

Brazilian Railway Culture

Martin Cooper

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Thesis Abstract

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This thesis examines the cultural significance of the railway in Brazil from 1865 to the present day. The conventional view of Anglophone historians, and in particular economic and political historians, has been of a railway network created in the late nineteenth century by British entrepreneurs as a product of informal empire. For the most part the development of the railway in Brazil has been depicted as a series of political and financial struggles between local Brazilian regulators and foreign companies. This study goes beyond such a view and examines the railway as a series of complex cultural encounters and negotiations within Brazil itself.

It begins by developing a conceptual framework situating the railway as a large technical cultural system. This is used to analyse the various forms of cultural production inspired by the railway in Brazil. Individual sections of the network are considered in turn: the writing of railway history, autobiographies, fictional narrative, poetry and song, cinema and television, and fine art. Connections and linkages are identified between the social actors involved, the writers, artists and audiences, and the manner in which they are describing and performing 'the railway'. Together this multidisciplinary ensemble provides an understanding of the railway in Brazil, and the manner in which its meaning has been negotiated and transculturated.

This historical analysis is then used to examine the way in which railway heritage is displayed in the twenty-first century and how it has come to have a temporarily settled, hybrid, meaning. A series of visitor interviews and reviews of selected railway museums highlight how the public engages with these sites. This study concludes that contemporary museum visitors come in search of personal memories of 'their' Brazilian railway, choosing to ignore the role of federal government in the creation of this heritage.

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This work is dedicated to the Glory of God

Author declaration

This work is based entirely on individual research by the author.

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All photographs are by the author unless otherwise stated.



Fig. 1 The main railway companies and routes in Brazil, 2008
 Source: Ministério de Transportes, Brasília, DF,
 ‘<http://www.transportes.gov.br/bit/inferro.htm>’ (29/07/08).
 Figs. 2-6, from the same source, show a selection of larger-scale maps which include a number of the towns and cities mentioned in this study.
 See fig. 2 for key to map symbols.

