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## Articles



# Dante's *Purgatório Canto VI* in Nineteenth-Century Brazil: Translating the *Nazione/Nação*

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In *Purgatório Canto VI*, we witness the moving embrace between Virgil and Sordello prompted by their discovery that Mantua is their common hometown. Such a tender moment unleashes Dante's rage toward Italy and its citizens, leading him to condemn the many wars and frivolous political games of Italy's municipalities, particularly Florence. In this canto, Dante already envisions Italy as a unified space, albeit one bound principally by language rather than politics. However, Dante's *Divine Comedy*, because of its premature national consciousness, became an exemplary text for nineteenth-century politicians and activists committed to creating a unified Italian nation state. This essay argues that these local revisionist interpretations of Dante reverberate through the 1888 Brazilian-Portuguese translation of *Purgatório Canto VI* by José Xavier Pinheiro. It argues further that an analysis of the circulation of ideas about Dante among nineteenth-century Italian political exiles in Brazil sheds new light on the broader historical and political relationship that existed between these two communities as they struggled to establish distinct national identities.

In *Imagined Communities*, Benedict Anderson suggests a new way of thinking about the concept of nationhood, one that insists on the fact that a nation is, first and foremost, the product of the imagination of a community that chooses to be identified by a particular signifier. Anderson affirms that "it is always a mistake to treat languages in the way certain ideologues treat them—as emblems of nation-ness" (133). While Brazil and Portugal, for instance, share a common language, they do not share a common national identity. Yet Anderson goes on to attribute to language the "capacity for generating imagined communities, building in effect particular solidarities" (133). The 1888 Brazilian-Portuguese translation of the *Comedy* exemplifies

this contradiction, for it re-appropriates the nationalist ideas that the theorists of the Risorgimento bestowed upon Dante in the interest of Brazilian sovereignty. In this case, translation becomes the means through which the formation of an imagined community takes place. However, Anderson does not discuss the practice of translation in his book, nor does he take into consideration the widespread use of capitalist texts that pre-date print culture such as the *Comedy* and its translation in other “vernaculars,” particularly its adoption into the literature of the colonies.<sup>1</sup> Pinheiro’s skillful adaptation of Dante’s text to the Brazilian context shows the need to establish a literary canon separated from that of the motherland—despite their shared language. In fact, when Anderson attributes the success of the South American wars of independence to the language they already shared, he does not mention how the employment of such language might create problems when such communities had to be “imagined” independently from the motherland.

By placing culture at the foundation of nationhood, Anderson wants to depoliticize the concept of the nation or at least to disentangle the political dimension of nationhood from culture. Dante already was the poet of the Italian language; Italy already had a culture, a literature which, hypothetically, could offer it the tools to imagine itself as a community. However, Italy had to wait until 1871 to finally be the “nation” that Anderson describes, and Dante became the literary hero through whom activists could begin imagining Italy. Indeed, Anderson does not take into consideration the fact that Italian was one of the first vernacular languages, established in Medieval times thanks to Dante Alighieri’s laboriousness and study.<sup>2</sup> The *Comedy* is not mentioned at all as one of the first “cultural artifacts” that made it possible to think of the nation. As we have seen in *Purgatório Canto VI*, Dante already has an imagined community in mind, symbolized by his frustration at the local rather than national character of the embrace between Sordello and Virgil. Even if the Italy in the *Comedy* might not resemble the nineteenth century nation-state Anderson studies, it still represents a space that is not only geographic, but also literary and poetic, united under the same language. On the one hand, Italy would not have fit Anderson’s model because of the lateness of its nationalist movements. On the other hand, Italy also predated Anderson’s model because of the foundational national language invented by Dante, both real and imagined.

