

The B-Side of History: the late 18th-century popular theater in the *Histories of Portuguese Theater*

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ABSTRACT – The B-Side of History: the late 18th-century popular theater in the *Histories of Portuguese Theater* – The objective of this article is to analyze the discourses of four *Histories of Portuguese Theater* (HPT) about the late 18th century. After discussing and delimiting the aesthetic aspects that circulate in Portugal in the period and the problems related to popular theater in the *corpus*, we established a quantitative analysis of the eighteenth-century theatrical varieties in each of the HPTs. Such quantitative examination leverages the qualitative analysis undertaken in the central part of the article, which aims to understand the aesthetic-ideological position of the discourse project of each author. Finally, we concluded that the HPTs are characterized by a view that should be reviewed considering the contemporary thought about the period.

Keywords: **History of Portuguese Theatre. 18th century. Dialogic Discourse Analysis. Chapbook Theater. Arcadian Theater.**

RÉSUMÉ – B-side de l'histoire: le théâtre populaire de la seconde moitié du XVIIIe siècle dans les *Histórias do Teatro Português* – L'objectif de cet article est d'analyser les discours de quatre *Histoires du théâtre portugais* (HTP) sur la seconde moitié du XVIIIe siècle. Après avoir discuté et délimité les aspects esthétiques qui ont circulé au Portugal à l'époque et les problèmes liés au théâtre populaire dans le *corpus*, se établie une analyse quantitative des variétés théâtrales du XVIIIe siècle dans chacun des HTP. Certain regard quantitatif s'appuie sur l'analyse qualitative entreprise dans la partie centrale de l'article, qui vise à comprendre la position esthétique-idéologique du projet discursif de chaque auteur. Enfin, on conclut que les HTP sont marqués par un regard qui doit être revu à partir de la réflexion contemporaine sur la période.

Mots-clés: **Histoire du Théâtre Portugais. 18ème Siècle. Analyse Dialogique du Discours. Teatro de Cordel. Teatro Árcade.**

RESUMO – O Lado B da História: o teatro popular da segunda metade do século XVIII nas *Histórias do Teatro Português* – O objetivo deste artigo é analisar os discursos de quatro *Histórias do Teatro Português* (HTP) sobre a segunda metade do século XVIII. Após discussão e delimitação dos aspectos estéticos que circulam por Portugal no período e dos problemas relativos ao teatro popular no *corpus*, estabelece-se uma análise quantitativa das variedades teatrais setecentistas em cada uma das HTP. Tal olhar quantitativo alavanca a análise qualitativa empreendida na parte central do artigo, que visa compreender a posição estético-ideológica do projeto discursivo de cada autor. Por fim, conclui-se que as HTP são marcadas por uma mirada que deve ser revista a partir do pensamento contemporâneo sobre o período.

Palavras-chave: **História do Teatro Português. Século XVIII. Análise Dialógica do Discurso. Teatro de Cordel. Teatro Árcade.**

Read the variegated Portuguese 18th century

The Portuguese late 18th century is historically characterized by a major turnaround in Portuguese politics undertaken by the Marquis of Pombal, who was Chief Minister to King Dom Joseph I during practically his entire reign (1750–1777). This historical figure was so important at the time that, unlike the other monarchical periods, the time period during which he held office is called the *Pombaline period*. Among the many changes promoted by the Marquis, one that directly relates to our discussion is the return of the so-called *foreigned* – Portuguese citizens who, after having contact with the Enlightenment then current in Europe since the beginning of the century, had to hide or leave the country in order not to be captured by the Inquisition or by the Portuguese political police. This movement promotes a renewal in Portuguese Letters and, with them, in the theater written and published¹ in Portugal. During the government of the Marquis of Pombal, names such as Correia Garção and Manuel de Figueiredo have their works published after being approved by the Real Mesa Censória.

Certainly, these few lines do not present exactly the social, political and cultural turnaround promoted in this quarter of century, which corresponds to Pombal's time in office; nor do they show the tensions between a culture flourished from obscurantism that was imposed on that society and the *imported* enlightened eruditism. And here we get a little closer to our objects.

The *corpus* we adopted for this work comprises four fundamental books quite widespread among Portuguese theater scholars: *História do Teatro Português*, by Luciana Stegagno Picchio (1969), whose first edition, in Italian [*Storia del teatro portoghese*], was published in 1964; *História do Teatro Português*, by Luiz Francisco Rebello (1967); *História do Teatro Português*, by José Oliveira Barata (1991); and *História do Teatro Português*, by Duarte Ivo Cruz (2001), the last three in their first edition. All authors present an overview of Portuguese theater in their works, even covering a recent period close to their publication dates, in diachronic order, divided into chapters whose delimitation is primarily that of artistic schools or movements (which may or may not be understood within a given century)².

It is important to note, to continue the discussion, that all surveyed authors organize their books quite similarly. The conception of these discourses and the way they are constituted stem – as expected – from the human thought in effect in the period of their writing, which we will call contemporary thought, because it is coeval to our own discourse space-time.

And here begins our issue with the writing of these works in the chapters that will be more closely analyzed in this article. When dealing with the late 18th-century so-called popular theater, the author faces two difficulties: a) the understanding of the thought that is current as of the writing of a theater considered *ancient*, that is, that does not correspond or has little contact with the current ideals of writing³; and b) the legitimacy and comprehension of works belonging to the comic genre⁴, that is, that do not fit the erudite standards of artistic writing.

Bakhtin (1983, p. 38) addressed this matter when he analyzed the work of François Rabelais:

One of the major shortcomings of contemporary literary criticism is its attempt to fit all literature-the Renaissance in particular-into the framework of official culture. And yet some work, Rabelais' especially, can be understood only against the background of popular culture which has always-and at all stages of its evolution-opposed the official culture and created its own unique world view, its own forms of figurative representation.

As for the quotation above, it is first important to explain that Bakhtin understands the Renaissance as a broader movement than the artistic school to which we are accustomed to delimiting until the end of the sixteenth century. According to him, it makes sense for “Renaissance thought” to extend up to the end of the Baroque period – which, in Portugal, would extend up to the late eighteenth century, when it would clash with and eventually be supplanted by the following forms of human thought (which Bakhtin calls “bourgeois Europe's literary creation and ideology”, 1984, p. 2). Nor does Bakhtin propose a sudden but gradual change, in which the enlightened-romantic thought begins its process of establishment already in the European 17th century:

In the seventeenth century an important process was started in all ideological spheres. Generalization, empirical abstraction, and typification acquired a leading role in the world picture. This process was completed in the eighteenth century. The very pattern of the world was changed. [...] This pattern

was most strikingly shown in artistic creation (especially in the eighteenth century) and led to the specific limitations of realism in the age of the Enlightenment (Bakhtin, 1984, p. 115-116).

In Portugal, in the late eighteenth century, we see precisely this ideological process proposed by Bakhtin. In theater, in which clearly the Arcadian current is due to the Enlightenment thought that arrived in the country with the Pombaline government, the previous current is also still present in the artistic sphere, namely in “chapbook theater” [*teatro de cordel*].

