die Realität miteinander zu tun?“ in *Medien – Computer – Realität. Wirklichkeitsvorstellungen und Neue Medien*, ed. Sybille Krämer, (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1998), 14.

<sup>133</sup> Erll, *Kollektives Gedächtnis*, 136.

<sup>134</sup> W. J. T. Mitchell and Mark B. N. Hansen, foreword to *Critical Terms for Media Studies* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010), x.

Sybille Krämer's theory of "medium as trace and apparatus" which reveals as external repositories (e.g. books, images, etcetera), a medium is least apparent when the message it carries is unaltered.

We do not hear air vibrating, but the sound of the bell; we do not read letters, but a story; we do not exchange sounds in a conversation, but opinions and beliefs, and the movie usually lets us forget the projection screen. Media work like windowpanes: they better perform their task, the more transparent they remain, the more inconspicuously they remain below the threshold/boundary of our attention<sup>135</sup>

While cultural memory by means of oral narratives have always existed, the use of media have provided for the possibility of more instances of experiences and events to be stored, guarding against loss, and it also allowed for circulation outside of social groups ensuring the likelihood of the continued existence of memories that define the group for subsequent generations. Besides the functions of storage and circulation media also has the ability to cue or prompt memory. Though this function is most potent with landscapes and locations, cues signal acts of remembering contents of social memory tied to specific narratives of the past. Modern media such as: television, movies, and the internet allows for faster and wider storage, transmission, and cueing thereby connecting disparate members of a social group together is just one example of the significance of the association between the use of mediums and cultural memory. But an older medium writing and in particular literature has created a different avenue by which cultural memory can be explored and expressed from its use to form specific types of collective memory via canonization, to representation in literature, to acting as a vehicle for cultural memory.

### 4.3 Cultural Memory and Literature

Cultural memory has elicited study from a plethora of fields and its intersection with literature has brought about interest in areas ranging from intertextuality and rhetorical conventions to canon formation, and literature as a carrier of cultural memory. In, "Where Literature and Memory Meet: Towards a Systematic Approach to the Concepts of Memory in Literary Studies", in *Literature, Literary History and Cultural Memory*, Astrid Erll and Ansgar Nünning highlight three areas of current research: memory of literature (later memory of

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<sup>135</sup> Sybille Krämer. "Das Medium als Spur und als Apparat," in *Medien – Computer – Realität. Wirklichkeitsvorstellungen und Neue Medien*, ed. Sybille Krämer, (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1998), 74.

literature and memory of literature II), memory in literature, and literature as a medium of collective memory. Each of these areas demonstrate how cultural memory and literature not only interact with one another, but also literature's capacity to (re)construct cultural memory itself.<sup>136</sup> When discussing memory of literature as a whole, the general approach is the assumption that, "artistic work [literature] can only be understood in its diachronic context," genitivus subjectivus (memory of literature) and genitivus objectivus (memory of literature II); the former is where literature operates as a symbol system (manifested in individual texts) that remembers itself by means of intertextual references, and the latter where literature is a social system as reflected in canon formation and literary history.<sup>137</sup> Erll argues that 'memory of literature' in terms of canon formation and literary history are physical manifestations of cultural memory constructed by institutions and maintained by societies. The selection process of canon formation makes clear the importance of institutions because it is they who cultivate a corpus of texts from a diverse assortment of works that will construct a narrative to be circulated and passed to subsequent generations as a type of memory story. These custodians, when thinking in terms of national literature, protect and maintain what ultimately is the identity and history of a nation. The crafting of literary history undergoes a similar process by which given all of literary history, certain motifs, rhetorical conventions to name a few, are considered significant and will tell the history of literature (e.g. a nation) while others will be relegated to obscurity. The representation of memory in literature or the staging of memory stems from the premise that, "literary works refer to cultural memory. Reorganizing, rearranging, and staging them in the medium of fiction thereby making them observable."<sup>138</sup> Here, works themselves are avatars of cultural memory and is most visible in its staging capacity via literary forms, particularly first-person narration (the remembering 'I'), and as such, according to Erll has created an avenue by which cultural memory affects literary motifs and shapes literary themes.<sup>139</sup>

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<sup>136</sup> Astrid Erll and Ansgar Nünning, "Where Literature and Memory Meet: Towards a Systematic Approach to the Concepts of Memory in Literary Studies," in *Literature, Literary History and Cultural Memory*, ed. Herbert Grabes, (Tübingen: Gunter Narr Verlag, 2005), 264-265.

<sup>137</sup> Erll, *Kollektives Gedächtnis*, 61-62. Translation by Tanya Doss.

<sup>138</sup> Erll, *Kollektives Gedächtnis*, 68. Translation by Tanya Doss.

<sup>139</sup> Ibid.

#### 4.4 Literature as a Medium of Cultural Memory

As outlined by Erll and Nünning in, “Where Literature and Memory Meet: Towards a Systematic Approach to the Concepts of Memory in Literary Studies” in *Literature, Literary History and Cultural Memory*, the last area of intersection between cultural memory and literature on its face reads literature as a means of transmission, and hints at the already debunked notion of neutral carrier. We know that as a type of media, literature will leave its mark on the (re)construction and interpretation of cultural memory; so what does or could this look like? Should we take it passively and look at it in its strictly media functions? Is it, as Martin Sexl states in, “Literature as a Medium by which Human Experience can be Transmitted” a means to convey the human experience?<sup>140</sup> Maybe C.W.R.D Moseley’s argument that it is the shared memory of art and story coming together to form cultural and national identities?<sup>141</sup> Do we, as Herbert Grabes insists, do ourselves a great disservice by seeing it just as a reading of the past?<sup>142</sup> Could the solution be a mix of any or all of these, or some other possibility? As a type of media, literature is already endowed with certain characteristics and when viewed structurally, similarities with memory emerge and perhaps this is the starting point in understanding how the two interact with regards to mnemonic objects, their encoding, and their use to create memory stories. Erll points to three areas where cultural memory and literature meet: condensation, narration, genre and it is here we may see how, through these intersections, literature as a medium actually serves cultural memory.

The production of mnemonic objects by way of condensation (also known as convergence in media discussion) allows a wide swath of information regarding an event or experience to be distilled to composite signs and symbols that are then inculcated with meaning derived from their role in events.<sup>143</sup> Similar to cultural memory, the signs and symbols are

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<sup>140</sup> Martin Sexl. “Literature as a Medium by which Human Experience can be Transmitted,” in *Methods for the Study of Literature as Cultural Memory: Proceedings of the XVth Congress of the International Comparative Literature Association ‘Literature as Cultural Memory*, ed. Theo D’haen, (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2000), 83-92.

<sup>141</sup> C.W.R.D. Moseley. “Ancestral Voices,” in *Literature and Cultural Memory*, ed. Andreea Paris, Dragoş Manea and Mihaela Irimia, (Netherlands: Brill, 2017), 63-71.

<sup>142</sup> Herbert Grabes. “The Value of Literature for Cultural Memory,” in *Literature and Cultural Memory*, ed. Andreea Paris, Dragoş Manea and Mihaela Irimia, (Netherlands: Brill, 2017), 31-49.

<sup>143</sup> Erll, *Kollektives Gedächtnis*, 168.

selected because they are deemed to have relevance and will serve as identifying features of an event or experience. The resulting objects must then be combined in some way to form a narrative which is a process central to both memory and literature. “Cultural memory rests on narrative process. More precisely, every conscious remembering of relevant past events and experience, both individual and collective, goes along with strategies which are also foundational for the makeup of literary texts.”<sup>144</sup> The central purpose of narration for cultural memory is temporal, it connects the past, present, and future, but this should not be read as an importation of a narrative formed in the past, rather it uses mnemonic objects that signify a past, reconstructs and interprets memory in the present to sustain memory and identity for the future. Memory is not a static collection of elements from the past, instead it is fluid because it is always being (re)constructed and interpreted in the present according to the needs of the group. Fluidity allows, theoretically, for varying (re)constructions of a memory because the group always has the ability to use or ignore mnemonic objects to construct a narrative. They also have the ability to create new mnemonic objects or exclude previously encoded signs and symbols which reinforces the sentiment that the group will always dictate the significance of not just a memory but also the objects that construct its narrative.

Genre, familiar in literature as a means to group works according to similarities in form, style, etcetera also shapes how cultural memory is configured. “Genres are conventionalized manners of encoding events, and genre conventions are themselves ever-present in memory.”<sup>145</sup> Whether aware or not, when we summon a memory, particularly autobiographical memory, we do so by way of genre schemata where we format and arrange mnemonic objects (signs and symbols) into a narrative. Similar to media, genre schemata are not neutral, they are encoded and convey values, norms, worldviews, and otherwise reveal themselves in the way we craft memory stories.<sup>146</sup> Genre itself is the object of cultural memory, derived from our socialization and enculturation so while it sets the framework for arranging memory, it does not exist without cultural memory. Given the similar fundamental structures to cultural memory, and knowing that as media it will leave a shadow of itself, how does literature serve cultural memory outside its

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<sup>144</sup>Ibid.

<sup>145</sup> Erll, *Kollektives Gedächtnis*, 169. Translated by Tanya Doss.

<sup>146</sup> Erll, *Kollektives Gedächtnis*, 65. Translated by Tanya Doss.

role as external repository and vehicle of circulation? In analyzing selected works from Alfred Reitz and Gertrud Gross-Hering, I hope to draw closer to an answer that will elucidate what it means for literature to serve as a medium for cultural memory.

## CHAPTER 5

### Literary Analysis

In examining what literature does in serving as a medium for cultural memory, a case study involving six short stories from authors, Alfred Reitz and Gertrud Gross-Hering will be examined. Close reading will be utilized so as to focus on multiple elements in the texts. Unless noted, all translations are by me.

#### 5.1 Alfred Reitz

According to the *Pesquisa: Literatura Brasileira*, Alfred Reitz oversaw an agricultural colony in Cameroon, Africa prior to World War I but during the course of the war was arrested, and taken to England where he was held until its end. In 1922, he immigrated to Brazil joining relatives who had already settled in the city of Itá, located in the southern state of Santa Catarina. In Itá, Reitz worked in agriculture, photography, as editor of advertising in various newspapers, and later opened a pharmacy. He died in Itá in 1951 at the age of 65. His recovered works span from 1933 to 1953 with the majority published in the *Kalender für die Deutschen in Brasilien* (*Rotermund Kalender*), *Serra-Post Kalender*, and *Der Urwaldsbote*.

##### 5.1.1 Testa Branca, der Tropeiro

In “Testa Branca, der Tropeiro”, written in 1941 and first published in *Die Serra-Post-Kalender*, Alfred Reitz touches on themes of exploitation, cultural diversity, interstitial spaces, poses questions about motivation of actions, and employs the deep forest as a metaphor for culture and ethnic identity. It is a fascinating account of an immigration story told over the course of a night in the backlands of southern Brazil. The narrator recounts his run-in with the titular character, who chronicles his journey from post-World War I Germany to his time in a private colonization company and finally, his life in the remote part of Santa Catarina as a tea trader. In service to cultural memory, the story documents the complex navigation of immigration as an experience and as an expression of the culture from which it emanates. The manner in which the story is written intimates that Reitz may be writing with dual audiences in mind. The use of heavily coded colloquial language in the narrative voice and in Testa Branca’s personal story seems to be a nod to fellow colonists and lends authenticity to the narrator, Testa



Branca and Reitz. He also provides extensive discussion and explanation as to predatory colonization company practices which seems to point to an external readership detailing the sometimes-perilous situations that immigrants had to navigate. Both of which provide a means for Reitz to record and display how immigration plays out in the daily life of German immigrants in Brazil. The text is divided into two parts, with the first being carried by the narrator, who fixes the location and circumstances of the second part of the story, Testa Branca's personal narrative. The opening scene physically situates the audience in a remote area populated with only a small grocery store tavern.

Es war im Hochland des westlichen Santa Catarina. Vor der kleinen Kamp-Venda sattelte ich mein Pferd ab. Der Geschaeftsmann, ein Syrier, wies auf meine Frage nach dem Eingang zur Weide auf ein mächtiges Stangentor, gleich hinter dem Schuppen.  
“Wie gross ist die Weide? Dicht?”  
“Zehn Alqueiren... Ueberall vier Draehte.“... Als ich zurückkehrte, wimmelte der Platz vor der Venda von Pferden und Maultieren. Eine “tropa” war eingetroffen. Die meisten Tiere – es mochten an die dreissig sein – trugen leere Tragsaettel, der Rest war mit Mehl- und Salzsaecken und mit Petroleumkisten beladen. Eine Herva-Tropa, die Herva-Tee zur Station gebracht hatte und nun mit den Einkaeufen zurueckkehrte. Ob der hochgewachsene Mann, der so garnicht brasilianisch ausschaute, wohl der Besitzer oder nur der Fuehrer der Tropa war? Gleich seinen drei Begleitern sattelte er die Tiere ab<sup>147</sup>

The narrator immediately sets up the scene through physical descriptors that situate the locale in a remote area and by use of the coded term *Kamp-Venda* which creates a connection to the internal audience with the use of a specific term that relates a culturally specific existence and function. It is a locale, sparse in both population and traffic, that operates as a type of rest spot, catering to those working trade routes or traveling the backlands and are in need of food and rest. In following it up with a detailed painting of the scene, the narrator is capturing an image of what one might see in this part of the world, namely a tea trader caravan. And it is against this backdrop that the tall stranger immediately illicit an almost jarring response from the narrator.

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<sup>147</sup> It was in the highlands of western Santa Catarina. I unsaddled my horse in front of the trading post courtyard. The merchant, a Syrian, pointed to a heavy-duty gate just beyond the shed to my question regarding the entrance to the pasture.

“How wide is the pasture? Compact?”

“Ten Alqueiren... Four wires [fence] everywhere.” When I returned, the space in front of the shop swarmed with horses and mules. A caravan had arrived. Most of the animals, there may have been thirty, carried empty saddle bags. The rest were loaded with flour and salt sacks, and kerosene containers. A tea caravan, who had brought herb tea to the stop and now returned with purchases. Was the tall man, who did not look Brazilian at all, perhaps the owner or only the caravan leader? Like his three companions, he unsaddled his horse.

“Was hat Sie in diesen verlorenen Winkel Brasiliens gefuehrt?” fragte er mich ploetzlich auf Deutsch.

“Ein Landsmann? Das haette ich kaum vermutet.”

“Sieht man mir das nicht an? Ja, ja, wenn man so an die zehn Jahre in Walde steckt! Aber bei Ihnen wusste ich es schon bei dem ersten Wort, das Sie mit dem Syrier wechselten, dass ich einen Landsmann vor mir hatte.”<sup>148</sup>

This passage marks the first direct exchange between the narrator and the caravan leader as they settle in to overnight at the *Kamp-Venda*. Language variations and constellations figure prominently in Reitz’s work as a reflection of the community, markers of social stratifications, sources of intracultural tensions, and here as an indicator of shared membership. Whereas their earlier interaction over a meal with the Syrian owner and the tall man’s companions had been in Brazilian which resulted in little more than pleasantries, and further convoluted the tall man’s identity. This interaction sees a certain comfort develop between the two that will permit a deeper dive into their respective stories.

Auf den Reitpelzen sitzend, den Ruecken an die Hauswand gelehnt, schluerften wir unsern Mate und kamen ins Plaudern. Der Zweck meiner Reise war, im Auftrage eines Landbesitzers festzustellen, wieviel ‘intrusos’ auf dem Lande zwischen dem Rio Três Voltas und dem Rio Santa Teresa saessen. Unter ‘intrusos’ versteht man Leute, die sich auf einem Lande ansaessig gemacht haben, das ihnen nicht gehoert. Meine Aufgabe erweckte das Interesse meines Gefaehrten.

“Wozu will der Mann das wissen?”

“Es ist die Rede von einer Kolonisation mit Einwandern.”

“Auf dem Land da? Alles miserables Land, lauter Pinien- und Hervastraecher. Die Leute muessen darauf verhungern. Haben Sie bei den ‘intrusos’ verlauten lassen, welchen Auftrag Sie haben?” Ich verneinte; der Landbesitzer hatte mir ausdruecklich eingeschaeerft, den Leuten nichts ueber seine Absichten zu sagen.

“Daran haben Sie gut getan. Haetten die Caboclos etwa gemerkt, um was es sich handelte, man haette Ihnen die ‘rote Krawatte’ verpasst.” Er machte die Bewegung des Halbschneidens. “Die Leute wehren sich von dem Lande heruntergetrieben zu werden, wenn es ihnen auch zehnmal nicht gehoert. Seien Sie vorsichtig. Ich kann Ihnen da vielleicht etwas helfen, kenne die ganze Ecke bis zur Grenze. Was haben Sie bisher festgestellt?”

Ich zog mein Notizbuch hervor und zaehlte die Namen der Familien auf, die ich festgestellt hatte.

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<sup>148</sup> “What has led you to this desolate corner of Brazil?” he asked me suddenly in German.

“A countryman? I had hardly suspected that.”

“Don’t you see it in me? Well, certainly not when you are in the woods for ten years/if you have been in the forest like this for ten years! But in your case, I already knew with the first word that you exchanged with the Syrian that I had a countryman in my midst.”

“Stimmt ungefaehr, fehlen noch die da oben an den beiden Fluessen.”

“Da wollte ich morgen hin.”

“Den Weg kann ich Ihnen ersparen. Ich weiss ungefaehr, wer dort alles sitzt.” Er sann nach. Murrte halblaut einige Namen vor sich hin. Ich notierte sie eifrig<sup>149</sup>

The narrator reveals the reason of his presence in the area and his explanation documents contemporary issues: land disputes in border territories, squatters, and immigrant colonization. Reitz uses the tall man's response to more clearly detail what the survey, the occupation and use of the land really means. He rebuffs the idea that the land could be or would be used for colonization and turns his attention to the people currently occupying the land. In interchanging the word *intrusos* and *cabaclos*, coupled with the locale, the tall man's response is implicitly referencing a four-year war, *Contestado War*, between landowners and *cabaclos* over land ownership which was marked by violence.

“Wenn Ihr Auftraggeber wirklich kolonisieren will, dann soll er gleich mit einer Kompanie Polizeisoldaten und einigen Maschinengewehren kommen. Sonst duerfte er die ‘intrusos’ nicht herunterbringen. Sagen Sie ihm, der Tropeiro ‘Testa Branca’ liesse ihm das sagen. Er hat vielleicht schon von ihm gehoert.” . . . “Testa Branca!” Den Namen hatte ich schon gehoert. Das war also der seltsame Deutsche, der mitten im Urwald allein unter den Cabaclos lebte! Wahrscheinlich hatten diese ihm auch wegen seiner weissen Stirn den Beinamen gegeben, unter dem er weit und weit bekannt war<sup>150</sup>

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<sup>149</sup> Sitting on the riding coat, backs against the wall, we sipped our Mate (tea) and started chatting. The purpose of my trip was an assignment from a landowner to find out how many intruders are on the land between the Três Voltas and the Santa Teresa rivers. By intruders it meant people who have taken up residence on land that does not belong to them. My task aroused the interest of my companion.

“For what reason does he want to know?”

“There is talk of colonization with immigrants.”

“On the land there? All dreadful land, nothing but pine shrubs and low brush. People are starving to death on it. Have you told the intruders why you are there?”

I said no; the landowner had explicitly told me not to say a word to the people about his intentions. “You did well, had the indigenous realized what was going on, they would have slit your throat.” He made the cut throat gesture.

“The people resist being driven off the land even though it does not belong to them. Be careful. I might be able to help you a bit there; I know the whole area up to the border. What have you found up until now?”

I pulled out my notebook and listed the family names, that I had located.

“That is about right but you are missing those up on the two rivers.”

“I intended to go out there tomorrow.”

“I can save you the trouble, I know roughly who is there.”

He thought it over/about it and mumbled a few names in a low voice. I eagerly wrote them down.

<sup>150</sup> If your client really wants to colonize then he should immediately come with a unit of police troops/military police and a few machine guns. Otherwise, he should not try to drive the squatters out. Tell him, the (transport) dealer, ‘white brow’ sends word to him. Perhaps he has even heard of him.” . . . “White brow!” I had even heard of the name. Well now that was the mysterious German, who lived alone in the middle of nowhere among the indigenous! They had probably also given him the nickname because of his white forehead/brow, for which he was known far and wide.

Continuing his assistance to the narrator, the tall man advises a course of action that, similar to his preliminary counsel, is predicated on the actions taken by the state to quell attacks. To add weight to the reliability to his words, he offers up a name that reveals his own relationship to the area and why he can speak with such authority on the matter. Testa Branca (White Brow) is a well-known figure in the surrounding areas because of his relationship and proximity to the *cabaclos* and as such has had a particular authority imparted to him by the non-indigenous as a trusted voice.

„Wie duftet doch der Flieder.“ Ungewöhnlich weich klang seine Stimme.

„Flieder?“

„Flieder, ... nein, den gibts hier nicht.“ Er strich sich ueber die Stirn. „Es ist der Cípo, jene Schlingpflanze, die dort drueben den Canella-Baum umwuchert ... Er blueht ... Was fuer ein Duft! Seltsam, wie solche Duefte alte Erinnerungen wecken.“ Ich wagte eine Frage; meinte, dass dieses Leben im Wald fuer einen Menschen, der an Kultur gewoehnt sei, einem Lebendigbegrabenwerden gleich komme muesse.

„Das meint man so, wenn man den Wald nicht kennt“, entgegnete er. Ironie schwang in seiner Stimme mit. Natuerlich fuer die, die nur im Grosstadttrubel ‚das Leben‘ sehen, mag es wohl stimmen... Aber ich hoere aus Ihrer Frage etwas anderes heraus. Sie moechten gern wissen, was mich so tief in den Wald getrieben hat? Stimmts?“<sup>151</sup>

A particular scent in the backlands of Santa Catarina evoke a momentary spatial break and transport Testa Branca to another time and place. The narrators' response resituates Testa Branca but still has not broken the connection. It also communicates the length of time he has been in the forest as to develop a knowledge base of local flora. It is the segue for Reitz to present the contesting notions that people have about culture distilled down to a simple metaphor that will resurface in different iterations, the deep forest. The implication being that it is a zero-sum situation which Testa Branca refutes as reactionary. However, he follows up by reframing the spirit of narrator's remark in more direct terms so as to explain how Testa Branca came to be.

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<sup>151</sup> “How the lilac smells.” His voice sounded oddly tender.

“Lilac?”

“Lilac, ...no, there is none here.” He stroked his forehead. “It is liana, those climber plants over there intertwined around the Cinnamon tree ...it blossoms...what a fragrance! Strange how a fragrance arouses an old memory.” I dared a question. I remarked that for a person who was used to culture, life in the forest would be tantamount to being buried alive.

“That is one's opinion when they don't know the forest”, he replied. Irony resonated in his voice. Naturally for those who only see “life” in the big city hustle and bustle it may be true ... But I note something else from your question. “You would like to know what drove me so deep into the forest? Right?”

„Warum soll ich es Ihnen nicht erzählen“, fuhr er fort. „Ich halte mich nicht vor den Armen der Justiz verborgen, wie so manche hier im Walde. Gewiss: damals, als ich die alte Heimat verliess, hätte ich mir nicht träumen lassen, dass sich mein Leben so gestalten würde. Dort hatte ich nach dem grossen Kriege [sic] kein[e] Aussicht auf eine Existenz, nicht einmal auf das tägliche Brot. Draussen in der Welt sollte es ja noch Raum und Brot geben. Also schrieb ich an einen Schulkameraden, der schon vor dem Kriege ausgewandert. Seine Antwort verhies goldne Berge. Aber als wir, meine Frau und ich, im Lande der Verheissung ankamen, sah es doch anders aus. Die glänzende Ingenieurstelle, die er angeblich bekleidete, war in Wirklichkeit eine Propagandistenstelle fuer eine Kolonisationsgesellschaft. Als ich einmal darauf anspielte, erzählte er mir etwas von den schwarzen Listen der Engländer, durch die er während des Krieges seine Stellung verloren habe. Eine passende Arbeit konnte ich nicht finden. Was nützen alle meine Kenntnisse, wenn ich die Landessprache nicht konnte. Mein alter Schulkamerad Brecht redete uns eifrig zu, auf die Kolonie zu gehen, dort würde sich eher etwas Geeignetes finden lassen. Es blieb uns schliesslich auch nichts weiter übrig, wollten wir nicht unser Geld mit dem ewigen Warten im Hotel aufbrauchen.“<sup>152</sup>

This excerpt marks the second part of the text wherein the events that have led to their chance encounter unfold. The opening of Testa Branca's personal narrative situates his circumstances in a real-world historical context that many Germans found themselves in after World War I. While he does not offer specificity as to why his prospects were so poor, Reitz's own biography speaks of imprisonment which forced his hand but regardless the circumstances, the war was the common impetus that led to the decision to emigrate. In explaining his arrival story to the narrator, he makes mention of a series of exchanges with a schoolmate, Brecht, that highlights the predatory practices of colonization companies and their agents that prey on people in desperate situations.

