For the ever-expanding horizons of the Portuguese Empire, descriptive correspondence was an important early colonial enterprise. Narratives written to the king from voyages abroad were composed with an Adamitic zeal, adhering to the logic that naming led to *de facto* dominion over those things named. For example, after describing interactions with the indigenous, their appearance, and behavior, Cabral’s scribe, Caminha, writes from the newly christened Terra da Vera Cruz in 1500: “Parece-me gente de tal inocência que … imprimir-se-á facilmente neles qualquer cunho que lhe quiserem dar.” Afterwards, he turns his gaze to the land while broaching issues of keen interest to the king, such as the possible existence of gold and the adequacy of the land for colonization: “Esta terra, Senhor, parece-me … muito grande … não podíamos ver senão terra e arvoredos … Nela, até agora, não pudemos saber que haja ouro.” Then, like “Canção do exílio,” Caminha’s letter concludes with a comparison of Portugal with the newly encountered continent: “Contudo a terra em si é de muito bons ares frescos e temperados como os de Entre-Douro-e-Minho, porque neste tempo d’agora assim os achávamos como os de lá.” Caminha’s favorable assessment as scribe set the stage for the colonization of Brazil.

Three decades later, in 1532, King João III of Portugal wrote to Martim Affonso, a sixteenth-century Portuguese explorer who would eventually rule over the São Paulo region (then known as São Vicente) as its first captain. The king, increasingly interested in the business of Brazil’s initial colonization, was anxious to learn more about what he had seen during his voyage. At the time, Affonso found himself in charge of a fleet exploring the coastline. King João III writes to him with a request for more information: “Havendo de estar lá mais tempo, enviareis logo uma caravela com
recado vosso, e me escrevereis muito largamente tudo o que até então tiverdes passado, e o que na terra achastes” (João III 193).

At the end of their journey, a travelogue was produced, written by his brother, Pero Lopes de Souza. The document described their journey from Lisbon to Fernando de Noronha and then down the coast to the River Plate. *Diário da navegação da armada que foi à terra do Brasil*, later published in 1839 by the Brazilian historian Francisco Adolfo de Varnhagem, may not be as graceful or compact as Caminha’s letter, but it is with narratives like these two and others from the sixteenth century that “Canção do exílio” finds the moorings of its comparative dialectic and colonial subtext. Once received by the king, these letters from “além-mar” were as good as deeds. Imperial plans could be made, territories divided, peoples subjugated, crops planted, minerals and other commodities extracted, and general instructions for exploration expounded, all in an effort to enrich and expand the empire.

Three hundred years later, in the early nineteenth century, as colonies gained independence across the Americas, the Romantics would turn this mode of descriptive narration on its head, symbolically reclaiming the ownership of newly independent nation-states as they rewrote history from a local perspective, albeit an elite one. Laden with the same imperialist anxiety for possession, poems like “Canção do exílio” still approximate the enthusiasm of the explorers. As Gonçalves Dias assumes Caminha’s gaze, he tells us that “lá” in Brazil, everything is wonderful: the birds’ songs more beautiful, the fields more abundant, the stars brighter. Yet, the impulse to describe everything “lá” no longer serves colonial interests. Unlike Caminha and Affonso, Gonçalves Dias, as a self-described exile in Portugal, does not write to the king; instead, he implicitly challenges him and what was the Portuguese empire. The land is now “minha,” declares the Brazilian, and the gardens, the flowers, the stars, “nossos.” Brazil in all its exuberance now belonged to the newly independent Brazilians.

When Gonçalves Dias’s *Primeiros cantos* reached Portugal in 1847, making the journey back across the Atlantic, the critics received his first volume of poetry with praise. Famously, the nineteenth-century Portuguese novelist and historian Alexandre Herculano, in “Futuro literário de Portugal e do Brasil,” wrote a glowing review: “Os primeiros cantos são um belo livro; são
inspirações de um grande poeta. A terra de Santa Cruz, que já conta outros no seu seio, pode abençoar mais um ilustre filho” (98). Herculano’s reference to Brazil by its original colonial name points to the post-colonial dynamic at the heart of Romantic poetry, opening the way for Herculano to praise all those American poets who glorify their own land and not Europe: “Quiseramos que as Poesias americanas … ocupassem [em Primeiros cantos] maior espaço … Esse Novo Mundo … é assaz rico para inspirar e nutrir os poetas que crescerem à sombra das suas selvas primitivas” (98). This well-known episode in the young poet’s early career undoubtedly provided him with the confidence needed to successfully pursue his chosen vocation. Yet, Herculano’s review notwithstanding, Primeiros cantos provoked a very different reaction among the growing Portuguese population of immigrants in Rio de Janeiro.

Compelled from Portugal by one crisis or another, including a civil war over regal successions, economic decline, and a failing empire, thousands of young Portuguese, mostly males, were finding their way to Brazil at the time that “Canção do exílio” was published, and for very different reasons than those that had driven Portugal’s first explorers. These immigrants came to Brazil out of necessity where they would attempt to make a name for themselves in an emergent petite bourgeoisie. As the most popular destination for immigrants in Brazil, these young men came to the port city of Rio de Janeiro to look for work, often through familial connections, as small-business clerks in the narrow streets of the city’s center. Physically filling the shops and, in social terms, the wide gap between the elites and the street-vending slaves, it has been estimated that, in 1846, there were approximately 20,000 to 30,000 Portuguese in Rio de Janeiro, which had a total population of around 200,000 (Nunes 45). Making up at least ten percent of the population, these immigrants inhabited positions of relative privilege and were involved in the cultural happenings and popular events of the city.

Published across the bay in Niterói, the Portuguese immigrants in Rio were some of the first to read and respond to “Canção do exílio.” Young males, “cast out” like Gonçalves Dias for one reason or another, certainly sympathized with the poem’s youthful longing for home. As we will see, the saudade expressed in their own poetry is also for a more innocent age, for home, for family, friends, first loves, and the bucolic villages of
their childhood. It is the eventual and inevitable patriotic longing for the “Edens” of youth as these poets, reaching adulthood, unwillingly conformed to the norms and necessities of their time, making the passage across the Atlantic. Yet, as their responses will also show, they vehemently disagreed with Gonçalves Dias on where true paradise could be found. They were not happy with the pitiful shadow of a nameless, almost song-less bird representing their country as they immediately countered Gonçalves Dias’s “sabia” with the European “rouxinol,” or nightingale.

