Song of Exile
Enslen, Joshua Alma

Published by Purdue University Press

Enslen, Joshua Alma.
Purdue University Press, 2022.
Project MUSE. muse.jhu.edu/book/95087.

For additional information about this book
https://muse.jhu.edu/book/95087

For content related to this chapter
https://muse.jhu.edu/related_content?type=book&id=3112667
“Sou ali”
Variations by Female Authors
(1867–2015)

Published in 1991 in *Simians, Cyborgs and Women*, Donna Haraway described “A Cyborg Manifesto” as an “effort to contribute to socialist-feminist culture and theory … in the utopian tradition of imagining a world without gender” (150). In the manifesto, Haraway employed the idea of the cyborg as a transcendent “hybrid of machine and organism” capable of overcoming the dualisms of Western society (149). Her specific argument states that “high-tech culture challenges dualisms,” such as man-woman and human-machine, as she proposes that women, using technology, may augment their powers and presence, intellectual, physical, and otherwise, while obscuring gender differences (177). This technological transformation would allow women to no longer be bound by the category of “other” historically imposed upon them by the patriarchy; a move that would help women more easily overcome long-established barriers to equality and opportunity. As controversial as it was influential, Haraway’s “A Cyborg Manifesto” not only imagined, for a pre-internet public, important theoretical stances for feminism, but it also anticipated many of the profound changes that the spread of technology would provoke in the decades to follow.

In the study at hand, there is an example of the almost literal fulfillment of the cyborg proposition as the advent of the internet and social media have given unprecedented numbers of Brazilian women the opportunity to contribute publicly to the nation-making dialectics bound to the intertextual universe of “Canção do exílio.” This drastic increase in female authorship reflects positively on the current Western “shift of all culture to computer-mediated forms of production, distribution, and communication,” demonstrating one of the many ways that technology can be used as a grand equalizer (Manovich, *Language* 19). Grossly under-
represented in the “Canção do exílio” variations published prior to the year 2000, female authors now have an almost equal share in authorship. The significance of this increase in female voices in the new millennium in contrast to historical absence makes this chapter a welcome and necessary operation specifically intended to recognize female authors’ contributions to the ever-expanding narrative tradition.

Considering the year 2000 as a convenient dividing point (although the internet came to Brazil a few years prior), there are drastic differences in the pre- and post-millennial numbers of female authors. Between 1846 and 1999, only 5 of the 258 texts were of female authorship. On the other hand, in the first 16 years of the twenty-first century (2000–15), 98 of the 242 texts, or 40%, were written or co-written by at least one female author with most of these texts published electronically. Indeed, if the current authorship trend continues, the last variation by a sole male author will be published in just a few short years with female-authored and collaboratively mixed-gender authored texts completely dominating the scene. More likely, however, is that the ratio of male-to-female authors will stabilize as women gain parity and reflect more accurately Brazil’s balanced population dynamics.

Importantly, these 103 texts are not the only female-authored variations ever written. There are certainly other pre- and post-millennial female-authored texts beyond these 103 texts. The assumption, though, is that the statistics presented about these texts are representative enough so that, even if the hurdle of large amounts of dark data were overcome, every variation ever written were located, and the gender of the author known, the ratio of female-to-male authored texts among all variations would continue to be basically the same. The pre–2000 variations would be vastly dominated by male authors (although I would not mind being proven wrong in this case) and the post-internet texts would evince an obvious surge to the contrary.

This chapter presents distant and close readings of these 103 female-authored variations as it reveals the important narratives that emerge vis-à-vis the nation. In general, our readings will show that most of these 103 poems challenge the homogenizing and heteronormative paradigms of the original through a post-structural and intersectional questioning of Brazilian identity. Refuting
the utopic narrative of the original in favor of more sobering views of Brazil, these poems discuss themes such as pollution, poverty, racism, corruption, machismo, and violence, often conflating the struggle of women with those of other historically excluded groups.

An analysis of the most frequent nouns among the 103 female-authored texts helps to trace their general word-choice contours. Quantifying the number and frequency of nouns borrowed from the original delineates the most obvious textual similarities shared by the group with the original. These repeated nouns serve as nodes of semiotic convergence connecting texts across time while providing glimpses into the breadth of intertextuality existent in the corpora. The results of a frequency analysis of the 103 female-authored texts were compared with the same analysis of the 244 texts from 1999–2015 and then again with the entire group of 500 texts. In the 103 female-authored texts, the first eleven most frequent nouns from the original poem closely approximate those of the 2000s as a whole. The list is as follows (from the greatest to the least number of occurrences): “terra” (204), “sabiá” (60), “palmeiras” (56), “noite” (54), “deus” (42), “céu” (30), “canção” (23), “estrelas” (20), “exílio” (19), and “flor” (19). The overlap in the two groups coupled with the fact that they both share “lugar” as the first most frequent non-original noun corroborates the observation that these female-authored texts—all authored in the 2000s with the exception of 5—differ little from contemporaneous texts by male authors.