Der Direktor des Kolonisationsunternehmens, auf dessen Laendereien wir uns niederliessen, war ein junger Mann, anfangs der Dreissiger. . . . Er verstand etwas

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<sup>152</sup> “Why shouldn't I tell you (about it),” he continued. “I am not hiding from the arms of justice like some others here in the woods. Sure, back then when I left my old home, I would never have dreamed that my life would end up this way. After the great war, I had no prospects there, not even a means for obtaining the basic necessities of life. Outside, there should still be the opportunity for a better life. So I wrote to a schoolmate, who had already emigrated before the war. His answer promised the moon. But when we, my wife and I, arrived in the promised land, it looked different. The magnificent engineer post, that he supposedly held, was in reality a propagandist position/post for a colonization company. When I hinted at it once, he explained something about the English blacklists, which had caused him to lose his post during the war. I could not find suitable work. What use is all my knowledge if I couldn't speak the local language. My old schoolmate, Brecht, eagerly persuaded/encouraged us to go to the colony company where there would be something more suitable. In the end, there was nothing left for us to do if we did not want to use up our money waiting forever in the hotel.”

Deutsch, sprach es aber nicht. Nur “huebsche Maedchen, schoene Frau”, das konnte man oefters von ihm hoeren. Dagegen sprach er glaezend franzoesisch. . . . Ich kaufte eine Kolonie mit 3000 Kaffeestraeuchern. Alter Bestand, der keine Vollernten mehr gab. Aber damals waren die Preise fuer Rohkaffee noch hoch, gute Einnahmen standen also in Aussicht. Mir gefiel das freie Leben, man war unabhaengig. Nur meine Frau konnte sich nicht hineinfinden, sie stammte aus der Stadt und hatte nie auf dem Lande gelebt. Einige Male besuchte uns Brecht, wenn er mit einem Einwanderertrupp einkam<sup>153</sup>

Realizing that he and his wife could not indefinitely remain in a hotel while he tried to find employment, Testa Branca purchases a plot of land and recalls his impression of the director, on whose land they settled. As a Brazilian, the young director of the colonization company occupies and operates in a rather unique space; it is one where European immigrant exposure to Brazil is mediated through him and the company. Reitz uses Testa Branca’s brief discussion of the director to open up the ways in which the colonization company as an entity and he as its main agent provide a sense of security by way of the company owned lands on which new arrivals could settle. However, the mention of the only two gendered German phrases that he has learned and employs with great frequency seems to suggest that the space in which he administers the affairs of immigrants and working to advance the interest of the company, he is also advancing his own.

Er hoerte sich die Klagen meiner Frau an und versprach zu helfen. Eines Tages bot er mir dann im Auftrage des Koloniedirektors eine leitende Stelle beim Strassenbau an. Mit der Landessprache hatte ich mich inzwischen etwas vertraut gemacht. Brecht, schlug vor, dass meine Frau mitginge, um mit ihrem Franzoesisch, das sie ziemlich gut sprach auszuhelfen, da er nicht wusste, ob er gerade anwesend sein koennte, um als Dolmetscher zu fungieren. . . .

Ich musste leider feststellen, dass mein Portugiesisch noch sehr mangelhaft war, daher wurde die ganze Verhandlung durch Vermittlung meiner Frau in Franzoesisch gefuehrt. Wir kamen schnell zu einem Abschluss. Der Direktor sicherte mir ein Monateinkommen zu, das die ganze Jahreseinnahme aus der Kolonie uebertraf. Fuer die in Aussicht genommene Arbeit kamen mir meine Kenntnisse der polnischen Sprache zustatten, da die Arbeiter fast saemtlich Polen waren, die durch Wegebauarbeit den Kaufpreis ihrer

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<sup>153</sup> The manager of the colonization company, on whose lands we settled, was a young man in his early thirties. He understood some German but could not speak it. You could often hear from him, “pretty girl, beautiful woman”/Only “pretty girl, beautiful woman” you could hear that more often/You could frequently hear “pretty girl, beautiful woman”. On the other hand, he spoke French splendidly. . . . I bought farmland with 3000 coffee plants. Old stock/stand/group/cluster, that no longer yielded a full harvest. But at the time, the price for raw coffee (beans)/green coffee was still high so there were good proceeds in sight. I liked the free life/living, one was independent. Only my wife could not get used to it, she was from the city and had never lived in the country. A few times Brecht visited us, whenever he arrived with a batch of immigrants.

## Kolonien abarbeiteten<sup>154</sup>

In the preceding scenes, Testa Branca alludes to his wife's difficulty in adjusting to a more rural lifestyle as she had been a city dweller back in Germany versus his own acclimation, that sees the remoteness as a sense of freedom. Reitz uses the above passage to acknowledge other experiences within the broader immigrant narrative such as Testa Branca's wife's resistance and protest to their current situation. The remedy to her protestations then highlights the varying roles of language: a bridge, marker of assimilation/acclimation, progression, and something to be weaponized. Brecht serves as an intermediary for the immigrants and the colonization company. His role in recruiting Testa Branca was only one facet, he also suggests relocation onto the company colony and communicates the wife's complaints directly to the director, and offers employment on behalf of the director. Testa Branca's wife serves in a similar capacity in brokering the negotiations for his employment offer, and Testa Branca himself will fill this role in service as supervisor over a Polish road construction crew. He also uses language as a marker of his own trajectory. His language skills have improved since his arrival but not enough where he can operate independently which the company uses to their financial advantage as illustrated with the Polish work crew. Unable to speak the language, the colonization company exploits that fact to create a ready-made work force that can then be hired out to the government for public works' projects.

Der Direktor stellte uns ein Wohnhaus, nicht weit vom Direktionsgebäude, zur freien Verfügung. Er glaube doch nicht, meinte er, dass meine Frau allein auf der abgelegenen Kolonie leben wolle. Bald darauf siedelten wir über. Mein Kolonielos erwarb ein Italiener. Er zahlte mir die Anzahlung zurück und übernahm die Restschuld. Das uns zugewiesene Haus war geräumig und in gutem Zustand. Meine Frau verstand es mit geringen Mitteln recht wohnlich einzurichten. Wir konnten mit unserer Lage wirklich zufrieden sein. Meine Arbeitsstätte lag etwa zwanzig Kilometer vom Direktionssitz entfernt. Das bedeutete, dass ich am Montag früh fortreisen musste und erst am Sonnabend gegen Nacht wieder nach Hause kam. Ich war also die ganze Woche über

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<sup>154</sup> He [Brecht] heard my wife's complaints and promised to help. Then one day he offered me, on behalf of the colony company director, a senior position in road construction. By then, I had become familiar with the local language. Brecht suggested that my wife come along to help out language-wise because she spoke French quite well, and because he did not know if he could be present to act as interpreter ... Unfortunately, I had to find out that my Portuguese was still very poor, therefore thanks to my wife's intervention, the entire process was/negotiations were conducted in French, and we quickly came to a deal. The director promised me a monthly income that would exceed/surpass the entire income from the farm. My knowledge of Polish came in handy for my prospective work since the workers were almost all Polish (Poles), who worked off the purchase price of their farm land through road construction.

abwesend. Den Sonntag verlebten wir zusammen. So verging ein halbes Jahr, meine Kenntnisse im Brasilianischen hatte ich gut vervollkommen können. Nach Beendigung dieses Strassenbaues stellte mir der Direktor einen weiteren in Aussicht. Unsere Zukunft schien gesichert<sup>155</sup>

As a resolution to his wife's unhappiness, the couple relocates onto the colony proper after Testa Branca accepts employment. This scene offers a snapshot of a side of colony life that is not wholly unfamiliar to Reitz's primary readers: work contracts and situations, separation from family for work, and acquiring housing and/or property. But for the audience outside of these spaces, the details of the working and living conditions seems ideal and is made more so when Testa Branca discusses his divestment of his farmland. Contrasted to his description of their home signifying freedom and independence, the director's portrayal touches on the wife's unhappiness and alludes to the content of her complaints to Brecht. Language again surfaces as almost an aside in Testa Branca's account but it is alluding to assimilation that immigrants experience to varying degrees, the movement into an interstitial space with acquisition of the language of the dominant culture.

A standard trip home one weekend marks a shift in the story and its constellation of players, and its driving force is a lavish watch. Testa Branca is told by his wife of a prize she has won in a lottery; the circumstances are such that the director had been pressed to buy lots from his sister who was head of a charity raising funds to build a home for less fortunate children. The wife reports that the director had given her ten lots and upon his return from São Paulo, learned that she had won. The extravagance of the watch and the practicality of their situation leads to a sometimes-terse exchange where Testa Branca urges her to sell it and use the proceeds for something practical. She balks at the notion and he returns to the work camp without reconciling the situation. A confrontation with a drunken subordinate leads to charges of infidelity between Testa Branca's wife and the director.

Drueben an der Wand tickte einformig die Uhr. Mir schein, als formte ihr Ticken immer

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<sup>155</sup> The director provided us a home not far from the administration/management building. He remarked that he did not think that my wife would not want to live alone in the remote work camp. Shortly afterwards, we moved. An Italian purchased my farm. He paid me back the down payment and took over the remaining debt. The house assigned to us was spacious and in good condition. My wife managed to furnish it quite comfortably with few resources/little means. We were really happy with our situation. My worksite lay some/was twenty kilometers away from the head office. That meant that I had to leave early Monday and only come back home Saturday night. So, I was absent all week; Sunday we spent together. Half a year passed, I was able to improve my Brazilian language skills. After completion of this road construction, the manager promised me another. Our future seemed secured.



das gleiche Wort. „Vorbei... vorbei...“ Waren Minuten oder Stunden unter diesem einformigen Ticken vergangen? Ich wusste es nicht. Es war an der Zeit, ein Ende zu machen.

„Wir sehen uns nicht wieder. Unsere Wege trennen sich heute. Du hast dein Los selbst gezogen. Was hier ist, bleibt dir. Auch mein rückstaendiges Gehalt von drei Monaten. Ich werde durch das Konsulat Anweisung geben lassen, dass es an dich zu zahlen ist.“ Ich wandte mich zur Tuere. „Nur den Hund nehme ich mit.“<sup>156</sup>

More than just a parting of ways, Reitz uses this to set their respective stories on different courses that depict the varying directions in which immigrant experiences play out. The consulate's role in the dispensation of their communal assets is the first mention of any entity connected to Germany and alerts the readers to the navigation of certain civil processes.

Am naechsten Tag sprach ich auf dem Konsulat vor. Der Konsul nahm meinen Antrag auf Ehescheidung zu Protokoll. „Es ist seltsam“, meinte er zum Schluss, „wie sich viele Frauen verändern, wenn sie einmal den Aequator passiert haben. Wir wissen hier ein Lied davon zu singen. Es sollte nicht zur Scheidung kommen.“ Ich hatte das Angebot eines Brasilianers angenommen, auf seinen weit im Inneren gelegenen Ländereien den Hervaschnitt zu beaufsichtigen. Daher erhielt ich erst nach vielen Monaten die Aufforderung des Konsulats, dortselbst in einer wichtigen Angelegenheit vorzusprechen. Ich reiste hin. Der Konsul uebergab mir einen Brief. Die Handschrift meiner Frau. Er enthielt nur wenige Zeilen. Eine Bitte zum Verzeihung und ihrer nicht im Boesen zu gedenken. Der Konsul gab mir die Erklaerung zu diesen etwas raetselhaften Zeilen: Sie hatte sich das Leben genommen. Die Polizei der Hauptstadt hatte den Brief dem Konsulat uebersandt. Auf der Polizei erfuhr ich das Weitere. Man hatte sie tot neben einer Bank in den Anlagen gefunden; mit Zyankali vergiftet<sup>157</sup>

This relatively short scene sees two separate trips to the consulate both of which are the product of and the impetus to life changing events. The consulate is a conduit for the correlation of

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<sup>156</sup> The clock in the wall ticked monotonously. It seemed to me that its ticking always formed the same word. “It is over . . . it is over . . .” Had minutes or hours passed under this monotonous ticking, I did not know. It was time to put an end to it. “We won’t see each other again. Our paths separate today. You did this to yourself. What is here stays with you as well as my three months back pay. I will instruct the consulate to pay it to you.” I turned to the door. “I’m only taking the dog with me.”

<sup>157</sup> The next day I went to the consulate. The consul took my application for divorce on record. “It is strange”, he said at the end, “how the women change once they have crossed the equator. We here can tell you a thing or two about it.” “There shouldn’t be a divorce.” I had accepted a Brazilian’s offer to supervise the tea harvest on his far-flung lands. So, it was only after many months that I received a request from the consulate to go there to discuss an important matter. I traveled there and the consul handed me a letter. My wife’s handwriting and it contained only a few lines. A plea for forgiveness and not to think ill of her. The consul gave me an explanation to these somewhat puzzling lines. She had taken her own life. The municipal police had forwarded the letter to the consulate. I found out more from the police, who found her dead next to a bank in the park; poisoned by cyanide.

immigration and divorce, immigration and gendered changes in character. That it is voiced by an external entity, seems to reflect a particular narrative that has been and is circulating back in Germany. The official's remarks reveal that divorce filings are not an anomaly, and hint at a frequency enough that they are well-suited and comfortable enough with it to offer an unsolicited opinion. The audience has been witness to Testa Branca's story and while there is mention of failure to adapt to the remote farmland, nothing else alludes to any change of character on the wife's part. That he does not attempt to refute that official's analysis implies this to be a bogeyman scare tactic disguised as a cautionary tale of one of the pitfalls of immigration. Reitz then pivots to Testa Branca's path with the acceptance of a position that is the result of his language acquisition and that will relocate him to the backlands of the state. At the conclusion of the passage, the consulate again comes into play as the conduit of the effects of immigration, but this time it is with a far greater consequence than divorce.

Ein Brasilianer habe fuer sie in ihrem Hause ein Zimmer gemietet, sei aber nie wieder gekommen. Sie habe versucht, sich mit französischem Sprachunterricht etwas zu verdienen, auch einige Schuelerinnen gefunden, die aber nach kurzer Zeit wieder fortgeblieben waeren. Einige Male haette sie erzaehlt, sie habe Geld zu bekommen, was die Gesellschaft ihrem Manne schuldig sei. Es wuerde reichen, dass sie nach Deutschland zurueckreisen koenne. Sie haette ein paarmal darum geschrieben, aber das Geld waere nicht gekommen. Nein, Schulden haette sie keine hinterlassen. Zuletzt haette sie ihre kostbare Uhr verkauft, um von dem Erloes zu leben. Mit dem letzten Gelde haette sie noch die Pension bezahlt.

Ich besuchte ihr Grab. Ein Armengrab mit einer Nummer. Ich setze die Exhumierung und Überfuehrung nach dem Friedhof der deutschen Gemeinde durch. Sie sollte nicht hier unter dem Abschaum der Großstadt den letzten Schlaf tun. Der Erzaehler bedeckte fuer einen Augenblick die Augen mit den Haenden<sup>158</sup>

Testa Branca's decision to relocate his wife to a German cemetery is followed by thoughts of revenge. When he arrives back at the colonization company, his former supervisor provides him with the events that unfolded after his departure. It is here that the reader learns that the same

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<sup>158</sup> A Brazilian had rented her a room in his home but she never returned. She had tried to earn some money with French language lessons. She even found a few female students, but they were gone after a short while. She explained a few times that she had money coming from the company that owes her husband [back pay] which would be enough for her to travel back to Germany. She had written a couple of times but the money had not come. She left no debt behind. Lastly, she sold her expensive watch to live off of, and with the last bit of money, she paid the boarding house. I visited her grave, a pauper's grave with a number. I had her exhumed and reinterred at the German community cemetery. She should not have her final resting place among the dreg of the city. For a moment, the narrator covered his eyes with his hands.

situation has played out again with the director and a recently arrived young couple from Italy but with a different outcome. The husband, in this case, kills the director, and he and his wife flee from Santa Catarina to a neighboring state. Whereas Testa Branca's post-marriage path reflects one direction, his wife's represents an alternate course. Within the brief summation of the wife's story, another tale unfolds documenting the difficulties of navigating the dominant culture, lack of resources, the plan to return to Germany, and the ensuing desperation and despair. The convergence of those three immigrant experiences ends Testa Branca's personal narrative as the tale circles back to the two men. Citing the parallels in his interactions with the director and that of the Italian man, Testa Branca questions his own actions and seeks clarity from the narrator.

„Wie oft schon habe ich mich gefragt: wer von uns beiden Maennern, die das gleiche Schicksal traf, hat wohl recht gehandelt? Jener, der blind seinen Instinkten folgte, oder ich. Der Verstand will mir eine Antwort aufzwingen, das gereifte Urteil, die Erfahrung, alle diese Faehigkeiten, unter denen sich doch nur der Egoismus des Menschen verbirgt, kommen ihm zur Hilfe. Und doch spricht in meinem Innern immer wieder eine Stimme dagegen. Vielleicht koennen Sie es mir sagen: Habe ich recht gehandelt?“<sup>159</sup>

The narrator assures him that his actions were correct but Testa Branca rejects it, seemingly resigned that the answer will always allude him. With that, he announces his return to the forest, but not before extending an invitation to the narrator, explaining that like his actions and his story, the forest will not let him go.

### 5.1.2 Die Wette

“Die Wette” by Alfred Reitz, published in 1937 in the *Kalender für die Deutschen in Brasilien*, is a tale about an ill-fated bet Peter makes over a case of beer to break up Hilde's romantic relationship, and become engaged to her. The tale itself is unremarkable, it is not loaded with symbolism or metaphors to communicate some larger truth, a belief or assertion. It is straight forward in its central plot, but its execution and the manner of storytelling is what takes center stage and reveals its true intention. It is a story of stacked character mini-narratives that

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<sup>159</sup> How many times have I asked myself which of us two men, who met the same fate, was right? The one who blindly follows instinct or me. The mind wants to force an answer on me, the matured decision, the experience, all these abilities under which one's selfishness hides itself, comes to his aid. But in my heart, a voice says otherwise. Perhaps you can tell me, did I handle it correctly?”

provides an account of a German settlement in southern Brazil as both backdrop and backstory. Through their respective nested stories, the characters represent particular experiences that Reitz uses to record a sociocultural accounting of the colony. He employs third-person narration in both the mini-narratives and the central story but his authorial intrusion suggests that the character 'voices' may share much of the same attitudes or operate as dissenting voices. In weaving this short tale through an assortment of lived experiences, Reitz acts as narrator, critic, linguist, cultural anthropologist, and botanist among others to show the assorted situations and instances of a community that are an expression and representation of it as a whole. The flow of this short story is such where the narration operates in a cycle. It starts with a character and in the recounting of their own personal history and story, the narrative expands out to a broader telling of the colony wherein another character is introduced, becomes the focus, and the cycle is more or less repeated. The exception being the first mini-narrative, which Reitz initiates with a saying.

„Der Mensch denkt, Gott lenkt“ und in der brasilianischen Fassung dieses Sprichwortes fand ich den Nachsatz „die Schwiegermutter macht alles zunichte“. Aber dies dürfte doch nicht immer zutreffen. Im vorliegenden Falle, gewiß nicht. Der Schwiegermutter von Matthias Schreiner, in den Pikaden kurz der Matz genannt, die Schuld beizumessen, daß aus dem vom Matz gegründeten Stadtplatz nichts geworden war, . . .<sup>160</sup>

Reitz links the saying to both German and Brazilian cultures to open the broader story of a wager and to present the first mini-narrative. The saying can be interpreted to serve two purposes, one obvious, the other more so coded. The former is his way to introduce the colony through its founder, Matthias Schreiner (Matz), anchored in the failure of the city square, *Bom Retiro*, to thrive as the central gathering space for the community. The latter insinuates that everything to follow will fall in the midst of this space invoked by this expression.

Damals, als die Straße gebaut wurde, - es sind schon mehr als dreißig Jahre darüber vergangen, - hatte der leitende Ingenieur sie quer durch die 4 Kolonien vom Matz gelegt. Anfänglich wurmte den Matz der Verlust des Landes, dann kam ihm eines Tages die Erleuchtung. Kamen hier nicht drei Pikaden zusammen? War nicht hier ein Stadtplatz eine Notwendigkeit? Gedacht, gesagt, getan. Matz ließ

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<sup>160</sup> “Man thinks, God leads his steps” and in the Brazilian version of this saying, I found the addendum, “the mother-in-law destroys everything.” But this may not always hold true and certainly not in the present case. Matthias Schreiner, nicknamed Matz in the settlement, blamed his mother-in-law that nothing had come of the town square he had founded.

zwei von seinen Kolonien in Hausplätze und Chacaras vermessen und eröffnete eine Venda. Mit der Zeit wurde eine Schule mit Lehrerwohnung gebaut, ein Schmied ließ sich nieder. Matz stiftete Land für eine Kapelle und den Friedhof, der eher in Benutzung genommen wurde als die Kapelle, und dann war es mit der hoffnungsvollen Entwicklung des Stadtplatzes “Bom Retiro” zu Ende. Auf diesen schönen Namen hatte ihn Matz getauft, bei den Kolonisten hieß er allerdings das Dreckloch, weil sie im Winter mit ihren Wagen in den zahllosen Löchern der Straße festfahren<sup>161</sup>

The road conducts the reader and the story into the settlements. Through Matz’s story, Reitz details the institutions that while central to the functioning of the colony, also double as public spaces for social interaction and in some cases, repositories for communal practices. It is ironic that Matz viewed *Bom Retiro* as the town square, the heart of a public space for the community to gather, and that its failure to be as such, according to Reitz, was communal.

Er war der Geschäftsmann der drei Pikaden. Die Wertschätzung, deren er sich als solcher unter den Kolonisten erfreute, war unterschiedlich. Sie stand im umgekehrten Verhältnis zu dem Debetsaldo, mit dem der betreffende Kunde im Hauptbuche des Matz stand. Dies war auch oft der Grund, daß manche mit Produkten beladene Kolonistenwagen am frühen Morgen oder späten Abend, ohne an der Venda des Matz anzuhalten, vorbei zu fahren versuchten. Nutzloses Beginnen, der Matz paßte auf. Sich die Fuhre ansehen, im Kopf die Seiten seines Hauptbuches nachschlagen, war eins. “Heh, Compadre, was habt Ihr da? Bohnen..., zahle 12 Milreis. Mehr zahlt der João auch nicht. Können wir das Konto gleich ein wenig in Ordnung bringen.” Ein Entkommen für den Ertappten war kaum mehr möglich<sup>162</sup>

As Reitz moves deeper into Matz’s narrative, he is also moving the larger story and reader deeper into the colony. Here, he lays out Matz’s business which intimates the agrarian nature of

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<sup>161</sup> Back then as the road was being built (more than thirty years had already passed) the chief engineer laid it straight through Matz’s four large tracts of land. At first the loss of land irritated Matz, but then one day he had an epiphany. Didn’t the three [forest] colonies come together here? Wasn’t a town square a necessity? Thought, said, done. Matz had two of his large tracts of land measured into home sites and small ranches, and opened up a grocery shop. In time, a school with an instructor residence was built and a blacksmith established. Matz donated land for a chapel and a cemetery, that was of more use than the chapel, and finished with the optimistic development of the city square Bom Retiro (Good Retreat). Matz baptized it with this beautiful name, however the colonists called it the hellhole because in winter their wagons would get stuck in the countless street holes.

<sup>162</sup> He was the businessman of the three settlements. The esteem, which he enjoyed among the colonists was varied. It was inversely proportionate to the customer’s debit account balance that was in Matz’s ledger. This was also often the reason that some of the product laden colonists’ wagons tried to travel past Matz’s store without stopping. A profitless beginning, Matz paid attention and one way in which he did this was inspecting the load and looking up the pages of his ledger in his head. “Heh, friend, what do you have there? Beans..., I will pay 12 Milreis. João will not pay more. We can settle up the account a little.” An escape for the caught was hardly possible.

the colony, the dynamics and tension that play out in interactions as they relate to commerce. The scene also marks the first time that the reader hears directly from a character and it showcases another detail, namely language mixing and language constellations. To what degree characters mix the language, in general, will figure heavily in the story, and Reitz addresses this indirectly and directly later in the text, but its presence is as much a nod to his audience, as it is a marker of authenticity, and his own membership in the settlement community.

Sonntag nachmittag war das große Zimmer neben der Venda immer dicht besetzt. Die Kolonisten aus den Pikaden kamen zusammen, um den üblichen Schafskopf oder Doppelkopf zu spielen. Und wie die Alten sungen, so zwitschern die Jungen. Die an der Grenze zur Männlichkeit stehende Pikadenjugend nahm für sich gewöhnlich auch einen Tisch in Beschlag. Noch unbeschwert von der Verantwortung, eine Familie zu erhalten, wurde an diesem Tische gemauschelt und, weil es sich besser machte, mit Asszwang<sup>163</sup>

The scene opens with an orientation that informs the reader of the colonists' relation to the room (a public place to gather), the frequency of this gathering (weekly), the purpose (taking part in public communal activities), and condition of said gatherings (crowded). The town square Matz had envisioned when he created *Bom Retiro* is realized by the community in the area adjacent to his store. Upon entering into this space, Reitz moves away from the specificity of the colony through Matz's lens to the broader narrative frame from which he records the customary community activities of card playing, singing, drinking, and gossiping. Much of these activities are offered without explanation or interpretation, instead it is a steady reporting of practices which he uses to then transition from the larger picture of the gathering to a particular group of young men, and Peter's narrative.