The nineteenth century political and literary unification movement known as the Risorgimento started with Giuseppe Mazzini's *Giovine Italia*, or *Young Italy*, in 1831. This movement spread throughout Europe and crossed the Atlantic to Rio de Janeiro where it influenced a generation of Brazilian intellectuals. Mazzini in "Dell'amor Patrio di Dante" (Of the Love for the Patria of Dante), writes about Dante's texts: "in all of his texts, of any genre, the immense love for patria gleams under different forms; love . . . that was not restricted to a circle of walls, but to the entirety of the country, where the *sì* echoes, because the patria of an Italian is not Rome, Florence, or Milan, but all of Italy" (10).<sup>3</sup> Mazzini goes further in his exaltation of Dante affirming that "with this energy, with this overabundance of strength, Italy could have founded in that century its independence against the foreign insult" (5). In his reading of Dante, he underlines the possibility of Italy becoming a nation already at that time in the fourteenth century.<sup>4</sup> He concludes by encouraging the Italians to read Dante—not Dante the poet, but Dante the patriot—making it clear that the former figure pertains to an old scholastic, and elitist tradition:

Oh Italians! Study Dante; not in commentaries, not in glosses; but in the history of the century in which he lived, in his life, in his works. But keep this in mind: there is more than the verse in his poetry; and because of this do not trust the grammarians, and the interpreters: they are like those who dissect cadavers; you see the bones, the muscles, the veins that form the body, but where is the sparkle that animated it? (Mazzini 12)<sup>5</sup>

When Mazzini states that there is more than "verse in his poetry," he means that the young patriots adhering to *Giovine Italia*, when reading Dante, should pay special attention to the political aspects of his poetry. He incites them to study Dante in relation to the historical events of his time and to understand that the "sparkle" that animated the poet lies in the relationship that Dante's works have with the social, political, and economic situation of his time.

In short, Dante becomes a political model for Italian nationalism rather than a literary one. His work is reinterpreted and re-inscribed in the Italian nineteenth-century tradition, acquiring a new meaning, and supported by many literary figures who professed to be

seldom inspired by his work. Stefano Jossa makes a compelling case that Dante ultimately became not only a political icon, but also an anti-literary one. He argues that “this political icon [Dante] was perceived and used against literature. The patriots of the Risorgimento, in other words, separated Dante the man from Dante the poet, exploiting the former as a political icon against the literary tradition of Italian literature” (42). Jossa invites us to consider whether those who professed to hold Dante as their greatest inspiration took into consideration his aesthetics. In other words, Dante becomes, in the eyes of nineteenth-century Italian nationalists, an iconoclast, someone who wrote against the very classical tradition with which he is often associated. As “the decadence of Italy was identified with Italian literature” (42), it was that tradition that constituted the impossibility to change society. In order to surface from such decadence, Italians needed something new onto which they could transpose the new sense of nation.

To break free of an old tradition which did not represent the interests of those nineteenth-century activists who aspired to create an Italian nation, Dante has been re-interpreted, re-appropriated and to a certain extent also re-written. The intellectuals of the Risorgimento rejected the literary Italian tradition that came with Dante because “to accept tradition means to accept what is already known and well reputed. It often implies the rejection of change. On an ideological level, such a position implies the preconceived denial that something already experienced can lead to something new and positive” (Ciccarelli 127). The school of Petrarch, for example, is part of this literary Italian tradition, against which these nation builders shaped Dante’s new legacy. The poetry of Dante—more dynamic than the static Petrarchan lyricism—was better suited to satisfy the need of those fighting to unify Italy. However, as Andrea Ciccarelli notes, “it is extremely difficult to argue that the majority of the authors who revived the Dantesque ethical line of Italian culture actually followed Dante’s main aesthetic goal” (128). Instead, the evidence suggests that they followed Mazzini’s invitation to pay more attention to the political contours of Dante’s poetry than its stylistic attributes. This proves not only the greatness of the ideological message of Dante, but also that “Dante is so broad that he can be misinterpreted and misrepresented, and yet, he preserves his perennial, innovative role of *Pater Patriae*. A true man for all seasons” (Ciccarelli 149). Dante and

his poetry become a symbol onto which any society, even centuries later, can project its national aspirations.