The three most frequent nouns of the female-authored texts—“terra,” “sabiá,” and “palmeiras”—are also the same as the three most frequent nouns (and in the same order) as those of the entire corpora of 500. As the study at large shows, the prominence of the binomial pair, “sabiá” (60), and “palmeiras” (56), along with the frequency of “terra,” especially in the phrase “minha terra tem” (“terra” appears 204, “minha” 205, and “tem” 265 times in the female-authored texts), are the tell-tale traits of most variations. Thus, these female-authored texts, by containing most of the 17 unique nouns appearing in the original, and the same three most frequent nouns, evince great textual similarity not only with the 2000s text, but also with the rest of the corpora. In this aspect, there is little difference across the texts from 1846 to today.
Despite this consistency, the paradox found among the texts from the 2000s remains intact in the female-authored texts. While being 4% more textually related to the original than those written prior to the new millennium, the female-authored texts are less like the original in message. Specifically, these 103 female-authored texts are mostly pessimistic about Brazil, with only 32 in the positive mode, 21 in the other mode, and 50 in the negative mode. Themes involving the defining social ills of Brazil today dominate the thematic content. As already demonstrated, however, this is not a new occurrence; sadly, since the dictatorship, the negative mode has controlled the discourse. The sense is that, as the texts continue to be more textually related to the original, but contrary in meaning, Brazil could be potentially approaching a paradigmatic shift in identity wherein the original is entirely subverted, becoming a shell of its former self. On the other hand, as indicated by the 32 texts in the positive mode, all is not lost. Many Brazilians are still not prepared to give up completely on Stefan Zweig’s “land of the future” and Brazil’s reality most certainly rests somewhere in between. The cataloguing of tokens that replace “palmeiras” within the fifty negative texts further details the generally dark vision of Brazil that characterizes the 2000s. A precursory reading of the titles of these texts in the negative mode sorted by year of publication already begins to demonstrate what we might expect to see in a Types and Tokens Analysis. Nouns such as “pobreza,” “grito,” “expropriados,” “revoltas,” “martírio,” “corruptos,” and “contrários” stand out among the titles. The Types and Tokens Analysis below focuses on the first line of the original. Of note is the tendency among these texts to negate the assertion of the original as in “Minha terra não tem palmeiras” or “Minha terra tinha palmeiras.” In such cases, as before, the noun disclosed has been struck through to indicate its negative (i.e.: palmeiras)

Minha terra tem ___________

acarajé
algunas árvores
altares de ouro
analfabetos
antas
araras de safira
arroios de diamantes

asfalto
atlético
aves
bananeiras
bandidos
beleza
belezas
“Sou ali” (1867–2015)

borboletas
buracos
buzinas
cadeia (para preto pobre puta)
cadeias (mal assombradas)
calvário
canto emudecido
carência
casas (sem rebocar)
chão verde
cheiro de queimada
chimarrão
churrasco
cidades sepultadas
cobras grandes
cosas feias
colibris de opalas
contrastres (agudos)
corrupção
corruptos
criança de rua
crianças (a mendigar)
crianças (desprovidas de direitos)
crianças (massacradas)
cruzeiro
damas da noite
desamores
dinheiro (para rico)
doenças
drogas
encantos mil
engana-tico no fubá
escolas
escolas (ignoradas)
professores (desvalorizados)
professores (deprimidos)
escolas (sucateadas)
esgoto (a céu aberto)
especiarias

estádios
estradas
estrelas
exílio
favelas
feijoada
flores
flore
fome
fomes
frutas com coroas e cravos
frutíferas árvores
fumaça
gado de corte
gente alegre
gente astuta
gente bonita
granadas
grileiro
grutas que faíscam no escuro
heitores
horrores
hospitais
igrejas
indio
infância do exílio
injustiças
inquérito
Internacional [futebol]
janela
ladrões
lagos
latifúndio
lírios mosqueados
lixo
macacos
madeireiras
maior carente
mais fumaça
mangueiras (mais)
mansão (para rico)
mкрас
mar
maravilhas (encomendadas)
marginais
mendigos
menino (sem camisa)
menino na lixeira
menor abandonado
mico-leão-dourado
misérias
morcego
muralhas
nuvens de poluição
o efeito estufa
ódio
onça
órfãos
os fortes
os fracos
Palmeiras [futebol]
palmeiras
palmérios
pântanos (que choram lágrimas
de óleo em vez de água
estagnada)
papagaios
papas na língua
pássaros
pedras
pés que nascem fugindo
pioelho
pobreza
poeira
poema concreto
poema sujo
políticos
políticos modelo
ponto g ignorado
ponto por debaixo dos panos
povo (‘forte, impávido, colosso’)
pragas