Einen Ring trug Peter nicht an seiner Rechten. Sollte das mit der Berta nichts geworden sein? Zwischen den Spielen riskierte einer, sich nach dem Ergebnis der vierwöchigen Abwesenheit zu erkundigen. Peter strich sich über sein semmelblondes, struppiges Haar als wollte er etwas Lästiges fortscheuchen. Die Berta paßte nicht zu ihm. Er brauche eine Frau, die Lesen, Schreiben, und Rechnen könne. . . . Plötzlich legte Peter die Karten hin, starrte gespannt durch das geöffnete Fenster, sprang auf und postierte sich in das Fenster. Verwundert

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<sup>163</sup> Sunday afternoons, the large room next to the store was always crowded. The colonists from the settlements gathered together to play the customary [card] game of Schafskopf or Doppelkopf. And like the older people who were singing, the young were gossiping. The settlement youths, who stood at the edge of manhood, also usually seized a table for themselves. Still free from the responsibility of supporting a family, they passed the time playing Asszwang (forced to play the ace) because it made things better.

sahen die anderen ebenfalls auf die Straße, was er dort zu sehen gab. Weiter nichts als drei junge Mädchen, die unter Lachen am Hause vorbeischlenderten. Links und rechts, die beiden Pommelchen mit ihren grausam verschnittenen Bubiköpfen, waren die Zwillinge vom Matz. In ihrer Mitte, von beiden untergefaßt, ging ein schlankes Mädchen, das durch den modischen Schnitt seines Kleides und seine ungewöhnliche Haartracht, - die schweren braunen Zöpfe waren in einem Kranz um den Kopf gewunden, - Peters Aufmerksamkeit erregt hatte.

“Wer ist die da in der Mitte, hein?”

“Kennst du die nicht mehr? Dem Schulmeister seine Hilde. War ein Jahr in der Villa und hat schneidern gelernt. Vor vierzehn Tagen kam sie zurück.” . . .

Peter machte sich an seinem Pferd das unter einem Cinnamomo angebunden stand, zu schaffen. Dies dauerte solange, bis die Mädchen an ihm vorbeikamen. Mit einem “Dag ooch, ihr Mäd” machte er ihnen seine Aufwartung. Die Zwillinge kicherten, während Hilde den deppisch dastehenden Peter mit einem verwunderten Blick betrachtete, dann ihren Kopf mit denen der Zwillinge zusammensteckte. Hätte Peter die Ohren gespitzt, so hätte er den Spottvers gehört, der ihm noch von der Schule her anhing. “Peter Schrumm, Peter Schrumm, bleibst dein ganzes Leben dumm.”<sup>164</sup>

The expansive documentation of the communal gathering and practices recedes, and becomes the backdrop from which Peter’s mini-story emerges. Reitz moves past the failed *Bom Retiro*, Matz’s store and now into this public gathering area, and in doing so moves further into the interior of the colony (story-wise), where the spaces are more revealing of the inner workings of the settlement and its inhabitants. The room itself has another significant importance, it is the initiating point of a recurrent theme (education) that will resurface throughout the main story and the subsequent mini-narratives. It is a subject that is initially raised via Peter’s rejection of Berta, is hinted in his interest in Hilde, and the subject of a tease Hilde and the Matz twins use to

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<sup>164</sup> Peter wore no ring on his right hand. Did his courtship with Berta come to nothing? Between plays one of the guys ventured to ask about the outcome of his four-week absence. Peter stroked his blond disheveled hair as if he wanted to shoo away an annoyance. Berta did not suit him. He needed a woman that could read, write and was good with figures. Suddenly Peter put the cards down, stared intently through the open window, jumped up and planted himself at the window. Surprised, the others looked onto the street to see what he was looking at. Nothing more than three young girls who strolled by the house laughing. The two chubby girls, left and right, with the horribly cut bobs were Matz’s twin daughters. In the middle of both, arms linked, walked a slim girl, who because of the stylish cut of her clothes and her unusual hairstyle (the thick brown pigtailed were in braids around her head), had aroused Peter’s attention. “Who is that in the middle?” “Don’t you recognize her anymore? Hilde, the schoolmaster’s daughter. She was away from the colony for a year studying how to tailor. She’s been back for fourteen days.” . . . Peter started to get his horse that was tied up under a white cedar tree. This took so long, the girls passed by. He greeted them with a, “Good day ladies”. The twins giggled whereas Hilde looked puzzled at the simpleton Peter standing there, and then huddled with the twins. Had Peter strained his ears, he would have heard the taunt that still remained with him from school. “Peter Schrumm, Peter Schrumm, all your life stay dumb.”

describe Peter. Within this same space, Peter will make that ill-fated bet over two cases of beer to break up Hilde's engagement to Albert Willtgen, and assume his role as her betrothed. At the conclusion of the wager scene, Reitz inserts a section break to transition away from Peter's personal story. Reitz pulls the reader back out spatially into the wider colony before bringing them into the world of Herbert Meinhoff, the colony schoolmaster.

Herbert Meinhoff hatte vor dreißig Jahren die Lehrerstelle in der Gemeinde übernommen. Dem mittellosen, jungen Einwanderer war diese Stelle die Planke gewesen, aus der er sich mit vielen Mühen sein Lebensschifflein zusammenzimmerte. Als er dann, nach einigen Probejahren, die Tochter eines Kolonisten in das Lehrerhaus führte, da verstummten auch die Stimmen, die von Zeit zu Zeit die Behauptung aussprachen: "Der Schulmeister dient uns nicht." Warum er ihnen nun gerade nicht diente, darüber ließen sich diese Pikadenkritiker nicht aus. Aber da sie bei allem etwas zu nörgeln hatten, wurde ihnen kein Gehör geschenkt. Daß er keinen Cachaça vertrug und daher sich jedem Umtrunk entzog, hätten billig denkende Menschen ihm doch als ein Verdienst anrechnen müssen. Aber die Kolonisten, die den Zuckerrohrsaft in das "gärende Drachengift des Krakehlwassers" verwandelten, bleiben im geheimen weiter seine Gegner; er war eben kein Förderer des Umsatzes ihrer Produktion<sup>165</sup>

Meinhoff's narrative is a two-parter, the first addresses his arrival and tense relationship with the community, and the second half speaks more to his experience with regards to the role of education in theory and practice in the colony. Reitz uses the tension between Meinhoff and the community critics to articulate what could be factors to explain the attitudes that Meinhoff raises as challenges to his role. Reitz, as narrator, offers his own remarks of the collective tension and distrust that find their source in the critics' interpretation of Meinhoff's lack of communal drinking as an indictment of their practices. That is not the case, rather it is only a specific habit that Meinhoff will raise that has to do with another community custom.

Meinhoff hatte es nach fünfzehnjähriger Lehrtätigkeit fertiggebracht, sich eine eigene Kolonie zu erwerben und auch zu bezahlen. Er setzte sich ein Haus darauf, baute sie im Laufe der Jahre aus, verließ die windschiefe Lehrerwohnung und das abgebaute Pflanzland, das ihm die Jahre hindurch hatte dienen müssen. Das war

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<sup>165</sup> Thirty years ago, Herbert Meinhoff had accepted a teaching position in the community. For the destitute young immigrant, this post had been the plank from which he strove to build his life. When he married a colony daughter after a few years of probation, the voices who from time to time declared "the schoolmaster does not support us" fell silent. Why didn't he support them was not the critics point, but since they griped about everything, no one listened to them. Because he couldn't stomach Cachaça and thus avoided drinking, reasonable people would have seen it as a virtue. But the colonists, who converted the sugar cane juice into "a strong drink of imbued dragon poison" secretly remained his adversaries. He simply was not an advocate of the sales of their product.



eine Riesenleistung bei den zwei Milreis Schulgeld, die er für jedes Kind im Monat erhielt, richtiger gesagt erhalten sollte. Es war viel, wenn er mal auf 50\$000 im Monat kam. Und wie oft blieben die Väter ihm die 2\$000 schuldig, weil sie am Sonntag beim Schafskopf verloren hatten. Da war dann eben der Schulmeister der Leidtragende. . . . Zwei von seinen Söhnen ließ er ein Handwerk erlernen, die beiden anderen wandten sich dem Handel zu. Hilde, die sich als Spätling eingefunden hatte, setzte ihren Willen durch und lernte schneidern. So hatten alle seine Kinder eine Ausbildung erhalten, wie sie die meisten Kolonisten, auch die bemittelten, ihren Kindern nicht zuteil werden lassen. Für die hieß es meist nur "Putzhacke". Nur der Matz war weitsichtiger als die anderen. Er ließ seinen Kindern durch Meinhoff Privatunterricht geben. Was er dafür zahlte, ging auf Konto "Kolonie"<sup>166</sup>

The telling of Meinhoff's land purchase stands as a metaphor for education and the colonists. Reitz emphasizes the conditions that seemingly pushed Meinhoff to purchase his own land but more importantly, the time frame in which it takes him to afford the land is tied not to the ability to pay but more so the priority and willingness of the colonists to pay for their children's education. This sentiment is bolstered with the revelation of the gambling occurring during those weekly Sunday gatherings that deprives Meinhoff of income and the children of a formal schooling. Reitz also details the education of Meinhoff's own children and in doing so offers an interpretation of how education in the community might be better understood. The mini-narrative also makes clear that instruction is predicated on reception of school fees which, coupled with the gambling, foreshadow of a pervasive lack of school attendance in the colony.

Peter tippet an seinen Hut. "Dag ooch. Is he daheeme?" Peter sprach das verwilderte Deutsch, das in den abgelegenen Pikaden gesprochen wird. Es ist weder Platt noch Hochdeutsch, meist ein Gemengsel von beiden, oft mit brasilianischen Wörtern durchflickt. Ungeeignete Lehrer, mangelnder Schulbesuch kommen meist als Ursache für diese Sprachverwilderung in Betracht. Daher kommt es auch, daß die Jugend, die sich ihres mangelhaften Deutschsprechens bewußt wird, es vorzieht, im Verkehr mit Hochdeutschsprechenden sich der brasilianischen Sprache zu bedienen, sobald sie

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<sup>166</sup> Meinhoff had managed after fifteen years of teaching to acquire and pay for his own land. He put a house on it and expanded it over the years, having abandoned the lopsided teacher's residence and degraded land that had served him through the years. It was a monumental achievement given the two thousand reis school fees he received monthly for each child, more correctly said, should get. It was a lot if he made fifty thousand reis a month but how often the fathers were short the two thousand reis because they had lost it on Sunday playing cards; the schoolmaster was the casualty. He allowed two of his sons to learn a trade, the other two turned to business. Hilde, the last born, got her way and trained in tailoring. Thus, all of his children had received an education that most colonists, including the well-off, couldn't provide for their children. For them [the colonists] it was for the most part "mason hoes". Only Matz was more forward-looking than the others. He had Meinhoff give his children private lessons. What Matz paid for it went to Meinhoff's "land" account.

diese auch nur annähernd beherrscht. Der Verfasser will zu dieser Sprachverwilderung nicht noch beitragen, sondern läßt den Helden mit ein paar Ausnahmen hochdeutsch sprechen. Hilde mußte sich erst einen Augenblick besinnen, was der Peter wollte. “Sie meinen wohl, ob mein Vater zu Hause ist? Wünschen Sie etwas von ihm, Herr Strumm?” “Ja, er soll meinem Vater einen Brief schreiben.”<sup>167</sup>

The broader range discussion surrounding education and educational disparity finds its exemplars in Meinhoff’s daughter, Hilde’s, narrative. Preceding her exchange with Peter, Reitz divulges that Hilde has already learned of the bet from the Matz twins. What then transpires between her and Peter is more than one of content; it is of language itself, and it reaches back to educational practices, the difference here being that this instance of language mixing is significant enough for Reitz to directly address the reader. Reitz’s own admittance that he has rendered Peter’s speech into High German versus the colloquial dialect, and general discussion of language use in the colony seems to initially convey a displeasure and even an air of hostility on the High German speakers’ part. Hilde’s ensuing characterization and mocking of the language recall the very dynamics that Meinhoff’s story addresses playing out in this somewhat brief exchange. She makes clear that this particular manner of speaking is not uncommon but rather a feature of isolated colonies which, given how language is tied to education in the settlements, supports to the notion that sparse school attendance is also commonplace. The scene also displays the range of language usage as a result of language loss, the development of a first-generation pidgin, morphing to a creole and/or acquiring a second language with High German serving as the indicator of formal education. The early tone by which Reitz ascribes the settlement pidgin to the uneducated and poorly educated may come across harsh and even hypocritical considering its prevalent use in all his narratives but it gives way to something else. It recalls his own biography as an adult immigrant that has not grown up with this language constellation and education disparity at play. But more so, it acknowledges the heterogenous

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<sup>167</sup> Peter tips his hat. “Good day. Is he home?” Peter spoke a feral German that is spoken in the remote colonies. It is neither Platt nor High German, mostly a mishmash of both often interlaced with Brazilian words. Unqualified teachers and lack of school attendance are mostly to blame for this barbarizing of the language. It is why it is also the case that the youth who become aware of their poor German speaking, prefer to use the Brazilian language in dealings with High German speakers as soon as they have mastered it. Nevertheless, the author does not want to contribute to this use of but rather let the hero, with a few exceptions, speak High German. Hilde had to think for a moment what Peter wanted. “You mean perhaps if my father is at home? Did you want something from him Mr. Strumm?” “Yes, he is supposed to write a letter on behalf of my father.”

nature that exists within the colony space. With Reitz's authorial intrusion and the manner of Hilde's narrative, it appears that there is some animus of the language on his part, but given Peter's rebuttal in the following scene coupled with Meinhoff's discussion of his difficulties in the settlement and this exchange between Hilde and Peter, it comes off more as an explanation as to why the colony is the way it is rather than an outright condemnation of the settlement *lingua franca*.

Das "Sie", "Herr Schrumm" und das gewählte Hochdeutsch wurmte Peter ganz mächtig. Und dabei hatte die Hilde noch seine Hand übersehen, die er ihr hinhielt. "Mein Vater ist bei den Bienen. Er wird bald kommen. Nehmen Sie, bitte Platz, Herr Schrumm." Hilde wies auf die etwas abseits stehende Bank und wandte sich wieder ihrem Buche zu. Peter fühlte sich verlegen; er holte ein Stück Rollfum von der Dicke eines Schifftaues aus seiner Hosentasche, zog sein großes Ansteckmesser und baute sich umständlich eine Maisblattzigarette von der Länge und Dicke seines Mittelfingers. Ein ganz gefährlich aussehender Glimmstengel, als wollte er einen Bienenkasten damit ausräuchern. "Barbaridade, ist das heute ein calor," versuchte er ein Gespräch anzuknüpfen. "Wie, bitte? Calor...? Sie meinen doch Hitze. O señor prefere conversar no vernáculo?" erkundigte sich Hilde mit einem spitzbübischen Lächeln, das ihr allerliebste stand und Peters Herz höher schlagen ließ. "Heeh, das verstehe ich nicht."<sup>168</sup>

Hilde's irritation with the colloquial dialect is met with Peter's own annoyance with High German, specifically the formality of how she addresses him. The exchange between the two illustrates the navigation outlined in the previous scene but here, there is some indirect translation which taps into Hilde's antagonistic conduct because she is aware of the bet. When she responds to Peter's colloquial with the vernacular spoken in the country, it is revealing that Peter, as well as the others who hold this as their predominant language, exist essentially in a world of their own and are as cut off from the outside world as colonies in which they live.

Meinhoffs Ankunft machte der hoffnungsvoll begonnenen Unterhaltung, zum Aerger Peters, ein Ende. Der Brief, den der alte Schrumm geschrieben haben

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<sup>168</sup> The formal "you", "Mr. Schrumm" and the refined High German ticked Peter off and in addition, she had ignored his extended hand at that. "My father is with the bees. He will return soon. Please have a seat, Mr. Schrumm." Hilde pointed to the somewhat remote bench and again turned to her book. Peter felt embarrassed. He took out a piece of rolling tobacco the thickness of a rope, pulled out his big lapel knife, and with great effort made a maize leaf cigarette the length and thickness of his finger. An entirely dangerous looking smoldering branch as if he wanted to smoke out a beehive. He tried to start a conversation, "Wow, it is calor[hot] today." "Calor[Hot]? Do you mean Hitze [hot]? Does the gentleman prefer to talk in vernacular?" asked Hilde with a mischievous smile that adorably suited her and made Peter's heart beat faster. "Heh, I don't understand that."

wollte, betraf den Verkauf einiger am Uruguay liegender Waldkolonien. Er hatte sie zu der Zeit erstanden, als in Europa die Völker nichts Besseres zu tun wußten, als sich vier Jahre hindurch die Köpfe blutig zu schlagen. Noch heute dachten viele Kolonisten mit Wehmut an die goldene Zeit zurück, in der sich ungestraft das kochende Schmalz im Kessel mit einigen Eimern Wasser vermehren ließ; in der für “Chisco”, jenes Gemengsel von verbrannten Blättertabak, Sortierungsausschuß und Fermentierungskehricht ein Preis bezahlt wurde, wie heute für “Claro primeiro”. In dieser Zeit war der alte Schrumm in seinem Element gewesen. Kein Kind ließ er die Schule besuchen, damit es nicht bei der Arbeit fehlte. Natürlich bezahlte er auch dem Schulmeister kein Schulgeld, obwohl er laut Statuten dazu verpflichtet war und dazu noch dem Schulvorstand angehörte. Jetzt hatte er die Kolonien zum doppelten Preise verkauft. Meinhoff sollte an den Käufer schreiben, wenn Schrumm nicht in dreißig Tagen das restliche Kaufgeld in den Händen habe, sei der Verkauf hinfällig und die Anzahlung ebenfalls<sup>169</sup>

Peter’s reason for the visit masks his true intent but it allows Reitz to again go into a broader discussion about the colony, this time detailing a bit about an individual, Peter’s father, and the collective history of the colonists with a bit of a time frame that incorporates some historical context as the backdrop to their story. The reader learns that Peter’s father has had the property in question since at least World War I which mirrors Reitz’s own arrival to Brazil, but it is also a time in which some questionable practices are remembered with nostalgia. The golden age, the elder Schrumm, the colonists’ nostalgia and the school attendance issue fall into place and provide a clearer picture of the colony’s ethos. Albert Willtgen, a protégé of Meinhoff, and who is courting Hilde arrives and by way of this small snippet Reitz reveals another facet to education and training in the settlement, specifically for educators that were historically filled by direct immigration.

Seit drei Jahren bereitete sich Albert durch Selbstunterricht und unter Meinhoffs Leitung für den Lehrerberuf vor. Im kommenden Jahre sollte sich sein Traum verwirklichen, und er ein Jahr lang das Lehrerseminar als Abschluß besuchen.

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<sup>169</sup> To Peter’s chagrin, Meinhoff’s arrival put an end to the initiated hopeful conversation. The letter, that the elder Schrumm had want written, pertained to the sale of some forest plots of land in Uruguay. He had brought it at the time when the people of Europe didn’t know anything better to do than beat their heads bloody for four years. Even today many of the colonists wistfully remembered the golden age when they could get away with increasing boiling lard in the cauldron with a few buckets of water or where the price for “Chisco”, any mixture of leaf tobacco, assorted scraps and fermentation waste was paid like today for “Claro primeiro”. At that time, the elder Schrumm had been in his element. No child was allowed to attend school so that none were missing from work. Needless to say, he also did not pay the teacher even though, according to the statutes, he was obliged to do so and he was also a member of the school board. Now he had sold the plots of land at double the price. Meinhoff was to write the buyer, if Schrumm does not have the rest of the purchase money in thirty days, the sale is voided and the down payment is forfeited.

Eine halbe Freistelle war ihm durch Meinhoffs Vermittlung auf dem Seminar schon zugesichert, auch daß er Meinhoffs Nachfolger werden sollte<sup>170</sup>

During the scene, in which Meinhoff is taking care of the letter Peter's father requested, Albert Willtgen, the other half of Peter's bet, arrives and promptly the reader is cognizant that he too is aware of the bet having been told by Reinhold, who is both engaged to Peter's sister and made the bet with Peter. Albert is studying and being mentored to take over Meinhoff's position as schoolmaster, and is engaged to Hilde. Albert's narrative serves as a supplement to Meinhoff where he relays the process to assume Meinhoff's position never touching on the impending challenges, as earlier outlined by Meinhoff, that he will face as schoolmaster.

Die zwei Kisten Bier waren verloren. Was war ihm auch nur eingefallen, solch eine dumme Wette abzuschließen. . . . Wer da den Weg hinaufkam, war die Berta mit ihrem Vater. Was sollten die denn hier? Die Berta sah ihn nicht an, setzte sich auf den Stuhl, den ihr der Albert hinschob. Ihr Vater würdigte Peter ebenfalls keines Blickes, sondern ging ins Haus, nachdem ihm Hilde gesagt hatte, er träfe den Vater in den Stube. Hilde holte heißes Wasser und die Chimarrãocua. Peter bekam sie, da er abseits saß, zugereicht. Dies geschah jedesmal mit niedergeschlagenen Augen. Peter konnte jedes Wort, das im Zimmer gesprochen wurde, verstehen, wenn auch der alte Franke seine Stimme dämpfte. Aber was wollte das bei dieser Bärenstimme groß besagen. Drinnen wurde ausgemacht, daß die Berta für ein halbes Jahr zum Lehrer als Mädchen kam, nur für die Kost, dafür aber sollte ihr Meinhoff Lesen, Schreiben und etwas Rechnen beibringen. Dumm war die Berta nicht, nur hatte ihr Vater ihre Schulausbildung, wie auch die ihrer übrigen Geschwister, vernachlässigt. Und das rächte sich jetzt. Nun hatte er es erfahren müssen, daß sogar ein Peter als Freier absprang. Versäumtes sollte nun nachgeholt werden<sup>171</sup>

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<sup>170</sup> For three years, through self-study and under Meinhoff's guidance, Albert prepared himself for the teaching profession. In the coming year, his dream would be realized and to finish, he was to attend a year-long seminar. An open spot at the seminar was assured for him through Meinhoff's intercession, and that he would become Meinhoff's successor.

<sup>171</sup> The one who came up the path was Berta with her father. What were they doing here? Berta didn't look at him and sat in the chair that Albert had pushed over to her. Her father didn't look at Peter either instead he went into the house after Hilde had told him that Meinhoff would meet him in the parlor. Hilda brought out hot water and the chimarrão gourd [gourd for drinking the caffeinated drink]. Peter reached for it because he was sitting a distance away and each time it happened with defeated eyes. Peter could understand every word that was spoken in the room, even when the elder Franke lowered his voice. But what did the softened voice imply. Inside, it was agreed that for half a year, Berta would work as a maid for boarding only, and in exchange, Meinhoff shall teach her to read, write, and some arithmetic. Berta was not dumb; her father had neglected her school education like that of her other siblings. And it had dire consequences and (now) he had learned that Peter had actually backed out as a suitor. Omissions should be rectified.

It becomes increasingly clearer to Peter that he has lost the bet and on the heels of that realization, a character mentioned passively at the beginning of the story makes an appearance. In this one space, all of the mini-story characters are present, as well as the person who set much of the events in motion though through no fault of her own. Berta and her father's arrival come as a surprise to Peter. The four young people partake in another communal practice that is familiar enough that Reitz does not go into any detail but in the midst of this other collective ritual, Peter overhears the agreement between Meinhoff and Berta's father. Berta will barter her services for a time period in exchange for a formal education that will include the very things that Peter listed as desirable traits in a mate. Again, consideration is fronted as the reason for her father's earlier decisions and his now change of heart that is sparked more so by Peter's rejection of her as a potential mate. This revelation suggests that like the other subjects of the bet, Berta is aware of the wager. Peter's own ruminations about Berta and her character reads almost comical given his own shortcomings but it is only because of her father's reconsideration that Peter is even entertaining a change of heart. Believing that she is doing this for him, it is the impetus for a second evaluation of Berta, but this time, it is Hilde that falls short in those areas that Peter deems as practical.

Als die Berta ihren Dienst bei Meinhoffs antrat, trug sie den Ring am Finger, wie auch die Hilde. Und die beiden Mädchen gestanden sich einmal, daß es ohne Peters Wette mit der Verloberei nicht so rasch gegangen wäre. Uebringens waren die beiden Kisten Bier noch zu trinken. Peter hatte ausgemacht, daß sie auf seiner Hochzeit getrunken würden, womit Reinhold einverstanden war<sup>172</sup>

From the time of Berta and her father's arrival, the larger story the colony is coming to its conclusion and it is only the dispensation of the bet and the mini-narratives that remain unresolved. But all are tied up together in the last scene when Reitz reveals that Peter's ill-fated wager was actually the impetus to everyone getting what they wanted. But in the process of recounting this tale to an audience, Reitz also creates a narrative that records and reflects the spectrum of colony membership, their experiences, notions, and practices.

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<sup>172</sup> When Berta started working at Meinhoff's, she wore a ring on her finger, as did Hilde. And both girls once admitted that without Peter's bet, the engagement would not have happened so quickly. Incidentally, the two boxes of beer had yet to be drunken. Peter had agreed that they would be drunk at his wedding, which Reinhold agreed to.