The reception of Dante and his poetry in nineteenth-century Brazil exemplifies this reinterpretation of his message not only across time, but also across space. The flexibility of his ideological message, or at least of the patriotic undertones that the Risorgimento attributed to him, held a certain allure among the nineteenth-century Brazilian nationalists. At the turn of the century, Italian immigration to Rio de Janeiro increased rapidly and the city received many political exiles in 1821, 1831, and 1834. Those political exiles, known as *carbonários* in Portuguese or *carbonari* in Italian, were followers of Mazzini's ideals.<sup>6</sup> In 1834, Rio de Janeiro also established its *Giovine Italia*, organized by Italian revolutionaries of the caliber of Giuseppe Garibaldi, Luigi Rossetti, and Tito Livio Zambecari. In *Italianos no Brasil [Italians in Brazil]*, Franco Cenni describes these influential figures as “romantics of political regeneration, fanatics of social justice, the Italian carbonari, wherever you met them, following Mazzini's words, announced to the people the next revolution” (106).<sup>7</sup> Because of the remarkable presence of these *carbonários* in Rio de Janeiro, it is highly probable that the translator of the 1888 Brazilian Portuguese edition of the *Comedy*, José Xavier Pinheiro, had come into contact with the Italian nationalist rhetoric of these political thinkers, and had also come to know and appreciate Dante's *Comedy* through the lens of the Risorgimento.

The translation of the nation-building process from Italy to Brazil is not limited to the circulation of revolutionary ideas; it also appears in the form of direct political action. These political exiles identified certain similarities between their own struggle in Italy and the one happening in Brazil (and in Latin America more broadly speaking) against imperial powers. In his study of nineteenth-century Latin American nation building, James Sanders looks at the leading Italian exile Giuseppe Garibaldi and his followers known as the *garibaldinhos* and asks: “[w]hy did thousands of foreigners enlist and risk their lives? Eloquent rhetoric asserted that a ‘spirit of liberty’ inspired them. . . . They compared their local struggles to those of the French during the Revolution and the July Days, as well as to movements in Italy and Poland” (28-9). Sanders highlights Garibaldi's own transplantation—or translation—of the struggle for expelling the Hapsburgs from Italy to the one happening in Santa Catarina during



the Revolução Farroupilha (1835-1845), which he led together with Luigi Rossetti: “during the battle of Rio Grande [Garibaldi] exhorted his men: ‘Fire, fire! Against the barbarous tyrants, and also against the patricians who are not republicans.’ He associated the Brazilian empire with imperialists, no doubt thinking of his native land’s relations with Austria” (26).<sup>8</sup> Around the same time as the proclamation of the Republic, Luigi Rossetti founded the newspaper *O Povo* in Rio Grande do Sul.<sup>9</sup> Besides being influenced by the doctrine of *Giovine Italia*, this newspaper contained many citations in Italian of Italian literary writers, such as Adelchi and Guerrazzi (Cenni 114). This points to a widespread dissemination not only of Italian ideals of nationhood, but also of the Italian language and the Italian literary figures that thinkers like Mazzini supported and championed, such as Dante.<sup>10</sup>

Dante’s *Comedy* deeply influenced two key late nineteenth-century Brazilian figures in particular: writer Machado de Assis and statesman Ruy Barbosa. Brazilian critic Alfredo Gomes reports that from one of the writer’s newspaper articles, appearing in 1893 in the *Gazeta de Notícias*, “it is possible to deduce that Machado de Assis used to read at night the *Divine Comedy*” (66).<sup>11</sup> As a matter of fact, we know that Machado knew Italian, and he himself translated Canto XXV from the *Inferno* already in 1874. After that moment, he often quotes Dante in Italian in his chronicles, short stories, and novels.<sup>12</sup> In the 1881 short story “The Alienist,” Machado includes the opening lines of *Inferno* XXXIII (vv.1-2), which originally referred to the character of Ugolino, who must spend the eternity gnawing the skull of his betrayer, “la bocca sollevò dal fero pasto / quel ‘seccatore’” (v.111). Furthermore, Ruy Barbosa, a key figure in the movement for Brazilian independence and the abolition of slavery, often quotes Dante in his speeches. During a speech Barbosa gave in the Brazilian parliament regarding the abuses of the Church, he quotes *Inferno* VI (vv.7-12): “rare it is to find a prime minister, a minister of agriculture, a party chief, that does not have to suffer a rain of mud, like those condemned in the very sad circles of Dante, who also have to endure the bad odors coming from the earth as a result of the rainfall” (Barbosa qtd in Gomes 67).<sup>13</sup> Even more pertinent to the topic of nation building, Barbosa quotes Dante again, this time drawing from *Purgatorio* Canto XVI (v.97). In this passage, Dante reflects on the validity of laws and comments that—even if they exist—no one respects them.