Secondly, popular culture, according to Bakhtin (1984, p. 3), is different from official culture, because in it there is “no dogma, no authoritarianism, no narrow-minded seriousness” can coexist with Rabelaisian images; these images are opposed to all that is finished and polished, to all pomposity, to every ready-made solution in the sphere of thought and world outlook”. Thus, popular culture would have an unofficial character, whose characteristics would shunt erudite systematization. It would be as if we (due to Romantic thought) had lost the sensitivity, the code necessary to be able to interpret a work belonging to the scope of popular culture and, even being aware of this, it is not always that the historian or critic manages to deal with the coercions of their own time.

Therefore, the analysis of eighteenth-century discourses and their affiliation to an unofficial current of thought in their historical context is a major part of this research. For now, we center our discussion on the reception of the dramaturgy (and, eventually, scene) of the late eighteenth century in the *Histories of Portuguese Theater* currently circulating. Since they serve as a *gateway* to the understanding and study of this period, and because this period is not abundant as to in-depth studies, it is often the information there that will constitute the theater scholars’ knowledge about the matter. From this arises our mobilizing question of this reflection: in the *Histories of Portuguese Theater*, how is the late eighteenth century popular theater, contemporary to opera and Arcadian, being represented?

The issue of the Portuguese 18th century

Margot Berthold, in her *A History of World Theater*, originally published in 1968 – a contemporary book, therefore, to those of Picchio and Rebello –, arranges her book by thematic blocks, organized in a diachronic

way – as the compendiums of our *corpus* are composed. The introduction of the chapter that focuses on the eighteenth century introduces it to its reader:

Everywhere in Europe, the eighteenth century was an era of change in the traditional social order and in modes of thought. [...] During the first half of the century, it felt united in the optimism of the Enlightenment while at princely courts the Baroque fortissimo was dying away in the mirrors and shellwork of the Rococo. [...] The theater tried to make its contribution to the shaping of the century that was to be so full of contradictions. It became a platform of man's new knowledge of himself, a pulpit of moral philosophy, a school of ethics, a subject of learned controversies, and also a common possession consciously enjoyed (Berthold, 1972, p. 478-479).

The excerpt presents three aspects relevant to our discussion that have already been indicated at the beginning of this text: i) changes in thought and social order; ii) the gerund – “was dying away” – employed over the Baroque aesthetic; and iii) the role of theater in these changes. Since Berthold is referring to European theater in *general*, we are interested in the intersection of this European movement with the artistic-theatrical reality experienced in Portugal in the same period.

The issue of the change in human thought towards the Enlightenment, which would culminate in Romantic thought or, through the metaphor proposed by Berthold (1972, p. 479), “the reservoir of the closing century flowed over into the intellectual and political currents of the nineteenth century”, is central to understanding the devaluation of comic genres amidst erudite culture.

With the Enlightenment and its advent of enlightened reason, the social balance becomes unbalanced and laughter loses its space as a valid way of understanding the world. That is because it is *opposed* to the reason advocated by the erudite milieu: it is democratic, since all individuals who share the same social environment can participate in it⁵; but it is also wild, as reminded by Hansen (1992, p. 15, emphasis in the original, our translation):

Now, of all the weak vices, the most shameful are those of intemperance, in debauchery and dishonesty, which always imply the two most material senses and which are, apropos, the most suitable for comedy. In this case, the application of playful and poignant wits causes **cachinnus**, guffaw, immoderate laughter, unlike other vices, which excite a laugh pervaded with seriousness.

In a commentary on *The Aristotelian Telescope* [*Il cannocchiale aristotelico*] (1663), by Emanuele Tesauro, the Brazilian professor understands the laughter from the medieval or *carnival* perspective of which Bakhtin speaks, since Tesauro is a commentator on Aristotle carved into the heart of the Renaissance. Being, therefore, “immoderate”, laughter must be, from the eighteenth-century enlightened perspective, removed from the social setting or, in the impossibility of this, relegated to a smaller, more circumscribed and limited plane of social life. The change in human thought in the eighteenth century, therefore, interferes with the cultural value attributed to certain artistic objects, lowering them or elevating them according to the morality and erudition of each time.

But those who think that such change was accepted and carried out with promptness and without tensions are mistaken. It is no coincidence that Berthold (or, in this case, the translators) uses the gerund “was dying away” when referring to the Baroque aesthetic⁶. The Renaissance worldview was rooted and perfectly adjusted to European (and, why not, Western) popular culture, since it presented the including elements presented above and brought the public to itself, taking it into account⁷. Enlightenment aesthetics, on the contrary, is a construction of reason, that is, it is firstly formulated as an idea and then brought to the concreteness of reality in artistic forms little accessible to the theatrical audience of the eighteenth century. If it was easier for this bourgeois theater to captivate its audience in certain European countries, whose political-social conjunctures propitiated its rise, it certainly was not the case in Portugal.

Finally, as for the role of theater in the changes that took place in the eighteenth century, it was taken as a vehicle that would be able to circulate the social, ethical and moral ideals that flourished from this new way of understanding the presence of man in the world. In a general perspective, Berthold (1972, p. 480) states that “the stage was to be the forum and bulwark of moral philosophy, and it dedicated itself to this duty with decorum and zeal”. Similarly, a certain current of thought of Portuguese dramaturgy in the eighteenth century:

A common idea unfailingly emerges from all these texts: that of the *usefulness* of dramatic art as a means of *instruction*. And this ‘utilitarian’ conception of theater is present in all the authors of Arcadia who wrote theatrical

texts, either originals or translations, as well as in the censors of the future Real Mesa Censória, who make this idea a *sine qua non* (Carreira, 1988, p. 18, emphasis in the original, our translation).

According to Carreira's thesis, the Arcadians were responsible for the dialogue of the Portuguese stage with this "supreme task of human thought and action" (Berthold, 1972, p. 480). However, the texts written by the Portuguese "enlightened" authors did not appear much on stage, also because the Portuguese Arcadia itself had a very brief life (1756–1776), and the few texts represented did not captivate its audience.

In addition to its usefulness as a form of moral education, the Arcadians sought to supplant the two other theatrical forms in effect in the Portuguese dramatic sphere in the eighteenth century: opera, with clear Italian influence, and chapbook theater, in whose miscellany of references the form of the Spanish golden theater stands out. Specifically against chapbook theater lies a "deep aversion of the Arcadian literates and the reviewers of the Mesa Censória" (Carreira, 1988, p. 20, our translation), whose echoes reproduce the erasure or depreciation of the genre in the history of Portuguese theater.

Now, if the eighteenth century is, throughout Europe, a time of crisis, Marnoto (2014, p. 10, our translation) draws attention to the specific situation of Portugal in the period:

Even so, the rhythms of Portuguese literature are very slow compared to the rest of European literature: if the Roman Arcadia was founded in 1690, its Portuguese counterpart, the Lusitanian Arcadia, will have its first formal sessions only in 1757. A country geographically located at the western end of the European continent, such as Portugal, has always been inclined to have contact with other peoples of Europe and the world. But the progressive intensification of these relations, from the beginning of the eighteenth century onwards, could not fail to have a strong impact on the circulation of new ideas.