In *Utopias, utopias*, Beatriz Berrini compares the role of Gonçalves Dias’s “sabia” with the “rouxinol,” providing a summary of the traditional uses of the latter in European literature. Citing the works of Keats, Goethe, and the Greek myth of Philomela, among others, she explains how the song of the nightingale (“rouxinol”) and its transnational migratory habits engendered a centuries-old association of the bird with the poetic expression of “saudade” (80–96). The song of the “rouxinol,” like Gonçalves Dias’s “sabia,” conjures that mystical mix of pain, absence, love, and longing, as it became the symbolic voice of these Portuguese immigrants. When read collectively, the Portuguese responses point to a common desire for a return not only to home, but to a golden age represented throughout the Portuguese Romantic period in narratives and histories about the Reconquista, the Age of Discoveries, and other aspects of Portuguese history and popular culture. But, as a rule, these poets were not so grandiose in design. First and foremost, they sought to reject Gonçalves Dias’s proposition that Portugal was somehow inferior.

In 1848, José Ferreira Monteiro published from Rio de Janeiro an anthology entitled *Lisia poética*. Totaling more than 600 pages, the anthology is filled with hundreds of poems, mostly from Portugal, but with many from Portuguese immigrants in Rio. In the introduction, Monteiro describes the contents of the anthology as “uma escolha seleta de todas as poesias que os poetas portugueses modernos têm publicado em vários jornais literários portugueses, que pela sua efêmera não tem chegado ao domínio do público do Rio de Janeiro” (“Introdução iii). Beginning with a discussion of this volume, this chapter explores a handful of early Portuguese responses to “Canção do exílio,” then follows the trend from the nineteenth century to more recent times. These texts,
while focusing on Portugal, explicitly dialogue with Gonçalves Dias’s original as they form the first nodes of an intricate intertextual web.

Far from Portugal, somewhat vulnerable and self-conscious of the poor conditions back home, young Portuguese poets published their writings in Monteiro’s anthology to assuage their longing. Of the sixteen Portuguese responses to “Canção do exílio” found among the 500 texts under analysis in this book, the first three are from Lisia poética. These three are “A saudade da pátria (imitação),” written by A. J. Ferreira; “Mêz d’Abril em Portugal,” written by Lagoa; and “A minha pátria” by Lara e Souza, all from 1847. The other thirteen poems are: “Recordações da pátria,” written by an unknown author in 1848; R. Carlos’s “Uma resposta” from 1853; “A M.E,” published by Antero de Quental in 1861; “À minha terra,” from a writer called Alijoense in 1865; “Portugal” by Araújo Pereira Alvim (1873); the song lyrics “Minha terra tem loureiros” from 1875; a similar song from 1876 also called “Minha terra tem loureiros”; the lyrics “Do Tejo-Guanabara,” published in a Brazilian newspaper in 1922; “Minha terra” from another newspaper in 1933; “O nôbo sabiá” by Mário Montairo in 1946; Cassiano Ricardo’s “Ainda irei a Portugal,” from 1947; “Minha terra,” written by Armando A. C. Garcia in 1967; and José Paulo Paes’s “Lisboa: Aventuras,” from 1987.

An early parody of “Canção do exílio” often cited in the criticism is “Recordações da pátria,” published on January 5, 1848 in O correio da tarde. This poem was identified by Lúcia Miguel Pereira in 1943 in her book A vida de Gonçalves Dias (that year was the centennial of the composition of “Canção do exílio”), but it is most certainly not the earliest imitation and the title indicates as much. As printed in O correio da tarde, the title reads, “Recordações da pátria—imitação de uma imitação.” This admission that the poem is not just an “imitation,” but an “imitation of an imitation,” not only leads us back to Gonçalves Dias, but also points to an earlier, albeit lesser-known imitation of “Canção do exílio,” A. J. Ferreira’s poem “A saudade da pátria (imitação)” from 1847. Fittingly, the 1848 poem’s dedication, in duly cited quotations, references the commentary from the Lisia poética editor’s notes to A. J. Ferreira’s 1847 poem. The anonymous poet repeats Monteiro’s admonition: “Dê-nos mais punhados dessas tulipas, dessas boninhas, dessas violetas,” etc. (“Recordações” 3).
Then, the author in compliance with the request, proposes that his poem be considered “mais uma espécie para a coleção de amador” (“Recordações” 3).

As if the dedication were not enough to identify the poem’s inspiration, the 1848 “Recordações” also provides a footnote signaled by an asterisk at the end of the twentieth line in reference to A. J. Ferreira’s poem which quotes the Gospel of Matthew: “Caesaris Caesaris!—Este verso é original da imitação.” These lines in question, which read “Minha terra é um paraíso / Onde há benigno Sol” match perfectly with the thirteenth and fourteenth lines from “A saudade da pátria (imitação).” Since many other lines from the poem, including the opening lines, are also lifted from A. J. Ferreira’s 1847 imitation, it is not clear why the author feels compelled to make this confession at this particular point in the text.

Recordações da pátria—

Imitação de uma imitação

Minha terra tem silvados
Onde canta o rouxinol,
Onde canta a tutinegra
E o cuco no pôr do Sol.

Que estrelas que por lá vão!
Que flores de cor subida!
Que vida naqueles bosques!
Que amores naquela vida!

Em cismar sozinho à noite
Que prazer eu tinha lá!
Minha terra é um paraíso,
Que não encontro por cá.

Minha terra tem silvados
Onde canta o rouxinol,
Onde o cuco negro e feio
Descanta no pôr do Sol;
Minha terra tem silvados
Onde canta o rouxinol.

Minha terra é um paraíso
Onde há benigno Sol;
Minha terra tem belezas,
Como o ouro do crisol;
Minha terra produz linho
Muito bom para lençol.
Permita Deus que ainda veja
Outra vez aquele Sol!
E o loureiro e a tutinegra
E as flores do rouxinol;
Onde o cuco canta à noite
De meias com o rouxinol! (“Recordações” 3)

In Lúcia Miguel Pereira’s somewhat disparaging critique of the 1848 text, she states that the poem has little literary value: “[E]ssa versalhada … com uma dedicatória visivelmente destinada a bulir com algum figurão—coisa tão do gosto dos jornais do tempo—só tem o valor de mostrar a repercussão dos versos de Gonçalves Dias” (qtd. in Marques 90). Borrowing directly from Gonçalves Dias’s original, there are birds singing in the laurels and brushwoods, beautiful groves filled with flowers and lovers, etc. And, of course, there is the tell-tale closing that articulates the author’s hypothetical return to his home in Portugal.

