Song of Exile
Enslen, Joshua Alma

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About the Author

Joshua Alma Enslen is an Associate Professor in the Department of Foreign Languages at West Point, where he teaches courses in Portuguese as a second language and in Brazilian literature and culture. He holds a PhD from the University of Georgia (2008) and a Post-Doctoral Certificate of Studies (2016) from the University of Coimbra’s Materialities of Literature program. His current research focuses on exploring, in visual and narrative modes, the intertextual influence of Gonçalves Dias’ “Canção do Exílio” (1843), one of the world’s most imitated poems. His works of data-driven art conveying the influence of Gonçalves Dias’ poem, and created in collaboration with visual artist Alaina Enslen, have been featured in solo exhibitions at the historic University of Coimbra’s Museum of Science (2016), later nominated for an APOM 2017, at FOLIO 2016 (Óbidos), and at U Lisbon’s Caleidoscópio (2017). Apart from his book on the influence of “Song of Exile,” he has published numerous essays on varied topics in Brazilian literature and culture in academic journals such as the Luso-Brazilian Review, Hispamia, and Portuguese Literary and Cultural Studies.

“In this carefully crafted study, Joshua Enslen chronicles the allure and cultural impact of Brazil’s most iconic and imitated poem. Penned in Coimbra, Portugal, in 1843 by Brazilian Antônio Gonçalves Dias, ‘Song of Exile’ inspired Brazilians to reimagine their nation’s landscape and history. References to it abound in popular culture and music. For nearly two centuries, the poem has been invoked by political regimes and actors, including protestors during Brazil’s 2018 presidential election. ‘Song of Exile’ idealized Brazil as an Edenic garden and offered fertile ground for subsequent writers to imitate or challenge Gonçalves Dias’s utopic vision.”

—Luciana Namorato, Indiana University