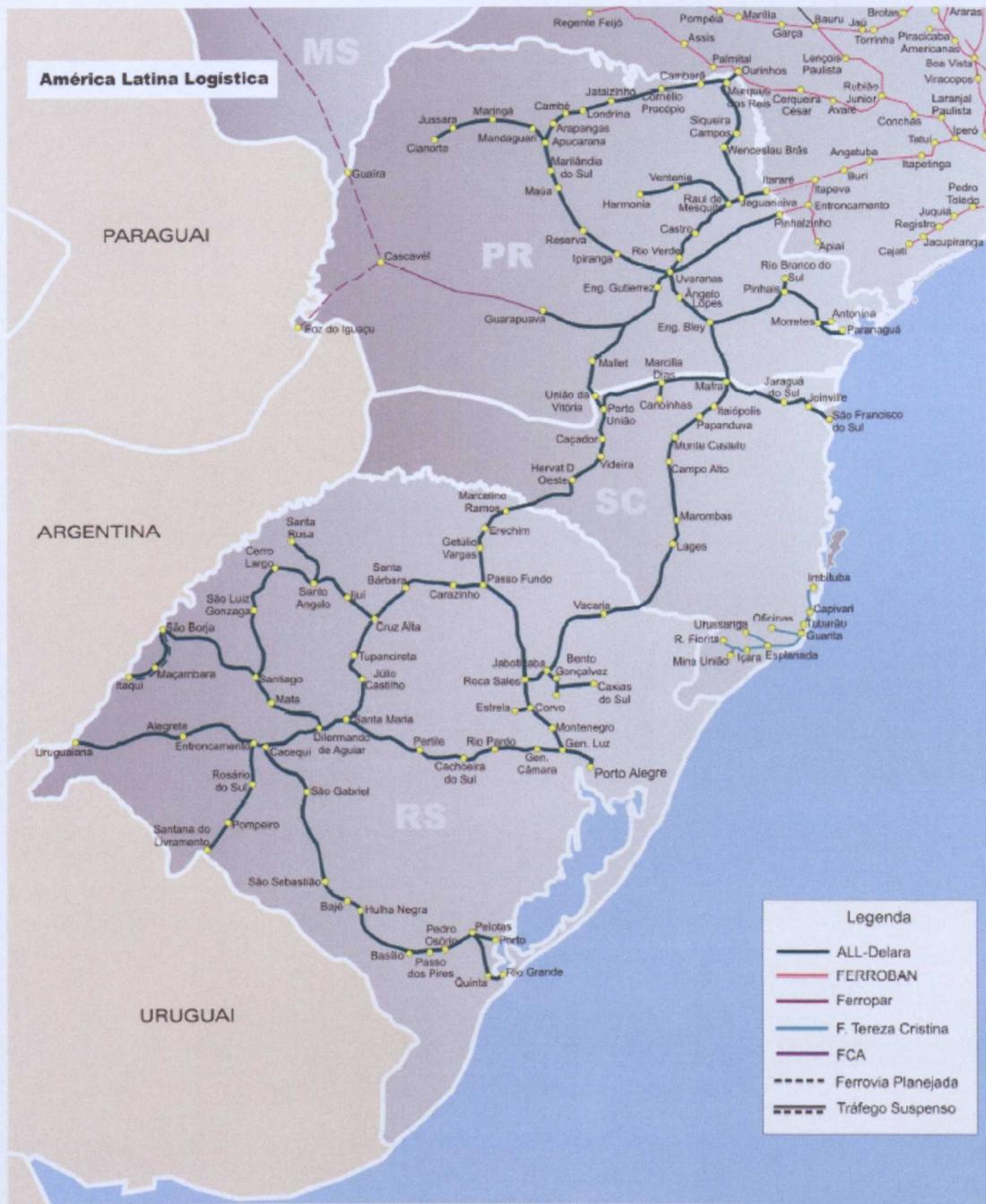


Fig. 2 Railways in Rio Grande do Sul, Santa Catarina and Paraná, 2008



Fig. 3 Railways in São Paulo and Minas Gerais, 2008



Fig. 4 Railways in Minas Gerais, São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, 2008



Fig. 5 Railways in Minas Gerais, Bahia, Espírito Santo and Sergipe, 2008



Fig. 6 Railways in the north-eastern states of Brazil, 2008

Chapter 1

Introduction



Fig. 7 Estação da Luz, São Paulo, SP, 2004

In March 1962, during the post-Carnival weeks of Lent, a Greek-born Prince walked down the steps of a railway station built by British engineers and run by descendants of Italian and Portuguese families. The photograph that captured this moment was published on the cover of a magazine, *Ferrovias*, a railway staff journal (fig. 8). Prince Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh, husband of the reigning British monarch Queen Elizabeth II, was on a visit to Brazil. The station building where this occurred had been built in the Victorian gothic style at the turn of the twentieth century: an architectural memorial to the British informal empire constructed by English-speaking railway engineers and funded by shareholders in London and Europe (fig. 7). Just after the end of World War Two the concession had expired and the railway line, the most profitable in Brazil, had reverted to federal government ownership. Behind the scenes, litigation by British shareholders in search of financial compensation was rumbling on in the courts even as Prince Philip embarked on his official visit.

The image on the front cover of this magazine is none-too-well framed, with the viewer initially confused by the crowd of men walking down the steps from the booking hall towards the platforms. *Ferrovias*, founded in 1935 and originally called *Revista SPR*, was the official Portuguese-language magazine of what was then the British-owned *São Paulo Railway*¹ and was published at intervals ranging from one to three months for distribution to the 13,000 employees of the line.² Each edition included articles for the staff, retired workers, members of the railway social club and their families, and usually ran to between thirty-two and forty-four pages with a front cover that featured some architectural or technological aspect of the railway. Publication continued when the Brazilian government took over the ownership of the line in 1946 and from the 1950s onwards it was published by the Associação dos Engenheiros da Estrada de Ferro Santos à Jundiá (AEEFSJ, the Association of Engineers of the Santos to Jundiá Railway).