Barbosa refers back to Dante when he insists the laws of society must be enforced and protected from abuse: “the hand that he [Dante] did not see in his republic and in his time, the hand sustaining the laws, there [in the Brazilian Constitution] we have it, today, created, and so big, that nothing is equal to its majesty, nothing is more revitalizing for power” (Barbosa qtd in Gomes 68).<sup>14</sup> The political engagement that Dante inspired was then common to a worldwide generation of liberal intellectuals who were shaping the idea of nationhood to which we are accustomed.

The ways in which Machado de Assis and Ruy Barbosa came to know Dante’s works are not fully explored by Gomes. It is safe to assume that they would probably have read the *Comedy* in Italian, or possibly French: we know that Machado owned the 1868 Firmin Didot edition. Gomes does mention that Barbosa used and cites from an Italian edition, which alters v.123 of *Inferno XXVII* from “tu non pensavi ch’io loico fossi!” to “tu non sapesti ch’io loco fossi.” The actual text appears only in this instance, and Gomes does not acknowledge the 1888 Brazilian-Portuguese translation. Because of the years in which both Machado de Assis and Ruy Barbosa employed Dante’s citations in their works and speeches, we can only infer that they probably were familiar with Pinheiro’s translation, or that they were navigating the same circles.<sup>15</sup> However, Pinheiro’s invisibility to the literary and political circles of his time also serves to reinforce the sense of disregard that nineteenth century literature scholars had for the practice of translation.

Translation theorist André Levefere points out a significant difference in the treatment of the critic and the translator: while both figures essentially “rewrite” the text, in service to some ideology or poetics, the former is revered almost as a “priestly figure” while the latter is disregarded as disfiguring the text. The circumstances under which José Xavier Pinheiro came to translate the *Comedy* are uncertain. There are no records of him, nor articles written about his edition.<sup>16</sup> Despite its relative obscurity or lack of reception at the time, this translation of the *Comedy* is historically significant because the translator’s linguistic decisions offer considerable insight into the Brazilian re-appropriation of Dante as articulated with broader intellectual and political trends of both nineteenth-century Italy and Brazil. Pinheiro reads—and translates—into Dante the same ideological potential conferred upon him by the Risorgimento intellectuals: the possibility

to build a literary canon that breaks free from the Portuguese literary matrix. The Portuguese tradition is associated with Camões, whose lyricism, coincidentally, is often read in comparison to Petrarch's. The reason for distancing the new Brazilian canon from Camões is also ideological: he wrote an entire epopee about the glory of the Portuguese colonial empire, *Os Lusíadas* (1572). Indeed, evidence of Pinheiro's desire to use the *Comedy* in a manner akin to that of the theorists of the *Risorgimento*—that is, as an attempt to foster the idea of a *Brazilian* identity, one distinct from the legacy and culture of Portugal—appears as early as the frontispiece of his translation, which reads *tradução brasileira*, or “Brazilian translation.”