Since the Arcadians are the *representatives* of Enlightenment thought in Portuguese theater, the crisis of thought experienced in Europe in the eighteenth century is limited, in Portugal, to the second half of the eighteenth century, which is why we will focus more closely on this part of the *Histories of Portuguese Theater* of our *corpus*.

We have, therefore, a division between the first and the second half of the Portuguese eighteenth century that can be delimited by the change of

the *King of Portugal and the Algarves*. In the first half of the century, we have the long reign of King Dom John V (1706–1750). Of the aspects of his reign that interest us in this discussion are an exacerbated religiosity of his court, an Inquisition actively present in the national territory and the monarch's taste for opera, including funding scholarships for studies in Italy. These conditions prevented the flowering of Enlightenment thought in Portugal during his reign, favoring the maintenance of Baroque thought and artistic forms, already in vogue in the previous century, of Spanish origin:

[...] the success was such that this type of theater continued to prevail far beyond the date when the Bragança dynasty was restored in 1640. Caution in the face of the claims of hegemony of the neighboring kingdom was therefore reconciled with great enthusiasm. This trend continues, however, in the eighteenth century, finding in António José da Silva one of its great revitalizers (Marnoto, 2014, p. 31, our translation).

The name of António José da Silva, since Romanticism, is always cited as one of the great authors of the history of Portuguese theater, alongside Gil Vicente and Almeida Garrett. His dramaturgy follows, as Marnoto states, a clearly Spanish line of dramatic composition, already influenced by Italian opera, present in Portuguese territory since the beginning of the century⁸.

This line of Portuguese theater will continue in the late eighteenth century with the so-called *chapbook theater*, which is unanimously seen by theater scholars not as a theatrical genre, but under the aegis of its materiality (being sold hanging on a piece of string [Portuguese: *cordel*]) and its objectives (being a type of theater written or translated in order to please its readers) – that is, we are dealing with a heterogeneous set of texts gathered and named *a posteriori*, and whose designation is based on the contemporary reception of such texts (through the printed book) and disregards the first function of the dramatic text, which is to be presented on stage (and these texts were represented in the period). Then our central problem begins, as there is an attempt to combine different forms in a single mold, and a mold based on the materiality of the publication of such works, even though we know that “conversely, at least in Spain, what most determined the writing of a play were the conditions of its *performance*” (Chartier,

2002, p. 80, emphasis in the original, our translation). Carreira (1988) and the catalog *Theater Prohibited and Censored in Portugal in the Eighteenth Century* [*Teatro proibido e censurado em Portugal no século XVIII*] (Camões, 2015)⁹ show that the real situation of production, representation and circulation of plays was much more complex, but basically every request for publication of dramatic text referred to a text already represented, to be represented or prohibited from being represented¹⁰.

D. José assumes the Portuguese throne in 1750, with the death of his father, King D. João V. However, it is the rise of the Marquis of Pombal¹¹ to the position of Secretary of State for Interior Affairs of the Kingdom (equivalent to the current position of Prime Minister), in 1756, that marks a turn in Portuguese thought, with the relative opening to Europe – coinciding even with the foundation of the Portuguese Arcadia, in the same year. Certainly, we cannot fail to mention that Pombal's work in the face of the tragedy that occurred with the Lisbon Earthquake in 1755¹² (and a certain negligence of the king, they say) was decisive for the freedom granted by the king to his Secretary of State during the remainder of his reign.

In the theatrical field, if in the first half of the century we had opera and aulic-matrix theater coexisting in reasonable balance, as they occupied different spaces in the Portuguese social fabric; in the second half of the century, with the entry into the equation of an element of opposition (the Enlightenment thought), a controversy is created between the current theatrical forms – a controversy that, as seen in the plays and in the treaties, is much more present in the Arcadian discourse than in opera or chapbooks –, because “[...] one of the most ambitious projects of the Arcadians was exactly the restoration of Portuguese theater, which was under the influence of the Spanish and Italian theaters, but very particularly of the latter” (Carreira, 1988, p. 18, our translation)¹³.

This entire issue is reflected on the way twentieth-century authors read and present such a complex period. Table 1 shows the material space assigned to each of the main themes addressed by the authors under the 18th century insignia:

Author Chapter dedicated to the 18th century [English translation]	Book pages	Chapter pages	Pages about Ant. J. da Silva		Pages about opera		Pages about Arcadian theater		Pages about chapbook theater	
Luiz Francisco Rebello Do teatro de cordel ao teatro da Arcádia [From chapbook theater to Arcadian theater]	166	14	3		2		5		4	
		8.43%	1.81%	21.43%	1.20%	14.29%	3.01%	35.71%	2.41%	28.57%
Luciana Stegagno Picchio [Setecentos] [<i>Settecento</i> , or 1700s]	486	33	8		1		16		8	
		6.79%	1.65%	24.24%	0.21%	3.03%	3.29%	48.48%	1.65%	24.24%
Duarte Ivo Cruz Dos clássicos aos neoclássicos* [From the classics to the neoclassics]	342	31	2		4		15		5	
		9.06%	0.58%	6.45%	1.17%	12.90%	4.39%	48.39%	1.46%	16.13%
José Oliveira Barata A dramaturgia portuguesa em busca de identidade* [The Portuguese dramaturgy in search of identity]	417	46	17		6		10		7	
		11.03%	4.08%	36.96%	1.44%	13.04%	2.40%	21.74%	1.68%	15.22%

*This chapter is larger than the elements analyzed in this chart, which is why the sum of the parts does not result in 100%.

Table 1 – Chart comparing the Histories of Portuguese Theater *analyzed*. Source: Prepared by the author.

Despite the sterility that a table can represent in relation to the value of the textual content, it is significant that Arcadian theater occupies more space than chapbook theater in all publications. If we are condescendingly flexible and add it to the number of pages occupied with the theme of António José da Silva (early eighteenth century), some parity is achieved by certain works – although it should be noted that Picchio reserves the same number of pages to the Arcadian theater and to all the rest of eighteenth-century theater (strangely, the Italian author hardly mentions opera) and Cruz deals with the Arcadian theater in half the space allocated to the eighteenth century. To understand the inconsistency of such proportionality, in addition to the shorter duration and volume of production of Arcadia, which is around 20 years, there is also the issue that the Arcadian thought is a united thought, whose texts are all written from a general poetic that aesthetically unifies the plays, while chapbook theater is an amalgamation of various scenic and dramaturgical practices published in a certain form, the chapbooks leaflets.

The discursive arenas of each author

The effectively *material* aspect of the past cannot be changed; however, the aspect of meaning, the expressive, speaking aspect can be modified, as it is unfinished and does not coincide with itself (or is free) (Bakhtin, 2017c, p. 60, emphasis in the original, our translation).