Still, the text is not entirely convincing as a traditional Romantic poem of longing, even though it repeats many of the tropes of the genre. Whether unwittingly or not, the poem also approximates a cultural critique in the vein of O. de Andrade’s “Canto de regresso à pátria” (1925). With images of commercial production, symbolized by the linen sheets and the refinement of gold, not to mention the uncharacteristically “ugly” cuckoo, the poem reminds us that nation-making is not a purely Romantic exercise. More importantly, though, in “Recordações da pátria,” the traits of a family of Portuguese responses to “Canção do exílio” are affirmed. With “silvados” replacing “loureiros,” the poem cites the soon-to-be oft repeated and varied opening lines of A. J. Ferreira’s 1847 “A saudade da pátria (imitação)”: “Minha terra tem loureiros / Onde canta o rouxinol.”

Considering that the existence of an earlier parody is clearly marked in “Recordações da pátria,” the reason it has taken critics so long to locate this poem’s antecedent must only be that, prior to the creation of the Hemeroteca Digital Brasileira and other digital archives, such as Google Books, the task would have been too daunting and diffuse. However, today, the digital revolution has created an unprecedented opportunity for the critical study of the influence of “Canção do exílio.” With the assistance of digital tools, an instantaneous search through millions upon millions of pages for key phrases from “Canção do exílio” (or any other text)
can be completed with comparable ease. Indeed, most of the texts gathered for this study, including those from the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century, would not have been located without online digital archives. After determining the most repeated phrases from the original in a preliminary study of eighty variations, a search for key phrases, especially “minha terra tem,” was carried out in available digitized archives. In this manner, hundreds of unknown variations of “Canção do exílio” were rediscovered, unearthing the textual archeology of its unparalleled popularity.

Written on October 16, 1847 in Rio de Janeiro, less than a year after the publication of “Canção do exílio,” “A saudade da pátria (imitação)” makes no qualms about its debt to Gonçalves Dias’s original. Its derivative nature is apparent even in the title with Ferreira adding to it the parenthetical qualifier, “imitação.” As we know now, variations of “Canção do exílio” would eventually become an unstoppable cultural force, but in 1847 it could not have been so obvious to A. J. Ferreira and others just how popular variations of the poem would be. For this reason, A. J. Ferreira’s poem, as the earliest confirmed parody, inhabits a special place among all variations. “A saudade da pátria” was published in *Lisia poética* along with the author’s “Recordações de Portugal.” In both poems, the theme of longing for Portugal is prominent. Praising A. J. Ferreira for his use of the theme, Monteiro describes him as one possessing “um engenho, e uma propensão tão feliz para a poesia” (*Lisia* 44). He also goes on to request that A. J. Ferreira continue to cultivate his “recordações da terra natal … para que sobre elas deitemos o orvalho das nossas lágrimas cá pela terra estrangeira” (*Lisia* 44).

A saudade da pátria (imitação)

Minha terra tem loureiros
Onde canta o rouxinol,
Por dias de primavera
De manhã e ao pôr do sol.

Da minha terra o céu puro
É mui belo, mui brilhante,
As flores da minha terra
Têm um brilho fulgurante.
Minha terra tem Tulipas;

34
In form and content, “A saudade da pátria (imitação)” is exactly what one now expects from a classic variation of Gonçalves Dias’s poem. As in the majority of the variations to follow, A. J. Ferreira relies heavily on the syntax of the first two lines of “Canção do exílio” as he adapts “Minha terra tem palmeiras / Onde canta o sabiá” to his own frame of reference. Specifically, the binomial pair of Gonçalves Dias’s poem, the “palmeiras” and the “sabiá,” become the Portuguese “loureiros” and “rouxinol.” These two nouns are repeated numerous times throughout A. J. Ferreira’s poem within the same syntactical structure as Gonçalves Dias’s opening. A. J. Ferreira also uses Gonçalves Dias’s first two lines to create other variations so that the bulk of the poem is a further recapitulation of the original’s opening, such as “Minha terra tem Tulipas; / Tem o lindo Gira-sol” and “Minha terra é um paraíso! / Onde há benigno sol!” (A. J. Ferreira “A saudade” 43). Another site of strong intertextual activity is in the last stanza employing the line, “Permita Deus que ainda veja” (A. J. Ferreira 43). Here, A. J. Ferreira imitates closely the text of the original while reviewing the previously communicated imagery, emphasizing his desire to return to Portugal.

In order to account for this standard adaptation of the original, so abundant among the variations, this study introduces the notion of Syntactic Templates: grammatical structures established in the original from which variations generate related texts. Additionally, the term variation, borrowed from the musical composition method of “variations on a theme,” is used to reference
any genre of text (and in any length) where borrowing from the original can be found. Among the 500 texts, the most frequently borrowed syntactic templates are from the first two lines wherein any noun may be substituted for “palmeiras” or “sabiá,” and even at times, “terra,” while the rest of the phrase’s syntactical structure remains intact. In fact, this type of borrowing takes place even in the original; as a subordinate phrase to the first line, the second line, turning on the adverb “onde,” is really only an extension of the first, introducing the noun “sabiá.” Likewise, each line of the second stanza as well as the phrase “Minha terra tem primores” is a recapitulation of the first line.

As this study will show, this type of systematic borrowing creates the opportunity for generating lists of token nouns, specifically those that substitute “sabiá” and “palmeiras.” These lists form valuable differential readings that morph throughout the generations of texts as perspectives on Brazil and Brazilian identity change in reaction to historical circumstances. In Foundations of Computational Linguistics, Roland Hausser writes that a token “explicitly specifies the possible continuations to other word tokens, both within its proposition and from its proposition to others” (9). Dependent on Gonçalves Dias’s syntax, the determination of what words qualify as tokens is a simple process. For example, when the syntactic template, or pattern, of the first two lines of the original text is intact, but in the place of “palmeiras” or “sabiá,” the variation introduces new terms, then those latter terms are considered tokens of the original noun types. In order to render a new meaning for the original, variations simply introduce new terms in place of the original ones, based on the appropriate parts of speech. In this way, a basic formula emerges in which one syntactic template may be expressed as: “Minha terra tem ________ / Onde canta ________.” As mentioned, A. J. Ferreira uses this formula to create the lines, “Minha terra tem loureiros / Onde canta o rouxinol” (“A saudade” 43).

Still, despite its obvious dependency on the original text, what lacks in A. J. Ferreira’s poem is perhaps the one element that most galvanized the original in the collective memory of the time. This element is the explicit comparison between Portugal and Brazil, which engendered a competitiveness along former colonial-imperial lines. Through the use of the adverbs “cá” and “lá,” Gonçalves Dias categorically states that Brazil is better than Portugal.
Therefore, when A. J. Ferreira and other immigrants respond to “Canção do exílio,” stating that they miss the nightingale’s song or the rivers and hills from home, the implication is that these features in Brazil are not quite as attractive to them. As discussed in a previous chapter, there are many antecedents in Portuguese poetry that employ these superlative descriptions while inviting comparisons, if not on an international level, at least among the different regions and towns of Portugal. It was within this tradition that “Canção do exílio” emerges transplanted in Brazil and, somewhat ironically, with A. J. Ferreira’s response, the first branch of interrelated variations is affirmed, characterized by the “loureiros” and “rouxinol.”