### 5.1.3 Eine Schmerzhaftes Heiratserlaubnis (A Brutal Marriage License)

In, “Eine Schmerzhaftes Heiratserlaubnis”, published in 1938 in the *Rotermund-Kalender*, Alfred Reitz crafts a story rife with generational, inter-, and intracultural tensions as they play out in the tale of a young couple seeking a marriage license in the midst of an ongoing family feud in a Brazilian German settlement. At the center of the tale is the narrator, whose dual nature plays a significant role. He is a member of the settlements who, in his professional capacity, is an agent acting on behalf of the Brazilian government in his service as a district magistrate. He sits as part of a larger configuration of cultural spheres that are codified into written and unwritten laws that he must transit legally and socially. In this telling of a contested marriage borne, in part, from an old family feud, Reitz creates a space where this lone character straddling different cultural arenas interprets the practices within and offers commentary and critiques as a member of both spheres. The dual and dueling accounts surrounding the marriage license and couple allows the narrator to present and comment on the cultural nuances that are particular to the colony while also delivering a more removed legal reading of events. In setting this young couple’s story in the context of a famous Shakespearean family feud, Reitz is able to present a universal story in a very culture specific frame and in doing so create a space in which to document the colony, and its community dynamics.

Da saßen sie nun, die beiden jungen Menschen, auf der Veranda, die den Zugang zu dem Amtszimmer des Distriktschreibers bildete und warteten auf mich. Er, ein Mann etwa Mitte der Zwanziger, sie ein junges Ding von siebzehn Jahren. Sie saßen da mit hängenden Köpfen und schauten ziemlich trübselig drein. Seit vier Tagen drehte sich das Gespräch der Koloniebevölkerung um diese beiden Menschen. . . . Drewes Tilda war von Haus ausgerissen. . . , schon gehört? Niemand wußte, wo sie stak. Die Rede ging von einem hohlen Baum, in dem sie in traulicher Zweieinsamkeit hausen sollte. Andere wollten wieder wissen, daß Tilda in letzter Zeit geäußert haben sollte, sie würde sich ein Leid antun, wenn ihre Mutter nicht zugebe, daß sie den Brunner Franz heirate. Und die Tilda hatte den Dickschädel ihrer Mutter geerbt. Diese Feststellung stammte von ihrer eigenen Mutter, es war daher anzunehmen, daß sie zutraf<sup>173</sup>

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<sup>173</sup> There they were waiting for me, the two young people, sitting on the veranda that was the entrance to the clerk’s office. He, a man around twenty and she, a young thing of seventeen years. They sat there, hanging their heads and looked quite miserable. For four days, colony talk had centered around these two people. . . . Hadn’t you already heard? Tilda Drewes had run away and no one knew of her whereabouts. The explanation went that she lived in solitude in some hollowed-out tree. Others had the view that Tilda must have recently expressed she would harm herself if her mother would not allow her to marry Franz Brunner. Tilda had inherited her mother’s stubbornness.

The story opens with the first-person narrator immediately placing the reader in the midst of an event that has been fodder for colony gossip, and which has driven the young couple, Tilda and Franz to seek out his assistance. His initial characterization of the couple intimates a familiarity with them but the source of which is not immediately divulged. The opening also marks the initiation of the language constellation of High German, Brazilian, and Pommern Platt that will remain throughout the narrative and operate as a cultural code specific to the settlements, and which identify the narrator and Reitz as its members. To give the backstory of the events that have led to the couple's appearance, the narrator utilizes the gossip surrounding them as a vehicle to seemingly introduce additional voices from the community. Such mediation will be a recurring practice with only a few exceptions of direct exchanges with characters to further fashion the semblance of multiple voices while concurrently portraying him as initially a neutral observer, and a critic of the forces driving this situation.

Das Interesse wandte sich den Amtsstuben zu, denen der Fall zu seiner Klärung und eventuellen Nachspiele zugeleitet worden war. Gestern hatte mich der Vater des jungen Mannes aufgesucht, um mich in meinem Amte als Distriktsrichter zu sprechen. Was er mir erzählte, war mir bereits durch den Polizeidelegado bekannt. Die beiden Menschen hatten sich lieb, aber die Mutter des Mädchens war dagegen. Zwischen den beiden Familien bestand so etwas wie Montague-Capulet-Feindschaft. Sie bestand schon seit der Zeit, als die beiden Familien sich, vor mehr als fünfzehn Jahren, im Walde niedergelassen hatten. Mit einem totgeschossenen Schwein, daß sich an den Bataten des anderen gütlich getan hatte, nahm sie ihren Anfang. Die lieben Nachbarn sahen sich veranlaßt, Partei zu ergreifen und „Hie Montague“, „Hie Capulet“ war an der Tagesordnung. In der Hauptsache bekam es das Vieh zu spüren, daß sich, in der Annahme, daß sein Futter überall wachse und die menschliche Einrichtung der Grenzen nicht beachtete, in des Nachbarn Roça verirrte. Mit Knüppeln und Steinen wurde es auf den Trab gebracht. Es kam vor, daß eine derartig gehetzte Kuh auf ihrer Flucht stürzte und das Bein brach. Und die Notschlachtung, die denn folgte, ließ die Feindschaft wieder in hellen Flammen emporschlagen<sup>174</sup>

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This remark came from her own mother therefore it was assumed to be true.

*Note: There are spelling variations to the Drewes/Dewes family name in the original transcription that are reflected on the translation, however, I have opted to use the Drewes spelling when discussing the text.*

<sup>174</sup> The matter found its way to the office, where it had been forwarded for clarification and possible repercussions. Yesterday, the young man's father paid me a visit in my professional capacity as district magistrate to talk. What he recounted was already known to me through the police. The two loved each other but the girl's mother was against it. Something like a Montague-Capulet hostility existed between the two families and has been around since the time when both families had settled in the woods more than fifteen years ago. It started with a pig shot dead that had feasted on the potatoes of the other. The sympathetic neighbors saw themselves induced to take sides and "Hither Montague", "Hither Capulet" was the state of affairs. The main issue was that the cattle, who assumed their food



The narrator adds Franz's father's account to the prevalent community narrative that runs counter the ones circulating through the settlement and which now places the source of the issue at the feet of Tilda's mother, Frau Drewes. This also marks the occasion of the narrator's revelation to his audience of his place in both the story and the colony as an in-between, and go-between for community members navigating the country's common and civil law systems. Franz's father's visit intimates the community's recognition of the narrator's dual role, and brings both into a single space. The sociocultural study facet moves to the forefront with the introduction of the larger colony via Franz Brunner and Tilde Drewes' families presented in the context of a famous Shakespearian family feud. By situating it as such, the reader has a frame of reference by which to read, and analyze the information regarding the actions and practices governing the events within the community that have led up to the current state of affairs.

Aber trotzdem, über alle Feindschaft hinweg, hatte die Liebe verstanden, Ihr Netz zu spinnen. Und da er keinen anderen Ausweg sah, hatte der Kolonie-Romeo seine Julia aus dem Elternhause entführt. . . .Am dritten Tage erschienen beide im elterlichen Hause des jungen Mannes. Dort gab es zuerst eine Auseinandersetzung, dessen Ende der Beschluß bildete, das Pärchen sollte sofort durch den Distriktsrichter gesetzlich getraut werden. . . . Die Mutter hatte die Zustimmung zu geben und die gab sie nicht. Kaum hatte sie erfahren, wo sich ihre Tochter befand, da erschien sie beim Polizeidelegado und verlangte zwangsweise Rückführung ihrer Tochter ins Elternhaus. Der Delgado lehnte, auf Grund der Sachlage, das Verlangen ab. Die Mutter könne nur die sofortige Heirat verlangen, brauchte nur ihre Zustimmung zu geben, alles andere erledige die Behörde. Die gäbe sie nicht ... Dreimal hatte sie dies dem Dolmetscher erklärt und dabei mit der Faust auf den Tisch geschlagen . . . Prozessiert müsse der Franz werden, eingesperrt, daß ihm die Lust verginge, Mädchen zu entführen. Da müsse der Staat viele Gefängnisse bauen, wenn jeder Junge wegen einer solchen Geschichte eingesperrt werden müßte, war die Meinung des Delegados. Aber all sein Zureden half nichts, sodaß er zum Schluß sich in der Angelegenheit nicht als zuständig erklärte und die Regelung dem Distriktsrichter überließ<sup>175</sup>

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grew everywhere and did not notice the human establishment of borders, strayed onto the neighboring tract of cleared land. They were chased off with sticks and stones, but it happened that one such harassed cow fell in her flight and broke her leg. The emergency slaughter that followed brought the hostility roaring back to life.

<sup>175</sup> But despite all the bad blood, love had managed to spin its web, and since he saw no other way, the colony Romeo had run off with his Juliet. On the third day, both appeared at the home of the young man's parents. At first there was a disagreement, at the end of which the decision was made that the couple should immediately be officially married by the district magistrate. . . . The mother had to give consent to the marriage and she did not give it. She had no sooner learned where her daughter was when she went to the police commissioner and demanded the forcible return of her daughter home through compulsion. Owing to the circumstances, the commissioner refused the demand. The mother could only request the immediate marriage. All she had to do was agree and the authorities would do the rest. She would not give her consent and explained so to the interpreter three times banging her fist on

The exchange between Frau Drewes and the police commissioner is illustrative of aforementioned community navigation in the legal realm and provides a clear example as to why the narrator's dual role, and go-between roles, in general, are necessary. In the ensuing back and forth, there is an underlying tension borne of language differences and inherent to that, unwritten and written codes that translate into practices. The chasm this creates has been bridged by people such as the narrator and in this case, the translator. However, how effectively those roles play out find a perfect example in the police commissioner's office. The interpreter is simply translating language, not the coded context (cultures) in which these languages exist; that is significant as its absence does not allow the commissioner any means of sensitive or nuanced interpretation, and colors how the issue can be characterized. Reitz also uses this exchange to showcase another means of capturing the essence of the settlement community. The use of hybrid terms in place of their German or Brazilian counterparts reflects and documents not just the use of the colloquial dialect within the community but it also reveals that its use is not universal. Meaning that while it provides a wealth of information about the workings of colony, it is also a source of intra-cultural tension and an object of criticism. The manner in which the commissioner interprets and understands the Tilda/Franz/Frau Drewes situation in relation to the law sets up an interesting contrast as to how the same matter will be considered by the magistrate.

„Setzt Euch, Frau Drewes. Mir wurde gesagt, Ihr wolltet Eurer Tilda die Erlaubnis zum Heiraten nicht geben. Aber das war sicher nicht im Ernst gemeint. Nachdem sie nun mit dem Franz einmal ausgerückt ist, läßt sich die Geschichte doch nicht auf eine andere Art einrenken. Ich denke, Ihr gebt die Erlaubnis und alles ist erledigt.“  
„Gäw ick nicht . . . Gäw ick nich . . .“ Kurz und bestimmt, im schönsten pommerischen Platt kam es heraus<sup>176</sup>

The magistrate invites Frau Drewes to the clerk's office in an effort to settle the case without the costly and cumbersome intervention of the regional judge who can intervene and grant

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the table . . . Franz must be locked up so that he would lose his inclination to carry off young girls. The police commissioner was of the opinion that the state would have to build many prisons if every young man were to be jailed over such a matter. But all his coaxing was of no help so in the end he declared himself not responsible for the matter and turned it over to the district magistrate.

<sup>176</sup> “Have a seat, Mrs. Drewes. I was told that you did not want to give your Tilda permission to marry. But certainly, that was not meant seriously. Now that she's run away with Franz, don't let the affair sort itself out in some other way. I figure you give permission and all is done.” “I don't give it . . . I don't give it” it came out curt and assertive in the most beautiful Pomeranian Platt.

permission in the case of unreasonable parental refusal. What transpires in the exchange between the two demonstrates the complexity of the dynamics within the colony community (generational, intercultural and intracultural) as the reader sees not only this spectrum represented by Frau Drewes and the narrator, but also the Franz and Tilda, and Franz's parents. The narrator, being an agent of the state and a fellow colony member, demonstrates an opposing reading of the situation; his ties to the community grant a familiarity and sensitivity to nuances particular to practices that he can then consider when having to intervene or act on behalf of the government or the colony.

Ich öffnete die Schleusen meiner Beredsamkeit, stellte ihr vor, daß sie gegen den Franz als Schwiegersohn nichts einwenden könne. Er habe eine eigene Waldkolonie, sei fleißig und sparsam, tränke und spiele nicht. Was könne sie mehr verlangen? Daß er die Tilda überredet habe fortzulaufen, sei nicht schön von ihm gewesen. Aber sie, als die Mutter, trage auch etwas Schuld daran. Warum habe sie nicht zugelassen, daß sich die beiden verlobten. Sicher hätten sie dann noch ein Jahr mit der Hochzeit gewartet. Dann höre auch endlich mal diese alte Familienfeindschaft auf, die weiß Gott, wenn es die Umstände mit sich brächten, eines Tages noch zu Blutvergießen und Totschlag führe. Sie möge ihre Zustimmung geben, das sei ihre Pflicht. "Gäw ick nich ..., Herr Richter. Wat bruckt de Tilda all ant Frigen tau denken. Ick was 26, als ick ehrem Vadde heirat t heww. Mit säbenteihn Johr frigen? Dort wier ick bi mein Mudde schön ankamen. Dei was noch von dräben. Dei Putzhack hedd sei mi an den Kopp smäten. Gah in de Rossa, du Dammel, un schaff ... Un gerad in de Bohnen- und Weitenaust möt sei wegloppen. Sei sall nach Hus kamen..."<sup>177</sup>

Beyond documenting language use, the exchange reveals a great deal about the enterprises within the settlement. The narrator's defense of Franz, and Frau Drewes' responses tell of the agrarian nature of the colony and ways in which inhabitants sustain themselves. In tying the plight of the young couple back to Romeo and Juliet, the narrator channels Friar Laurence in asserting that the marriage would end the family feud that has every potential of becoming violent as it did between the Montagues and Capulets. The difference being that he alludes to the inevitable violent outbreak between the two families and explicitly calls out her culpability in its

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<sup>177</sup> I opened the floodgates of persuasiveness, and suggested she could not object to Franz as a son-in-law. He has his own forest tract of land, would be hard-working, economical and did not drink or gamble. What more could she ask for? It had not been nice of him to convince Tilda to run-away, but she as the mother was also to blame. Why had she not let the two get engaged? Certainly, they would have waited a year to wed and finally ending this old family feud that God only knows when one day the circumstances could lead to bloodshed. Giving consent was her duty. "Judge, I will not give it. Why is Tilda thinking about marriage? I was twenty-six when I married her father. Married at seventeen? Had I already brought it up with my mother and that was still going on, she would have smacked my head and go tend to the soil fool. Tilda needs to run off to the bean and wheat storehouse. She needs to come home.

realization. What the narrator does differently than the commissioner is he acknowledges her issue with Franz's actions because he has intimate knowledge of the general cultural implications of Franz's actions but leaves it to Frau Drewes to spell out its specificity.

„Dei Erlaubnis kriegt sei von mi nich. . .“

Von dieser Seite war ihr nicht beizukommen. Himmel, was kostete das Mühe, diese pommerschen Dickschädel umzustimmen. Es schien, als habe sie die brasilianische Sonne noch härter gebrannt. Aber ich gab mich noch nicht verloren. Es hieß eben andere Seiten anschlagen. „Gut, Frau Drewes, ich will nicht behaupten, daß Ihr Euch weigert.“ . . . „Aber, wie Ihr wollt. . . . .Getraut werden Sie, das könnt Ihr nicht verhindern. Im Gesetz ist schon dafür gesorgt, daß mit der elterlichen Autorität kein Mißbrauch getrieben werden kann. Und das tut Ihr, wenn Ihr, wie die Verhältnisse einmal sind, auf Eurem Nein beharrt.“

Sie gab keine Antwort. Die Muskeln ihres sonnenverbrannten Gesichtes arbeiten und verrieten einen inneren Kampf. Jetzt hatte ich die richtige Saite angeschlagen. Um ihr Zeit zu lassen, zündete ich mir eine Zigarette an. Ich wandte mich an den Distriktschreiber, der unser in deutscher Sprache geführtes Gespräch nicht verstanden hatte. „Ultima ratio.“<sup>178</sup>

The narrator has listened and discussed the personal and communal implications of the consent refusal and after appealing to her that Franz's character has met and exceeded what would be favorable criteria in the colony and failing to change her mind, he now addresses the subject according to Brazilian law. It is as much what the police commissioner had intimated in his refusal to intervene but in the narrator's utilization of a different strategy, he wants to respect their relationship as fellow colony inhabitants and not to dismiss any cultural considerations outright. Instead, he sought to use those internal matters to craft a remedy, and calling upon Brazilian law was, as he communicated to his clerk, that is clueless as to the proceedings as he does not understand German, was done because nothing else had worked.

Ich nahm ihr die Peitsche aus der Hand. „Hiermit und nicht mit dem Griff.“ Sie nickte zustimmend. „Und dann müßt Ihr vorher unterschreiben, daß Ihr die Zustimmung gebt und mit dem Schlagen aufhören, wenn ich halt sage.“ . . . Der Schreiber wollte ein vorgedrucktes Formular ausfüllen, aber das diente in diesem Falle nicht. Ich diktierte

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<sup>178</sup> “She will not get permission from me . . .” There was no getting through to her. Heavens, how much effort will it cost to change this pig-headed Pomeranian's mind? It seemed, the Brazilian sun had burned her even harder. But I have not lost just yet. It meant working another angle. “Good, Mrs. Drewes, I do not mean to suggest that you refuse.” . . . But as you wish. They will be married; you can't prevent that. The law (even) ensures that parental authority cannot be misused. And that is what you're doing if you are adamant in your no, as in the present circumstances. She did not answer. The muscles of her sunburnt face betrayed an inner struggle. I had struck the right chord. To give her time, I lit a cigarette. I turned to the district clerk, who had not understood our conversation in German. “The last resort.”

ihm. Er schrieb das Diktat auf einen Aktenbogen nieder. „So, nun hört her, Frau Drewes, was Ihr unterschreiben sollt. Ich übersetze es gleich. Ihr versteht doch kaum das Brasilianische.

Zur Eheschließung meiner minderjährigen Tochter Mathilda Drewes mit Herrn Franz Brunner gebe ich hiermit meine Zustimmung unter der Bedingung, daß es mir gestattet ist, meine Tochter in Anwesenheit des Herrn Distriktsrichters, für ihr Ausreißen vom Elternhause in angemessener Weise zu strafen. Mit vollzogener Strafe habe ich mich jeden Einspruchsrechtes gegen die Eheschließung begeben.“ . . .Ich nahm der Frau die Peitsche aus der Hand und drückte sie auf einen Stuhl nieder. „Sie hat genug bekommen. Schluß.“

Der Tilda kollerten die dicken Tränen über die Wangen, als ich sie zur Türe hinausschob. „So, nun geht und holt die Zeugen. In einer Stunde werdet ihr getraut.“ Unter die Einverständniserklärung schrieb ich die Bemerkung: „Die Strafe wurde in meiner Anwesenheit in angemessener Weise vollzogen.“ Ich reichte sie [die Einverständniserklärung] dem eingetretenen Schreiber. „Die kommt in die Akte. Obwohl jemals eine derartige Heiratserlaubnis in eine Eheakte gekommen ist?“ „In meinem Cartorio noch nicht,“ bestätigte dieser<sup>179</sup>

Frau Drewes relents but still demands a stipulation in exchange for her consent. It [the demand] evokes much of what drove the events and was the ultimate solution in *Romeo and Juliet* to assure the couple could be together, violence and the threat of violence which is explicitly and tacitly alluded to with the recurring imagery of Frau Drewes' riding whip. The whip is a constant companion when Frau Drewes interacts with the narrator, and it acts as an extension of her body especially her hand. The narrator makes definitive mention of the whip on a few occasions but two notably stand out. In one instance, her hand that holds the whip is a conduit of her emotions as seen with her use of it to emphasize her refusal to grant permission. In a later scene, it is the alternative means to her balled fist, that the narrator surmises will do more harm than the use of the wide leather straps of the horse whip to punish Tilda for running away. The narrator's acceptance of this act as a remedy supports his previous actions and desire to set the corrective

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<sup>179</sup> I took the whip from her hand. "With this and not the handle." She nodded in agreement. "And you have to sign in advance that you give consent and must stop the beating when I say stop." The clerk wanted to fill out a pre-printed form but that would not do in this case. I dictated to him and he recorded it in a file. "Now pay attention Mrs. Drewes to what you are expected to sign. I'll translate right away being that you hardly understand Brazilian. I hereby give my consent to the marriage of my minor daughter Mathilda Drewes to Franz Brunner on the condition that I am permitted to punish my daughter in the presence of the district magistrate in an appropriate manner for her running away. After the punishment is administered, I will abandon any objection to the marriage." . . . I took the woman's whip out of her hand and put it down on a chair. "She has had enough. That will do." Heavy tears trickled down Tilda's cheeks as I hurried her out of the door. "Now go and get the witnesses. You all will be married in an hour." Under the declaration of consent, I wrote the remark: "The punishment was completed in an appropriate manner in my presence." I handed it to the entering clerk. "It goes in the file. Has such a marriage license such as this ever come?" "Not as of yet in my register office," confirmed the clerk.

within the community and having Frau Drewes essentially buy into it as such versus that of outside legal intervention.

Genau ein Jahr später führte mich eine Schulrevision in eine der neuen Pikaden. Auf dem Rückweg, vor einer großen Pflanzung mit blühenden Mais, stand eine junge Frau mit einem Kind im Arm an der Straße. Sie lachte mich an, da erkannte ich sie. Es war Tilda, die ich nach einem etwas schmerzlichen Vorspiel getraut habe. Sie hatte mich heute morgen vorbereiten sehen. Ob ich nicht absteigen wollte, um einen Mate-Chimarrão zu trinken. . . . Der Franz hatte ein ganz nettes Bretterhäuschen gebaut. Obstbäume waren schon angepflanzt und zum Schutz gegen die Schlepper mit Schafwolle um den Stamm versehen. Eine primitive Röhrenleitung aus Palmiten leitete das Wasser bis in die Küche. Sonst war noch alles einfach, wie es auf einer neu angefangenen Waldkolonie eben ist. . . . [E]rzählte mir die junge Frau, wie es ging. Es schien gut zu gehen. Fast zwei Alqueiras Wald hatte der Franz mit Hilfe von Caboclos geschlagen. Der Mais war gut geraten, über vierhundert Sack rechneten sie zu ernten. Schweine hatten sie einen ganzen Trupp herumlaufen, von denen ein Teil schon reif zur Mast war<sup>180</sup>

The narrative circles back with Tilda and Franz at its center and through which elements of colony life are conveyed. The story has moved away from its Shakespearian frame to portray an alternate ending, where the two lovers are allowed to be together. However, in this iteration, it is a new forest settlement and the elements entailed in its existence differ than that of an established community, with the only similarity being the narrator himself still in the business of his liminal role. The detail he provides in describing Tilda and Franz's home and farm communicate the conditions under which colonists labor and live while also providing an environment in which familial reconciliation can occur.

Wie alt ist der Stammhalter?“

„Söß Monat.“

„Schon sechs Monat.“ Sie wurde ein wenig Rot und lächelte verlegen.

„Na, ist die Mutter noch immer böse?“

Nein, sie hatte der Tilda verziehen.

Vor zwei Monaten war die Mutter schwer krank gewesen. Dreimal habe der Arzt

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<sup>180</sup> Exactly one year later, a school audit led me to one of the new settlements. On the way back, on the street in front of a large plantation flourishing with corn, stood a young woman with a child in her arms. She smiled at me, then I recognized her. It was Tilda, who I had married after a somewhat painful prelude. She had already seen me this morning. She enquired if I would like to come down and drink a Mate-Chimarrão. . . . Franz had built a very nice wooden cottage. Fruit trees were already planted and provided a safeguard around the trunk against rigs with sheep's wool. A crude pipeline out of palms directed the water to the kitchen. Otherwise, everything was simple like it is in a newly started forest colony. . . .the young woman told me how it was. It seemed to be going well. Franz had felled almost two Alqueires (23.9 acres) with help from the indigenous. The corn turned out good, they expected to harvest four hundred sacks. They had pigs in a group running around, part of which was already mature for fattening.

kommen müssen. Tilde war hingegangen und hatte die Mutter gepflegt, weil in den Nächten gewacht werden mußte. Als die Mutter wieder besser war, hatte sie ihr gesagt, es sei nun alles vergessen und ihr Kleiderstoff für den Kleinen geschenkt<sup>181</sup>

In this last scene, the narrator's exchange with Tilda intimates the impetus for the marriage consent and the current status of the mother-daughter relationship. In recounting her mother's serious illness, Tilda hints that reconciliation was a possibility because of the narrator.