Bakhtin's quotation alerts us to the individuality of each statement on which we focus on in this article. Even if they belong to the same genre (historical compendium), are based on the same material (past), share the same *corpus* (Portuguese theater) and even have the same general (chronological) or specific organization (a separate chapter for the period), they are different statements, from authors with different relationships with the world and with the *corpus*. Therefore, although we seek to find common factors among the books, we will also analyze them in their enunciative specificities.

We will start with the titles, all of them called *History of Portuguese Theater*.

The concrete utterance, as conceived of by the members of the Bakhtin Circle, includes what in other approaches is called a paratext, viz., a text adjacent to the main text, such as the title, subtitles, a dedication, epigraphs, a preface, an afterword, among others. According to several authors, paratexts carve out the path for the reader to enter into the intricacies of the main text (Brait, 2019, p. 259).

The three elements that constitute the title of the works are representative of a genre, a materiality and an evaluative delimitation, respectively. When speaking of a *History of* something, especially when, in Portuguese, added with the defined article (in this case, *of + the*), there is an objective direction of the textual form – commonly chronological, diachronic and segmented. This formation is so intrinsic that even small deviations must be noted, so that the reader does not see them as an involuntary slip, but a conscious choice of the author. As when Cruz (2001, p. 101) warns that “we are once again forced to diminish the rigor of the chronological scheme”, as if this were the only acceptable scheme in the genre in which he writes. In addition, when proposing a *History*, there is a tacit commitment signed between author and reader of an account that follows very closely the events that *actually* happened. We will see that this pact is sometimes

broken by the authors due to a narratological coherence, according to Certeau (1988, p. 93, emphasis in the original):

[...] a *narrativization* makes content move in the direction of its expansion, from nonchronological models to a chronologization, from a doctrine to a manifestation of a narrative type; inversely, a *semanticization* of raw data makes descriptive elements move toward a syntagmatic linkage of utterances and an establishment of programmed historical sequences.

That is, some authors will organize their process of selection and presentation of events, as well as their illations between events (including from different times) in favor of a discursive project that does not necessarily prioritize a representation of the tensions of the time. “Thus history is always ambivalent: the locus that it carves for the past is equally a fasion of *making a place for a future*” (Certeau, 1988, p. 85, emphasis in the original), or building a line in relation to the present.

This discussion leads us to the third element of the title: *Portuguese*. The very geographically marked selection establishes a relationship with Enlightenment ideas of nationality:

The ‘nation’ as a community of citizens, that is, as a political entity, is the creation of the French Revolution. By following the maxim “one nation, one state”, the ‘nation’ reality came to become, in Europe, a simultaneously cultural and political entity and led to the belief that it is not only natural for a nation to have a state but also necessary for it to have a state in order for its cultural identity to be preserved (Miranda, 2008, p. 154, our translation).

Based on Oommen’s writings¹⁴, Miranda establishes the proximity of the construction of the contemporary notion of *nation* and Enlightenment thought. To us, this rupture is essential, because we are at the center of this conflict of conceptions of the world, and, returning to the theatrical topic, the Portuguese Arcadian theater is a corollary of the thought that will constitute the fundamental bases of the writing of history in the books of our *corpus*. By establishing, therefore, the dichotomy between chapbook theater and Arcadia theater, the authors, consciously or not, define a dichotomy between the *other* and *me*, *old* and *new*, *ancient* and *modern*, *past* and *present*, and readers, consciously or not, puts themselves close to the this and in opposition to that element of this duality:

If we analyze the processes of building nations from a historical point of view, we will find that myths related to nations tend to be developed *as if the nation were being created in opposition to other nations* (Miranda, 2008, p. 158, emphasis added, our translation).

The national imagination, therefore, dominates historical writing in the books analyzed, either objectively or present in the roots of discourse. Because “[...] nations are, thus, built by discourse, through processes of ideological elaboration” (Miranda, 2008, p. 155, our translation), there is meaning in determining the theater presented in publications as *Portuguese*, even if it rarely refers to spaces different from large cities and academic centers, namely Lisbon, Porto and Coimbra.

Returning, therefore, to the second element of the titles, *Theater*, which ends up constituting materiality, that “effectively *material* aspect of the past” of which Certeau speaks in the quotation that opens this section. But that which the authors consider *theater*, when it comes to the second half of the eighteenth century, is intrinsically based on the materiality of the publication of the dramatic text and, with less importance, on other notes on scenography or the backstage. This view is not erroneous, since the theater of that period was centered on the text, as reported by Roubine (1982, p. 43-44, our translation):

Therefore, the beginning of a tradition of sacralization of the text – which would mark in a lasting way the western spectacle, and especially French – can already be situated at that time [European seventeenth century]. [...] Thus, we see the specialization and hierarchization of theatrical professions being outlined at the same time: to each one their *métier*, and all at the service of the text (and the author)!

However, as Roubine (1982) points out, this hierarchization leaves out a whole kind of theater that is not subservient to the text.

In Portugal, something similar happens between the theater of Arcadia and the other theatrical forms of the same period, which are despised by that – thought that continued in effect until very recently¹⁵. The more vehement an author’s defense of a very specific view of history, the more superficial (and even unfair) may be his view on certain historical movements that do not contribute to the assertion of his thesis or to the construction of his narrative. Therefore, the late eighteenth-century theater for the authors

of *Histories of Portuguese Theatre* analyzed is a production based on dramaturgical writing that emerges from a Portuguese pen, especially in Portuguese language and, when applicable, published and/or represented in Portugal¹⁶.

We can name Romanticism as a literary strand that guides the writing of history in our *corpus*. Romanticism, as a Portuguese aesthetic-literary movement, converges both to the origin of current human thought and to the creation of a national project, as we have exposed above. With regard to theater, the objective is the one stipulated by Almeida Garrett as a modernizer of Portuguese theater¹⁷, whose ideas are already pointed out by Cruz (2001, p. 154):

The new social structure was not compatible with the laws of the past and demanded, therefore, new legal regulation, along with the ideological, cultural and political education of citizens, that motivated a true national regeneration, *in the light of romantic ideals of recognition of a historical past*, of chaste traditions, of beliefs, of customs (Ferreira, 2008, p. 53, our translation).

Romantic thought in Portugal arises from the unfolding of its contact with French thought begun in the 18th century, through the writers of Portuguese Arcadia. If, like Bakhtin, we understand that Enlightenment and Romanticism participate in the same strand of human thought, which in turn is different from that of the Renaissance, we can associate, in the theatrical field, the Arcadian theater and the Romantic theater idealized by Almeida Garrett – and, by association, chapbook theater and opera as different from this theater, participants of another current of human thought. How much of this influence interferes with our authors' appreciation of a theater not only based on another strand, but against which Arcadism invests?

Armed with the questions raised so far, let us take a closer look at each of the texts under analysis.