pral
praias maravilhosas
pranetas
prazeres
preto no branco
primores
problemas
professores (frustrados)
profusão de asfaltos
promessas de políticos
prostituição
puta
puteiro
queimadas
quilômetros de sede
recursos
relíquias de amantes fantasmazs
rio
rolas de âmbar
rosas
sabía
salvação
sangue
santinho
saúde
seringueiras sangradas
serra de ouro
sol
soldado na favela
dificuldades (tantas)
tapetes na porta à espera
terra
 tudo que há de bom
varejeira
Vasco
verde (mais)
verme (explorador de viúva)
violência
voodoo
The above list of tokens clearly demonstrates that the female-authored texts in the negative mode are concerned with an abundance of issues pertaining to modern-day Brazil. This systematic reading presents a mosaic of the nation’s problems in counterpoint to the original’s unifying narrative. In its place, these varied images portray critical perspectives of Brazil bound closely to feminist political strategies; the texts question and subvert the hierarchies and discourses that, over the course of the nation’s history, have led to the exploitation and exclusion of some in favor of the privilege of others. The messages of these texts are multitudinous and, applying the theories of Joan W. Scott, the feminist political strategies that these texts embody form an “exposure of the kinds of exclusions and inclusions—the hierarchies—it [in our case, Brazilian identity] constructs, and a refusal of their ultimate ‘truth.’” (48). These narratives, thus, constitute perspectives that promote “an equality that rests on differences … that confound, disrupt, and render ambiguous the meaning of any fixed binary position” (Scott 48). Subsequently, the superlative position of Brazil is disrupted as the binary of “cá” / “lá” has also burst into a constellation, replacing a capitalized singular National History with not just numerous small (his)stories, but more especially (her)stories.

In 1867, H. de Mendonça from Goiás published “Saudades da minha terra” in the Jornal das famílias. Written in the positive mode, the content of H. de Mendonça’s early variation is not especially unique, but the text is still historically significant since it is, for now, the earliest known female-authored variation. The text assumes the narrative voice of the author’s sister, assumedly in the court of Emperor Dom Pedro II in Rio de Janeiro.

Saudades da minha terra:

paródia por uma goiana à sua irmã na corte
Minha terra tem palmeiras,
Que mais belas nunca vi,
As campinas verdes cores;
Lá viceja o Buriti.

Nossas flores tem perfumes
Que na infância eu colhi,
Nossas brenhas mais negrumes;
Lá descansa a Juriti.
Puros ares sem neblina
Foi só lá que eu fruí!
Que país mais rico de ouro,
Haverá no mundo assim?

Nossas aves têm endeixas! …
Mais saudosas nunca ouvi.
Aqui … são tristes as queixas.
Melodias?! … só ali.

Negros olhos buliçosos
Mais formosos que eu já vi;
Róseos lábios são viçosos
Sem carmim como os daqui.

Nesses lagos cor de prata
Quantas vezes eu me vi?!
Os rios formam cascata;
Junto deles eu nasci …

As florestas são gigantes,
Lá sibila a sucuri;
Nesses campos verdejantes
É que cresce o muricy.

Nossas redes são macias,
Mais macias que as de cá;
Nas bebidas, todas frias,
Prima o doce guaraná!

Os rios todos piscosos …
As frutas todas sabor …
Quem nos fez assim ditosos?!
Foi o mágico Criador.

Tudo lá indica a Deus,
Almo rei da criação:
Esse azul puro dos céus
Não te inspira à oração?!

A alma toda pudor
De magia transcendente,
Foi só lá que eu vi-a crente,
Alvo ninho do amor! …

Eu não sei se é saudade
De tudo o que lá eu vi …
Dizei-me pois a verdade:
Nossa terra não é assim? …
Dizei-me, ó alma crente,  
Se acaso eu me iludi?!  
A Goiana nunca mente,  
Eu só conto o que eu vi! (H. de Mendonça, “Saudade” 127–28)

The original “Canção do exílio,” published only a generation before, served as an obvious touchstone for H. de Mendonça as she took her first professional steps in her literary career. In her text, she employs a comparable romantic bent, straightforward imagery, and a memorable and popular rhyme scheme as she follows closely the rhetoric of the original. Showing many classic signs of a variation in the positive mode, the text glorifies the author’s native region of Goiás in contrast to the capital where her sister lives among the nobles in the imperial court. In H. de Mendonça’s divinely blessed Goiás, the birds’ songs are more beautiful, the rivers and lakes more vibrant, the beds softer and the fruits more delicious. This text’s regional focus, comparing different areas of Brazil to each other, is a common occurrence among the variations, especially those in the positive mode, as authors typically propose the superiority of their specific town or state as a metonymy for the superiority of Brazil itself.