## 5.2 Gertrud Gross-Hering

Gertrud Gross was born in May 6, 1879, the penultimate child of nine, in Dresden, Germany. The effects of the six-month long Franco-Prussian War (1870-1871), Industrial Revolution, and overall economic situation in Germany led her father to emigrate the family to Blumenau, Brazil shortly before her first birthday. She attended a German school, founded in 1889 by the residents of the city and shortly after found her state engulfed in the Federalist Riograndense Revolution (1893-1895). This civil war raging in three of the southern states pitted opposition groups against the recently-formed Republic (1889), resulted in approximately 10,000 deaths, and only ended after a decisive defeat at the Battle of Pulador. Shortly after marrying, Gertrud Gross-Hering wrote the story, "Durch Irrtum zur Wahrheit" which she gave to her uncle for Christmas. Her cousin, Arthur Köhler, owner of *Der Urwaldsbote* (The Forest Messenger), wanted to publish it and she agreed but only under the condition that her name not appear. The story, which initially appeared in the paper with only three stars in place of her name, was later published as a novel under her name. Gertrud went on to write poems, stage plays, sketch stories, short stories, and novels, one of which, "Vereinte Kraft" (United Forces) was published in Germany. Her connections to theater extended past writing to a friendship with Edith Gaertner, daughter of Rose (Rosálie) Gaertner (née Sametzki) who was founder of The Frohsinn Theater Society (Sociedade Teatral Frohsinn). Gertrude Gross-Hering lived in Blumenau until her death in 1968. Her works are imbued with religious and secular values, the desire to preserve said

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<sup>181</sup> "How old is the offspring?"

"Six months."

"Already six months." She turned a little red and smiled.

"Well is your mother still angry?" No, she had forgiven Tilda. Two months ago, the mother had been seriously ill. Requiring the doctor to make three visits. Tilde had gone and nursed her mother because she had to be watched during the night. When her mother had recovered, she had told her that everything had been forgotten and had given her clothes for the little one.

values carried from Germany, and their commentary on the collective German community experience in Brazil. Her work has been regarded as recordings of the German settlement collective experience in Brazil, and while they reflect the community, these works also reveal her own personal course informed and encoded with the values carried from Germany and German culture. Although German culture and its preservation has great importance in her short stories, her work is distinctly German-Brazilian and reflects the tension between German cultural memory and interstitial space, and liminal identity mostly played out generationally, inter- and intraculturally.

### 5.2.1 Ein Guter Kern (A Good Heart)

Appearing in *Kalender für die Deutschen in Brasilien (Rotermund Kalender)* in 1938, the last line in “Ein Guter Kern” by Gertrude Gross-Hering is a direct admonishment to her readers for a protective interest and regard for home and homeland. Hering tells of the story of Jakob Schmidt, a native of a German settlement in southern Brazil, who not seeing his future in the colony, leaves to find his place in the world. After Jakob’s return from Germany to the colony in Brazil, the narrator states, “Hauptsache, daß das Jaköble wieder da war, das Jaköble, das in 2 Monaten das gelernt hatte, was er – Großvater – mit aller Liebe und aller Strenge während 18 Jahren nicht in ihn hineingebracht hatte: Achtung vor dem Land seiner Väter, und damit Achtung vor diesen selbst und die Liebe zur Scholle”<sup>182</sup>. Although those themes are explicitly stated, much of the message is derived from and carried by way of tacit commentary on identity. The author uses third-person omniscient narration to set up an undercurrent parallel discussion around how one identifies, is identified, gatekeeping, and the tension arising when they inevitably conflict. Using geographical markers to set and befuddle signification of identity, Hering demonstrates the folly of using it as the sole identifier, and instead hints at a more complex elements of identity. She uses this to shape a narrative that tells of Jakob’s journey to his grandfather’s homeland, one that is the center of stories told by his grandparents, especially his grandfather Zurich with the intent of fostering a tie to Germany in him. In preserving a sense of connection to homeland, his

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<sup>182</sup> The main thing was that Jaköble was back, the Jaköble who had learned in two months what he, grandfather, with all the love and sternness had not been able to instill in Jakob for eighteen years. Respect for his father’s country and as a result an appreciation for love of country.



grandfather passes along certain cultural elements like customs, language, and practices which depending on the situation can blur otherwise sharp demarcations of belonging and/or challenge conceptions of identity.<sup>183</sup> His grandfather sees these stories and the German colony itself as a buffer from the foreign influences he fears Jakob will fall prey to, but to Jakob they are reminders as to why he does not feel a sense of belonging. To him, the world outside the settlement is full of the possibilities and opportunities lacking on his grandfather's farm, and a space that will better serve him. However, through fateful employment on a steamer to Hamburg and his journey around Germany, Jakob comes to understand both his grandfather's strong ties to a homeland he left decades ago, his own connection to Brazil that he deems as home, and his own embodiment as an instance of being and inhabiting an in-between space. Even though the focus is on Jakob and grandfather Zurich, this is a story that through character interaction and introspection, explores the spectrum and tension of cultural memory and identity through contrasting inter-, intracultural, and generational ideas of belonging and their connection to Heimat.

The opening scene of the narrative has a dual role. It situates the story and reader in southern Brazil, in the midst of a German colony and specifically in the home of grandfather Zurich, and it displays to the reader the first instance of differing notions of how that space is defined. For grandfather Zurich, who has just learned that his grandson, Jakob, has run away, it has been, "das schützende Dach . . .", a place of protection for Jakob and a buffer from the world outside of the colony.<sup>184</sup> What his grandson needs protection from is not immediately made known but by Jakob's letter, it appears to be the very thing that draws him away. In the few lines he leaves his grandfather, Jakob addresses the reasons for his departure which also subtly reveals his connection to the colony.

Ausgerückt! Weshalb? Großvater Zurich strich zum dritten Male den Brief glatt, zog die Brille von der Stirn auf die Nase, setzte sich im Kuhstall auf den Melkschemel und las zum dritten Male mit halblauter Stimme die wenigen, flüchtigen Zeilen:

Lieber Großvater, ich geh. Recht mach ich's doch niemals. Und dann, die dreckige Arbeit in der Rosse paßt mir nicht, ich geh in Stadt, vielleicht wird ich auch Matrose.

Denn denk man nicht schlecht von mir und tu die Lene grüßen.

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<sup>183</sup> Heimat meaning home and homeland. It is used here because it is identity and culturally specific denoting those elements associated with Deutschtum (Germaness).

<sup>184</sup> "the protective roof . . ."

Rooted in his explanation for leaving are indications as to how he sees his grandfather's home and the German colony as spaces, and his relationship to them. He cites colony work and his ability to do said work as the rationale for his departure but couched within is his true rationale. That first line can be read as more than just leaving his grandfather's house, it also refers to the colony, which is noted with his insistence that the work of the colony does not suit him. Along that same line, he hints that he does not see the colony as a place of possibilities or opportunities versus what the outside world may offer. This sets up a story-long running list of what the colony, Brazil, and Germany means for grandfather Zurich and for Jakob which in turn offers insight as to how these spaces serve them. That they both have such divergent opinions of the German colony space and cultural expression within it is intriguing and it suggests that what draws Jakob to the outside world is the very thing from which grandfather Zurich believes Jakob needs protection. Hering uses this scene to establish what will become a pattern of bifurcation and a source of tension when it comes to spaces that in some capacity can lay claim and have been used as markers of identity.

Es erschreckte ihn [Großvater Zurich], daß Jakob fremden Einflüssen so zugänglich war, die segenbringende Landarbeit verachtete und sein Heil anderswo suchte. Wenn Großvater Zurich mit tastenden, ungelenken Worten Jäkobles Ideenkreis hatte verbreitern wollen durch Erzählen von Erlebtem und Gelesenem, wenn er versucht hatte, des Enkels Interesse zu wecken an den Vorgängen in Deutschland, so gut er selbst sie kannte, dann hatte Jaköble gar kein Hehl daraus gemacht, daß ihm das alles furchtbar gleichg[ü]ltig sei. Lieber lag er in seiner Freizeit mit Seinesgleichen im Wald oder am Wasser, jagend, fischend, lernte Zigaretten rauchen und portugiesisch schnacken. „Ihr mit Eure Sprach,“ pflegte er verächtlich zu sagen, trotzdem er selbst in seiner Aussprache die Badender Vorfahren nicht verleugnen konnte<sup>186</sup>

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<sup>185</sup> Run away! Why? Grandfather Zurich smoothed out the letter for the third time, moved his glasses from his forehead to his nose, sat down on the milking stool, and read the few brief lines in a low voice/silently for the third time.

Dear Grandfather,  
 I'm leaving. I never do anything right and filthy dunghill work does not suit me. I'm going to the city and maybe I'll even become a sailor.  
 Don't think ill of me and give Lene my best.  
 Your Jakob

<sup>186</sup> It scared him that Jakob was so open to foreign influences, who despised the blessings of work, and who sought well-being elsewhere. Whenever Grandfather Zurich had tried to broaden Jakob's collective ideas/mind with fumbling awkward words via talk of what he had experienced and read, whenever he had tried to generate interest in the goings-on in Germany as well as he knew it, Jaköble made no secret that he didn't care. In his spare time, he

Earlier in the text, grandfather Zurich had only hinted at some vague danger he felt threatened Jakob's well-being but here these fears are clearly articulated and quite telling. It reveals gatekeeping as a means to safeguard and to exclude so as to define cultural membership. For grandfather Zurich, the threat is two-fold; the disinterest in the happenings in Germany and in contrast, Jakob's embrace those things spatially and culturally outside of his home and the colony, specifically speaking Brazilian. Grandfather Zurich's view of language ties in with his bifurcated view of cultural memory and its membership as zero-sum. The narrator's comments push back against the contention of foreign with the comment about grandfather Zurich's own accent which is just as unconventional and foreign as Brazilian is in his defined colony space. Hering uses this to build on the undercurrent of tension between a generation that sees no reverence for its cultural memory that they carried with them from Germany, and another where there is no acknowledgement of liminal space and the practices, notions and sentiments that are being created within it, perhaps causing inhabitants of that space feel out of place. This seeking to find a place of belonging and a means of rescue expressed in Jakob's letter is again echoed in his anticipation of the outcome of a meeting that could realize his desire to become a sailor. „Morgen früh wollte er mit Chico und dessen Kiste auf dem kleinen Dampfer nach Rio Grande fahren – und sein Heil bei dem Kapitän des Lloyd dampfers suchen.“<sup>187</sup>

Kurz vor Santos erfuhr Jakob, daß der brasilianische Lloyd dampfer, ohne längeren Aufenthalt in den brasilianischen Häfen zu nehmen, über's Weltmeer fahren würde, bis Hamburg. Ein ganz eigenartiges Gefühl überrieselte Jakob bei dieser Aussicht. Deutschland – das war etwas, das ganz, ganz fern, ganz dahinten schwebte, etwas Unwirkliches, Schemenhaftes. Das Jugendland der Großeltern, von dem sie noch mitunter gesprochen, wenn die harte Arbeit einmal auf Stunden ruhte, und die Gedanken zurückwandern konnten in vergangene Tage<sup>188</sup>

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preferred to be with his peers in the woods or waterside: hunting, fishing, learning to smoke cigarettes and chatting in Portuguese.

“You all with your talk,” he used to say scornfully even though he couldn't deny the Baden ancestors in his own speech.

<sup>187</sup> Tomorrow morning, he wanted to go on the small steamship to Rio Grande with Chico and his crate, and seek rescue from the captain of the Lloyd steamer.

<sup>188</sup> Shortly before Santos, Jakob learned that the Brazilian Lloyd steamer without delay in the Brazilian ports, would travel across the ocean to Hamburg. A peculiar feeling ran through Jakob at the thought of it. Germany was something that hovered far, far away, something shadowy and unreal. The grandparent's childhood country which they still talked about whenever they took an hourly break from the difficult work, and their thoughts could wander back to the bygone days.

Up to this point, the reader has been privy to how grandfather Zurich defines cultural memory and space, with only a peek at Jakob's views by way of the letter. Hering presents Jakob's views of Germany and they are just as unknown and foreign as the "influences" grandfather Zurich fears. Jakob frames it in terms of his relationship to Germany or rather lack thereof. It is relegated to something that his grandparents have, but for him it is barely perceptible and he is far removed from it in its instance as a marker of identity.

Lächerlich war das den Jaköble immer vorgekommen, rückständig, kindisch fast. Ihm war, als müßten nur alte Menschen mit alten Ansichten und Gewohnheiten dort wohnen. Es heiß ja die „alte“ Heimat. So hatte er sich's damals seinem Kindersinn eingepägt, und der Gegenstand war Jakob viel zu unwichtig erschienen, um sich später ein anderes Bild davon zu machen. Nun sollte er in das alte Land kommen, und es sehen. Oder mußten sie etwa auf dem Dampfer bleiben, während der im Hafen lag?<sup>189</sup>

This excerpt continues to elucidate Jakob's relation to Germany or rather an idea of Germany that he developed as a child that has remained into his adulthood. The operative adjective coloring this imprint is "old" the significance of which is that he attaches this perception not to just beliefs and customs, but also to a specific geographical location, Germany. This reinforces the detachment borne of estrangement to a cultural memory that while a part of his identity, is not its sole component and speaks to the feeling of not belonging that pushes Jakob to leave. Hering uses this to voice the in-between space that the younger generation born outside of Germany navigate in regards to how they see themselves, their group membership, and the ways they view the colony in relation to said identity.

Zu lachen hatte Jaköble nicht viel auf dieser Reise. Jeder Matrose schien das Recht zu haben, ihn zu foppen und zu quälen. „Alemãozinho“ nannten ihn die dunkelgesichtigen Gesellen und spotteten über seine Blondheit, seine helle Hautfarbe, über seine anfängliche Ungeschicklichkeit bei den Schiffsarbeiten<sup>190</sup>

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<sup>189</sup> This always seemed absurd to Jaköble, backward, almost childish that only old people with old beliefs and customs live there. (Even though) It is called the "old" country. That is how it stuck in his childhood mind, and the matter had seemed too unimportant to Jakob to later make a different picture of it. He should go to the old country and see it or did they have to remain on the ship while it was in port?

<sup>190</sup> Jaköble had little to laugh about on this trip. Every sailor seemed to have the right to tease and bully him. The dark-faced journeymen called him, "Little German" and mocked him over his bloneness, fair complexion, and his initial ineptitude at ship work.

This is the first direct challenge to Jakob's identity and it comes at the hands of fellow Brazilians based on appearances and ability, but focus more so on the former. He first notes that the other Brazilians are darker skinned which sets up the binary that he and the other men use to question and defend group membership. Interestingly, the very phenotype that is the basis of his exclusion among some of his shipmates will come into play again but as a means of inclusion.

„Ich bin Brasilianischer so gut wie ihr,“ sagte er empört, wenn sie ihn als Deutschen hänselten. „Ich spreche genau so gut portugiesisch wie ihr. Und ich kann es auch schreiben. Ihr schreibt mit genauer Not euren Namen.“ Dann lachten sie noch mehr und nannten ihn „nosso professor Jacó“<sup>191</sup>

Jakob's reply to this form of gatekeeping is to construct his identity around the language they all speak, to assert his membership, and to go so far as to suggest that he may have greater claim given his ability to write in the language. In response, the group does not reject his claim, but find another way to present his alterity by using his own argument against him. Through this attempt of Jakob's, Hering sets up a different means to signify group membership hence the narrator's pushback on grandfather's Zurich's distinctive Baden pronunciation in light of his disapproval of Jakob speaking Brazilian. Hering may also be hinting at the subjectivisms and nebulousness of these markers of identity and how muddled it can be in terms of interstitial space and liminal identity. In the following scene, Jakob slips away from his group of countrymen sailors who are trying to lure him into a bar and in their pursuit of Jakob playfully and seriously taunting him as a traitor, a group of young German men come to his aid.

Der Anführer der jungen Deutschen war auf Jakob zugetreten, der erschöpft an einer Hausmauer lehnte. „Do you speak English?“ fragte er. Jakob sah ihn verständnislos an. „Was meinen Sie?“ „Ein Deutscher!“ rief der Fragesteller verblüfft. „Was machen Sie denn in der Gesellschaft?“ Jakob wischte sich mit dem groben Tachentuch [Taschentuch] über das erhitzte Gesicht. „An Matros' bin ech halt, vom brasilianische Lloyd,“ sagte er ein wenig geniert. „Donnerwetter, und spricht badenserisch,“ wunderte sich der Bursche. „Dann sind Sie wohl von zuhause durchgebrannt?“ riet er. „Sell sch [scho],“ gab Jaköble zu. „Aber mer fahre bal wieder heim.“ „Heim? Wohin?“

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<sup>191</sup> “I’m as much a Brazilian as you all,” he said indignantly when they teased him as a German. “I speak Portuguese as well as you all and I can also write it while you all struggle to write your names.” Then they laughed even more and called him “our professor Jakob”.

„No, nach Brasilie, wo ich daheim bin.“  
Die jungen Leute, die neugierig näher getreten waren, sahen sich fragend an.  
„Wie denn, Sie sprechen ja Dialekt. Mithin müssen Sie doch hier geboren sein.“  
„Ah na, Mei Großvater scho, ech net. Ech bin Brasil’aner.“ Er sagte das mit einem gewissen Stoltz und ärgerte sich über die plötzlich lachenden Gesichter um sich.  
„Ein Brasilianer, der badens’risch spricht,“ rief einer. „Machen Sie uns auch keine Mätzchen vor?“<sup>192</sup>

Language again comes into play and is reminiscent of Jakob’s weaponized use to signal membership, but in this case, it is used to deny his claim of Brazilian identity and instead through a myriad of assumptions that define their concept of Deutschtum, mark him as German and specifically, a Badener. The now double-edged sword of using language as a signification of identity is the same one wielded by Grandfather Zurich, and Hering’s dual use of a common marker muddles the idea of both Deutschtum and brasilidade. Instead, it opens a lacuna where those sentiments attached to particular groups come into question. It is only after Jakob later presents governmental proof of military service to the youths are doubts of his identity quieted.

Auf dem Wege dorthin erfuhr Jakob, daß seine Begleiter einer Bewegung angehörten, die Deutschland wieder zum alten Ansehen bringen wollten. „Die Hitlerbewegung,“ erläuterten sie.  
„Hitler? Ist das ein Mann?“  
Sie sahen Jakob ob dieser Frage verdutzt an. „Ja, lest Ihr in Brasilien denn keine deutschen Zeitungen? – Hitler ist unsere Zukunft. Hitler wird unser Führer werden, der Führer für ganz Deutschland, und das hoffentlich bald.“  
Jakob senkte beschämt die Augen. Er dachte an den Großvater, der ihn immer wieder für die Vorgänge in Deutschland zu interessieren versucht hatte. Aber Deutschland lag ja so

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<sup>192</sup> The ringleader of the young Germans had approached Jakob, who leaned exhausted against the wall.

“Do you speak English?” he asked.

Jakob looked at him blankly. “What do you mean?”

“A German!” exclaimed the questioner surprised. “What are you doing in this crowd?”

Jakob mopped his heated face with a coarse handkerchief. “I am just a sailor from the Brazilian Lloyd.” he said a little embarrassed.

“Wow, and he speaks the Baden dialect,” the guy marveled. “Then perhaps you ran away from home?” he guessed.

“I hoped to,” Jakob admitted. “But I will go home soon.”

“Home? Where?”

“To Brazil, where I am at home.”

The young people, who had approached curiously, looked at each other quizzically. “You speak the dialect therefore you must have been born here.”

“Ah well. My grandfather sure. I am Brazilian.” He said that with a certain pride and annoyed at the sudden laughing faces around him.

“A Brazilian that speaks Badenish,” one shouted. “Are you kidding?”

weit, ganz da hinten irgendwo – hatte Jakob gedacht, was soll man sich mit Dingen beschweren, die einem nichts angehen<sup>193</sup>

Hering uses the youth to reflect what Jakob had experience back in the colony which seems to suggest that the colony itself is a mirror of sorts of Germany; a reprimand of his disinterest of Germany. Jakob's indifference in the goings on in Germany are a source of shame in that brief moment but then is countered by his long-held sentiments. There is a detachment expressed in adjectives in terms of physical proximity that signify the attitude of Jakob's generation in the colony. Hering continues to build this tension between the generations but also within the various cultural memories to which Jakob belongs but is seemingly constantly challenged in the story. As if to remind Jakob of his tie to Deutschtum and Germany, the leader of the youth group says to Jakob before the group departs, "Auf Wiedersehen denn, kommen Sie gut rüber über's Weltmeer und vergessen Sie Deutschland nicht."<sup>194</sup> The narrator notes that this departure is tinged with envy for Jakob because he sees and wants the comradery and the sense of belonging that prompted him to flee the colony and has followed him to Germany.

Als Jakob, müde vom ungewohnten Gehen, in seiner Hängematte lag, stellte sich der junge Deutschbrasilianer – Hermann Wols – zu ihm, und erzählte als große Neuigkeit, daß der Lloyd längere Zeit – aus unbestimmten Gründen – hier im Hafen von Hamburg liegen bliebe. Der junge Mensch war außer sich vor Freude. „Vielleicht gibt mir der alte Urlaub, dann lern ich Deutschland kennen. Zuerst geht's nach Pommern, wo meine Großeltern herstammten“<sup>195</sup>

In keeping with the play of concepts of identity, the narrator mentions early in the story the presence of another sailor, a German-Brazilian, who warns Jakob not hang out with the other

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<sup>193</sup> On the way there Jakob learned that his companions belonged to a movement that want to bring back Germany's old reputation once more. "The Hitler Movement," they explained. "Hitler? Is that a man?"

They looked at Jakob baffled on account of his question. "Yes, don't you read any German newspapers? Hitler is our future. Hopefully soon he will be our leader, the leader for all of Germany." Jakob lowered his eyes in shame. He thought of his grandfather, who had repeatedly tried to interest him in what was happening in Germany but it was far away, somewhere in the background Jakob had thought. Why gripe about things that are none of our business?

<sup>194</sup> Goodbye then, travel safely (over the ocean) home and do not forget Germany.

<sup>195</sup> As Jakob, was lying in his hammock, tired from unaccustomed walking, Hermann Wols, the young German-Brazilian came to him and explained the big news. The Lloyd, for indefinite reasons, would remain for a time here in the port of Hamburg. The young man was thrilled. "Maybe they'll grant me leave then I can get to know Germany. First, I'll head to Pomerania, where my grandparents come from.

sailors. Interestingly, Jakob has minimal interaction with this character which suggests disinterest on Jakob's part to associate with German-Brazilianess in favor of these other iterations of Brazilian identity. This same character is now the means by which Jakob learns he may have the opportunity to become better acquainted with Germany. The excitement he feels stands in contrast with the indifference he had always shown towards his grandparent's homeland and signals the beginnings of a different relationship to the country.

Im Flug ging es über Heideland, durch Wäldchen und Felder, an Dörfern und Städten vorbei. Wie ein Wunder entfaltete sich das deutsche Land vor Jakobs staunenden Augen. Ein Traum schien's ihm, ein Märchen. Großmutter's Erzählungen fielen ihm wieder ein – wenn sie ihn, den wilden Jungen, gefügig machen wollte zum Schlafengehen<sup>196</sup>

Hering's use of fairy tale imagery is a metaphor that characterizes Jakob's connection to and view of Germany. She builds it through the use of terms which call forth a scene and place that is not real, rather it is tied to his grandmother's bedtime tales. These stories have cultivated a certain image of Germany as other worldly in his mind that still holds even while traveling in and around it. It also suggests that much of what Jakob holds of Germany and its culture, and his own ties to it are always mediated through someone or something. The use of elements central to fairy tales also find their way intertwined in Jakob's own trajectory with successful and failed quests that transform him from who he was to he will become.

Als Jakob wieder zu Atem gekommen war und das schmucke Schiff den Rhein hinaufglitt, hörte er in seiner Nähe hellen Singsang, begleitet von einer Laute. „Muß i denn, muß i denn zum Städtele hinaus,“ klang es aus einem Dutzend junger, männlicher Kehlen. Andere fielen ein, schließlich fangen [sangen] alle Fahrgäste mit. Das Lied kannte Jakob, wenn auch von dem Text nur den Ersten Vers.<sup>197</sup>

A folk song looms large in this scene and much like the stories of his grandmother, is another indirect link to Germany. It also serves as a metaphor for German-Brazilians holding

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<sup>196</sup> In flight, he crossed grassland, through forests and fields, past villages and towns. Like a wonder, the German land unfolded in front of Jakob's astonished eyes. It seemed like a fairytale to him. Grandmother's stories, that she would tell when she wanted to ready him for bed, again crossed his mind.

<sup>197</sup> As Jakob recovered his breath and the pretty ship glided up the Rhine, he heard near him, a cheerful community singsong (an informal gathering to sing unrehearsed well-known songs) accompanied by a lute. "Do I have to, have to leave the city," it rang out from a dozen young male throats. Others joined in, eventually all the passengers were caught up. Jakob knew the song but only the first verse.



significance in its articulation here as a cultural and identity marker, and as a signal to Jakob, German-Brazilians and of their place therein. Only the first lines of the verse are mentioned in the story and are not part of the central narrative but a copy of the song in its entirety is included as part of the short story which reads,

Muss i denn, muss i denn  
Zum Städtele hinaus, Städtele hinaus,  
Und du, mein Schatz, bleibst hier?  
Wenn i komm', wenn i komm',  
wenn i wiedrum komm', wiedrum komm'  
Kehr' i ein, mein Schatz, bei dir.  
Ann i glei net allweil bei dir sein,  
Han i doch mei Freud' an dir!  
Wenn i komm', wenn I komm',  
wenn i wiedrum komm', wiedrum komm'  
Kehr' i ein, mein Schatz, bei dir<sup>198</sup>

The juxtaposition of the German passengers singing this entire popular folk song versus Jakob only knowing one verse hints at an incompleteness of sorts; partially even superficially joined. That he has retained only a part of the song is additional evidence to the indifference he has shown up to this point but the song's inclusion here is also a nod to Hering's prominent theme of guarding cultural elements that she believes underpin German-Brazilian identity. The lyrics themselves speak of a promise to return home to a loved one after a yearlong journey and hint at Jakob's own wanderjahr like journey.