The need to find other ways to create a Brazilian identity distinct from Portugal is a consequence of the peculiar process that led Brazil to become independent. Peculiar because it differs from the rest of South America, where brutal wars of independence established a clean cut with the colonial power. Indeed, in 1808 Brazil experienced a singular event compared to other European colonies: the Portuguese court, threatened by the Napoleonic invasion, moved to Rio de Janeiro. Here the center becomes periphery; for the first—and only—time there is an inversion of the colonial pact. King João IV also proclaimed the kingdom of Brazil, which went from colony to kingdom, then empire, and only later was conceptualized as nation first by figures such as José Bonifácio, and, later, Ruy Barbosa. When the constitutionalist wave spread across Europe, the king was asked to return to Portugal and left his son Pedro in charge of Brazil. Finally, Pedro, disobeying his father's order to return to Lisbon, proclaimed Brazilian independence from Portugal, thus becoming Pedro I of Brazil. Some historians, however, skeptical of the legend of the Ipiranga, according to which Pedro supposedly shouted “Eu fico!” (I stay!), believe that this plot was orchestrated by the king himself. Pedro I's most trusted advisor, José Bonifácio still represents an emblematic contradiction of Brazil, as historian Emília Viotti da Costa explains: “José Bonifácio was to fall victim to the contradiction of liberal practice in Brazil, where an ideology that was essentially bourgeois in its origin had been transformed into an instrument of slave owners” (39). In other words, ideas of freedom and universal rights were applied to a society structured on slavery and other forms of exploitation.

Viotti da Costa is not the only one to condemn the clash between the liberal ideologies coming from Europe and the slave-based

oligarchy that still characterized Brazil well after its independence from Portugal. In “Misplaced Ideas: Literature and Society in Late Nineteenth-Century Brazil,” Roberto Schwarz defines the adoption of liberal ideologies in late nineteenth-century Brazil, where slavery was still in practice, as an “ideological comedy” (20) because the reality of the everyday was strikingly different from the ideas professed by the intellectual elite. He goes on to describe how Brazil improperly affirms and reaffirms European ideas in every instance of reproducing its social order (29). According to Schwarz, it is precisely this quality of incongruity that functions as the foundation of the irony-laden realism of Machado de Assis (30). In these realistic accounts of nineteenth-century Brazilian society, ideas such as liberalism emerge as “misplaced ideas.” In this realism the writer, Schwarz affirms, had to face, willingly or not, the fact that liberalism was out of place in the social reality of late nineteenth-century Brazil. Building on this insight from Schwarz, my analysis of Pinheiro’s translation considers the effects of imposing the liberal ideas and concepts of nationhood or nationalism on texts not pertaining to the tradition of nineteenth-century Europe. In this way, Dante’s *Comedy* is no more—or less—misplaced in the literary canon of Brazil than it is in the political agenda of Italian liberal intellectuals.

Dante’s concept of Italy as a unified space was similarly “misplaced” at the time of the first appearance of the *Comedy*. This is particularly evident in *Purgatório VI* where Dante shifts his attention from Florence—which was the principle focus of the sixth canto in the *Inferno*—to Italy, which he envisions as a nation that functions as the intermediary between the municipality and the empire.<sup>17</sup> Dante believed in the co-existence of the Church and of the Empire, both acting as safe-keepers of humanity, the former in the spiritual dimension and the latter in the temporal one. He structures his invective by first describing the social organization of Italy at the time. He then analyzes the components and the causes that brought about this situation, namely the temporalism of the Church and the disinterest of the Empire. He ends with a forceful condemnation of his contemporary society and attempts to predict the fate of the Italian people.

Because of its myriad references to actual figures of thirteenth-century Italian society, the *Comedy* bears particularly strong markings of its historical and cultural moment. Pinheiro kept these names in his translation, only changing them to make them conform to Portuguese

phonetics; for example, *Pier da la Broccia* (v.2) becomes *Pedro Brosse* (v.2). However, Pinheiro, most likely under the influence of the political exiles flooding the streets and cafes of Rio at the time, made certain choices that enhanced the nationalistic undertones of the canto. This is particularly evident in his use of *pátria* (v.70) and *brava* (v.98) and in his decision to alter the gender of the adjective *enfermo* (v. 149).