História do Teatro [Romântico] Português, by Duarte Ivo Cruz

Starting with the title dedicated to the section of the book of Cruz, *From the classics to the neoclassics [Dos clássicos aos neoclássicos]*, it is already possible to expect a less detained, intermediate look at the course of theater contemporary to these aesthetic currents, but which is not subsidiary to

them. To a certain extent, such expectations are confirmed in the text as to a view more loaded with different ideologies from those that prevailed in chapbook theater: Duarte Ivo Cruz is at all an author to whom discursively the centrality of the history of Portuguese theater is in Romanticism. Such that, when identifying the lines of an eighteenth-century cultural matrix¹⁸, he states that:

This matrix obliges us, in particular, to immerse ourselves in the work of playwrights who, better or worse, cover the *Pre-Romantic period* of our theater: very little known and, in fact, *low quality* playwrights (Cruz, 2001, p. 97, emphasis added, our translation).

At this point, there is a mismatch between the analysis of the theater historian and the concrete utterance that is the texts of the eighteenth-century chapbook theater. There is no such thing as a *Pre-Romanticism* in the lines that make up the eighteenth-century cultural matrix identified by the author – or at least not until the end of the century. In this regard, Bakhtin (1987a, p. 144):

The first task is to understand the work as the author himself understood it, without exceeding the limits of his understanding. This is a very difficult problem and usually requires introducing an immense amount of material. The second task is to take advantage of one's own position of temporal and cultural outsidership. Inclusion in our (other's for the author) context.

That is, it seems that the author went directly to the second task, forgetting to look at the production context of chapbook theater and restricting himself to a speech project that aims to pave an aesthetic-cultural path up to the outbreak of Romanticism in Portugal – which the literature manuals present as a movement more *from the outside inwards* than the other way around. Resuming the table presented in the previous section, this perspective can be evidenced, since the author dedicates 48.39% of his space to the Arcadian theater; 6.45% to António José da Silva, and 16.13% to chapbook theater.

Because they belong to the same form of human thought, it is not denied that the Arcadian theater is the closest aesthetic movement to Romanticism¹⁹. Therefore, not only textually, but in the very division of the set of pages dedicated to the eighteenth century, Cruz favors the worldview which he defends. This is contrary to what he states in his text: “Portuguese Arca-

dia had little or no influence on the evolution of Portuguese theater” (Cruz, 2001, p. 106, our translation). If, as he states, this theater makes no difference to the history of Portuguese theater, it was not represented on the stages of yore or of now, and did not have a remarkable longevity as an aesthetic movement, why dedicate so many pages (48%) to it? We find no other answer than the legitimation of a speech project that, in the end, disregards the *first Bakhtinian task* for reading a text and favors a project of formation of the imagination and construction of the national identity that departs from the movements of History and passes to the field of Platonic idealization.

Also the valorization of an artistic movement to the detriment of the other can be seen in the value assessment of both through an adjective that subjectively detracts or appreciates each *line*, as Cruz names them. In addition to the example in the quotation above, which deals with the *low quality* of some texts, there is also in:

We refer to the existence of two lines of appreciable individuality – which does not exclude, of course, interrelations: one, genuinely popular and spontaneous, *erected in the genius of the Jew*, and *proliferated* through ‘chapbook theater’; the other, *intellectual, elaborate, based on doctrinal premises*, much less alive, *precisely aged, but interesting* – the theater of Arcadia, which only in manuals, rarely on stage, reaches us (Cruz, 2001, p. 105, emphasis added, our translation).

The adjectives used to characterize the Arcadian theater are more abundant and participate in a more positive and erudite semantic field than those attributed to popular theater – including giving Antônio José da Silva a deserved place of prominence, but which belittles the rest of the production. It should also be noted that, in the excerpt above, Cruz does not fail to present the general lines of verifiable historical facts, such as the absence of the Arcadian theater on the Portuguese stages of then and now – but even there there is an undervaluation and obfuscation of this information in relation to the points considered *positive* by the author.

With regard to the authors of each eighteenth-century line on which Cruz focuses, he devotes approximately two pages to each of them. There the difference is in the number of authors: while he deals with four Arcadian authors specifically (Correia Garção, Reis Quita, Manuel de Figueiredo,

and Cruz e Silva), he speaks only of one of the authors of chapbook theater (Nicolau Luís). It is noted the absence of the name of Francisco Luiz Ameno, mainly under the pseudonym Fernando Lucas Alvim, for his translations of Italian theater to *Portuguese taste* and some mention of the large amount of anonymous productions that circulated in Portugal in the eighteenth century.

História [Estrangeira] do Teatro Português, by Luciana Stegagno Picchio

The chapter of Stegagno Picchio entitled *Settecento [Setecentos]* seeks to establish an overview of this century, making sparse references to earlier or later centuries. With regard to chapbook theater, the sub-chapter is called *Continuators of the Jew and the repertoire of 'chapbook theater' [Os continuadores do Judeu e o repertório do 'teatro de cordel,']* denoting that Picchio believes that these two *lines* proposed by Cruz belong to the same strand of eighteenth-century artistic thought.

At the opening of the chapter, Picchio (1969, p. 185, our translation) states that

The divergence between two levels of the spectacle that already in the seventeenth century was warned about, when the religious one-act play sought its audience among the poorer people, while the socially and culturally more evolved spectators ran to applaud the swashbuckling heroes of Spanish comedy, this divergence, we said, turns in the eighteenth century into a clear separation.

This statement tells us that the author intends to establish a dichotomy between the eighteenth-century theatrical forms. Following her narrative, such duality seems to be established primarily between a theater of Spanish matrix, based on the Golden Century, and a theater of French matrix, with the translations of treaties and plays of French-speaking authors: "Literature follows this historical development. Moving away from Spanish culture for reasons of national prestige, the Portuguese turn their eyes to France, haloed by the splendor of their Court and enlightened by the thought of their sages" (Picchio, 1969, p. 186, our translation).

However, in analyzing the construction of this and other chapters of Picchio's book, we find a constant form of the author's writing: she presents the facts in a non-chronological, but thematic narrative organization within

the chapter and elects an author, based on which she will present long quotations of excerpts from one of their plays, and then finishes by commenting on other authors in a less in-depth manner. In the chapter in question, the author will make such a move twice, to present each side of the dichotomy that she proposes to pursue in its initial paragraph. However, the dichotomy to which Picchio referred at the beginning of the chapter will only appear nine pages after the beginning of the chapter, when for the first time she refers to the Arcadian theater, in these terms: “Several theatrical experiences (from Spanish to Jesuit and from courtesan to opera) converged in this complicated apparatus, and the entire neoclassical reaction of the Arcadians will invest against it” (Picchio, 1969, p. 194, our translation).