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<sup>198</sup> Do I have to, have to  
Leave town, leave town  
And you, my dear, stay here  
When I'm back, when I'm back  
When I'm back again, back again  
At your door I'll appear  
Though I can't be with you for a while  
My thoughts are with you  
When I'm back, when I'm back  
When I'm back again, back again  
At your door, I'll appear

Aber alle Freudigkeit war wie ausgewischt in ihm, als er so alleine weiter fahren mußte. Was wollte er auch in Baden? Er wußte ja nicht einmal den Namen des Dorfes mehr, dem der Großvater entstammte. Wie dumm von ihm, daß er nicht der Mühe für nötig gehalten, ihn sich zu merken. Nun fuhr er durch Baden, das genau so aussah wie das übrige Rheinland; und wenn ihn die Sprache der Schaffner und einiger Reisender auch anheimelte, so brach ganz plötzlich – vielleicht gerade deswegen – das Heimweh bei ihm aus. So unerwartet kam es, so mächtig, daß Jakob in Heidelberg sofort eine Rückfahrkarte kaufte, gleich bis Hamburg<sup>199</sup>

Away from the Hitler Youth, with whom he has spent time exploring parts of Germany, his enthusiasm to travel further to his grandparent's village and through Germany has waned. The combination of snippets of conversations, voices reminiscent of home, and not remembering the village name seem to touch off an epiphany for Jakob. His grandparents, and most recently the Hitler Youth he befriended have stood in to facilitate his connection to Germany but in traveling alone, there is no one to stand in that gap between Jakob and Germany. Their absence creates a vacuum where homesickness comes in suddenly and powerfully with an unfolding realization about homeland, connection, sense of self, and their interplay.

Sein Heimweh überwand alle Scheu, alle Bedenken, er mußte heim, mußte. Der Kapitän, der selbst nicht wußte, wann der [er] den Hafen wieder verlassen konnte, gewährte dem Bittenden die Entlassung, als der von Heimweh sprach. Vielleicht konnte er ihm nachfühlen. Drei Tage später verließ die „Monte Olívia“, auf der Jakob Schmidt als Zimmersteward die Heimreise antrat, den Hamburger Hafen. Einen Purzelbaum hätte er schlagen können vor Freude, als der Dampfer zu schaukeln begann, als Zeichen, daß das Meer ihn auf sich genommen<sup>200</sup>

The earlier folk song that had been a subtle reminder from Hering on Jakob's and German-Brazilian connection to German cultural memory resurfaces in the story giving voice to his overwhelming homesickness and articulating tacitly that Brazil is the love he has left behind and to whom he must return. It is only once the steamer is in open sea with its physical proximity to

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<sup>199</sup> But all the joy had left him because he had to travel on alone. What did he want in Baden? He did not even know the name of the village his grandfather came from. How dumb that he had not found it necessary to remember it. Now he rode through Baden, which looked exactly like the rest of the Rhineland. The speech of the conductors and some travelers reminded him of home so suddenly, and perhaps because of this, homesickness erupted in him. It came so unexpected and so powerful that once in Heidelberg Jakob immediately bought a return ticket for Hamburg.

<sup>200</sup> His homesickness overcame all misgivings. He had to go home, had to. The captain, who did not know when he could leave the harbor, granted the dismissal to Jakob when he spoke of homesickness. Maybe he could sympathize with him. Three days later, the "Monte Olívia", on which Jakob Schmidt reported for the journey as a cabin attendant, left Hamburg port. He could have somersaulted for joy when the steamer began to sway, an indication that the sea had taken it [the steamer] away [from the port].

Germany growing more distant that his excitement returns which is not rooted in just returning to Brazil but also in leaving Germany, standing in contrast to earlier in the story where their roles were reversed. The narrator notes that Jakob befriends another German, an older man who speaks with a southern dialect, returning from vacation in Germany. He owns a large plantation and after hearing Jakob's story offers him a job because the work is similar to that common in the colonies, the very work Jakob had labeled as unsuitable and a partial impetus for his departure.

„ . . . bin ech – da drübe in Deutschland – word'n.“  
„In - - -?“ Dem Alten blieb fast der Mund offen stehen. „In – Deutschland bischt g'weh? Jessas, nor – nacher sag ech garnix mehr.“ . . . Jaköble hatte Oberwasser. „Un wann ech dir verzähle tu, von die Leut, wo den Hitler hab'n wolln – drei Täg bin ech mit dena rummarschiert . . .“ er lachte in der Erinnerung und aus dem Frohgefühl heraus, den Großvater so versöhnlich wieder gefunden zu haben. Die Alte saß ganz still, blickte auf den Jungen, als spräche der indianisch<sup>201</sup>

Having not heard from Jakob in the time he has been away, grandfather Zurich assumes his fears have been realized and the worst has happened to his grandson at the hands of the outside world. Jakob's return extinguishes that fear and brings with it the revelation that he has been in Germany but it is bittersweet. The Germany that Jakob speaks of is as foreign and distant as grandfather Zurich's version of the country had been for Jakob. Hering uses this to set up the next scene where Jakob resolves the tension of identity, membership and home.

Zwischen Kauen und Schlucken erzählte Jaköble, erzählte von seinen Erlebnissen, und schloß mit den Worten: „Weischt, Großvater, Brasilien isch mein Heimat, un grad schterben tät ech, wann ech net mehr hier sein derft, aber die, wo Deutsche send, soll'n a wisse, wo's ihr Kraft her hab'n, und soll'n des net vergesse.“<sup>202</sup>

Through voicing his understanding of his grandfather's ties to Germany, Jakob is able to explore and explain not only his own connection to his homeland of Brazil but to Deutschtum in Brazil.

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<sup>201</sup> “... I had gone over to Germany.”

“In - - -?” The old man's mouth was almost open. “You've been to Germany? My goodness, I will say nothing more.”

... Jakob had the advantage. “When I tell you about the people who want to have Hitler – I hiked around with them for three days ...” He laughed at the memory and out of the happy feeling of having found his grandfather so forgiving. The old man sat very still, looking at the boy as though he were speaking gibberish.

<sup>202</sup> Between chewing and swallowing, Jaköble recounted his adventures and concluded with the words. “You know grandfather, Brazil is my homeland and I would die if I could not be here anymore but those who are German should know and not forget our ability to live and cultivate a life here.

Jakob makes the argument for inclusion where Deutschtum and identity are more than the narrow concepts that people use to gatekeep with the objective to conform or exclude people. He draws a parallel to his grandfather's sense of membership to his own with Brazil but in a way that expands the connection to German cultural memory in Brazil and a reminder to the other Germans to not forget that they have developed a life there. This is not just the voice of Jakob, but of Hering and the generations born in the colonies expressing their place in terms of their relationship homeland, group membership and identity.

### 5.2.2 Das Kronlein

“Das Kronlein” was initially published in 1932 and later became part of a collection of short stories under the title, Frauenschicksal in 1934. It tells the story of a recently immigrated couple from Germany and the young woman's struggle with life in the colony on the event of the couple's first New Year's Eve in Brazil. Similar to “Ein Guter Kern”, the narrative utilizes third person omniscient narrator which Gertrud Gross-Hering employs to weave a tale that is expressive of cultural memory and instructive of moral character. In looking at how literature creates a space for cultural memory expression in all its iterations, sometimes it is through characters and sometimes, as in this case, it is the story itself or rather how the story is constructed. A large part of the story is a dream sequence that Hering uses as an interstitial space to fuse the two lands to which the character, Martha, is connected. It is an “idios kosmos” (world of its own), that if placed temporally would be reminiscent of the same world in material form that Hering, her primary readers, the characters, specifically Martha, occupy. The story needs Germany and Brazil in order to create an allegory loaded with religious iconography that is gender and culturally specific. That is not to say that this modern-day Christian parable is exclusive, but rather a reflection of the Hering's attitudes, and experiences. She then uses this nebulous space to construct a narrative wherein the crown is symbolic of the highest attainment for a woman. That Martha lacks this crown, the feminine code of conduct, the very trait for which The Virgin Mary is aggrandized, is marked as a character and moral failure. Martha's ensuing search for the crown will see her move through a hybrid space where she will encounter instances of alterity that force her realize what the crown symbolizes, her relationship or lack thereof to it, and the means to obtain it. Though explicitly written as a guide for a type of feminine moral code of conduct, the story is not possible as a moral tale without the expression

of that liminal cultural space.

Sein Gesicht wurde blaß. Er trat dicht an sie heran und seine Stimme klang mühsam beherrscht, als er halblaut sagte: „Denke an den heutigen Abend, Martha. Wenn ich von heute an ein anderer bin gegen Dich, so hast Du Dir das ganz alleine zuzuschreiben. Ich sehe ein, daß ich Dich während der vier Jahre unserer Ehe zu sehr verwöhnt habe, daß immer ich derjenige gewesen bin, der nachgegeben hat. Das soll jetzt anders werden. Verlaß Dich darauf.“  
Er wandte sich nach diesen Worten von ihr ab und griff nach dem Hute auf dem Tisch. „Damit wir uns nicht in das neue Jahr hinüberzanken, gehe ich zu Krügers hinüber. Du für Deinen Teil hast ja abgelehnt, als die alte Frau Dich freundlich zu dem Abend einlud. Sie sind Dir zu gering, die Leute. So mußt Du eben mit Deiner Gesellschaft vorlieb nehmen.“<sup>203</sup>

Hering sets up the moral arc of the story in this first scene between Martha and her husband, Fritz. Using him as an agent, Hering presents the image of a woman who is at increasing odds with her husband and the community. While the readers are not provided any initial back story as to what transpired to initiate the argument, Fritz's accusation of Martha's lack of humility stands in contrast to the humble inhabitants of the settlement.

Und während die Gedanken grübelnd arbeiteten, erschien in dem jungen, ein wenig hochmütigen Gesicht ein Ausdruck von Trotz und Zorn.  
War sie denn das, die ehemals in Gesellschaften so gefeierte Martha Lünemann, die jetzt hier im brasilianischen Urwald saß, in einer Bretterhütte, die ihrer Meinung nach, jeder Beschreibung spottete?<sup>204</sup>

Ruminating on her husband's words immediately gives way to ambivalence and anger. The contrast between his words and how she sees herself sets up a dichotomy that Hering uses to construct an in-between space in which Germany and Brazil co-exist as a backdrop to the telling of Martha's story, the tension inherent in that space, and the space itself as a character expressing interstitial cultural practices, within which Martha interacts to explore and examine contrasting

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<sup>203</sup> His face went pale. He came close to her and his voice sounded controlled when he said in a low voice, "Think of tonight Martha. If I am, from this day forward, another person hostile to you, you have no one to blame but yourself. I realize, that I have always been the one who backed down. That changes now. Count on it."

Following these words, he turned away from her and reached for his hat on the table. "So that we don't argue going into the new year, I am going over to the Krüger's. You for your part declined when the old woman kindly invited you over for the evening. The people they are too low for you, so you just have to be content with your own company."

<sup>204</sup> And though mulling over the sentiment had worked, an expression of defiance and anger appeared on the young somewhat haughty face. Was she, the formerly socially celebrated Martha Lünemann, now sitting here in the Brazilian back country in a wooden hut that in her opinion mocked any attempt at description?

ideas of the feminine role and femininity itself.

Damals als sie Fritz Josten in aufrichtiger Liebe die Hand zum Lebensbunde reichte, hatte sie geglaubt, er würde sie über die Unebenheiten des Lebens hinweggleiten, daß sie ihre Härten nicht spüre. Ihr Leben war bisher wie ein einziger Sonntag gewesen, umsorgt von Mutterliebe, verwöhnt in der Gesellschaft der oberen Zehntausend, zu der sie, dank der einstigen Stellung ihres verstorbenen Vaters, gehörte.<sup>205</sup>

Hering reveals a bit of Martha's background story and its root in the trappings of high society which may lend insight into the crux of her anger at Fritz's admonishment. This passage also marks the first indirect mention of an iteration of German cultural memory, and a foreshadowing of an event or circumstance which disconnects her from that and from Germany. Both of which reveal how Martha views and relates to Germany in terms of her social standing within it.

Zorn über dies ihm angetane Unrecht und die Schwierigkeiten, die sich ihm bei dem Suchen nach einer neuen, passenden Stellung entgegenstellten, dazu die bitteren Tränen seiner Frau, die sich seit der Katastrophe von ihren Bekannten zurückgesetzt fühlte, veranlaßten Josten auszuwandern. Da er bei Martha keinen Widerstand fand, so dampften sie eines Tages nach Brasilien ab. Marthas Mutter war außer sich, ihr einziges Kind in die Fremde gehen lassen zu müssen, und zwar bereitete ihr Gedanke, daß Martha wohlmöglich das gewohnte Wohlleben „drüben“ entbehren müsse am meisten Kummer.<sup>206</sup>

Hering uses Martha's anger as implicit commentary on German cultural memory, group membership and her place in it. She had previously held a certain social status and owing to a circumstance finds herself excluded not just from friends of that status but also fellow members of that social group. Martha's contempt for her and Fritz's treatment at the hands of fellow Germans and their necessary departure stands in contrast with Martha's mother's sadness with regards to their circumstances and impending departure to Brazil. Her grief rests with her daughter abroad sans the comforts her group membership had afforded her, and that this dearth

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<sup>205</sup> At the time when she married Fritz Josten, she had believed he would shield her from rough times, that she would not feel their hardships. Previously, her life had been carefree, spoiled by the upper class to which she belonged thanks to the past standing of her dead father.

<sup>206</sup> Anger at the injustice and difficulties he faced in finding a new suitable position, at the bitter tears of his wife who had been abandoned by their friends since the disaster caused Josten to emigrate. Since Martha voiced no objection, one day they left for Brazil. Martha's mother was beside herself at her only child having to go abroad and in fact readied her mind that Martha, in great misery, would probably have to go without the luxuriousness she was accustomed to.

would be the center of her daughter's misery. Hering uses this to further the existing dichotomy that Martha herself sets up in the preceding passage between Germany and Brazil, and their respective spaces. The purpose is to show these two places as disparate but also to begin to shape the tension wherein Hering will build on the moral arc of the story.

Fritz Josten hatte gehofft, in Rio oder São Paulo eine Stellung in einer deutschen Firma erhalten zu können. Aber gerade zu jener Zeit befanden sich die großen Kaufhäuser in widriger Geschäftslage, und wenn auch die alten Angestellten nicht entlassen wurden, neue konnte man nicht einstellen.

So empfand Fritz Josten es damals noch als ein Glück, daß ein Deutscher, der nach seiner Heimat zurückkehren wollte, und in einem südlicher gelegenen Staate eine Kolonie besaß, diese ihm käuflich oder pachtweise überlassen wollte. Er entschloß sich zu Letzterem. Denn er wollte den Aufenthalt auf der Kolonie nur als Uebergangsstation ansehen, da sein Geldbeutel einen weiteren Aufenthalt in den teuren Hotels nicht mehr gestattete.<sup>207</sup>

The crux of Martha's anger is connected to a scandal which breaks out a few months after she and Fritz marry, and is the impetus for their departure from Germany. Hering reveals that while Fritz comes from a similar affluent background as Martha, he himself is not wealthy but does have a well-paying job that allows him to support a woman used to a certain affluent lifestyle. Fritz's father had invested his entire fortune in a promising enterprise and using his trusted name, the founders of the company were able to convince other businesses to commit as well. The venture ultimately failed which had no immediate direct effect on the couple but it is later revealed that the venture was fraudulent from the outset. The founders had been able to shield their own assets from loss whereas investors, some being highly respectable businesses, suffered heavy losses and as a result, the injured parties filed lawsuits alleging fraud. The elder Josten was, for his part, unaware of the scheme and had actually been pressed into becoming one of the founders but excluded from any insight as to the true nature of the business. However, it had been the Josten name that was used to market the venture and to lure in investors which blemished the family name and the damage went beyond the elder Josten's personal loss. Fritz was let go from his job, abandoned by their friends and along with no other employment

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<sup>207</sup> Fritz Josten had hoped to get a job in a German company in Rio or São Paulo. But at the time, the big department stores were in a bad business situation, and although the old employees were not dismissed, but new ones could not be hired.

At that time Fritz Josten was fortunate to find a German who wanted to return to his homeland and had property in a southern state that was available for sale or lease. Fritz chose the latter because he saw the territory as a transitional space and because he could no longer afford to stay in the expensive hotels.

prospects, Fritz looked to Brazil. Upon arrival, he finds that in Brazil, the German companies are unable to hire as a result of a bad business situation. Hering does not explicitly say so but suggests that the very venture that took down so many companies back in Germany had also hit Brazil, thereby linking the two countries as at fault in their respective ways for not allowing Martha to continue to live the life through which she has defined herself.

Noch einmal ließ sie ihre glänzenden Mädchenjahre an ihrem Geiste vorüberziehen und verglich sie mit denen, die sie hier verbracht hatte im brasilianischen Urwald.

Zum ersten Male wieder seit langer Zeit ließ sie ihren Tränen freien Lauf. Ein grenzenloses Mitleid mit sich selbst hatte sie ergriffen. Das ergriff sie allerdings öfter, nur daß sie es sonst stumm mit sich herumtrug.

Wie sie sich vorkam, so herabgewürdigt, gedemütigt. Wie eine Königin, der man die Krone genommen hatte.<sup>208</sup>

Martha's comparison of her childhood years in Germany to her present time on Brazil brings both these disparate places and times into a singular space. From within this liminal location, Martha's loss of status and the resulting estrangement and alterity, become more amplified and is articulated by her as debasement whereas Fritz expresses it as the source of her moral failure. Hering uses these dual notions of character decline as dueling meanings of the crown metaphor that are introduced in this and subsequent passages.

Aber plötzlich, wie durch Zauber, war der Druck von ihr genommen. Ach, das machte, weil sie nicht mehr einsam war. In einen Saal schaute sie, dessen Spiegelwände das strahlende Licht zurückgaben und die bunte Menge geputzter Menschen, die lachend und scherzend dort lustwandelten. Nur sie selbst trug kein Festkleid und festlich was ihr nicht zu Sinn. War auch die Schwere von ihrem Körper gewichen, lachen, und scherzen konnte sie nicht mit den anderen. Die kannten sie auch gar nicht, alles fremde Gesichter, und sie redeten eine fremde Sprache, die sie nicht verstand. Und sie verstanden auch sie nicht, als sie mitten durch sie hindurchging und bat: „Mein Krönlein hilft mir mein Krönlein suchen, es ist mir genommen worden.“ Sie lachten und wichen dem blassen Weibe in dem unscheinbaren Kleide aus. Da verließ sie traurig den Saal und ging in die Winternacht hinaus, den Blick immer suchend nach unten gerichtet.<sup>209</sup>

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<sup>208</sup> Once again, she allowed her amazing childhood years to cross her mind and compared it to those she has spent here in the Brazilian wilderness. For the first time in a while, she let her tears flow freely. An endless pity for herself took hold. Admittedly she embraced it more often, only usually she would silently carry it around. She found herself so debased and humiliated, like a queen whose crown had been taken.

<sup>209</sup> But suddenly, as if by magic, the pressure disappeared. Oh, that was because she was no longer alone. She looked into a hall whose mirrored walls reflected sparkling light and the colorful crowd of groomed people, who strolled in



The resulting isolation as a result of her situation culminates in a physical pressure bearing down on her body which suddenly lifts as the reader, Martha and the story itself are transported to a different location. The transition to this other world sets Martha down in the midst of the trappings of her former life but not as a part of it. The setting and people that populate the scene intensify her own awareness of estrangement from this world where she is unrecognized, ignored, not understood, and alone. In this initial scene in the mirrored hall, her complete exclusion is given form in her virtual invisibility to the other attendees, and it is among these people, that Martha first vocalizes her search and their assistance to recover that former life, her crown.

Der alte Pastor aber hatte sie doch erkannt. Sie sah es an seinen Augen, die auf ihr ruhten in stummer Frage. Da hob sie flehend die Hände: „Mein Krönlein habe ich verloren, ich kann ohne mein Krönlein nicht leben.“ Da sah der alte Pfarrer sie strenge an. „Sei getreu bis in den Tod, so will ich Dir die Krone des Lebens geben,“ sagte er schwer und langsam. Martha schlug die Hände vor’s Gesicht. Ihr Konfirmationsspruch! Sie hatte seiner nicht mehr gedacht, all die Jahre hindurch. Mit taumelndem Gange verließ sie die Kirche und strebte der Einsamkeit des weißverhängten Waldes zu. „Mein Krönlein, mein Krönlein,“ wimmerte sie vor sich hin, und bei jedem Lichtstrahl, der blitzend von Himmel auf den knisternden Schnee fiel, sie glaubte sie ihr Krönlein schimmern zu sehen, und immer wandte sie sich enttäuscht wieder ab.<sup>210</sup>

Whereas Martha’s idea of a crown is expressed in terms of social standing, Hering uses Martha’s interaction with the priest to articulate the competing notion previously voiced by Fritz, here of moral failure. The choice of Revelations 2:10 as Martha’s confirmation verse and her subconscious evoking of it in the dream sequence speaks of the crown of life, which in Christian

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laughing, and joking. Only she herself was not wearing a party dress and the festive activity made no sense to her. The heaviness had also left her body but she could not laugh and joke with the others. They did not even know her, all were unknown faces, and they spoke a foreign language that she did not understand. They did not understand her either when she passed through them and begged, “My crown, help me look for my crown. It has been taken from me.” They laughed and avoided the pale woman in the unremarkable dress. Then sadly, she left the room and went out into the winter night, looking downward.

<sup>210</sup> But the old pastor had recognized her. She saw it in his eyes, which rested on her in silent question. Then she raised her hands imploring, “I have lost my dear crown. I can’t live without my little crown.” Then the old pastor looked at her sternly. “Be faithful to death, I will give you the crown of life,” he said slowly and solemnly. Martha threw her hands up in front of her face. Her confirmation saying! All those years, she had not thought of it. She staggered out of the church, and headed towards the solitude of the white covered forest. “My crown, my crown,” she whimpered to herself and with every ray of light falling from the sky to the snow, she thought she saw her crown and always turned away disappointed.

tradition is rewarded to those who persevere in the face of difficulties. Hering uses this verse to distance the competing crown analogies by grounding the latter in religious tradition versus that of social construction. Stated otherwise, the crown is rewarded to those for particular perseverance while in the midst of tribulation, who remain faithful in that endurance even onto death. In Martha's case, she reads it as the pursuit of the crown she has lost, whereas Hering communicates it as the crown Martha has never possessed. Hering keeps these two disparate notions within the same space for two purposes. It allows these competing ideas to be represented to the reader as two modes of being, and the space itself as a means to explore what the differing analogies could mean in terms of how Martha constructs her identity.

Da ließ eine Stimme sich vernehmen neben ihr, ohne daß sie den Sprecher wahrnehmen konnte. Leise erst, dann immer lauter tönte sie: „Dein Krönlein, das Du suchst, war ein unecht Krönlein. Laß ab vom Suchen, es bringt Dir kein Glück. Das echte Krönlein aber, das Du nie besessen, mußt Du dir erwerben; ohne dieses wirst Du kein Glück finden.“  
„Erwerben? Wie soll ich das tun? Und wo ist es verborgen? Wie sieht es aus?“ fragte sie angstvoll.  
„Wie Du es erwerben mußt, ist Deine Sache,“ klang es zurück. „Und wo es ist? Auch das kann ich Dir nicht verraten. Nur wie es aussieht. Es ist zusammengesetzt aus Frauenwürde, aus Schmerz und Hoffnung, aus Unschuld und Erkenntnis, und oben als kostbarste Perle: die Demut!“  
„Und sonst ist kein Sc[h]muck daran?“ fragte sie fast enttäuscht, „kein Glanz, kein Schimmer?“  
„Die Krone leuchtet mehr als Gold und Edelstein“, entgegnete der unsichtbare Sprecher. „Aber nur dem, der ihren Wert erkannt hat, andern bleibt ihr Anblick überhaupt verborgen.“<sup>211</sup>

In this play off the familiar biblical narrative of Moses and the burning bush, where a God-like speaker is employed as a means of moral counsel and instruction to Martha, and readers. The disembodied voice, per biblical tradition, represents one of many forms of spiritual manifestation in the material world where God is said to command, instruct, and declare prophecy. Hering uses

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<sup>211</sup> Then nearby, a voice was heard without her being able to sense the speaker. First softly, then it grew steadily louder. “Your crown, which you are looking for, was a false crown. Let go of that search, it brings no luck. But the real crown, which you never possessed, has to be earned. Without it, you will not find happiness.”