While in the Italian text Sordello inquires about Dante and Virgil's "paese" (v.70), in the Portuguese text Pinheiro deliberately uses the word "pátria" (v.70) instead of the Portuguese *país*.

ma di **nostro paese** e de la vita  
 ci 'nchiese; e 'l dolce duca incominciava  
 "Mantua. . .", e l'ombra, tutta in se romita,  
 surse ver' lui del loco ove pria stava,  
 dicendo: "O Mantoano, io son Sordello  
 de la tua terra!"; e l'un l'altro abbracciava. (vv. 70-75, emphasis mine)  
 qual fora a **pátria nossa** e a nossa vida.  
 A falar o meu Guia começava: "Em Mântua. . ."  
 quando a sombra, comovida,  
 a ele se enviou donde se achava,  
 "Sordelllo sou" —dizendo—em Mântua amada  
 nasci também." —E amplexo os estreitava. (vv. 70-75, emphasis mine)  
 but asked us what **our country** was and who  
 we were, at which my gentle guide began  
 "Mantua" —and that spirit, who had been  
 so solitary, rose from his position,  
 saying: "O Mantuan, I am Sordello, from your  
 own land!" And each embraced the other. (vv. 70-75, emphasis mine)

The use of the word *pátria* suggests an attempt to translate, both inside and outside the text, the national consciousness present in Dante and exalted by the intellectuals of the Risorgimento, a national consciousness that was much needed in nineteenth-century Brazilian society. Furthermore, by using the word *pátria*, Pinheiro also translates the ideas of the Risorgimento. However, unlike the theorists of the Risorgimento, Pinheiro, due to the interpretative latitude provided by the process of translation, is able to insert the language of nineteenth-century nationalism directly into the canto as if it were Dante's. By using the word *pátria*, Pinheiro ensures that the embrace

between Virgil and Sordello—a gesture of intellectual communion between the three poets—links the idea of a shared literary and poetic space to that of a political one.

Immediately after the embrace, the canto becomes explicitly political. The invective begins with an apostrophe to enslaved Italy, “Ah! serva Itália” (v.76), which in the Brazilian text can function as a subtle reference to slavery. It then continues with a second apostrophe to the Church followed by a third one to Albert of Austria, whereupon Dante vocalizes his disappointment toward the emperor, who chose to take care only of the German lands and thereby leave Italy to destroy itself through its interminable internecine wars.

o Alberto Tedesco ch'abbandoni  
 costei ch'è fatta **indomita e selvaggia** (v.97-98, emphasis mine)  
 Alberto de Germânia! Atente agora  
 que é tornada **indômita e brava** (vv.97-98, emphasis mine)  
 Oh German Albert, you who have abandoned  
 that steed become **recalcitrant and savage** (vv.97-98, emphasis mine)

These historical peculiarities are left almost intact in Pinheiro's translation. However, although he might not change the historical facts of the canto, avoiding the complete domestication of Dante's work, he decides to translate *selvaggia* as the word *brava*, instead of, for example, using the literal translation *selvagem* (as he did for the adjective *indomitalindômita*). After all, the adjective *brava*, which means both furious and valiant, presents a slightly more admiring image of those struggles to free Brazil from imperial power. Moreover, *selvagem* is also a term used historically to describe the people and communities indigenous to Brazil. Possibly with a conscious consideration of the risk of misinterpretation embedded within the Brazilian context for the word *selvagem*, Pinheiro chose *brava* instead, a safer and a more positive adjective better suited to nineteenth-century Brazilian society. Pinheiro wanted his translation to make sense, to not be “misplaced,” and where he could, he made changes that show once again how Dante functioned as “a true man for all seasons.”

In addition to the translation of *paese* as *pátria*, and *selvaggia* as *brava*, Pinheiro also makes another revealing decision: he changes the gender of Florence from feminine to masculine.

E se ben ti ricordi e vedi lume,  
vedrai te somigliare a quella **inferma**  
che non può trovar posa in su le piume,  
ma con dar volta suo dolore scherma (vv.148-151, emphasis mine)  
Se ves ao claro e tem viva a lembrança,  
ao **enfermo** há de achar que és semelhante,  
que, no leito jazendo, não descansa;  
em vão se agita, a dor vai por diante (vv.148-151, emphasis mine)  
And if your memory has some clarity,  
then you will see yourself like that **sick woman**  
who finds no rest upon her feathered-bed,  
but, turning, tossing, tries to ease her pain (148-151, emphasis mine)