Although less textually related, another possible candidate for the first Portuguese response is Lagoa’s “Mêz d’Abril em Portugal.” This poem was written prior to A. J. Ferreira’s, on August 31, 1847, and first published in the *Diário do Rio de Janeiro* on September 7, 1847 (Brazilian Independence Day), a little over one month before A. J. Ferreira’s poem was written. The poem appeared again shortly thereafter in *Lisia poética* in 1848. Similar to A. J. Ferreira’s poem, “Mêz d’Abril” contains multiple words and phrases in common with the original, especially the repetition of the most repeated three-word phrase found in the original, “Minha terra tem.” (The phrase in Lagoa’s poem is rendered modified in this manner: “Mêz d’Abril na minha terra tem.”) In general, the content of each of Lagoa’s stanzas functions as a re-appropriated extension of this potentially borrowed line, listing all the laudable attributes that Portugal claims. The poet repeats the phrase ten times with only slight variation, once in each of the ten stanzas and, apart from the opening line, the third stanza contains other echoes of “Canção do exílio” where Lagoa also introduces the “rouxinol” singing in a tree, among other birds, such as the “tuttinegra” and “rola.”

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**Mêz d’Abril na minha terra**

Tem verdores ... que primor!
A rocha com seu ardor,
O salgueiral a falar,
E sobre um raminho oculto
O rouxinol a gorgeiar,
O seu canto a bela, adulto:
A ovelhinha a saltar;
E por entre estas belezas
Que segredos! Que lindezas! (Lagoa 31)
Unlike A. J. Ferreira’s text, though, Lagoa’s poem is not a true imitation of “Canção do exílio.” It lacks the explicit intertextuality and close formal imitation of the original. Nonetheless, among the many images of “Mêz d’Abril,” the reader still finds some of the most significant words from “Canção do exílio,” such as “Deus,” “céus,” “amores,” and “primores.” Additionally, “Mêz d’Abril” communicates the same hypothetical scene of death as Gonçalves Dias’s poem, albeit with little textual overlap with the original. In the last stanza, Lagoa desires to fly home to the Douro River, to the mountains, and to his lover named Isbel [sic], and feels that the longing is so painful that he may die: “Mêz d’Abril, na minha terra / Oh Isbel! Ó pátrio Doiro, / Nosso amor … aquela serra … / O cabelo que não loiro/ Pobre cantor, voa, corre … / No desejo, —e ele morre!” (Lagoa 33). Of course, these similarities, instead of pointing only to “Canção do exílio” as a primary source for “Mêz d’Abril,” may just as easily point to the milieu of themes and words already associated with saudosistic Portuguese poetry. After being published in Lisia poética, “Mêz de Abril” would not have great repercussions, but A. J. Ferreira’s “loureiros” and “rouxinol” became a steadfast leitmotiv among Portuguese responses to “Canção do exílio.”

With the first clear imitation of A. J. Ferreira’s poem being the previously discussed “Recordações da pátria” from 1848, these symbols echo in many other texts throughout the nineteenth century. For example, written in 1847, approximately one month after Ferreira’s poem, the indebtedness of Lara e Souza’s “A minha pátria” to Gonçalves Dias’s original is obvious while the appearance of the “rouxinol” also approximates Ferreira’s text. The last stanza reads: “Ah! Permita o meu destino / Que mui cedo torne a ver / Aonde eu brinquei menino, / Nesses campos a perder … / Aonde eu ao pôr do sol / Escutava o rouxinol” (Lara e Souza 104). A global analysis of the 16 texts included in the group of Portuguese responses shows that Ferreira’s opening two-lines are frequently varied and reiterated. Specifically, these lines are repeated verbatim in two popular songs from the 1870s, one from 1875, and another from 1876, both entitled “Minha terra tem loureiros.” While the remaining lyrics go on to introduce numerous modifications throughout, the 1875 variation bears the subtitle “Paródia à Canção do exílio,” pointing directly to Gonçalves Dias’s original while eliding its debt to Ferreira’s variation.
Regarding this 1875 variation, it was also published unchanged at least two other times (and probably many more), first in *A cantora brasileira* from 1878 and then again in 1893 in *Cancioneiro de músicas populares*. The many *Cancioneiros* published in both Portugal and Brazil throughout the nineteenth century helped promote the original’s popularity and its continued variation.

Minha terra tem loureiros: paródia à canção do exílio (1875)

Minha terra tem loureiros
Onde canta o rouxinol,
Canta triste solitário
De manhã e ao pôr do sol.

Quem me dera ouvir de novo,
Nessa terra que eu deixei,
O canto do rouxinol,
Se o seu canto tanto amei!

Minha terra tem campinas
Que tapizam lindas flores,
Trinam lá melhor as aves,
Sabem mais cantar amores.

Quem me dera ouvir de novo
O cantar do rouxinol,
Nessa terra que amo tanto,
Se eu amei tanto o seu sol.

Nem permita Deus que eu morra
Dos anos no arrebol,
Sem que veja o sítio ameno
Em que canta o rouxinol.

Que o prazer que hoje me cerca
É cruel—cruel bem sei.
Quero ver esses loureiros
Que lá na pátria deixei. (60–61)

Minha Terra Tem Loureiros (1876)

Minha terra tem loureiros
Onde canta o rouxinol,
Canto triste o solitário
Que se esconde ao pôr do sol.

Quem me o dera ouvir de novo
Nessa terra que eu deixei!
Chapter Three

Minha terra tem campinas
Que tapizam lindas flores,
Trinam lá melhor as aves,
Sabem mais cantar amores.

Quem me dera ouvir seu canto,
Se o seu sol eu sempre amei!
Oh! falsário prazer não me sigas,
Eu contigo não quero aliança;
Que ao sepulcro me deve—promete
Essa ideia da prova—Esperança.