“Earn? How am I supposed to do that? And where is it hidden? What does it look like?”, she asked anxiously. “How you obtain it is your concern,” it chimed back. “As to where it is? I cannot tell you that either, only how it looks. It is composed of female honor, of hope and pain, of innocence and understanding, and the most precious thing, humility.”

“And there’s no jewelry on it?” She asked almost disappointed. “No shine, no sparkle?”

“The crown shines brighter than gold and precious stones,” replied the invisible speaker. “But only those who realize its true worth. For others, it remains altogether hidden from sight.”

the voice as a counter that verbally challenges and redefines the idea of a crown from that of a worldly sense to a spiritual one as the true definer of the happiness and femininity that eludes Martha. The crown as outlined by the voice echoes those traits presented in Proverbs 31 that speaks of what it is to be a virtuous woman (wife). Characteristics of such a woman symbolized by the crown are in contrast to that of the crown that has previously sat atop Martha's head. The allusion to Moses lends legitimacy to the message as one divined by God that reaches beyond Martha to the readers as a gendered code of conduct. The voice, Hering herself, is providing another set of traits by which Martha is to construct her identity versus what she has historically depended on and used. For her part, Martha still attempts to associate characteristics of her former life to that of the divined code of conduct in an effort to tie the worldly and the spiritual. An effort that is soundly rebuffed by the voice.

Martha fragte noch weiter, aber das Stimmchen schwieg. „Ich werde zu meiner Mutter gehen,“ dachte die Junge Frau, „vielleicht kann sie mir raten.“ Und mit raschen Schritten eilte sie zur Stadt zurück und stand bald darauf im Stübchen der Mutter. „Das Krönlein kenne ich nicht,“ sagte diese auf die Frage der Tochter. „Ich selbst habe es nie besessen, sonst wäre es von mir auch auf Dich übergegangen. Aber raste nicht, bis Du es erworben, denn ich merke es an mir, daß eine Lücke im Leben des Weibes bleibt, das des Krönleins entbehren mußte.“  
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Hering uses this passage to suggest a causal agent for Martha and any woman that is devoid of the true crown, a divine femininity that was not passed down to subsequent generations, and a rationale for the ensuing moral flaws as a result of its absence, namely a lack of true feminine character. The admonishment to keep searching echoes that of the disembodied voice and Fritz, where her comportment is held up as the source of her misery. This scene, besides counsel to find the true crown of femininity, also further situates the story in a interstitial space providing a clue to the reader that Martha is in the midst of a dream given that both her mother and the priest, as recognizable figures to Martha, are physically in Germany whereas Martha and Fritz are across the Atlantic in Brazil. This space allows Martha to further explore these contrasting ideas upon which identity can be constructed or stripped away, and it allows a means of exposure to

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<sup>212</sup> Martha asked further, but the voice fell silent. “I will go to my mother,” thought the young woman, “maybe she can advise me.” And with quick steps, she hurried back to the city and soon after stood in her mother’s small room. “I do not know of the crown,” she said to her daughter’s question. “I never possessed it myself otherwise I would have passed it to you. But do not rest until you have acquired it, because I notice that an emptiness lingers in the lives of women bereft of the crown.”

the alternate feminine character narrative while still couched in the familiar.

Mit erwachenden Augen sah sie sich um. Geschlafen hatte sie, geträumt! Wie deutlich dieser Traum noch vor ihrer Seele stand! Sie schloß noch einmal die Augen, um all die Einzelheiten festzuhalten. „Fritz muß mir helfen!“ sagte sie zum Schluß ganz laut in die Dunkelheit hinein.

Und dann kam wieder die Angst über sie. Würde er ihr auch helfen wollen? Was hatte er heute Abend noch gesagt, ehe er fortging? „Denke an den heutigen Abend, Martha. Wenn ich von heute an ein anderer gegen Dich bin, so trägst Du die Schuld allein daran. Ja, so ähnlich war es! Martha stöhnte leise auf. Wenn er sie nicht mehr liebte, wenn sie ihm gleichgültig geworden war<sup>213</sup>

This passage brings the narrative and Martha full circle, back to the first scene of the story.

Hering uses the phrase, „Mit erwachenden Augen“ to transition from the dream sequence back to the material world which while itself is a physical in-between space in theory, has been rejected by Martha. Awakening eyes here, like the crown, carries multiple meanings and in fact are linked to the differing conceptions of the crown. Martha is aroused from a sleep that is, as far as Hering is concerned, her former feminine code of behavior, what it is to be a woman. Martha’s last thoughts in the dream echo her reality where she is confronted with the consequences of her behavior towards her husband, her relationship to him and her own identity as a woman. Hering, is making a moral argument to women, but the theme of feminine identity speaks in general as to how traits construct identity, and how one identifies and is identified.

„Hilf mir, Fritz,“ begann sie endlich, ihren Mut zusammenraffend.

„Helfen?“ entgegnete er verwundert.

„Helfen, mein Krönlein suchen,“ entfuhr es ihr. Und als sie den seltsam erschreckten Blick in den Augen ihres Mannes gewahrte, fügte sie schnell hinzu: „Eine andere will ich werden, Fritz, eine ganz andere. Aber helfen mußst Du mir. Ja?“

Da zog ein frohes Leuchten über die vergrämten Züge des Mannes. „Ist das Dein Ernst?“ fragte er atemlos<sup>214</sup>

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<sup>213</sup> With awakened eyes, she looks around. She had been asleep, dreamt it. How clearly this dream was still with her. She closed her eyes again so as to hold onto all the details. “Fritz has to help me!” she finally said loudly into the darkness. And then fear overtook her again. Would he even want to help her? What had he said tonight before he left? “Martha, think of tonight. If I am unsympathetic to you from now on, only you are to blame.” Yes, it was similar! Martha groaned softly. Suppose he no longer loved her the moment she became indifferent to him!

<sup>214</sup> “Help me Fritz,” she finally began, collecting her courage. “Help?” he replied puzzled. “Help me find my crown,” she blurted. And when she caught sight of the peculiarly alarming look in his eye, she quickly added, “I want to become someone else, but you have to help me. Yes?” A merry radiance grew over the man’s careworn features. “Are you serious?”, he breathlessly asked.

This passage acts as a mirror image of the last scene in the dream sequence with Martha searching frantically for Fritz to help her find her crown. The scene replays itself in the material world with different outcome as she actually locates Fritz and begs for assistance. The manner in which the scene plays out suggests that Martha needs Fritz's help because the potentiality of her transformation is tied to her role as his spouse. Any re-imagining of her femininity and identity requires her role as a wife which seemingly implies that marriage and other female role norms are necessary to acquire true femininity as divined by God.

Die junge Frau wollte sich anklagen, ihn um Verzeihung bitten, aber schon nach ihren ersten Worten verschloß er ihren Mund mit einem Kuß. „Kein Wort mehr davon, Liebste. Wollen es begraben und vergessen sein lassen. Aber ich habe Dir etwas mitzuteilen, und zwar etwas Freudiges. Weißt Du, weshalb uns die alten Krügers für heute Abend eingeladen haben? Sie wollten uns eine freudige Mitteilung machen. Der Alte hat einen befreundeten Kaufmann in H., der nächstens aus Gesundheitsrücksichten nach Deutschland reisen muß, und dem fehlt für diese Zeit ein Leiter seines Geschäftes. Herr Krüger, der weiß, daß ich dem Kaufmannsstande angehörte, hat ihn auf mich aufmerksam gemacht, mich, wie es scheint, warm empfohlen, und die Folge ist, daß der Kaufmann mir ein Angebot hat machen lassen, das sehr annehmbar ist. Auf jeden Fall ist's der Schritt nach aufwärts. Nun, was sagst Du dazu?“ schloß er froh. Martha schmiegte sich an ihn. „Ich freue mich um Deinetwillen,“ sagte sie leise<sup>215</sup>

This last excerpt is a reversal with regards to Fritz. Martha attempts to apologize and explain herself but he quickly silences her in favor of telling her about the offer of employment. He is not interested in her epiphany, or desire for transformation, and instead seemingly is dismissing her behavior which is odd given the reprimand of her conduct he gave her at the beginning of the story. Her response to the news of his employment encapsulates and demonstrates the very code of femininity that Hering outlined and is a turnabout of attitude and response as seen at the beginning of the story. Martha's reaction and demeanor carry those characteristics: female honor, hope, understanding and humility that the disembodied voice (Hering) asserts are the true

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<sup>215</sup> The young woman wanted to fault herself, and ask him for forgiveness, but after her first few words he silenced her with a kiss. "Not a word of it darling. Let us bury and forget about it. But I do have something to tell you, and joyous at that. Do you know why the elderly Krugers invited us for the evening? The wanted to tell us some good news. The old man is friends with a businessman in H., who has to travel to Germany for health reasons, and during that time he needs a manager for the business. Mr. Kruger, who knows that I am a tradesman, brought my name up, warmly recommended me and as a result, the merchant has made me a very nice offer. In any case, it is a step up. Well, what do you have to say to that?", he cheerfully concluded. Martha snuggled up against him. "I am happy for you," she said softly.

crowning traits of femininity.

### 5.2.3 Mutter Wantken

In, “Mutter Wantken”, published in 1934 as a part of the four-story collection, Frauenschicksal, Gertrud Gross-Hering uses the personal story of the titular character’s visit to church as a vehicle to drive two other narratives; one is religious in nature, a parable, and the other is a sociocultural accounting of a German colony. The former, with its moral component, reflects Hering’s own strong religious beliefs with Mutter Wantken and the colony playing out a situation in which religion is shown to have the capacity to subvert man’s will and facilitate reconciliation. The latter constructs a historical record of a German settlement, a composite of the colonies that peppered Southern Brazil and which Hering and her primary readers called home. It is a sociocultural recording that, as a whole, serves as an articulation of that settlement culture but which also itself houses other instances of cultural expression within same community. Such a framing allows Hering to offer commentary on the colony as an in-between space that is neither expressly German nor Brazilian, but instead is both and simultaneously altogether different. This component, in turn, also serves as the impetus for the mother-son conflict at the heart of the story which explores how social group membership (here, a member of the colony) informs how inhabitants navigate individually and collectively within a space that by its existence and in the way it is defined in inclusive/exclusive means, is steeped in tension. This is particularly evident in the character Mutter Wantken’s case, who uses these factors as a means to reinforce, extend and deny group membership. As the story unfolds, Hering delivers a snapshot of a community and a culture but also provides a look at the relationship and identity dynamics within it.

Rüstig schritt Mutter Wantken in den hellen Sonntagmorgen hinein. Ihre guten „Tüffeln“, die ihr Aeltester zum letzten Geburtstag geschenkt hatte, trug sie in der einen, und das abgegriffene Gesangbuch nebst einer dicken Schnitte Maisbrot – in ihr[dem] Schnupftuch – in der anderen Hand.

Der gute Sonntagsnachmittagsrock, den sie vor sieben Jahren von dem Erlös eines kleinen Schweinchens gekauft hatte, war hochgeschürzt, und ließ die großen, breiten Füße und ein Stück der mageren, dickgeaderten Beine sehen. Die Füße

waren nicht umsonst so groß und breit; Mutter Wantken hatte sie siebzig Jahre lang hart gebrauchen müssen, auch zum Feststehen<sup>216</sup>

The opening scene is one rich in imagery and tone that paints a picture of the locale in which the narrative unfolds, and introduces the dual nature of the story as both a sociocultural historical record and morally instructive text. The lines though few provide an array of information loaded with physical descriptors. The slippers, worn hymnal, Maisbrot, the good Sunday skirt, thin veined leg, and large wide feet begin to sketch an image of Mutter Wantken and also stand, in the case of her feet, as an explicit statement of a defining character trait, that both shapes Mutter Wantken's interactions with other characters, and that operates as a recurring motif throughout the story.

Einmal setzte Mutter Wantken sich zu kurzer Rast in den Schatten eines Orangenbaumes, der seine Zweige über den Weggraben streckte. Und sie dachte befriedigt, daß es nur noch eine Wegstunde sei, die sie vor sich habe bis zur Kirche. Mit neuen Kräften setzte sie dann ihren Weg fort. Nach einer halben Stunde schon tauchten die ersten Häuschen des Ortes, dem sie zustrebte, aus dem Grün der Obstbäume vor ihr auf. Als Mutter Wantken endlich an dem bescheidenen Gasthof anlangte, waren ihr die Beine doch etwas zittrig geworden. Freilich, wenn man schon um fünf Uhr morgens aufgestanden war, die zwei Kühe gemolken, das Kleinvieh besorgt und Kaffee gekocht hatte, ehe man den Marsch antrat, war das wohl nicht wunderlich<sup>217</sup>

This scene presents colony life as both a setting and as a character. In terms of a character, it is a glyph that communicates to the reader a set of attributes, marks its distinctiveness, and individuality that can convey far more through depictions of character interactions with it, and how said characters experience and navigate colony life. As a setting, through which the

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<sup>216</sup> Mutter Wantker energetically strode into the bright Sunday morning. She carried in one hand, her good slippers that her eldest son gave her on her last birthday. In her other hand, in a handkerchief, she carried a worn hymnbook along with a thick slice of Maisbrot (yeasted corn and wheat bread). The good Sunday church skirt, that she bought seven years ago from the earnings on a few small pigs, was tied high and exposed her big wide feet and a bit of her skinny heavily veined leg. Mutter Wantken's feet were not big and wide for nothing; she had had to use them hard for seventy years, and she had also used them to stand firm.

<sup>217</sup> At one point, Mutter Wantker sat down for a short rest in the shade of an orange tree whose branches stretched over the inlet. She thought, with satisfaction, that there was only an hour's travel more to the church. Then with renewed strength, she continued on her way. After half an hour, the first houses of the place she was headed for emerged ahead of her from the greenery of the fruit trees. When Mutter Wantken finally arrived at the modest inn, her legs had become a bit shaky. Admittedly, if someone was up at five o'clock in the morning, milked the two cows, cared for the small livestock, and had made coffee before undergoing the march, that was probably not strange.

characters pass, it is the backdrop from which Hering chronicles the events, experiences, happenings, and practices as a historical record. As Mutter Wantken moves through the setting, it allows Hering to provide and record additional information about the colony as a whole (e.g. social structure, layout, etcetera), but also offers specificity in terms of Mutter Wantken's personal experiences with these elements via her unfolding story.

So ging Mutter Wantken erst noch zum Kirchhof hinauf, um alte Bekannte zu besuchen. Ja, fast alle, die hier schliefen, hatte sie gekannt. – Sie ging von Grab zu Grab, schob hier und da ein Zweiglein zurück, um die Inschrift herausbuchstabieren zu können, und nickte öfter mit dem Kopf, als wolle sie sagen: „Ja, ja, den Weg, den Ii gegangen, möten wi all mal gahn, de ein tidig, de anern später.“

An vier Gräbern verweilte sie länger. Das waren die Gräber ihrer drei frühgestorbenen Kinder und ihres Mannes, der nun schon zwanzig Jahre hier schlief<sup>218</sup>

The cemetery carries a two-fold meaning. It is a portrayal of loss, and its imprint not just personally as it relates to Mutter Wantken, but also communally and forged from that, a component of group membership in the specific space of this colony. Hering also uses the cemetery as a metaphor in an acknowledgement of the past. It is the history of the colony lying at Mutter Wantken's feet. Those who originally founded and settled the land, the work and practices that allowed it to flourish, the lives that have come, lived, and gone are all inscribed on the headstones in the cemetery, and in the history of the settlement. To visit the cemetery is to commune with the past reflecting on those shared lives and experiences, and one's place and connection to it.

Mit gebeugtem Kopf saß sie wohl zwei Minuten lang, betend. Das war ungewohnte Arbeit, und dauerte deshalb lange. Nicht, daß Mutter Wantken nicht fromm gewesen wäre. Sie war es in ihrer Art. Aber die harte Arbeit in ihrem Leben ließ sie zu keiner Andacht kommen, und um gedankenlos das Wort Gottes im Munde zu führen, dazu war sie zu gerade und ehrlich. So betete sie eigentlich

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<sup>218</sup> Mutter Wantken went up to the church graveyard to visit old acquaintances. Yes, almost everyone laid to rest here had known her. She went from grave to grave, here and there pushing back a branch to read out the epitaph and nodding her head more often as if she wanted to say, "Yes the way you all have gone, we must all travel. Some early, others later."

She lingered at four graves longer. They were the graves of her three children who died early, and her husband who had already rested here for twenty years.



nur in der Kirche, und da der Weg dorthin weit war, geschah das folglich nicht all zu oft<sup>219</sup>

Hering uses this passage to set up the religious moral instruction aspect in which she offers a case study of sorts of a relationship or lack thereof to God. In customary Christian tradition, prayer is a means to communicate directly with God whether for supplication or giving thanks. That prayer is an unfamiliar undertaking is quickly followed by an explanation as to this characterization that sets Mutter Wantken in an interesting albeit seemingly murky place. She attaches and reduces prayer and any communion with God to a singular physical location and outside of that specific space, religion and God are notably absent. In their place, hard work and life are the center of her world. Hering is careful to explain that it is not that Mutter Wantken does not do those things closely associated with practitioners of Christianity, rather that it is done so in a way that she has defined for herself. The reduction, compartmentalization and this self-definition will later re-emerge and come to be another source of tension within her own personal story. Mutter Wantken's relationship also allows Hering to suggest some causal relationships, particularly as they relate to and are understood in Christianity, a means of comfort in hard times, a reminder of God's love, et al., and Hering's telling even hints at Mutter Wantken's absence from God in a parallel to the creation story, where Adam and Eve hide themselves from God because of sin and shame.

Als der Pfarrer später, nach abgesungenem Kirchenlied, seine Predigt hielt, fühlte sich Mutter Wantken von einer tiefen Müdigkeit überfallen. Sie wehrte sich heftig dagegen, konnte es aber nicht verhindern, daß ihr der Kopf einige Male ruckartig vornüber fiel. Plötzlich aber öffnete sie die Augen weit und blickte verstört zu der Kanzel hinüber. Was hatte der Pfarrer eben mit erhobener Stimme gesagt? „Kann auch ein Weib ihres Kindleins vergessen, daß sie sich nicht erbarme über den Sohn ihres Leibes?“  
Ja, so waren die Worte. Und hatte der Pfarrer nicht dabei zu ihr hingeblickt? Woher wußte er denn ...?  
Mutter Wantken drehte sich mit scheuer Bewegung den Kopf nach den Zuhörern. Es war ihr, als müßten sie mit Fingern auf sie zeigen. Aber keiner blickte zu ihr hin, alle sahen mit steifen Gesichtern gradaus zur Kanzel<sup>220</sup>

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<sup>219</sup> With her head bowed, she sat for two minutes praying which was an unfamiliar task and therefore took a long time. Not that Mutter Wantken was not religious, she was in her own way but the hard work in her life did not let her come to church service and did not permit her to so carelessly bring up the word of God. On that point she was very honest and sincere. So, she basically only prayed in church and since the journey there was far, that did not happen too often.

<sup>220</sup> Later after the hymn as the pastor delivered his sermon, Mutter Wantken felt herself struck by a deep weariness.

The communal hymnal phase of the church service has ended and it is two questions the pastor raises in the midst of his sermon that rouses her from her exhaustion induced slumber. His words are met by three questions of her own that recall the message, acknowledge and evoke an emotional response. The words she attributes to the pastor are part of a bible scripture that neither she nor Hering discloses, which speaks in part to one's relationship to God and God's love for His people. Because church is the only place Mutter Wantken has any connection to God, the Word of God, and her attendance is almost nonexistent, it is seemingly the only space where there is a pushback or counter to her unyielding character. This is significant because it has been her defining trait and the resulting product from that stands in contrast to God, how a practitioner would comport themselves in theory, and is the central point of tension in her story that informs the lens by which she sees herself, and others. The use of biblical scripture as a literary device allows Hering to do a few things by tying Mutter Wantken to the broader community and to readers. Mutter Wantken serves as a version or type of member of the community in both attitude and action, and the biblical verse and her subsequent reaction poses questions of reflection not only to Mutter Wantken with regards to her relationship to God and religion but also extends it to readers as a means of self-reflection. Although Hering does not include the entire verse of Isaiah 49:15 which gives the context of the scripture, it would be apparent for those familiar with the bible, serving as its own message and a reminder of God's devotion.

Doch ihre Müdigkeit war verflogen, und ihre Gedanken begannen zu wandern. Sie wanderten zu ihrem jüngsten Sohn, der ihres Alters Stab und Stütze gewesen; bis, ja bis er sich von ungefähr einem Jahr an ein Mädchel gehängt hatte, ein zugereistes, armes Mädchel, das niemand vordem gekannt. Da war die Zwietracht zwischen Mutter und Sohn getreten. Er sollte ein bekanntes Kolonistenmädchen heiraten, das etwas zubrachte, so wollte es Mutter Wantken. Der Sohn aber ging

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She struggled fiercely against it but she could not stop her head from jerking forward several times. All of a sudden, she opened her eyes wide and looked over to the pulpit bewildered. What had the pastor said with a raised voice? "Can a woman forget her nursing child? Can she feel no love for the child she has borne?" Yes, those were the words. Had the pastor not looked over at her? How did he know that? Mutter Wantken timidly turned her head to the audience. It seemed to her that they had pointed at her but no one looked over at her. They looked straight ahead to the pulpit with stiffened faces. (Bible New Living Translation <https://biblehub.com/isaiah/49-15.htm> August 16, 2009 7:35PM)

seine eigenen Wege. Und so wars gekommen, daß der Mutter starrer Willen den Sohn hinausgetrieben hatte aus dem Vaterhause<sup>221</sup>

In revealing Mutter Wantken's backstory of the conflict with her youngest son, the line of narrative that examines identity navigation within the colony surfaces which sees it as binary and exclusive versus liminal and inclusive. The former represented in the attitude of Mutter Wantken particularly the ways in which she characterizes the young woman and her romantic relationship with Mutter Wantken's youngest son, and the latter via implicit and explicit pushback by her son. She constructs a rubric which she uses to dismiss her son and the young woman's relationship, and the young woman herself as part of the colony. She wields it as a type of weapon and means of protectionism that though couched in her argument of abandonment suggests a larger fear of her son's dismissal of her rubric extending to who he is and who he belongs to in terms of his own identity. At the conclusion of this scene, Hering again raises Mutter Wantken's unyielding character, but this time, as the source of familial tension.

Nach Wochen hörte sie von einer Bekannten, daß die beiden, der Sohn und das fremde Mädchen, geheiratet hätten. Mutter Wantken schüttelte über die Zuträgereien unwillig den Kopf, sie wollte nichts hören von dem ungeratenen Sohn, der seine Mutter um eines hergelaufenen Mädels willen aufgab. Auch dann rührte sich nichts in ihr, als man ihr zutrug, dem jungen Ehepaare gehe es nicht gut. Er ginge auf Tagelohn, und „was sie sei“, arbeitete auch bei den Nachbarn um ein Geringes. „Wie man sich bettet, so liegt man,“ hatte Mutter Wantken darauf gesagt und war noch rüstiger an ihre Arbeit geschritten. . . . Und sie dachte an den Sohn, und die Bitterkeit quoll in ihr hoch. Seine alte Mutter konnte er verlassen, um sich an ein fremdes Mädels zu hängen. Nein, das würde sie ihm wohl nie verzeihen können<sup>222</sup>

As the backstory progresses, moving towards the present and Mutter Wantken's presence in

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<sup>221</sup> Nevertheless, her tiredness was gone, and her thoughts began to wander. They went to her youngest son, who had been her help and comfort in old age. Until, yes until for a period of about one year he became entangled with a girl, a poor recent newcomer, that no one [from the colony] knew. There was strife between mother and son. He was supposed to marry a familiar settlement girl who was skilled in doing something. That is what Mutter Wantken wanted. The son, however, went his own way and so it came to pass that the mother's firm will had driven the son from the family home.

<sup>222</sup> Weeks after, she heard from an acquaintance that the two, the son and the foreign girl had married. Mutter Wantken shook her head indignantly at the informant. She did not want to hear anything of the recalcitrant son, who abandoned his mother for the sake of a perfect stranger. Also, when she was told the young couple was not doing well, she was not moved. He worked as a day laborer and “whatever she is” also worked a little at the neighbors. “You made your bed, now lie in it,” Mutter Wantken had said about it [the situation] and was even more animated in her work.

church, her characterization of the conflict and descriptors of her son reflects more so on a lack of deference, and towards her now daughter-in-law, they grow more aggressive, exclusionary, and isolating. She sees the couple's hardship as a consequence of her son's decision to embrace what she deems as foreign and in doing so rejecting those elements that have defined who they are as a colony and as its inhabitants. The price for his abandonment and rejection of Mutter Wantken's vision of colony membership and presumably the colony itself in not marrying one of its members, is hardship to which she is unsympathetic and this inclination sits in opposition to the pastor's words of motherly love. Mutter Wantken's language keeps her daughter-in-law separate, and betray that her acceptance is predicated on the young woman's identity lining up with her own. It does not matter that she and Mutter Wantken speak the same language and share some other aspects of a wider membership, rejection of the girl is reflective of her embrace of a rigid idea of belonging and alterity. Though she never directly charges her youngest son with abandoning the colony and his identity by extension, his choosing the stranger over her, showing deference to the young woman instead of her, not adhering to her ideas of community is her indirect charge of just that. This sentiment is intriguing as it stands in contrast with the rest of the colony that has seemingly accepted the young woman into its membership.