¹ There are several different spellings and naming conventions for this line. For the sake of consistency this study uses *São Paulo Railway* throughout.

² 'Publisher's Statement', *Revista SPR*, Vol. V (January 1940), p. 3.

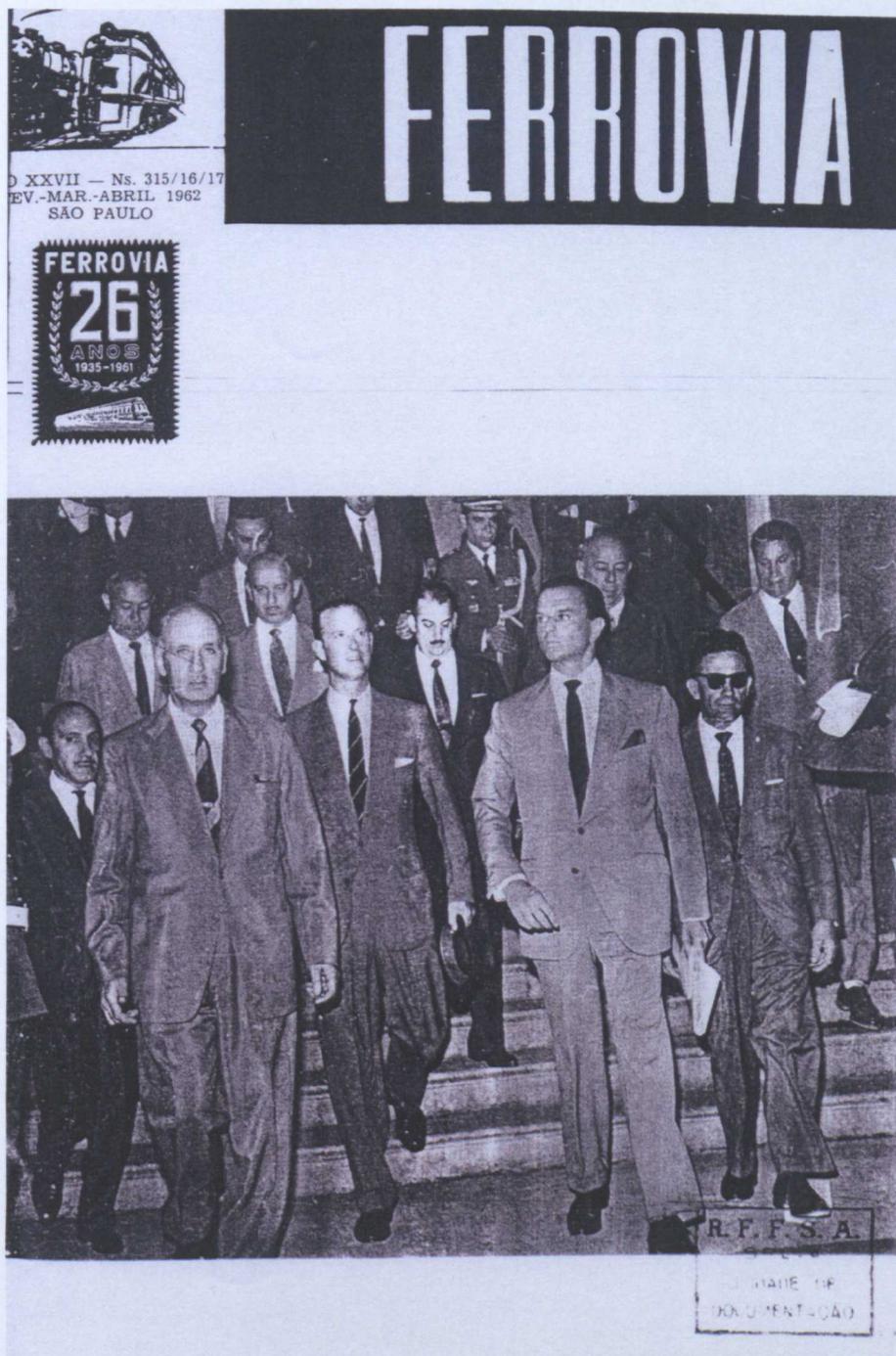


Fig. 8 Cover of *Ferrovia* magazine, April 1962.³ Front left in the photograph is Pedro de Andrade Carvalho, superintendent of the railway line from Santos to São Paulo and Jundiaí. To his left (the viewer's right), and one pace behind, is Prince Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh.