According to Eliane Vasconcellos, H. de Mendonça was the first female from Goiás to publish a book of literature (88). Her collection of poems, A redenção, published in 1875, and many of her other works appeared in periodicals such as O Domingo and the above referenced Jornal das famílias. Beginning with the subtitle to the poem above, “Paródia por uma goiana à sua irmã na corte,” it is apparent that H. de Mendonça and her sister, who Vasconcellos named as Maria Leonilda Carneiro de Mendonça, were of a more privileged class (89). This upbringing would have allowed H. de Mendonça the opportunity to be educated and less encumbered by domestic responsibilities, giving her comparatively more free time for literary pursuits than most women. Still, this conjecture should not downplay the courage of H. de Mendonça and other pioneering female authors with similar backgrounds; privilege is no guarantee of interest in writing nor publication, nor does it erase other professional challenges and obstacles posed by the patriarchy. Based on her publication record, it is apparent that H. de Mendonça was not only seriously dedicated to the art of literature, but also persistent enough to have her work make its
way into print despite the challenges. For this reason, Mendonça’s text deserves not only special recognition among the variations, but the author deserves to be included among the growing list of nineteenth-century female writers whose works have been rescued in recent decades through what has been termed a process of “arqueologia literária” (Alós 691).

While the most historically significant text of these 103 female-authored texts is H. de Mendonça’s from the nineteenth century, the longest female-authored text is from the mid-twentieth century. Published in a newspaper in 1948, Haydee Nicolusi’s “Canção do turista malogrado” expresses frustration that the nation cannot capitalize on its own beauty and resources. According to the poem, this shortcoming keeps tourists from discovering Brazil’s natural wonders and diminishes potential for profits. In this capitalist light, the text can be read as part of a concerted early twentieth-century modernization effort spearheaded in the 1930s by the Vargas regime to commodify and package Brazil for tourism. According to Skidmore, this effort, including the institutionalization of soccer as the national sport and Carnaval as the nation’s yearly cultural celebration, “was clearest after the [Vargas] coup of 1937” and had “an economic rationale (to attract tourism)” while also “help[ing] to soften the dictatorship’s image of repression and censorship” (118). By the time Nicolusi published her poem in 1948, the success of Vargas’s policies were obvious.

Canção do Turista Malogrado
Minha terra tem lagos que olham o céu com olhos de novilhas sonhando,
A água das cascatas tece rendas como a roca das velhas fadas,
Há regiões que ainda estão nascendo no ventre de florestas meninas,
Mas para ver tudo isso de perto só falta uma coisa: estradas.

Minha terra tem flores tão raras tais se fossem de prata ou vidro,
Cada vitória régia em botão é uma pomba de asas fechadas,
Tem lírios mosquados como tigres, parasitas-veleiros, navegando,
Mas para ver tudo isso de perto só falta uma coisa: estradas.

Minha terra tem pássaros que são verdadeiras joias de penas;
—rolas de âmbar, colibrís de opalas, araras de safira e granadas,
Quando as garças pousam para dormir cada árvore é um ramo branco de noiva,
Mas para ver tudo isso de perto só falta uma coisa: estradas.
Minha terra tem cobras grandes que mamam peitos de moça,
Tem antas que arrasam povoações quando estouram em manadas,
Tem macacos que riem e choram e papagaios que falam como gente!
Mas para ver tudo isso de perto só falta uma coisa: estradas.

Minha terra tem arroios de diamantes e serra de ouro sem vulcões,
Os vales quando estão florindo imitam tapeçarias bordadas,
Tem grutas que faíscam no escuro que nem broches de brilhantes,
Mas para ver tudo isso de perto só falta uma coisa: estradas.

Minha terra tem igrejas cor de luar esculpidas por gente sem mãos!
Tem relíquias de amantes fantasmas. Tem cadeias mal assombradas,
Tem cidades sepultadas na bruma com mais de trezentos anos.
Mas para ver tudo isso de perto só falta uma coisa: estradas.