Oh! Quem me dera gozar
O doce ar que gozei! (71–72)

Ferreira’s first line from “A saudade da pátria (imitação)—“Minha terra tem loureiros”—is repeated an additional six times among the sixteen poems without any modification to the second line (“Onde canta o rouxinol”), but with the fourth word “loureiros” changed. These six variations occur in three different poems. The earliest of these is “Recordações da pátria” from 1848, wherein “loureiros” is changed to “silvados.” In 1873, Araújo Pereira Alvim’s poem entitled “Portugal,” published in the seventh edition of the periodical Sexo feminino (dated October 18), changes A. J. Ferreira’s “loureiros” to “colinas” (3). Demonstrating its longevity, Araújo Pereira Alvim’s poem is also reproduced as a lyric in 1893 alongside the 1875 variation above in the Cancioneiro de músicas populares.

Portugal
Minha terra tem colinas,
Onde canta o rouxinol;
Minha terra é mais amena,
Mais saudoso o pôr do sol.
As flores têm mais perfumes
Nossos frutos mais sabores
Tem mais mimo a natureza,
Mais paixão nossos amores.

Mais prazer encontro eu lá
Em cisamar ao pôr do sol;
Minha terra tem colinas
Onde canta o rouxinol.
“Onde canta o rouxinol”

É mais linda a primavera
Mais jucundo o nosso estio;
Mais fértil o nosso outono,
Mais saudoso o inverno frio:

E assim uma após outra,
Alternando as estações,
Há mais viço nas ideias
Há mais fogo nas paixões.

Não permita Deus que eu morra
Sem que veja o seu farol,
Suas tão belas campinas,
Seu tão doce pôr do sol;

Sem que pise ainda as colinas
Onde canta o rouxinol. (179)

The editor of the 1893 Cancioneiro, Cesar das Neves, wrote in regards to Araújo Pereira Alvim’s variation: “A esta mimosa poesia do celebre poeta brasileiro, respondeu-lhe um português com outra imitativa, não menos repassada de sentimento nostálgico” (179). Then, including a second variation alongside the original, which is identical to the 1875 version above, he concludes enticingly: “Além desta, há muitas outras imitações” (179).

The ethnomusicologist James R. Cowdery, in his article from 1984, “A Fresh Look at the Concept of Tune Family,” provides a musical analogy that, when applied to the variations of “Canção do exílio,” helps illuminate the process evident in these texts. The concept of tune families is used for organizing folk music into related melodic groups. Cowdery proposes that “certain melodic moves are seen to belong together not as a fixed chain of events, but more as a system of potentialities” (497). He continues, “These motives can recombine in various ways, expanding or contracting, to make new melodies which still conform to the traditional sound” (497). These two lyrical variations above (not coincidentally based on melodies, such as the one prescribed in the 1893 Cancioneiro) demonstrate the traits, not of a melodic family, but of a textual one. Adapting Cowdery’s theory to the question at hand, the original poem can be understood “not as a fixed chain of events,” or words, “but more as a system of potentialities” (497). As the original text functions as a “system,” it is modified and “recombine[d] in various ways” (497). Lyrics such as the
ones from these Cancioneiros connote the possibilities for textual variation “as new melodies which still conform to the traditional sound” (497).

In “À minha terra,” published in 1865 by an author with the pseudonym Alijoense, A. J. Ferreira’s “loureiros” are changed to “salgueiros” while other elements of textual borrowing from both Gonçalves Dias and A. J. Ferreira are also evident, such as a hypothetical return and the singing “sabiá.” In general, this poem offers an example of how the phrase “Onde canta o rouxinol” remains unchanged across these sixteen responses, appearing a total of thirteen times while modified versions of it appear a total of eighteen times. Through the use of the template (“Onde canta _________”), birds such as the “cuco negro” and the “melro” in texts like “Uma resposta” and “Recordações de Portugal” appear in place of the “sabiá.”

À minha terra
Minha terra tem salgueiros,
Onde canta o rouxinol,
Não há outro como ela
Debaixo da luz do sol!

Nosso céu de puro anil
Tem os astros mais brilhantes:
São mais ternos nossos anjos,
Nossos amores mais constantes.

Nossos campos no outono
Tem frutos que aqui não há;
É mais linda a primavera,
Que o verão eterno de cá.

Aqui sob o sol ardente
É sempre a mesma natura;
Lá os prados sempre belos,
Variam na formosura.

Nossos ares tem mais pureza,
É mais brando o nosso sol,
São lindas as verdes moitas
Onde canta o rouxinol.

Minha terra tem belezas,
Belezas que aqui não há;
Se não tem ricos palmares
Onde canta o sabiá,
“Onde canta o rouxinol”

Tem bosques muito formosos
Onde cante o rouxinol;
Não há nada que a exceda
Debaixo da luz do sol!

Ai! Permite Deus que eu vá
Meus dias nela acabar;
Que me não mate a saudade
Que me faz experimentar:
Saudade do fundo da alma,
Daquele lindo torrão,
Onde o céu, o bosque e o prado,
Tudo fala ao coração. (Alijoense 2)

Due to its strong semantic relationship with a nation’s geography and the process of colonization through a domination of the land, the phrase “Minha terra tem” quickly emerged in the variations of “Canção do exílio” as a significant reference. In fact, already in 1858, this three-word phrase was indicative enough of the original to solicit the need for the anonymous author of “Minha terra tem talentos” to defer to Gonçalves Dias’s original in a footnote to his first stanza, even when the rest of the poem bears comparably little resemblance to the original. The poem begins, “Minha terra tem talentos / Que ainda brilham como um sol / Tem um estro mui subido / Que vence o do rouxinol” (“Minha terra tem talentos” 3). The note also references A. J. Ferreira’s Portuguese parody from 1847 with these words: “Alusão ao poeta português, que como reclamo, quis responder às melodiosas poesias líricas do sr. Gonçalves Dias” (3). The reference to Ferreira’s parody, more than a decade after its publication, further corroborates its lasting impact in the popular poetic imaginary of the period.

As we look more closely at the evolution of Gonçalves Dias’s first two lines throughout the whole of the 16 Portuguese responses, some key similarities with the group of 500 texts emerge. In these 16 texts, as in the corpora as a whole, “terra” is the most frequent noun. Appearing a total of 60 times in the group of 16, it is most often appended to the possessive “minha” and to the verb “tem,” as in the phrase “minha terra tem.” This 3-gram appears a total of 36 times in the 16 texts and the two-gram “minha terra,” a statistically weaker link to the original than the three-gram, appears another 17 times. In this way, these
Portuguese responses attempt to re-appropriate Gonçalves Dias’s Romantic assertion of independence by superimposing over the Brazilian poem a Portuguese culture and geography.