The use of the masculine form hardly seems like a coincidence; rather it appears to reflect certain stylistic and ideological imperatives. In order to make this geographic reference specific to the city of Rio de Janeiro, at the time the capital of Brazil, Pinheiro had to shift to the masculine form (*inferma* to *enfermo*). Otherwise he would have kept the feminine, as the Portuguese noun for city, *cidade*, is feminine. Associating Rio with an ill man, incapable of finding any solace, not even when lying in bed, could be a reference to the debates happening around the question of abolition. We can even read Pinheiro's translation as figuring the illness of Rio as precisely slavery itself, an illness that cannot be alleviated by sleep and that will keep growing, unless it is eradicated (a clear reference to slavery had already been made at the beginning of the invective). In 1887 Ruy Barbosa promulgated the *Lei dos Sexagénarios*, which granted freedom to all the slaves over the age of sixty; meanwhile abolitionists became more active in organizing mass escapes. Indeed, the publication of Pinheiro's translation and the abolition of slavery in Brazil both occur in 1888.

The second explanation for Pinheiro's use of the masculine is that he wanted to refer directly to the emperor, and ultimately through metonym to the monarchy itself as a form of illness. At the time of Pinheiro's translation, it was widely known that the emperor, Pedro II, was ill. He had been suffering from gallstones for several years, and one of his most severe episodes occurred in 1887. He also reportedly had problems with short-term memory loss and slurred speech. To receive the best medical care, Pedro II departed for Europe, leaving his daughter, Dona Isabel in charge of the empire. During this trip Pedro

II went to Italy (his wife Teresa, or Teresinha, who accompanied him, was a Bourbon) where he attended a lecture by Giosuè Carducci at the University of Bologna. It is worth noting the love Pedro II had for the world of arts and letters. During a previous trip to Italy, he met Alessandro Manzoni, another writer of the nation, with whom he stayed in touch for more than twenty years, reinforcing once again the ways in which Italy's culture circulated and was subsequently re-appropriated by Brazil. It is perhaps therefore more plausible that the shift in gender in Pinheiro's version of Dante is a veiled reference to Pedro II who could not find peace because of his sickness and the decline of his empire. The change from feminine to masculine thus functions as a brilliant transposition of Dante's frustration and anger toward Florence to a Brazilian context and to his own national and contemporary frustrations: slavery and the declining monarchy.

However, we should not forget that Dante originally "centered his political and poetic beliefs around the sacredness of a central European empire" and ironically "was used as a symbol to fight and to bring down the Austrian Empire" by Mazzini (Ciccarelli 149). Francesco Bruni writes: "Dante is not a patriot of the nineteenth century, nor does he support an autonomous nation-state. Dante is a patriot of the fourteenth century, and according to him the Italian patria is part of a much broader formation, under the roof of the Empire" (Bruni 92).<sup>18</sup> According to Dante, the empire is the only political system that can bring justice, put an end to the violence of the city-states, and guarantee universal peace (Bruni 84). I mention this not to undermine or contradict the observations made in the foregoing discussion, but rather, on the contrary, to reinforce one of my central contentions: a masterpiece like the *Comedy* circulates and adapts to the structures of different temporalities and geographic configurations, thereby reflecting the changing relations between nations as well as their evolving conceptions of themselves.

As David Damrosch reminds us, world literatures are "a double refraction, one that can be described through the figure of the ellipse, with the source and host cultures providing the two foci that generate the elliptical space within which a work lives as world literature, connected to both cultures, circumscribed by neither one alone" (514). Pinheiro fills that ellipsis between the two cultures: not only does he incorporate ideas about Dante coming directly from the Risorgimento intellectuals into his translation, but he also appropriates a work used



as the foundation for imagining the Italian nation to explore distinctly Brazilian historical conditions. Ultimately, Pinheiro reconciles the literary and the political Dante by translating into poetic form those political aspects attributed to him by the Italian patriots.

## Notes

1. In addition to Pinheiro's 1888 translation, other versions of the *Comedy* start appearing in Latin America, such as the 1897 Argentinian translation by ex-president Bartolomé Mitre.