Minha terra tem frutas com coroas e cravos que nem a Cruz,
Tem pântanos que choram lágrimas de óleo em vez de água estagnada,
Minha terra tem tudo que há de bom no mundo: tem até homens!
É nesses que nós pomos nossa última esperança frustrada …
(Nicolusi 6)

Divided into seven stanzas of four lines each, the first line of each stanza in “Canção do turista malogrado” approximates the original by repeatedly employing its most common phrase, “minha terra tem.” In this way, the poem, as do many others, reads as one long extension of the original’s first line. But, in Nicolusi’s capitalistic “canção,” Gonçalves Dias’s “palmeiras” and “sabiá” are substituted by a variety of attractions, both natural and man-made. Among other things, Nicolusi’s “terra” has lakes, waterfalls, young forests, rare flowers, birds, snakes, monkeys, diamonds, churches, gold, and buried cities (6). While the mention of “canção” in the title leaves no doubt about the poem’s indebtedness to the original, this litany of tokens associated with the original’s “palmeiras” also provides a comparable subject matter: Brazil’s natural wonders. Yet, the exiled in this poem is not the poet from his native home. It is the tourists from their adventures and subsequently the capitalists from their money. To remedy this, and to facilitate greater extraction of profits, more infrastructure is needed, namely “estradas” (6). And while the fourth line in each stanza except for the last affirms this fact, the last line then reminds us of what is keeping the nation from its capitalistic progress. Tellingly, it is the same factor that stood in the way of the colonizers: “homens” (6). But, somewhat different from the Tupi Guarani and other tribes,
this time the men in Nicolusi’s poem obstruct the modernizing project through their inept governance and lack of expertise and not through any resistance to the idea.

To balance these longer texts, written in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the twenty-first has much shorter poems, all falling well below the average word-count. The shorter texts from the twenty-first century are often composed of only four lines mirroring the first stanza of the original. As an example of a shorter text with a unique subject matter is Guta Gatuna’s Twitter-inspired “Gonçalves Dias Revisited” (2009). In this poem, Brazil’s “sabiás” do not sing, but tweet: “Minha terra tem palmeiras / Onde twittam os sabiás / As aves que aqui twittam / Não twittam como as de lá” (Gatuna). Emblematic of how the original is inherently shareable, modular, and moldable to new contexts, the verb “twittam” is employed as a neologism based on the popular social media app Twitter, further demonstrating how variations have become even more frequent and more easily circulated as the original is adapted to new media environments.

Although not as diminutive as Gatuna’s poem, another female-authored poem in the same new-media vein is Bianca B. Gomes’s untitled text from 2012. In Gomes’s text, she replaces Gonçalves Dias’s “palmeiras” with “Facebook,” confirming that it is now through the open-ended virtual environment of the internet that the poem’s life will continue to grow:

Minha terra tem facebook
onde eu entro sem parar
sou tão viciada
que não quero nem estudar.

Posto sempre besteiras
mas tem várias curtiações
a galera comenta
e compartilha de montão.

Quando chego da escola
corro logo pro pc
entre no facebook
e esqueço de viver. (24)

Elaine Pauvolid’s existentially disruptive poem “Sou ali” from 2005 is another diminutive text which dialogues, although less obviously than most, with Gonçalves Dias’s original. Without
“Sou ali” (1867–2015)

Brazil as a referent, this text expresses its uniqueness positioned as an “other” as it manages to achieve the status of variation without employing any of the most frequently borrowed nouns or phrases. Instead, Pauvolid’s poem finds itself in conversation with “Canção do exílio” through its syntax and the use of other less commonly borrowed words. With the subtitle, “Sou ali,” the poem begins its alternative discourse. Pauvolid’s use of the preposition “ali” creatively opens a third space outside of the “cá” / “lá” dialectic of the original. For non-native speakers, the word “ali” translates the same as “lá” as “there,” but with a key difference lost in translation: “ali” indicates a space between a more distant “lá” and a close “cá” / “aqui” or “here.” In this marginal space, the author can work out her own identity not in relation to the nation, but existentially, as in her relation to life as a poet. Appended to the first-person conjugation of the verb “to be” in the title, the two words together (trans.: “I am there”) open a personal space for the poet’s succinct rumination. Then, the poem overlaps with the original through the non-traditional uses of the verbs “gorjear” and “cantar.” But, instead of indicating the song of the “sabiá” descanting the wonders of Brazil, these verbs hint ironically at an internal silence and nothingness that the author confronts through her poetry. In the closing line, employing the word “onde,” the intertextual dialogue concludes by pointing not to the place in the palms where the “sabicá” sings, but to the place where the poet’s psychological drama unfolds: in the silence.