There are other nineteenth-century examples of the referential power of Gonçalves Dias’s opening phrase. M. A. Pinto de Sampaio’s “Minha terra” (not a Portuguese response), published in Maranhão in the *O constitucional* on March 7, 1863, not only gets its title from the phrase in question, it also includes, as many others, the subtitle “Imitação.” Pereira de Castro’s variation called “Primores da minha terra,” published in the *Jaguarary* on December 20, 1860 goes even further. This poet feels the need to begin his text with Gonçalves Dias’s three-word phrase in quotes as a nod to the original: “‘Minha terra tem’ florestas, / Tem montanhas, tem colinas; / Cascatas, fontes, regatos, / Ridentes ferteis campinas” (4). Coincidentally, “Minha terra” is by far the most commonly repeated phrase in the titles of the 500 variations. Approximately 1 out of every 8 texts employs it in the title or in the first line when no title is given. Further demonstrating its strength, there is also occasionally some confusion about what the original was called since writers and critics at times name the original not as “Canção do exílio,” but as “Minha terra tem palmeiras.”

Another useful method of comparing variations to the original is the *Significant Words* category, composed of a list of the most repeated nouns. These nouns outline the general structure of a network, establishing intertextual nodes of contact with the original among the other intertexts. As it turns out, the original poem contains seventeen unique nouns, and the first nine most frequent nouns in the 500 texts come from among these seventeen: “terra,” “sabia,” “palmeiras,” “deus,” “céu,” “amores,” “vida,” “noite,” and “flores.” For anyone familiar with the poem, the appearance of these most frequent nouns in relative proximity to each other within a single text of comparable size to the original, especially “terra,” “palmeiras,” and “sabia,” leaves no doubt of its relation to “Canção do exílio,” immediately evoking its semantic universe. Specifically, while “terra” represents a broad canvas upon which Gonçalves Dias’s utopia is painted, the “palmeiras” and “sabia” symbolize the specific features of it. Coincidentally, these three most frequent nouns are so important to the symbolism of “Canção do exílio” universe that, in those variations where these three cannot be found in the same felicitous communion as in the
original, one often finds a pessimistic vision of Brazil (as discussed in Chapter 5 on the military regime). The other most frequent nouns simply serve as descriptors, reinforcing the utopia evoked by the first three. Tellingly, the tenth most frequent noun among the 500 and the first most frequent noun not found in the original is “Brasil,” a word that represents the symbolic sum of all the other most frequent nouns.

From the eight most frequent nouns in the sixteen Portuguese responses, “terra” and “Deus” are the only two nouns that are also found in the list of most frequent nouns among the 500. Serving as common cultural denominators, as mentioned, “terra” appears 60 times in the Portuguese texts. Functioning as a homebase for describing the specific features of Portugal, this noun is constantly modified by the appearance of other nouns and adjectives. On the other hand, the word “Deus” appears only eight times. In all cases evoking a Judeo-Christian God, its presence reminds us of a mainstream religious consonance between Brazil and Portugal established over centuries of colonization. The remaining six most frequent nouns found among the Portuguese responses help us to tease out these texts’ differences from the original. Constructing a universe of representative Portuguese symbols, these six words along with their frequencies are: “rouxinol” (24), “sol” (23), “saudade” (9), “pátria” (9), “mês” (9), and “Portugal” (8). These nouns convey the most frequent images and ideas that the Portuguese responses collectively use to describe the singularity of Portugal. In this vein, the inclusion of the word “Portugal” among the most frequent nouns of the Portuguese responses offers an interesting comparison. The word “Brasil” is never mentioned by name in “Canção do exílio,” but like “Portugal,” it also makes an appearance among the most frequently repeated nouns. Both Portugal and Brazil become, in this sense, entities that, albeit never named in the original, are ever-present in the intertextual universe of variations.

As far as the other most frequent nouns are concerned, in my opinion, “mês,” or “mez” (as rendered in the original), can be disregarded for three reasons: it only appears in one of the poems; it adds little to the imagery; and it is often appended by syntax to other frequent words such as “terra” and “Portugal.” Likewise, “pátria” adds little novelty to the conversation since, in this case, it is just another way of saying, “Portugal” (or a region
thereof). Appending “pátria” to “Portugal” and doing away with the anomalous “mês,” only three words are left: “rouxinol,” “sol,” and “saudade.” Of these three, “rouxinol” and “saudade” capture the essence of the Portuguese responses, as the first articulates the responses’ differences with the original and the second, a similar emotional content. The main role of “sol”—the same sun that shines on every nation—appears almost exclusively as a rhyming companion to “rouxinol,” symbolizing the nation as a bright shining beacon to its estranged poets.

In addition to an analysis of the most frequent nouns, the organization of lists of unique terms systematically associated with the verses of the original adjoins the content of the Portuguese variations in non-linear readings, helping to identify other key differences with the original. These lists are composed of the previously described token substitutions for key nouns from the Syntactic Templates of the original. Unique nouns from the variations, or Tokens, are defined as those words that substitute the most frequently used nouns from the original, called Types. In these sixteen responses, the analysis is focused on the tokens associated with “palmeiras.” The tokens replacing the term in the sixteen texts are below in alphabetical order. The choice to place the tokens in alphabetical order, as opposed to chronological order (or by some other criterion), encourages a non-linear reading. Without knowledge of when these tokens appear, it is easier to read this list as a single, cohesive unit, describing the Portuguese nation.

Minha terra tem ____________.

alegria  
amendoeiras floridas  
amor  
árabe  
ardores  
astros mais brilhantes  
beijo  
belezas  
belezas mil  
bosques  
brilho fulgurante  
cabanas  
caminas  
cantos  
carracos  
castelos  
céu puro  
colinas  
dialetos  
escribas  
escuta tutinegra  
fadista de raça  
flores  
folclore  
fontes  
fragas nuas  
frondosos castanheiros  
frutos
When considering the tokens in this list, it becomes clear that the lexical variety introduced in place of the type “palmeiras” is immense. These tokens represent an attempt to portray a rich and well-established nation, one noticeably different from Brazil, through a litany of Portuguese flora, fauna, geographic features, and human activity. These features are, if not altogether exclusive of, at least specific enough to Portuguese history so that, among the “loureiros,” “tulipas,” castles, saints, and festivals, a vision of a comparatively distinct nation emerges.