With regard to the evaluative aspects, we find a text that is intended to be neutral, which can already be observed in the table of pages: the author dedicates the same proportion (48.48%) to Arcadian theater and chapbook theater – while amalgamating the values referring to this theater and the oeuvre of António José da Silva, a legitimate position before Picchio’s text, because, as we have seen, she considers that chapbook theater is a continuation of Jewish theater. The author also lists an playwright from each strand for a more detailed analysis and transcription of long excerpts from their plays: António José da Silva and the joco-serious opera *The life of the Great Don Quijote de La Mancha and the Fat Sancho Pança* [*A vida do grande Dom Quixote de La Mancha e do gordo Sancho Pança*]; and Correia Garção and his comedy *New Theater* [*Teatro Novo*]. Such balance continues in the choice of words and organization of the text, in which we find only one adjective that attributes value to the strands of Portuguese eighteenth-century theater analyzed by her: “However, long before these last faithful cultivators of a genre so dear to the masses had composed *their poor texts, an interesting movement of theatrical restoration* was observed in Portugal, by the work and grace of Arcadia” (Picchio, 1969, p. 202, emphasis added, our translation). Note that the quoted excerpt is the initial paragraph of the subchapter *The Ulissiponese Arcadia* [*A Arcádia Ulissiponense*], which will deal precisely with the second aspect of the dichotomy proposed by Picchio, reviving the dual aspect between what was presented and what will be dealt with next.

Nevertheless, just like chapbook theater, Arcadian theater also does not escape some negative commentary on its activity, which is immediately sub-

sequent to being called *interesting*: “Armed with the poetics of Boileau and Luzán and provided with a good will equal to the inexperience, the Arcadians had committed to work” (Picchio, 1969, p. 202-203, our translation).

If, at first sight, Picchio’s text seems to be a balanced text that achieves a certain neutrality in the discourse, maintaining the dichotomous game proposed without *favoring* any side of the issue, it is also due to the absences that some issues can be traced regarding her speech project, as she reduces opera in the proposed panorama, which is only mentioned in some superficial enumerations. The author even alludes to it in some more specific lines not as *opera*, but as the fad of *melomania*, which includes the Italian company of Alessandro Paghetti and the shows in the theaters: Teatro da Trindade, Teatro da Ajuda, Teatro do Forte and Ópera do Tejo. Finally, everything that the other authors would name as the opera that took place in Portugal, Picchio names as *melodrama*. As for this posture, we conjecture two possibilities of interpretation, among several possible ones, and on which we will not focus because for both we lack concrete input: either the author, due to her Italian origin and to having first written the book in Italian (that is, having an Italian reader as an assumed interlocutor), believes unnecessary or superficial any comments to be made about opera based on the Portuguese experience; or, to achieve a speech project based on the dichotomy between two forces operating in the Portuguese eighteenth-century theater, the author deliberately obliterated the presence of opera as a third theatrical route, merging it with chapbook theater.

[*Primeira*] *História do Teatro Português*, by Luiz Francisco Rebello

In the title of its sixth chapter, Rebello presents the two main axes of the theatrical discussion in the eighteenth century: *From Chapbook Theater to Arcadia Theater* [*Do teatro de cordel ao teatro da Arcádia*]. As for the arrangement of the subchapters: *The opera* [*A ópera*], *The ‘Jew’ and the chapbook theater* [*O ‘Judeu’ e o teatro de cordel*] and *The Arcadia theater* [*O teatro da Arcádia*], we can also apprehend the three lines of force that the author understands to be part of the eighteenth-century theatrical structure – which he corroborates and is corroborated by most of the historical criticism. The proportion dedicated to each of them – 3.03%, 50%, and 35.71%, respectively – seems to denote a nationalism in a broad sense, as it

understands a certain continuation of Portuguese theater in the dramaturgy of the Jew and that “[...] the true continuers of António José da Silva’s theater were the authors of the ‘chapbook comedies,’ despite the schematism (often gross) of the situations and typification of the characters” (Rebello, 1967, p. 76, our translation). Then, the Arcadian theater that, as it proposes the restoration of Portuguese theater, carries in itself a national feeling; and the opera, imported from Italy, including companies, singers, set designers and a whole conjuncture that remains Italian, although represented in Portugal. In this regard, it is known, for example, that only one opera was written by a Portuguese author and, even so, in Italian (*La pazienza di Socrate*, by Francisco António de Almeida).

The Portuguese historian, a contemporary of Picchio and a bibliographical reference to the other authors of this *corpus*, is a little more incisive in his evaluative judgments, including when he situates himself in relation to those who examined the history of Portuguese theater before him – in this case, Teófilo Braga, in speaking of some eighteenth-century one-act plays, “[...] *both stigmatized by Teófilo Braga* insofar as they sacrificed the lyricism and the picturesque naivety of the old national school to the ‘mistakes and affectations of an exaggerated cultism’” (Rebello, 1967, p. 79, emphasis added, our translation). Braga is a signatory of a current of historical thought different from Rebello and other authors treated in this article: his texts focus much more on biographical aspects of historical figures – sometimes relating them to their artistic productions. The biographical emphasis is replaced, in Rebello and other authors, with an analytical bias of the works, especially those that are dramaturgical, that constitute the Portuguese theater. Still, Rebello and the other authors of this *corpus* fail as to looking into the other scenic aspects of Portuguese theater, which are in the background in relation to dramaturgy and, sometimes, scenography.

By denying the *stigmatization* of Teófilo Braga regarding the eighteenth-century popular theater, Rebello inaugurates a look into Portuguese theater that proposes the revalorization of some of its aspects: one of them, chapbook theater, which, as already seen, gains prominence, at least in terms of space, in Rebello’s text. Even so, the author recovers judgments of erudite aesthetic value when saying things like: “[...] The immediate century [*Settecento*] is defined by an extraordinary proliferation of theatrical activ-

ity, in which, however, quantity is not always synonymous with quality” (Rebello, 1967, p. 71, emphasis added, our translation), or “All this copious dramaturgical production [of chapbook theater], despite being accredited by the favor of the public (*it is true that they do not excel at demand or culture*)” (Rebello, 1967, p. 79, emphasis added, our translation). Such examples show that Rebello did not appreciate chapbook theater as an artistic product, which does not happen with Arcadian theater that, when criticized, is criticized in the following terms: “Arcadia’s influence on the evolution of public tastes was practically null” (Rebello, 1967, p. 82, our translation), in which the taste of the public is more belittled than the Arcadian dramaturgy.

Despite some issue we may have today concerning Luiz Francisco Rebello’s writing, it is important to emphasize that his *History of Portuguese Theater* [*História do Teatro Português*] is very important for the construction and study of this theater. The work is quite concise, being a pocket edition spanning only 166 pages, and even so it impacted and deeply impacts the following generations of scholars of Portuguese theater – which can be seen not only by its presence in the references of later compendiums, but also by the time it took for others to emerge.

História [Aprechada²⁰] do Teatro Português, by José Oliveira Barata

Unlike the other authors analyzed here, Oliveira Barata is an expert in eighteenth-century theater, more specifically in the work of António José da Silva²¹. Perhaps this is why he presents a more focused look into the eighteenth-century theatrical events, detaching himself from a narrative-documentary historiography of a more general aspect towards a theoretical reading based on current concepts in his analysis.