Sou ali
Tudo silencia e gorjeia
como gorjeasse o nada.
No entanto, gorjeia tanto este silêncio
que me tange e não me rompe
que poeta me vi nascer para cantá-lo.
Sou o cerne deste silêncio.
Onde ele toca, aqui estou. (Pauvolid)

As another example of a diminutive female-authored variation, the metaphor in the title of Marta Helena Cocco’s hemispherically focused “Versão enlatada do exílio” (2001) sets the tone for its sarcastic message. According to the poem, the siren song of American popular culture and art, conveniently packaged for world consumption, has left an indelible mark on Brazil and
veered it from the utopic course laid out by Gonçalves Dias’s original. Referencing US cultural expansionism through the filmic genre of Westerns, the poem first proposes Brazilians have been listening too intently to the “som do Sam” (qtd. in Silva Sá 207). These lines are an obvious reference to Uncle Sam who is a personified symbol of American military might going back to the War of 1812.

Versão enlatada do exílio

Em lá
sang sung
som do Sam
soa bem
bang bang.
E cá
sangue sangue
sanguessugas
se dão bem. (qtd. in Silva Sá 6)

Here Uncle Sam’s “som,” or sound, serving as a translingual homonym for the English word “song,” emanates not only from “lá” (the US), but also in the solfege key of “La.” Through this creative wordplay, the author reminds us that Brazilian identity in the 20th century, and especially after World War II, instead of being defined by its politico-cultural ties with Portugal and Europe, has been primarily defined by its ties with the US. In this reconfigured dialectic of “cá” (Brazil) and “lá” (United States), the glamorous violence of Western films, depicting the historical lawlessness and genocidal kill-or-be-killed Real Politik of Manifest Destiny, serves as a capitalist metaphor of intercontinental relations. For the author, the results of US expansionism are clear. They compose a violent narrative that has left Brazil in a pool of “blood,” both metaphorical and literal, swarmed by its own copy-cat “bloodsuckers”: “E cá / sangue sangue / sanguessugas / se dão bem” (qtd. in Silva Sá 6). In this way, the poem reminds us that, if Brazil and other colonies of the Americas were ever inspired by “Uncle Sam” in the nineteenth century to fight for their own independence, then in the twentieth century Brazil has, with the illegal trafficking of America’s high caliber rifles and handguns, become one of the most murderous nations on the planet (Hearn).
“Canção do exílio in Japan,” published by Marcia Miyasaki in 2008,9 is a classic example of the utopic moorings of the positive mode. The text closely mirrors the syntax and meaning of the original, but with a modern twist. The author is a “dekassegui,” or one of hundreds of thousands of Japanese-Brazilians who, beginning in the late 1980s, returned to Japan in search of a better life. Employing the typical tactic of token substitution, Miyasaki modifies the original to provide a snapshot of popular Brazilian culture, placing it in a positive light in comparison with what she has experienced in Japan. Still, it is no small irony that this example in the positive mode is written by someone who left Brazil because she did not find conditions manageable there. Indeed, as long as there are Brazilians, the fiction of Brazil as a paradise will always persist, even when reality demonstrates otherwise.

The poem begins, as might be expected, with the first two lines of the original, “Minha terra tem palmeiras / Onde canta o sabiá.” Then, in the second two lines of the first stanza, the author mimics the unattractive call of the crow instead of the Brazilian thrush: “As aves daqui não gorjeiam / Aqui tem corvo que faz cráá” (Miyasaki). In the second stanza, she hints at a difference in spatial perspectives. She longs for the Brazilian landscape which, in her experience, contrasts with the small homes and tight public spaces typical of urbanized Japan: “Nossas casas tem mais flores / Nossas ruas, mais espaço / Nossos bosques tem mais vida, / Nossa vida, mais sabores.” In the next lines, building on the mention of “sabores,” the poem covers a number of Brazilian culinary stereotypes, such as “churrasco,” “café,” and “guaraná.” These exist alongside homemade and mass-produced candies, such as the “beijinho,” “brigadeiro,” and the “Diamante Negro.” These popularly consumed items, accompanied by other romanticized Brazilian flora, such as the “laranja,” “banana,” and “maracujá,” complement the “sabia” and “palmeiras” of the original. The author also goes on to hint at other cultural differences with Japan, such as Brazil’s intense Christian traditions of communal worship in contrast to Japan’s private Shinto faith. In this vein, she writes: “Quero ir cantar na igreja, / E igreja aqui nem há.” The poem then closes with a typical play on words that hints at the assumed “paulista” origins of the writer where there is a significant population of Japanese immigrants. Replacing Gonçalves Dias’s “palmeiras” with the three main soccer teams from São Paulo, the first mentioned
is the homonymous “Palmeiras,” a coincidence which no doubt has precipitated the oft-repeated trope. Then, the author includes “Corinthians” and “São Paulo.”\textsuperscript{10}