³ RFFSA/SPR Archive, São Paulo, SP, *Ferrovia*, Vol. XXVII (February-April 1962), p.1.

Occasionally, posed group photographs of senior management would appear on the cover but this edition of 1962 marked a departure with the printing of a hastily snapped news photograph. It takes a moment to realise that the Duke of Edinburgh is walking one step behind the Brazilian in charge of the railway line, and that the Prince is the only one in the photograph looking to his left (to the viewer's right). One wonders why the photograph was not cropped to leave just the left hand side of the image for publication: the manner in which it is presented gives an impression of the large crowd of important people surrounding and controlling the movements of the solitary Prince.

1. Railway transport in Brazil

Why study the railways of Brazil? Two points are offered in answer to this question. Ian Carter, in his study of railway culture in Britain, was thinking of literary output when he wrote that '...disdained genres offer largely unexploited oceans in which to fish'.⁴ The wealth of material which will be briefly summarized here, and which will be explored in more detail in the chapters that follow, suggests that the subject of the railway in Brazil is one such ocean – not just of literary output but other forms of cultural expression – worth investigating. The second point, linked to the first, is that 'the railway' is not necessarily high on a list of ideas which a foreigner would associate with a Brazil popularly seen as a land of football, samba, carnival and beaches.⁵ Yet at the same time rail transport has played an important part in the country's history. A brief mention in Susanna Hecht and Alexander Cockburn's book *The Fate of the Forest* which was an account of the deforestation of the Amazon rainforest – a major talking point in the early 1990s – drew attention to the fact that a railway, the *Estrada de Ferro Madeira-Mamoré*, had been built between 1860 and 1914 in the Brazilian Amazon.⁶ It was this juxtaposition of ideas: railway

⁴ Ian Carter, *Railways and Culture in Britain: The Epitome of Modernity* (Manchester, 2001), p. 7.

⁵ Piers Armstrong, *Third World Literary Fortunes: Brazilian Culture and its International Reception* (Cranbury, NJ, 1999), pp. 11-12; Roberto DaMatta, *Carnivals, Rogues, and Heroes: An Interpretation of the Brazilian Dilemma*, trans. John Drury (Notre Dame, IN, 1991), pp. 239.

⁶ Susanna Hecht and Alexander Cockburn, *The Fate of the Forest: Developers, Destroyers and Defenders of the Amazon* (Revised edn., London, 1990), pp. 77-78, 89-94.

technology and environmental issues that led to a further investigation of railway transport in Brazil.⁷ What was found was a country-wide network of railway preservationists and a growing niche tourist industry, prompting further research with a desire to understand firstly how this had developed over the past thirty years and secondly the cultural context of the railway in Brazilian society.

The railway has affected millions of Brazilians between its arrival in the 1850s and the present day. It has been part of daily life for generations as passengers, rail workers, or museum visitors. In 2006 over 728 million passengers were carried by rail in Brazil, a country with a population of almost 170 million.⁸ In contrast, the railway network in Britain carried 1.1 billion passengers in a country with a population of some 60 million.⁹ The comparative proportions may be in the range of four to one between the two countries, but the usage of the railways by passengers in Brazil is still significant. This is an aspect of the country that does not reflect the image abroad of a sensual tropical location, and therefore warrants further investigation that challenges the prevailing images of carnival and football.