2. See for example his extensive research of Italian dialects in *De vulgari eloquentia*.

3. “[I]n tutti i suoi scritti, di qualunque genere essi siano, traluce sempre sotto forme diverse l’amore immenso, ch’ei portava alla patria; amore. . .che non restringevasi ad un cerchio di mura, ma sibbene a tutto il bel paese, dove il sì suona, perchè la patria d’un italiano non è Roma, Firenze, o Milano, ma tutta l’Italia” (10). All translations from Italian are mine unless otherwise stated.

4. “[C]on questa energia, con questa sovrabbondanza di forza, l’Italia avrebbe potuto fondare in quel secolo la sua indipendenza contro l’insulto straniero” (5).

5. “Oi Italiani! Studiate Dante; non su’commenti, non sulle glosse; ma nella storia del secolo in cui egli visse, nella sua vita, e nelle sue opere.—Ma badate! V’ha più che il verso nel suo poema; e per questo non vi fidate ai grammatici, e agli interpreti: essi sono come la gente, che dissecca cadaveri; voi vedete le ossa, i muscoli, le vene, che formavano il corpo ma dov’è la scintilla che l’animò?” (12).

6. The so-called carbonari (Italian for “charcoal burners”) were part of the secret association called Carboneria, originally founded in Naples in the beginning of the century.

7. The “românticos da regeneração politica, fanáticos da justiça social, os carbonários italianos, onde quer que se encontrassem, segundo as palavras de Mazzini, anunciavam aos povos a próxima revolução” (106).

8. The Revolução Farroupilha was a Republican uprising started in 1834 in the state of Rio Grande do Sul, which declared its independence from the Brazilian Empire for mostly economic reasons. Garibaldi joined the struggle in 1839 and managed to reach the northern state of Santa Catarina. However, they were defeated by imperial forces soon thereafter.

9. More regarding on the figure of Rossetti see the article “A nação mazziniana chega a região platina: jornalista italianos e os debates no prata em meados do século XIX” by Eduardo Scheidt.

10. For more on the influences of Italian culture in Latin America, specifically in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, see *Vida Nueva: La lingua e la cultura italiana in America Latina* by Alejandro Patat (2012) and *Do outro lado do Atlântico. Um século de migração italiana no Brasil* by Angelo Trento (1988).

11. “Ao que se deduz da crônica publicada na “Gazeta de Notícias” (27 de Agosto de 1893), Machado de Assis costumava ler, à noite, a *Divina Comedia*” (66). All translations from Portuguese are mine unless otherwise stated.

12. For a thorough analysis of the uses of Dante in Machado see the article by Jean-Michel Massa “Presença de Dante na Obra de Machado de Assis,” originally written in 1965 and republished in *Machado de Assis em Linha* in 2015.

13. “[R]aro é o presidente do Conselho, o ministro da Fazenda, o chefe do partido, que não passa fustigado por *uma chuva de lodo*, como esses condenados que se sucedem nos círculos tristíssimos do Dante sob flagelo *da que empesta o solo onde cai*” (67).

14. “[A] mão que ele (Dante) não via na sua republica e em sua época, a mão sustentadora das leis, ai a temos (na Constituição Brasileira), hoje, criada, e tão grande, que nada lhe iguala a majestade, nada lhe revitaliza o poder” (68).

15. It is important to note that Pinheiro’s edition is published posthumously by his son, as the translator died in 1882.

16. I have reached out to cultural foundation Casa Ruy Barbosa and the Academia Brasileira de Letras in search of more information about Pinheiro’s translation and about himself. As of now, the only manuscript I was able to locate is held in the Biblioteca Nacional in Rio de Janeiro.

17. While in *Inferno VI* we witness Ciacco denouncing the corruption of Florence, in *Paradiso VI* the emperor Giustiniano celebrates the Empire and condemns the partisan wars between Guelfs and Ghibellines.

18. “Dante non è un patriota dell’Ottocento né aspira a uno stato nazionale autonomo. Dante è un patriota del Trecento e per lui la patria italiana fa parte di una formazione molto più vasta sotto il tetto dell’impero universale” (92).

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