As an example of a female-authored negative variation where a concern for the underrepresented dominates, Porto’s “Expropriados” merits a closer look. Written in 2010, this poem adopts the most common tactic among variations, employing the first three words of the original as a template for the elaboration of a list of attributes that, replacing “palmeiras,” communicates an entirely different reality for Brazil. Porto’s Brazil is a nation filled with violence, exploitation, racism, inequality, and corruption. In the first of three stanzas, she describes the urban realities of the nation’s poor, either corralled by the soldier-police in the favelas or homeless and living off scraps. In the second, she rhymes the corrupt “grileiros,” who take illegal possession of land and property, with the parasitical “piolho” and “mosca-varejeira,” whose larva, once lain in the skin of a host, if undetected, can cause illness and even death. The last stanza paints the stark, yet definitive contrast of haves and have-nots in Brazil. On one hand, the “ricos” have “vantagem / tudo” while the “preto,” “pobre,” and “puta,” instead of the governmental support and resources they need, are given “prison.” This drastic contrast with the paradise proposed by the original leads the author to ask in conclusion, “Minha terra?” As seen in Barros’s 2009 “Uma canção do exílio,” this interrogation of the original’s presupposition is a defining feature of variations from the 2000s. Not only is the land not what Gonçalves Dias proposed, for the “expropriated” inhabiting the favelas, the land is not even theirs to contemplate.

Expropriados
minha terra tem pobreza
tem soldado na favela
tem menino na lixeira
tem esgoto a céu aberto

minha terra tem grileiro
tem piolho gente astuta
tem varejeira tem verme
explorador de viúva

minha terra tem cadeia
para preto pobre puta
para rico tem dinheiro
In the “other” mode, there are those texts that, by not articulating Brazil as the referent, offer alternative readings mostly unconditioned by nationalist discourse. Apart from the aforementioned examples about Twitter and Facebook, there are a number of poems in this category, written by both female and male authors, which adapt the original to discuss amorous relationships. The pervasiveness and persistence of the love theme in poetry worldwide coupled with the popularity of “Canção do exílio” in Brazil make this marriage all but an inevitability. As an example of a female-authored text about a relationship is Paula Cajaty’s “Desejo de exílio.” In an obvious tip of the hat to the original, Gonçalves Dias’s “estrelas,” “flores,” and “palmeiras,” among other borrowed terms, are creatively re-appropriated to ruminate on a potential betrayal to take place in the “cama do vizinho.”

Desejo de exílio

dou-lhe uma vida de estrelas,
ela pede um amor que gorjeie.
dou-lhe o desfrute das flores,
ela quer trepar em palmeiras.
dou-lhe o cantar de um passarinho,
e ela sonha
faceira
com a cama do vizinho. (Cajaty)

“Canto da minha terra,” written by Xangô in 2008, is the one variation most easily identifiable as being by an Afro-Brazilian woman. In this poem, which assumes the collective voice of all Brazilians of African descent, the author employs an exilic perspective of an original culture forcibly left behind. In broad strokes, instead of idolizing Brazil, she paints a generally utopic view of the ancestral continent in the pan-African mode, hinting at the rituals and geographies associated with an identity lost to the tragedies of the Middle Passage. As in Gonçalves Dias’s original, the utopian qualities of the text are important since “the construction of identity includes the building of a utopia that redeems the
community at a symbolic level” (E. Oliveira 36). In this way, the poem becomes part of a wider effort in Brazil beginning in earnest in the 1970s with the *Cadernos negros* to build a black consciousness through literature, an initiative needed to combat the nation’s exaggerated racial inequality (E. Oliveira 39).

This text, easily identifiable as a variation of “Canção do exílio,” begins in customary fashion with the phrase “Minha terra tem” and then continues with other intertextual echoes, especially the repetition of the “cá” / “lá” dialectic, while advocating for Afro-Brazilians to return to their roots. In this light, the poem references the syncretic religious rituals of Candomblé, which include traditional African music and dance as well as the worship of a pantheon of gods known as “orixás.” It also recalls a seventeenth-century war in Palmares12 where a large community of runaway and emancipated slaves led by Zumbi were besieged and decimated by the Portuguese colonial army, reminding us that the construction of “identity is … a permanent re-telling of the past in which agents reconstruct discourses while envisioning a future” (E. Oliveira 36).