Chapter four, which covers the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, is titled *The Portuguese Dramaturgy in search of identity* [*A dramaturgia portuguesa em busca de identidade*] – a title that, unlike the previous ones, already denotes not a *historical path*, but a theoretical perspective, without any attempt at neutrality. This theoretical orientation adopted by Oliveira Barata can already be inferred also in the subtitles of the chapter, when he reserves a subchapter for each of the three *influences* on the Portuguese eighteenth-century theater – the Castilian, the Italian and the French; when

he names as *The Project of António José da Silva* [*O projecto de António José da Silva*] the subchapter dedicated to the Jew; when he adds the name of Correia Garção to the subtitle dedicated to Arcadian theater; or even when the portion dedicated to chapbook theater comprises only *brief considerations*. The 17 pages dedicated to António José da Silva, which are the basis for the other discussions raised in the chapter, of a project by the author, say that:

António José da Silva's production conforms to a plan – 'interrupted' by the vicissitudes of his personal life – that aimed at devising, in the **joco-serious** version, a Portuguese opera whose theme would immerse into two fundamental vectors: on the one hand, still and always the Castilian heritage (as well as the Italian one filtered by Spanish models) and, on the other hand, a new dramatic treatment founded on the Portuguese tradition of Gil Vicente (Barata, 1991, p. 230, emphasis in the original, our translation).

Thus, Oliveira Barata presents his thesis on the dramatic production of the Jew, which, from his point of view, impacts all later eighteenth-century production. Thus, subverting an organization established in the other *Histories of the Portuguese Theater*, Oliveira Barata begins by discussing the eighteenth century considering the concept of *festivity* [*festa*], which is consistent with the ideas expressed by Bakhtin (2010), although he does not present the Russian critic as part of his bibliography:

Although expressing himself through different languages, the Portuguese man of the early eighteenth century, like the European man, externalized at the **festivity** not what he really **was** but **what he would like to be** (Barata, 1991, p. 208, emphasis in the original, our translation)

Through 'representation' they seek to fill the *horror vacui*. Aware of the transience of life and, equally, of the ephemerality of pleasure, one sees the search for immediate lust, translated into the taste for *fare presto*. 'Not postponing' was the means to shorten, albeit apparently, the distance between the 'reality' of quotidian life and the illusion that only the **festivity** could afford (Barata, 1991, p. 209, emphasis in the original, our translation).

Festivity somehow represented a temporary interruption of the entire official system, with its interdictions and hierarchical barriers. For a short period of time, life shunned its usual, legalized and well-established paths and penetrated the domain of utopian freedom. The ephemeral character of this freedom only intensified the fantastic sensation and the utopian radicalism

of the images generated in this particular climate (Bakhtin, 2010, p. 77, our translation).

In both cases, the festivity is perceived as a space of freedom. It adds, to the reading of both António José da Silva and chapbook theater, an explanation that can justify both the popular audience's appreciation for the works and the Inquisition and Arcadia's animosity: while the official, erudite culture hierarchizes and stratifies the social positions and the benefits of certain classes, the festivity levels these relations. In theater, it promotes equitable amusement, where both laugh, while erudite theater, lofty, is inaccessible in social terms – but also as to the very comprehension – to a major portion of the population.

In reaching the late eighteenth century and chapbook theater, the concept of *festivity* propounded when addressing the eighteenth century (textually in its first half, but of expandable meaning) is interrelated with the notion of a marginal theater: “Several of the works already carried out in this domain still record today the marks of the persistent research initiated by positivist scholars” (Barata, 1991, p. 248, our translation)²². Between the two, Oliveira Barata *fits* Arcadian theater, metaphorically locating it precisely among the vast chapbook production of the eighteenth century.

After presenting his theoretical bases for discussing chapbook theater as marginal literature, that is, when in fact he will undertake an analysis of this set of texts, Oliveira Barata makes a statement that makes an impression: “In the absence of studies that can better illuminate us, we advance our own opinion” (Barata, 1991, p. 249, our translation). If such assertion can indicate a lack of critical bibliography on the theme he will address, it is also certain that the author has an option to write not following the [even if few] critics who had dealt with chapbook theater until then. Oliveira Barata assumes an authorial, original and interpretative stance when he analyzes this theater, reinforcing his position as an author whose speech project goes beyond the narrative sequence of facts, but who builds theses and unique thoughts, which aim to reflect on the history of Portuguese theater.

If the author proposes new perspectives on the dramaturgy of the Jew or on chapbook theater – even if, on the latter, he presents impressions of wrong paths rather than a strong analytical point of view –, the same happens with Arcadian theater. Oliveira Barata, unlike the other authors ana-

lyzed, does not propose a dichotomy between chapbook theater and Arcadian theater, even because this *dispute* is unilateral. He proposes the revision of the “derogatory references to the activity of Arcadia” (Barata, 1991, p. 238, our translation), also analyzing this movement from a perspective at the same time distanced and contextualized, as Bakhtin advocated regarding the tasks of the reader.

In seeking to understand the place that the Portuguese eighteenth-century theater occupies in the complex cultural context of its time, which has different implications at the local level (Lisbon, Porto or other), national level (Portugal) and continental level (Europe), we perceive a dialogue that which is stated by Bakhtin (1987b, p. 3), that “the so-called literary process of the epoch, studied apart from an in-depth analysis of culture, amounts to a superficial struggle of literary schools”. By denying to perceive a dispute between the eighteenth-century forms of theater, but materializing them textually more broadly than a reductive dichotomy, Oliveira Barata expands the possibilities of understanding both literary strands of the Portuguese eighteenth century.

Non-solution of the issue of the Portuguese 18th century

In the original Portuguese sense, the expression [‘teatro de cordel’] designates the theatrical texts printed or handwritten in notebooks measuring approximately 20x15 cm, *in-quarto*, with 16 pages (or 32, rarely more), which were put up for sale hanging on a string – the cordel – nailed to the walls or doors, through the streets of Lisbon. The blind men, who were allowed to sell them, exhibited not only theater plays, but also poems, narratives, lives of saints, leaflets, anecdotes. This type of literature also appears in other European countries, such as Spain and France (Guinsburg; Faria; Lima, 2006, p. 97, our translation).

The proposal of this article sought the chapters or subchapters specific to the so-called *chapbook theater* [teatro de cordel] to understand them in their relations with the issues that surround such theater, namely: their multiplicity, their representation in the historical *path*, their relationship with other artistic-literary movements or even the coherence of an *incoherent* designation within the narrative and of the speech project proposed by the authors of *Histories of the Portuguese Theater*. We did not intend to establish an evaluative scale among the authors, although we must agree that

some of them sound more in line with the theories we defend throughout our academic career. More than that, we think it is important to draw attention to the ways the authors construct their speech projects, in order to better understand the genre to which these *Histories* are circumscribed. Still, as a discourse that seeks to be historical and that analyzes temporally and spatially distanced aesthetic objects, we learn that

Literature is an inseparable part of the totality of culture and cannot be studied outside the total cultural context. It cannot be severed from the rest of culture and related directly (bypassing culture) to socioeconomic or other factors (Bakhtin, 1987a, p. 140).