Wie ein zitternder Strom ging es durch den Körper der alten Frau. Der Rücken des Mannes reckte sich auf, und bei der halben Drehung ward die Hälfte des bärtigen Gesichtes der Schauenden sichtbar. Krampfhaft hielt Mutter Wantken ihr Gesangbuch umklammert, und ihr Blick konnte sich nicht losreißen von dem Stück gebräunter Wange, der etwas aufwärts strebenden Nase mit dem staatlichen Schnurrbart darunter. . . . Ein junges Weib saß neben dem Schnurrbärtigen und sah eben mit einem lächelnden Blick zu ihm auf.  
„De seihst ut, as sei werken künnt,“ fuhr es Mutter Wantken durch den Sinn, und ein ganz eigenes, zufrieden-wohlige Gefühl senkte sich in ihre Brust<sup>223</sup>

Mutter Wantken has been waiting to take communion when she catches sight of a young man. The first utterance attributed to Mutter Wantken directly as opposed to the third-person narration that Hering has leaned on comes with Mutter Wantken's first sight of a couple who will later

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<sup>223</sup> It [the sight of the man's back] went through the old woman's body like a current of electricity...The man's back stretched and after turning, half of his bearded face became visible. It was all Mutter Wantken could do to hold onto her hymnbook but could not tear her eyes away from the bit of tanned cheek, the somewhat upturned nose with the sizeable moustache underneath...A young woman sat next to the mustached man and looked at him with a smile. "They look like they could work," mused Mutter Wantken, and a complete contented blissful feeling descended in her chest.

turn out to be her daughter-in-law, and her son. This transition is preceded by increasingly neutral descriptors of the young woman which are a departure from the loaded language employed by Mutter Wantken previously. The shift in commentary suggests something is changing, has changed or is otherwise introduced that has altered her attitude towards the two. Whatever the impetus, it signals a tonal change for Mutter Wantken. The bitterness that has defined her feelings with regards to her son and his wife is being replaced by something else, and the unyielding nature has been muted by some other force. Religion, specifically communion, creates a space that normally does not exist for Mutter Wantken in the material world. It is a reminder of the love, suffering and sacrifice of Jesus, it is not a ritual to take lightly and believers are warned of mindlessly taking part as it is a moment of meditation. The reflection on Jesus and self is the stimulus that creates room for Mutter Wantken to reevaluate, and her subsequent references to her son are no longer entombed within the narrative of abandonment and the young woman, in that of alterity. Religion and God are creating an opening where she can move away from the unyielding position that has long defined her and her actions, but it, self-reflection and everything tied to what she associates with the physical space of the church then suggests that any reconciliation likely could not and would not be possible outside of that space.

Aber ein Ton schlug an ihr Ohr, das plötzliche Aufweinen eines ganz kleinen Kindes, und das kam von der Richtung, in der das junge Paar saß. . . . Mutter Wantken wollte eigentlich die Kirche durch das Hauptportal verlassen, aber das Stärkere in ihr zwang sie, dicht an dem jungen Paar vorüberzugehen. Die junge Frau sah gleichgültig über die Alte hinweg; sie kannte sie nicht. Aber in des Mannes Augen zuckte es auf, er machte eine unschlüssige Bewegung zum Aufstehen<sup>224</sup>

A few different things are happening here beginning with her attention having been torn away from the business of communion with the visual sight of the couple, and is now held to the point of distraction with the sound of the child's cry. The cry comes at the same time that the figurative body of Christ is being offered to her and hints at the convergence of the spiritual and temporal worlds. The reminder of eternal, unconditional and otherworldly love, a love conveyed in the earthly sense as that of a mother. Hering uses this scene to demonstrate a subversion of

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<sup>224</sup> But a sound hit her ear, the sudden cry of a small child that came from the direction where the couple sat. . . . Mutter Wantken wanted to leave the church through the main entrance but something stronger forced her to pass closer to the young couple. The young woman looked over the old woman indifferently, she didn't know her. But the man's eyes lit up at the sight of the old woman and he made a hesitant movement to get up.

will, an internal struggle within Mutter Wantken where that often-repeated character descriptor is being overpowered by a stronger force that sees the first interaction of sorts with her son, and the young woman.

Und wieder tat Mutter Wantken etwas, was sie nicht wollte und doch mußte: sie streckte die große, verarbeitete Rechte dem Sohn hin, der aufstehend mit festem Griff die Mutterhand packte.  
„Gun Dag ok, Mutter.“  
„Gun Dag, min Jung. Wo geiht di dat?“  
Es war nichts von Gefühlsduselei in diesem Wiedersehen; ganz ruhig und sicher klangen ihre Worte<sup>225</sup>

The first line of this excerpt encompasses a moral and religious distinction, desire versus obligation. What has overpowered her and forced her to approach the couple also now compels her to reach her hand out to her son. In Christian tradition, the partaking of communion is a means of healing and wholeness made necessary by human sin. It is also a reminder of Jesus's love for mankind. As such, this all-encompassing love that is at the heart of the religion, colors the relationship with God which, in turn, dictates a practitioner's actions and character. Hering demonstrates to the reader the tension between the struggle of this distinction, symbolized as the spiritual and the material world, through this exchange noting the initial lack of desire on Mutter Wantken's part but also in her determination to do so.

„En staatschen Kirl,“ sagte er dabei wohlgefällig.  
Nun trat doch ein Ausdruck von Rührung in das strenge Altweibergesicht. Mit scheuer Liebkosung strich Mutter Wantken über die geballten Fäustchen. „Hei hat din Näs,“ sagte sie stolz. Dann wandte sie sich mit ruckartiger Bewegung der jungen Mutter zu. „Dag ok, min Tochter.“<sup>226</sup>

Hering uses this penultimate scene to remind the reader of who Mutter Wantken has been, and to contrast it with her present actions to set up the story resolution but to do it in a way that ties in the moral and sociocultural lines of the tale together. Mutter Wantken's expression of emotion is then followed by an articulation directed at the physical manifestation of all the things she railed

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<sup>225</sup> And again, Mutter Wantken did something she did not want to and yet had to; she stretched out her right hand to her son, who grasped her hand with a firm grip. “Hello mother.” “Hello son. How are you?” There was no wrong emotion in this reunion, her words sounded calm and assured.

<sup>226</sup> “A handsome lad,” he said pleased. Now an expression of emotion appeared on the stern old woman's face. With apprehensive tenderness, Mutter Wantken stroked the little balled fists. “He has your nose,” she said proudly. Then abruptly turned to the young mother. “Hello daughter.”

against and tried to protect; membership, alterity and liminality are all found in the features of her grandchild. He is not strictly of the colony nor of his mother's land, rather he is something altogether different but still a representation, and member of the colony. Her acceptance of that extends to the young woman, who goes from alien outsider to a family and, by extension, a welcomed settlement member. Subsequently, the reader learns that the reconciliation happens on the day that the child is scheduled to be christened as a new member into the body of Christ. The symbolism of the baptismal and the actions of Mutter Wantken mirror one another as each are extending admission into their group.

## CHAPTER 6

### Conclusion

The research in this dissertation is not predictive, rather it gives nuance to ideas about *Deutschtum*, *brasilidade*, and identity in a broader sense. Through the use of various approaches in memory studies, linguistics, art history, media studies, history, political science and literary studies, a multidisciplinary methodology was formulated by which to study and examine the literary expression of culture. In engaging in conversations with conceptions behind national and immigrant literatures, and the construction, recollection and transmission of collective/cultural memory, what emerged was that the same dynamics addressed in this dissertation are playing out in the midst of the current global pandemic, are embedded in political discourse and entrenched in society, not just in Brazil, but worldwide. By analyzing the short stories of two German-Brazilian authors published in German settlement *Kalenders* during Brazil's *Estado Novo* (1937 – 1945), and using them as case studies, this dissertation has shown a position from which to argue the inclusion of German-Brazilian cultural memory and identity as inclusionary elements of *brasilidade*, and by extension, the artistic expression of that identity in literary productions as a part of Brazilian national literature. The *Literatura Brasileira de Expressão Alemã* project is provocative in its assertion of these literary productions as constituents of Brazilian literature, but such offerings including those by other immigrant groups were relegated to a subset of fiction, immigrant literature. In the case of Alfred Reitz, Gertrud Gross-Hering and the 175-plus authors identified by the project, they were voices that were silenced as a result of an ongoing cultural war; one of many political tools used to consolidate power within Brazil and to define its national character internally for exportation to the rest of the world.

Central to the argument for the cultural and literary inclusion of the authors from the *Literatura Brasileira de Expressão Alemã* project is the consideration of national and political identity. Notably, how collective and individual identity is perceived, discussed, and consumed, which historically subscribes to a belief of it as singular and fixed instead of its varied and variable state. Identity arises from (collective) cultural memory. Society is central to the creation of memory and for its recollection. It is a sociocultural dance of time, the interrelationship of the past and the present, a marker of our social environment and its resulting lens by which we use to filter, interpret and transmit our past. The memories themselves are products of our interactions with others within a social environment, a shared recalling, processing and interpretation of the



past. That action defines us as a social group, as we are communing with that group, adopting its perspective, interests, and ways of thinking. It is an identifier that is fixed in that we do not lose it when we move from one society or social environment to another and in fact, when memory is recalled, it places us back within that social environment (family, community or any social group) with its respective framing. Identity's varied characteristics owes itself to the fact that any one individual can be a member of any number of social groups, each with its distinctive social environment and resulting framework but these social groups each have specific traits and functions vis à vis cultural identity. The German immigrant community is an example of a lived intergenerational collective memory social group where the capture, construction, orientation, presentation and transmission of memory is primarily based in orality. It is a mode of remembering where through interplay and communication by way of repeated recalled oral stories, members of the group, who were not first-hand witnesses, are allowed and have the opportunity to still participate in a shared experience which reinforces group identity. But the past itself is not a given, it has to continuously be remade and rendered in terms of what data is remembered and the importance and meaning that said past holds, resulting in individual and collective memories that can vary greatly. At its heart, when recalling a memory, we are expressing qualities inherent to our social group; it reinforces to members, and expresses who we are as a group. For the German immigrant community, lived intergenerational memory is the mode by which identity is imprinted and the pathway by which we can observe *Deutschtum* and its dissemination to subsequent generations. As an identifier, this as a means of marking one's identity is significant given that the German immigrant community is removed from the geographical center of *Deutschtum* (the German Confederation and later Germany) and had to rely on other attributes to denote their membership.

Historically, there have been divergent ideas of *Heimat* in circulation. The prevalent belief that it is an undefinable term because of the personal value it holds for each individual versus concepts that see it as an example of varying referents that evoke a specific time and place, a cultural reaction to regional and national identity tension, or an expression of dual consciousness, et al. As it plays out in the German immigration community, *Heimat* bears a striking resemblance to *Deutschtum* in its varying instances which is owed to the fact that there are differing ways in what and how it is remembered, which affects how it is shaped and presented. Because it is borne out of the industrial age (industrialization and urbanization), a

tension resulting from contrasting rural and emerging modernity identities, Heimat became a concept around which to rally in cause of a conscious collective identity. If Deutschtum is Germaness, Heimat is an articulation of that Germaness, a symbol of their communal membership. The link between Deutschtum and Heimat, and they're assuming the traits representative of what it is to be German lies in Mnemosyne or rather its articulation within artistic expression. The practice of using objects to map memory as an aide memoire has a long history reaching back to antiquity where it localized memory, and encoded information in such a way as to allow for the efficient storage and recollection of memory. To better understand how variations in Deutschtum and Heimat are formulated and expressed, the use of Swiss linguist, Ferdinand de Saussure's, linguistic theory of the mnemonic relationship between concept, and acoustic images offers standards that seemingly mirror the fluidity and rigidity at play with Heimat as an articulation of Germaness, and Deutschtum as a whole. There are governing principles that allow fluidity for speakers to set up connections between any sound or series of sounds (SIGNIFIER) and any idea (SIGNIFIED) to communicate a meaning (SIGN). Over time, that fluidity allows for new associations to come out of new combinations of sounds and ideas to add to the already existing body of meanings. The principles also provide rigidity in that they dictate how these meanings are used. A connection is permanent, once it is made, it cannot be undone by any individual nor the community, nor can they replace it, they can only add to it. For Heimat, what this means is that given its ubiquitous nature and its diverse meaning, it can and does evoke a myriad of connections because of what is remembered (private, public practices, objects, etcetera) and how it is remembered (as familial, communal, political, etcetera). It is this myriad of associations that the German immigrants carry with them across the sea and use to recreate institutions, and instances from Germany. However, like their identity, these associations are no longer geographically centered and in fact, they take on a new layer of characteristics as the immigrants settle into these new physical spaces outside of Germany.

Early desire for immigration in the post-independent Brazilian Empire was economically, philosophically, politically, and socio-culturally driven and as such informed policy. The Imperial court pressed for the aggressive recruitment of Germans with initially little success owing to the climate, hostility, immigrant mistreatment, and the high African slave population with the last factor being the impetus for the urgency in European recruitment. Eugenics by means of immigration was the key to Brazil's racial and cultural transformation, and future

economic prosperity where desired traits believed to be inherent to Central Europeans would purge the country of its African genetic pool, and closer align it with Europe. They believed that the immigrants would expand and diversify the country's sources of revenue post enslavement, transform the agrarian economy to one primarily of exportation, secure the southern frontier against the expansionist policies of neighboring countries, and impart desired traits to the larger Brazilian population thereby transforming the face of the country.

The German colonies initial reliance on the land for subsistence informed what areas were selected for settlement, and in choosing familiar environments reminiscent of home, they established communities where they could remake that which had been left behind. The relative isolation of the colonies allowed those recreations to occur and flourish, creating self-contained communities that due to their remoteness could filter foreign influences from other non-German settlements and Brazil itself. Those cultural artifacts carried from Germany found natural repositories in public spaces and institutions such as school and specifically the Protestant church where direct lines to the Prussian state church guaranteed the influencing if not the outright shaping of ethnocultural spaces in the colonies by which to reinforce a particular flavoring of German cultural practice. Once German immigrants settled in Brazil, their presence, the colonies themselves create new associations to Heimat yielding new iterations that are a reflection and expression of their interstitial physical space, culture and identity. But rather than an absolute, liminality operates along a spectrum that creates a space for liminal cultural memory and its expression by way of e.g., hyphenated identity, dialects, etcetera. It is also simultaneously expanding *Deutschtum* and *brasiliadade* with no hard demarcations except for those people, policies and institutions that attempt to control access.

Traditionally, national literatures have a two-fold function in how, and what they communicate but with the same purpose, nation building with the intent to articulate a vision of the culture. Internally, national literature constructs and disseminates an image of the country and its future course. Externally, it telegraphs a national ethos, and the values that define the nation's identity. What that vision of Brazil would be became the center of debates, uprisings, and directed governmental policies in a long running culture war. The two noted nineteenth-century intellectuals, literary critic and poet *Silvio Romero*, and author *Machado de Assis* had a number of exchanges over the notion of national ethos, and its tie to Brazilian literature that initially centered around authenticity, specifically what elements would result in an authentic

Brazilian literature. For Romero, he imagined using literature to define national character and as such, literary production would reflect said ethos. A constellation of flora, fauna, and inhabitants, would be distilled to commonalities to yield a group of works that would be presented, and consumed as Brazil's identity. For Machado, such an approach reflected the obsession by intellectuals and the elite on external perceptions of Brazil, and he rejected the idea that any identity communicated through literature would be representative of national character. He argued for more organic representations that sought to understand human complexities and motives versus imported European tropes of Brazil that were then draped in nationalistic elements. Fast forwarding to the 100<sup>th</sup> commemoration of Brazil's independence, the nation saw a cultural pushback, led by the Modernists, that broke with old traditions governing the arts and how nationalism was expressed. They argued for an alternative to practices rooted in European norms which reflected and were extensions of European culture that yielded Brazilian cultural products that, as Machado had argued earlier, were imitations that essentially relocated Brazil and its people to Europe versus a true organic cultural production that was uniquely Brazilian.

Immigrant literature, by its nature, has conventionally been excluded from the discourse of national literatures, and in most countries, are relegated to a subgenre of fiction whose themes speak to immigration experiences. Stories surrounding departure from their home country, arrival, exploitation, discrimination, assimilation, interstitial spaces, identity, reasserting ethnic identity are not customarily seen as an extension or representative of national character even though in some countries, immigration is the backbone of the nation itself. Similar to national literatures, immigrant works also have internal and external mechanisms but both with the same intention, to show, through their narratives, the values within their communities and how they play out day to day similar to the human complexities and motives that Machado had argued. Inside these communities, these narratives are community builders, individual recordings of collective experiences. Externally, they are the face of the community both within their new country and their home country with an identity that is politically and culturally interstitial due to the binary nature (this or that) of how identity, culture, and by extension, cultural memory (collective memory) are considered. What this means in terms of the argument of literature defining and conveying a national character circles back to Machado's argument to refuse any national identity portended to be borne of literature versus Romero's argument of it conveying a commonality.

Literature as an external repository for cultural memory and by extension identity, finds its roots in antiquity but how it behaves as a form of media in how memory is stored is a relatively new field of study. Beyond its storage capacity, media can also be a memory prompt as well, allowing it the potentiality to connect disparate members of a social group together. However, how it stores, depicts and communicates cultural memory depends on its carrier. Astrid Erll and Ansgar Nünning in, *Where Literature and Memory Meet: Towards a Systematic Approach to the Concepts of Memory in Literary Studies*, identifies three areas of study in which literature and cultural memory interact and its capacity to (re)construct cultural memory, with two of the three being inculcated with values reflective of its usefulness to the group: genitivus subjectivus (memory of literature), genitivus objectivus (memory of literature II), and literature as a medium for cultural memory. The first two interest themselves in systems, the former as a symbol system where it remembers itself through intertextual references (intertextuality), and the latter, a social system reflected in canon formation and literary history. This is not to conflate national literatures and literary canons, but rather to demonstrate how there are institutionally constructed instances of cultural memory that are preserved by societies and this goes to the significance of the ongoing debate of who is it that selects those symbols that will be loaded with relevancy and come to represent the social group. Erll argues this process illuminates the importance of institutions be they formal or informal (government, education, family, among others) as they are the ones that from a diverse assortment of works construct a corpus of texts that cultivate a narrative to be circulated and passed on as a memory story. Society, which acts as the custodians, then protects and maintains the identity, history and vision of the country. Literary history undergoes a similar distillation whereby certain motifs, conventions, and other elements are extracted from a larger totality and are deemed to be significant as to tell the history of literature of the nation, while others are precluded. This loops back to Maurice Halbwach's cultural memory social groups and memory convergence, Aby Warburg's mnemonic objects, and explains the process as to how and why national literatures would traditionally be exclusionary of immigrant narratives versus the literary considerations raised by some of the voices from within these institutions. The perception of immigrant literature and its expression is simply as literary themes as opposed to representations from within the broader national narrative may lie with the perception of it as a representation of memory in literature where the works themselves are considered as a cultural performance as opposed to the defined signs and symbols that

society has invested in as iterations of their national identity (e.g. we are this, we are not that).

If we view national literatures as a body of texts that construct and convey a national identity, as is the traditional and prevalent practice, then the social and symbol systems of literary canons, literary history, and cultural memory avatars seem to explain the thought process of the institutions and societies that act as cultural gate keepers in prescribing what it is to be Brazilian. This falls short of Machado's and the Modernists' argument of an organic Brazilian national literature that is not reliant on markers or symbols constructed by institutions that have typically strong ties to old traditions outside of Brazil. If there is an apprehension or refusal to view immigrant literature and its liminal nature as a subset of national identity because of the institutional and societal preservation of these old traditions, our path lies in the third intersection of cultural memory and literature, which is literature as a medium of cultural memory. Literature as a type of media in its capacity as a vehicle or means of transmission does not denote a neutral or empty carrier and as Ann Rigney argues in, "Plentitude, Scarcity and the Circulation of Cultural Memory", media is not only able to store and transmit, but that it can create cultural memory as well. It shapes the way cultural memory is stored, remembered and conveyed that is consequential because whereas 'lived' memory with its oral transmission is the preferred mode, its fragility owing to its event horizon (the correlation between the passage of time and the lifespan of first-hand witnesses/experiences) makes it vulnerable to loss, whereas writing offers relative security from such a threat. The downside to this change of storage and transmission is it frees the social group from the requirement to commit experiences and events to the internal recall (lived memory). The result is a reliance on an external medium as a means to stabilize memory and identity, which then becomes instrumental as to what the group collectively remembers or forgets. This will have an effect on what elements related to that event or experiences are captured, and how it is recorded. The process recalls a type of convergence or distillation that given all the things in theory that could be said or written, they do not actually get written or said. Meaning that even though it is ideal to capture as many impressions of that event or experience, that is not what actually happens in reality. Memories are compressed into selective mnemonic objects that form the memory story. The objects, signs or symbols come to act as glyphs for the memory, and mark particular events as evidenced with the use of *9/11* or *twin towers* to circulate the memories associated with the events of the terrorist attacks in New York. But just as with this event or any other experiences, the small number of objects that tell a

memory story have value that members of the social group ascribe to it that is relative to its utility in the situation in which the memory is raised. Conversely, whatever is assessed to have no value is discarded, and this is not a singular event, but rather an ongoing process where the objects associated with the memory are reevaluated and can be discarded but not erased in favor of other objects. That signifies that the static characteristic associated with collective memory that defines identity and conveys the story of the social group is demonstrably false. Mnemonic objects like literature allow for greater circulation because of its nature of being an external repository. However, as with all media, it will dictate how and what is stored which, in turn, impacts how that memory will be (re) constructed and interpreted. It will not simply reflect or show reality, rather it constructs a version of the past from the signs and symbols of cultural memory. What this means for immigrant literature is as media, it is an external repository guarding against memory loss over time and also constructing an account of the past from the products of memory convergence (signs and symbols). The narratives constructed from these signs and symbols are representative of the group (their values, sentiments) as they play out on a day to day basis. In the assembly of these accounts of the group's memory, literature also creates a space within its pages where the authors are analyzing and interpreting in the midst of the construction of narratives such as: the play of languages, spectrums of acculturation, navigation, among others but again by way of the values of the group as they play out in the everyday. As literary productions, they display themes that speak to human motivations, actions, and complexities with a frame of reference that are a result of group experiences (e.g. the process of immigration within this new country).

If we accept the historical interpretation of a national literature, the question becomes, why is it that immigrant literature is not considered a mnemonic object of national literature? It emanates from within the nation, its accounts are a part of nation building both internally and externally as the story of the nation. This again suggests gatekeeping and as Daryle Williams explains in his book, *Culture Wars in Brazil: The First Vargas Regime*, these battles are about what should a country's official visual culture have or make room for, and are essentially a fight over nationhood taking place by way of cultural platforms. For Getúlio Vargas, it was cultivating and curating those mnemonic objects that would stand as markers of *brasilidade* internally and externally, effectively attempting to write over existing cultural memory and identity in its varying instances. Immigrants in Brazil are an iteration of national identity and by extension,

their cultural memories and expression. The cultural management policies put into place as a part of centralizing government control over the populace sought to create commonalities across the culture that would be the definitive representation of the nation, but that also meant excluding certain elements and that determination was made by a select few. Its maintenance would then be seen as imperative to sustaining and guarding the national imaginary against perceived threats, be they internal or external which Vargas used to secure his political hold on the country. All of which is reflective in Brazil's cultural production but at the price of the stories that Machado argued were more reflective of humanity and conducive to organic national literary production that would best tell the story of *brasilidade*. Today, there are a plethora of Brazilian authors that do not carry Iberian surnames that have enjoyed popularity in Brazil but this emergence comes some three generations removed from the large migration period after World War I. This may bode well for Brazilian literature in general, but for national literature, that is the artistic rendering of national identity, it is still heavily vested in maintaining how Brazil sees itself as codified in the laws and policies of cultural management. The project, *Literatura Brasileira de Expressão Alemã* (Brazilian Literature of German Expression), sees these works as part of how Brazil should see and define itself. A nation of Brazilians with a multifaceted identity, made of different groups that stand as mnemonic objects of the larger culture and whose national literature should reflect the manifold nature of its groups if its national literature is to tell who it truly is at the intersection of cultural memory and literature versus reliance on markers selected and put in place by a select few for a select few. Doing such necessitates a reimagining and reconsideration of how we understand, talk about and consume culture, and identity. This entails being in conversation with those dynamics separately but also as a whole as they are cultural, social, national et al identifiers. It means generating a shared meaning of nationhood and membership that is malleable in its intent and design. It can and does expand to accommodate the varying connections that arise from the memories (shared experiences) of their members, be they immigrant, or any other alterity group, and that these memories and their artistic expressions are seen as instances of the nation's identity and its national narrative. These issues are not just localized to Brazil as culture and their artistic expressions are a part of any nation's identity, and the larger globalization of cultural products and as such it necessitates understanding culture and identity not as absolutes but rather as a continuum of nuances. To construct it as such would also require resisting assigning hierarchal value so as to prevent the rendering of any new entries as



deviations or departures instead of the natural result of a dynamic nature of cultural memory and identity.

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