This present study is an investigation into the place of the railway in Brazilian society and culture, and the photograph in fig. 8 serves to illustrate some of the complex relationships that will be examined and discussed. The first point to make is the nationalities of those in the picture. São Paulo can be regarded as a city of migrants.¹⁰ Its population has from its foundation largely been made up of the descendants of southern and middle European immigrants, as well as people from the Middle East and Far East Asia; to these have been

⁷ Martin Cooper, 'Steam Railways in Brazil: Their Cultural Context and Preservation' (unpublished MA thesis, University of York, 2002).

⁸ ANTT, *Evolução Recente do Transporte Ferroviário*, pp. 8-9; Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística (IBGE), *Brasil em Números/Brazil in Figures*, Vol. 14 (Rio de Janeiro RJ, 2006), p. 68, Table 2.1.

⁹ Office of Rail Regulation, *National Rail Trends 2007-2008*, Qtr. Two (July-September 2007, London), p. 11; Office for National Statistics, *Annual Abstract of Statistics*, No. 140 (London, 2004), p. 26, table 5.1.

¹⁰ From the 1890s onwards the *São Paulo Railway* was one of many companies that were major employers of semi-skilled immigrants from Italy, Spain and Portugal. See: Elizabeth de Fiore and Ottaviano de Fiore (eds.), *A Presença Britânica no Brasil (1808-1914)* (São Paulo, SP, 1987), pp. 117-118.

added migrants from Brazil's northeast and the rural interior. In this regard it is similar to many other large Brazilian urban centres, where population movement has shaped its formation, growth, history and identity.¹¹ São Paulo's museum of immigration, the *Memorial do Imigrante*, is based in a building in the city centre close to the railway line up from Santos that was once a former reception and registration centre: it is Brazil's version of the USA's Ellis Island. Between 1887 and 1978 millions of immigrants disembarked at Santos and many took the *São Paulo Railway* up through the Atlantic forest to the reception centre. This was but one of several ports of entry for settlers yet by this route alone came the largest ethnic group: up to 1.5 million who travelled from Italy.¹² The railway, a technology implanted and run by British specialists, thus played a vital part in the experience of first arrival on Brazilian soil and later in the daily crush of overcrowded and late-running trains. How this railway ensemble was engaged with by Brazilian culture and society, and the tensions that were played out from the 1860s onwards, is the focus of this study.

Ferrovias said in an editorial that the Prince was visiting to 'revive and reinforce the ties of friendship that have always linked Brazilians and the English'.¹³ It remarked that,

Here... on the *E. F. Santos à Jundiaí* the work of the sons of Glorious Albion was so efficient that for ninety years the Railway maintained a consistent growth and was always one of the shining examples of business – not just in Brazil but in the world as a whole.¹⁴

The article then went on to observe that the subsequent transfer to Brazilian government ownership of this and other lines had improved the power of the railways even more. The few railway employees who had a literary background may have noticed the reworking of a turn of phrase attributed to the French

¹¹ Ana Teresa Jardim Reynaud, 'Migrants' Accounts of Rio: The Contribution of Affect to Remembering Place', *Space & Culture*, 7 (2004), 9-19. See also the collection of essays edited by Francisco Costa in '450 Anos de São Paulo', *Revista USP*, 63 (2004).

¹² 'Imigrantes Estrangeiros Entrados no Estado de São Paulo - 1885-1961', *Memorial do Imigrante: Histórico da Hospedaria*, (2006)

'<http://www.memorialdoimigrante.sp.gov.br/historico/e6.htm>' (26 May 2008); Boris Fausto, *A Concise History of Brazil*, trans Arthur Brakel (Cambridge, 1999), p. 166 and p. 234.

¹³ *Ferrovias*, Vol. XXVII (February-April 1962), p. 2.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

revolutionary poet Augustin who dismissed Britain as ‘perfidious Albion’.¹⁵ The cover photograph depicted bemused British royalty following submissively one pace behind the strident leadership of Brazilian technocrats. Roland Barthes in *Image-Music-Text* observes that an accompanying magazine text serves to reinforce the connotation of the visual image, and here the front cover photograph and text on page two taken together represent over one hundred years of complex diplomatic, technological and business history.¹⁶ The implication is that now, since the railway has been freed of its links to the Old World, it is even more successful and professionally run: Albion’s glory has been diminished.