Still, not all sixteen responses employ the use of **syntactic templates**. For example, Carlos’s “Uma resposta,” published in Rio de Janeiro in the *Periódico dos pobres* in 1853, is a strong response to “Canção do exílio.” But, departing somewhat from the still emerging patterns of variation, the author shows less dependency on Gonçalves Dias’s original text. To compensate, he is much more direct in his assertions of superiority. Demeaning the Brazilian bird in favor of the “melro” and “rouxinol,” the poem begins, “Se aqui vem o negro melro / Não gorjeia como lá; / Pois não gosta

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tokens (Portuguese)</th>
<th>Tokens (English)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>giestas floridas</td>
<td>primor(es)</td>
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<tr>
<td>gira-sol</td>
<td>rios</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>heróis</td>
<td>rocha</td>
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<tr>
<td>largas ruas</td>
<td>rola</td>
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<tr>
<td>lindas flores</td>
<td>rosas</td>
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<tr>
<td>loureiros</td>
<td>rouxinol</td>
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<tr>
<td>mais pureza</td>
<td>rudes pinhais</td>
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<tr>
<td>mil graças</td>
<td>salgueiral</td>
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<tr>
<td>mil templos do Senhor</td>
<td>salgueiros</td>
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<tr>
<td>minha saudade</td>
<td>santos</td>
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<td>mistérios</td>
<td>São João</td>
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<td>moitas</td>
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<td>neve</td>
<td>sol</td>
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<tr>
<td>olhares tão ardentes</td>
<td>sopros</td>
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<tr>
<td>ouro do crizol</td>
<td>sorrir de anil</td>
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<td>outeiros</td>
<td>toureiros</td>
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<td>ovelhinha</td>
<td>tulipas</td>
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<td>paixão</td>
<td>vales</td>
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<tr>
<td>palácios</td>
<td>verdores</td>
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<tr>
<td>palmeiras (mais viçosas)</td>
<td>verduras</td>
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<td>penedos</td>
<td>vitelos</td>
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<tr>
<td>poetas</td>
<td>zéfiros</td>
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<tr>
<td>praças</td>
<td>zimbros</td>
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<tr>
<td>prantos de um cherubim</td>
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das palmeiras / Onde canta o sabiá” (Carlos 5). Then, later in the poem, the author asks directly to Gonçalves Dias, as if he were still in Portugal as a student: “A minha terra é fértil / Sabes por que estás lá / E que em tudo o rouxinol / É superior o sabiá?” (5). Addressing him condescendingly in the informal “tú” form, the poet goes on to ask another direct question: “É tão má a minha terra? / Terra que me viu nascer: / E que tais os habitantes? / Com eles fostes aprender” (5). Then, after having already assured the reader that, “de nada vale o sabiá,” he apparently does not feel the need to reject outright the Brazilian “palmeiras” (5). The estranged poet simply proposes that Portuguese palms are better: “Na minha terra tem palmeiras / Mais viçosas do que cá” (5). With his eurocentric worldview, he also asserts that Brazil does not share the same glorious history as Portugal. Whether citing some popular Portuguese myth or simply referring to the whole of the “Old World,” the author informs us, “Nessa terra abençoada / Andou Cristo a passear” (5). He closes with a racially charged backhanded compliment, referencing the myth of the sensual “mulata” as the one thing Portugal lacks. After centuries of miscegenation and slavery, the symbol of the “mulata” was already pervasive by this time in Brazilian history. Carlos closes, “Mas lá” in Portugal “não tem mulatinhas / Para meigas te entreter” (5).

Others from the nineteenth century would dialogue with “Canção do exílio” in less offensive and more original ways, including the Azorean poet Quental (for another comparison of this text with Gonçalves Dias’s original, see also Berrini, 137–45.) In his poem “A M.E.,” written in 1861, evidence of intertextuality, including a re-working of the phrase “Minha terra tem,” is undeniable while the text’s distinctive take on exile rings clear. Being Portuguese, but from the Azorean archipelago, Quental sympathized with Gonçalves Dias’s marginalized perspective. But, different from Gonçalves Dias, Quental’s short poem communicates the “primores” to be found in Portugal, not in the Azores. Quental, also a student in Coimbra, writes: “Terra do Exílio! Aqui também as flores / Têm perfume e matiz; também vicejam” (221). He closes with the following message: “Eu sou bem como a flor que não descerra / Em clima alheio. Que importam teus encantos? / Não és, terra do exílio, a minha terra” (222). Unwilling to demean the beauties of continental Portugal in favor of his island home, Quental downplayed his origins in an act of deference to the continent. Yet, in
the end, the mainland is not his, he tells us, and its beauties do not belong to him, as he indirectly expresses his love for the Azores.

Here, it may be worthwhile to mention another poem with a similar sense of colonial deference. The African José Maia Ferreira’s "A minha terra," written on a visit to Rio in 1849 (and published in the very first volume of Angolan poetry), opens with a stanza that, although in the negative, is reminiscent of the Portuguese responses: “Minha terra não tem os cristais / Dessas fontes do só Portugal, / Minha terra não tem salgueiraes, / Só tem ondas de branco areal” (12). J. M. Ferreira’s “A minha terra” ironically defines his country not by what it is, but by what it is not (having spent most of his life outside of Africa, this negative declaration is reflective of his personal experience). However, despite his seemingly poor opinion of Angola, his loyalties are made clear near the end of the poem: “Mesmo assim rude, sem primores de arte, / Nem da natura os mimos e belezas, / Que em campos mil a mil vicejam sempre, / É minha pátria! / Minha pátria por quem sinto saudades / Saudades tantas que o peito ralam” (17). Bound to a sense of parochial inferiority, J. M. Ferreira’s lengthy poem descants the glories of Portugal (and even Brazil) with almost no mention of his own nation, exposing the complexities of peripheral colonial identities.

When comparing J. M. Ferreira’s and Quental’s poems with those of Gonçalves Dias, the absence in “Canção do exílio” of any deterministic colonial pessimism becomes important. Different from the Azores and Angola, beginning early in the nineteenth century, Brazil had already experienced the concession of special status of Empire and shortly thereafter continued to independence. In this way, these two other texts, especially J. M. Ferreira’s, should not be read as treatises of poorly endowed national geographies that were not worth celebrating, but rather geographic analogies of meagerly articulated political identities vis-à-vis the imperial seat, Portugal. Angola and the Azores, the former a European imposition and the latter uninhabited prior to colonization, would not find their way to independence and autonomy until the last quarter of the twentieth century.

By the end of the nineteenth century, with the exile of Dom Pedro II and the dissolution of the Brazilian Empire, “Canção do exílio” slowly faded from the collective Portuguese memory and responses to the Brazilian poem become fewer and farther
between. For this reason, there are only six poems from the twentieth century that can be classified as Portuguese responses. These six poems were published between 1922 and 1987 and, although some common themes do emerge, they are not nearly as related to each other as those from the nineteenth century. The strongest theme to emerge in these is a reformulation of the colonial relationship that deconstructs the hierarchy in favor of difference. Thus, if the nineteenth-century responses were characterized by competition, the poems of the twentieth century propose a truce, extending the proverbial hand of friendship.