Looking into the texts from another perspective, and returning to the idea of each author's speech project, it is not without purpose that each of them treats the constituent elements of the eighteenth-century Portuguese theater in different – and sometimes opposite – manners:

It is therefore impossible to analyze historical discourse independently of the institution in respect to which its silence is organized; or to dream of a renewal in the discipline that would be assured by the mere modification of its concepts without an intervening transformation of acquired situations (Certeau, 1988, p. 62-63).

As people of the 21st century, we do not examine the eighteenth-century chapbook productions *technically*, analyzing whether a translation of Metastasio or Molière was properly carried out, *authentic*, or if it was properly represented on Portuguese stages. Our view, we believe, is more distant, in order to see the whole context in which such an utterance was produced in the world – which, certainly, is different from that in which the original author participated (due to the issues already exposed in this work). By analyzing the whole culture in which such texts came to light, we can bakhtinianly identify this anonymous translator as also the author of the discourse, who dialogues with a specific auditorium, also different from the *original auditorium* of the first text. If the object, whether the play *George Dandin* or *Artaserse*, has different author and interlocutor, the object itself could not be the same, or it would not represent a dialogue between the parties. Or, according to Bakhtin (1987b, p. 7, emphasis in the original): “Such a dialogic encounter of two cultures does not result in merging or mixing. Each retains its own unity and *open* totality, but they are mutually enriched”.

Notes

- ¹ In time it will be seen why the verb *represented* here is not included.
- ² A slightly more detailed description of all titles can be found in the entry *Portuguese Theater* of the *Bibliographic Guide* of the School of Philosophy, Letters and Human Sciences (FFLCH/USP) (Corradin; Silveira, 2017).
- ³ “The- narrow concept of popular character and of folklore was born in the pre-Romantic period and was basically completed by von Herder and the Romantics. There was-no room in this concept for the peculiar culture of the marketplace and of folk laughter with all its wealth of manifestations. Nor did the generations that succeeded each other in that marketplace become the object of historic, literary, or folkloristic scrutiny as the study of early cultures continued” (Bakhtin, 1984, p. 4).
- ⁴ “Above all, he requires an exploration in depth of a sphere as yet little and superficially studied, the tradition of folk humor” (Bakhtin, 1984, p. 3). It is sad that such observation, made in the 1920s, was true until very recently (and, in some places, still in effect).
- ⁵ “Carnival laughter is the laughter of all the people. Second, it is universal in scope: it is directed at all and everyone, including the carnival's participants. The entire world is seen in its droll aspect, in its gay relativity. Third, this laughter is ambivalent: it is gay, triumphant, and at the same time mocking, deriding. It asserts and denies, it buries and revives. Such is the laughter of carnival” (Bakhtin, 1984, p. 11-12).
- ⁶ On the inexistence of a Baroque aesthetic in itself, see Hansen (2004).
- ⁷ As Lope de Vega (2006) already advocated in 1609 in his *Arte nuevo de hacer comedias en este tiempo* (v. 47-48): “porque, como las paga el vulgo, es justo / hablarle en necio para darle gusto”.
- ⁸ To learn more about António José da Silva and the Iberian baroque theater, see *Carnivalization in Iberian Baroque Theatre* (Gontijo Rosa, 2019a).
- ⁹ Available at: <https://www.teatroproibido.ulisboa.pt/>. Accessed: April 21, 2021.
- ¹⁰ Sometimes, the same text was forbidden to be represented and approved for publication, or *vice versa* – ignored some striking differences in the dates of the request, which could lead to the belief that another internal policy would be governing the censure criteria, also at very close dates such discrepancies occur.

- ¹¹ The Marquis of Pombal, before rising to the office that established his name in history, was ambassador during the reign of King D. João V and Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and War in the first years of the reign of King D. José – experiences that certainly provided him with knowledge for the opening to Europe undertaken in his government.
- ¹² To learn more about the 1755 Lisbon Earthquake, see the video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xLKNU5IZcuo>. Accessed: April 22, 2021.
- ¹³ Carreira (1988) notes the influence of Italian theater because it occupies the space first intended by the Arcadians, namely this space of erudite culture.
- ¹⁴ OOMMEN, T. K. Estado, nação e etnia: os laços processuais. *Revista Crítica de Ciências Sociais*, n. 39, p. 3-29, 1994.
- ¹⁵ See more in Gontijo Rosa (2019b).
- ¹⁶ We should remember what theater historian Veríssimo (1998, p. 371, our translation) writes about the play *António José, ou O poeta e a Inquisição* (1838), by Gonçalves de Magalhães: “Brazilian or Brazilianed actors, in a Brazilian theater, represented before an enthusiastic and moved Brazilian audience, the Brazilian author of a play whose protagonist was also Brazilian and who explicitly and implicitly spoke about Brazil”, certainly based on what the author of the play says about it, in his preface: “It required a national text, by an **author** aware of its nationalist meaning; it required a group of national **actors** convinced of what they interpreted, tempered by the difficulty of imposing themselves as representatives of a society aware of their national prerogatives, representing to an **audience** eager for a message that corresponded to the political desires of their self-affirmation as a nation”. Such project of affirmation, romantically nationalist, also ends up being diagnosed, in a mitigated way, in the discourses of the books analyzed here.
- ¹⁷ “[...] theater is a great means of civilization, but it does not prosper where it does not exist” (Garrett, 1966, p. 1320, our translation).
- ¹⁸ The lines that the author identifies are: “António José da Silva, himself a synthesis value; the opera; the ‘chapbook theater’; the Arcadian theater; the transitional theater until the beginning of the *Ottocento*” (Cruz, 2001, p. 97, our translation).
- ¹⁹ “The Arcadians therefore identify with enlightened despotism. But the very essence of their thought, as well as of the egalitarian ideals, is still bourgeois” (Cruz, 2001, p. 107, our translation).

- ²⁰ Term extracted from the book *An Experiment in Criticism*, by C. S. Lewis (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976). In the book, the author explains about a reader-critic, who gets immersed as much as possible in the context of the text, shunting from his own and then returning to it (according also to the *tasks* of the reader proposed by Bakhtin).
- ²¹ He is the author of the two main Portuguese books on the playwright: *António José da Silva: criação e realidade* (1983) and *História do teatro em Portugal (séc. XVIII): António José da Silva (o Judeu) no palco joanino* (1998); in addition to *Catálogo da literatura de cordel* (2006), in co-authorship with Maria da Graça Pericão.
- ²² This citation also evokes the attack made by Oliveira Barata on positivist studies of the literature (namely, on p. 225 and twice on p. 222). On the same page 248 (our translation), Oliveira Barata names “Carolina Michaëlis, Leite de Vasconcelos, Teófilo Braga, Forjaz Sampaio, are just some of the most important names that we necessarily have to ‘revisit’ when we intend to approach our chapbook production”. Previously, Oliveira Barata (1991, p. 225, our translation) makes it clear that he does not consider Teófilo Braga a positivist historian: “In the wake of the positivist legacy and the works of Teófilo Braga [...]”.

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