Canto da minha terra
Minha terra tem cantos e encantos
Tem dança, música, ritos e rituais
Onde aqui eu não encontro tudo que tem lá.
Meu céu tem estrelas lua e luar.
Minha mata tem verde, tudo que deixei por lá.
Minha Terra tem Orixás, onde eu canto e
Toco por eles lá.
Minha Terra tem lembrança, amizade, amor e tambor
Onde eu batuco, sempre que posso, toco
Pra eles nessa banda de cá.
Minha Terra não tem Palmares, como os daqui
Lá tem liberdade nos Palmares.
Terra berço de um povo negro, forte e bravo sempre será
Povo negro, bravo forte, lutador, rezador e
Caçador, esperando apenas que o povo de cá
Reconheça todo esse valor cultural que deixou
Tudo pra trás. Seja forte e valente a
Sua vitória está por chegar. (Xangô)

Although there is nothing particularly innovative about Xangô’s text in terms of literary form, it is curious that this recently pub-
lished poem still manages to stand out as the only variation among the 500 texts to deliver a message exclusively about Afro-Brazilian identity. An explanation as to why may rest within the homogenizing force of the original, effecting an erasure of differences as it attempts to join all Brazilians together in a happy uncontentious union much like the “palmeiras” and “sabiá.” But, this historical absence of Afro-Brazilian voices also points, as does the absence of female authors prior to 2000, to the subaltern status of blacks in Brazilian society in general, whose representation has been woefully absent in politics and other positions of power. As E. Oliveira argues in *Writing Identity*:

Confined to underprivileged social conditions, excluded from political channels of participation, inserted in the dominant discourse as the troubled object of study that was either ‘inferior’ or ‘exotic,’ stripped of an identity by the presence of the ‘mulatto’ ideal, blacks [in Brazil] have been denied access to the production of symbolic references that could affirm their identity. (27)

Another standout text from among those of female authorship is Lourenço’s “minha terra.” Posted online in 2015, along with other variations (which have all been subsequently removed), Lourenço’s poem is a bold rebuttal of the endemic misogynist abuses and sexual exploitations of *machismo*, and possibly the one text that best embodies a feminist critique of Brazilian society.

```
minha terra

tem as damas da noite
que botam pra correr a puta
que ousar roubar o ponto delas
tem ponto por debaixo dos panos
quando um tiozão
paga por molequinhas virgens
e por menininhos também
tem ponto g ignorado
por trogloditas
que trepam com suas fêmeas
como se trepassem
com uma boneca
cismo que cismo à noite
pra ter um pouco de tesão
```
minha terra
tem seringueiras sangradas
pra preservativo virar balão
minha terra
não tem papas na língua
desde que o tupi guarani
perdeu o posto de língua mãe
as aves que aqui voejam
são depenadas no carnaval
nosso céu de certeza
só o da nossa boca
porque contrato com deus
só no regime celetista
nossas matas quase mortas
quase mortos nossos natos
cismo que cismo à noite
pra ter um pouco de tesão
minha terra
tem seringueiras sangradas
pra preservativo virar balão.

Dealing with prostitution, pedophilia, and other issues, the poem mixes parasitic atrocities, perpetrated primarily by males, with those of certain damaging environmental practices, animal rights abuses, and even with the extinction of indigenous cultures. Together these offenses offer a sobering counterpoint to the original as they cast a diffuse post-structural light on the dark side of Gonçalves Dias’s normative nationalist discourse. The text opposes the original’s “palmeiras” and “sabiá” through the presentation of a cast of unwitting and unwilling operatives (i.e., prostitutes fighting over turf) and other downtrodden (exploited children and women tossed around like sex toys) in seemingly inescapable situations of inferiority and domination. With the play on the original’s use of the verb “cismar,” Lourenço’s poem does not anxiously ponder at night her return to the beauties of a Brazilian tropical paradise (“Em cismar sozinho à noite, / Mais prazer encontro eu lá”). Rather, she re-articulates the pleasure principle of Gonçalves Dias’s text as a zero-sum power play in which one’s enjoyment comes about through another’s pain while she anxiously considers whether she is somehow complicit in the Brazilian nightmare she unfolds before us (cismo que cismo à noite / pra ter um pouco de tesão).
To be an exile is to be forcibly placed in a peripheral space. It is the status of not the “one,” but an “other” who has been colonized, whether physically or discursively, by an institution (or its agent) in a position of relative power. Thus, while the position in which Gonçalves Dias found himself in 1843 was one of exile, it hardly compares to the tragic circumstances of the sexually exploited “young virgins” of Lourenço’s text. Nevertheless, these two subjects still find themselves in dialogue with one another, part of the same exilic discourse. While the first expresses optimism in the nationalist project, the multitudinous perspectives adopted by Lourenço and the other female authors presented in this chapter demonstrate the inherent failure of its heteronormative nationalism, offering in its place a variety of alternative, even if at times painful stories. Thus, while the increase of female-authored “Cântico do exílio” variations represents on one hand progress toward Haraway’s proto-cyberfeminist world without gender, on the other, the realities communicated through these texts tell us there is still a long path ahead toward achieving equality.