As bookends of the subgroup in question, reconciliation is the basis for the anonymous dialogue in “Do Têjo-Guanabara,” published in 1922, and of “Lisboa: Aventuras” from 1987. First, the 1922 text is organized as a singing dialogue between two protagonists appropriately named Tejo and Guanabara. In the lyrics, these two geographically bound characters develop a dialogue with the hope of communicating the message that, “Se a distância nos separa / Grande afeito nos enlaça” (“Do Tejo” 2). At the end of the poem, Guanabara quotes Gonçalves Dias’s first two lines to which Tejo replies, “Também nossas cantadeiras / Cantam pois como as de lá” (2). In this way, the poem undoes Gonçalves Dias’s proposition, stating that the birds in both places actually sing the same. Interestingly, this poem was published at a time when immigration from Europe, to include thousands from Portugal, had once again changed the demographics of Rio de Janeiro and, more especially, São Paulo (Fausto 155–56).

Do Têjo-Guanabara
Tejo: Belo jardim de Europa
A beira-mar Plantado
Guanab: A tua gente galopa
Em um correr alado
Tejo: Pairando em pleno azul
Buscando o que sonhara
Guanab: Na América do Sul
Do Têjo à Guanabara
Tejo: Minha bela Guanabara
Vens trazer-me a tua graça
Guanab: Se a distância nos separa
Grande afeito nos enlaça
Tejo: Nossos laços de amizade
Não se desatam jamais
Similarly, in the diminutive “Lisboa: Aventuras,” author José Paulo Paes takes the reader on a short journey through the streets of Lisbon to learn some of the subtle colloquial differences between European and Brazilian Portuguese. During the amusing journey, the poet compares terms, such as “cafézinho” to “bica,” the latter a term used for an espresso coffee in Lisbon, and “ó cara” with “ó pá,” each country’s equivalent to the American “hey, man!” (6). While exhibiting these terms and others, he makes no judgment as to which one is better nor does he hint to which he prefers. Then, he finishes the poem with a reference to “Canção do exílio”: “positivamente / as aves que aqui gorjeiam não gorjeiam como lá” (6). This light-hearted ending prima-facie appears to convey the opposite message of “Do Tejo-Guanabara,” proposing the birds’ songs actually differ. But, in reality, the poem sends a similar message to that of the 1922 text. Unlike Gonçalves Dias’s original, in Paes’s text, the fact that the birds’ songs are different does not imply that one is better than the other, only that they should be appreciated equally.

Among the remaining four twentieth-century poems are two traditional responses, Júlio de Castro’s “Minha terra” from 1933 and Garcia’s poem with the same name from 1967. Both of these rely heavily on the syntax of the first line of the original to delineate a litany of Portuguese flora and fauna. As seen in our list of tokens for “palmeiras,” from Castro’s poem, one learns that Portugal has “São João” and “santos,” including “Pedro, António,” and “Luís.” And, for the first time, there is mention of “árabe / Na sua origem.” In Garcia’s poem, Portugal has “giestas floridas,” “rudes pinhais,” “frondosos castanheiros,” “outeiros e castelos,” “poetas, toureiros e escribas,” “heróis,” “santos,” and “vitelos.” In completing the idea of “Minha terra tem,” the second stanza of Garcia’s text reads: “Tem o folclore em trajes de cores garridas. / Tem os cantares e a alegria das vindimas. / Os dialetos e as desgarradas em rimas / E, o rubor das moçoilas
The images continue in this fashion to be unsurprisingly stereotypical of traditional Portuguese culture.

In contrast, Cassiano Ricardo’s “Ainda irei a Portugal” from 1947 is not a typical variation by any means. The poem is a self-portrait of a Brazilian man with a Portuguese grandfather who discusses the “saudade” he feels for his grandfather’s homeland. But, ironically, Portugal is a place he has never been. The poem opens with these lines: “Nunca fui a Portugal. / Não por falta de querer, / nem por perder meu lugar / que este bem guardado está” (49). In order to justify his seemingly misplaced “saudade,” the poet then hypothesizes that in another life he must have been a Portuguese sailor: “Fui marujo, com certeza, / pois tenho alma azul-marinha. / Vim pro Brasil tão futuro / que nunca soube que vinha” (50). In his imagined voyages, Ricardo searches for his roots. While traveling far afield from his grandfather’s home, these journeys retrace an Age-of-Discoveries trajectory to which Portuguese identity is so bound, making possible his “future” Brazilian identity while also explaining by proxy his longing for Portugal. He describes his search for roots as a “backwards hope,” pointing us to the need for a symbolic return: “Saudade assim por herança / de coisas que não conheço, / chega a ser, quase, esperança ... / Esperança pelo avesso.” (51). By the end, the poet has taken us on a strange voyage, rounding the contours of continents in search of his own identity, which he collocates with the Portuguese. Then, affirming the inseparability of Brazil from its colonial roots, the poet ventures far back to the first Portuguese voyage to the “Terra da Vera Cruz,” to the foundational narrative of the Brazilian nation: “Condição estranha, a minha. / Sinto que sou quase autor / da carta de Vaz Caminha” (52). In the very next stanza, he alludes to “Canção do exílio”: “Esta a saudade que fere / mais do que as outras quiçá. / Sem exílio, nem palmeira / onde cante um sabiá ...” (52).

From a post-colonial perspective, it is no wonder that the Portuguese were the first to respond to Gonçalves Dias’s “Canção do exílio.” After all, it was the Portuguese through travelogues and other official correspondence who centuries earlier had created the foundations of the Edenic myth on which “Canção do exílio” was based. In the words of Caminha, upon arriving in the New World, “a inocência desta gente é tal, que a de Adão não seria maior.” But, in the nineteenth century, finding themselves in a
precarious situation, the poem’s first respondents, these Portuguese immigrants in Rio de Janeiro, felt threatened and offended by Gonçalves Dias’s unflattering comparisons. The emergence of this newly independent Brazilian voice came at the right time in history to fan the flames of Portuguese discontent, especially among a local population, even though their presence in Brazil was only further evidence of Portugal’s decline. These young poets, compelled from their native villages along the Douro, Minho, and Tejo, who had gone to the “big city” in a continental way, in order to defend their pride and patrimony, countered Gonçalves Dias’s poem with their own nationalistic utopias. Additionally, these responses established many of the traits for future variations, borrowing heavily from the syntax and verbiage of Gonçalves Dias’s original. But, as the decades passed, direct Portuguese responses all but faded from existence and, in the few responses that continued, authors attempted to downplay previous assertions of superiority in favor of mutual respect.