In reading this image in this way the assumption has been made that the presence of a foreign technology such as the railway was problematic in Brazil. That assumption is borne out by the evidence presented during the course of this study. The railways across Brazil were largely built to aid the extraction of natural resources, including initially sugar and coffee and later iron ore and soya beans, for export markets.¹⁷ Such extractive industries and infrastructures created tensions not just in Brazil: elsewhere Joseph Conrad described in his novel *Nostromo* the fictitious events in a Latin American country during the nineteenth century in which silver from the mines was transported to the docks by a foreign-built railway ‘...which is to put money into the pockets of Englishmen, Frenchmen, Americans, Germans, and God knows who else’.¹⁸ Eugenio Garcia, in his reading of British consular correspondence between Rio de Janeiro and London during the early 1920s, notes that the British were aware of frequent public criticism of the British-owned railways, and ‘consequently, any problem in the service was imputed directly to the British’; the feeling being that such

¹⁵ Augustin, Marquis de Ximénez, ‘L’Ère des Français’, in *Poésies Révolutionnaires et Contre-révolutionnaires* Vol. 1, (1821 [1793]), p. 160, quoted in Angela Partington (ed.), *The Oxford Dictionary of Quotations* (Revised 4th edn., Oxford, 1996), p. 750.

¹⁶ Roland Barthes, ‘The Photographic Message’, in Susan Sontag (ed.), *A Roland Barthes Reader* (London, 1993), pp. 194-210.

¹⁷ William R. Summerhill, *Order against Progress: Government, Foreign Investment and Railroads in Brazil 1854-1913* (Stanford, CA, 2003), pp. 58-105.

¹⁸ Joseph Conrad, *Nostromo* (London, 1994 [1904]), p. 197. The story is regarded to be based on Colombia and Panama. See: Malcolm Deas, ‘“Weapons of the Weak?” Colombia and Foreign Powers in the Nineteenth Century’, in Matthew Brown (ed.), *Informal Empire in Latin America: Culture, Commerce and Capital* (Oxford, 2008), p. 173.

transport operations were by rights something Brazil should be managing for herself.¹⁹

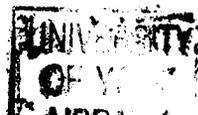
On Brazilian soil the technology was built, in the main, by British engineers backed by English shareholders trading on Britain's long standing special relationship with Brazil that remained for much of the nineteenth century. In the early twentieth century the USA grew to prominence in the provision of railway technology, and by the end of the twentieth century rolling stock from Japan, China and Spain was appearing on the rails.²⁰ The term 'railway imperialism' has been used to describe conditions such as these where, in the nineteenth century during the growth of the railways in Brazil, they formed part of Britain's informal empire based on trade and financial influence rather than military or political control.²¹ The difference in meaning between 'railway imperialism' and the railway industry's part in 'informal empire' will be discussed in chapter 2. As far as Brazil was concerned not all the railway companies were owned by foreign shareholders. Indeed the railway had, from its inception in the 1850s until the present day, been characterised by its complexity of ownership: there never existed one unified railway network either in private, foreign, state or federal hands. At least three different operating gauges also posed problems. The engineers and managers had been initially British, but were soon joined by French and North Americans, and later on engineering and technology colleges began to turn out Brazilian-qualified railway engineers. The unskilled workmen who first built them came from dozens of countries across the world.²² Through this rich and complex tapestry of control and power this study will probe aspects of the railway ensemble in Brazil to reveal the tensions

¹⁹ Eugenio Vargas Garcia, *Anglo-American Rivalry in Brazil: The Case of the 1920s*, University of Oxford Centre for Brazilian Studies Working Paper CBS-14-00 (P), 2000, pp. 17-18.

²⁰ René Fernandes Schoppa, *150 Anos do Trem no Brasil* (Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 2004), pp. 188-190.

²¹ Ronald E. Robinson, 'Introduction: Railway Imperialism', in Clarence B. David and Kenneth E. Wilburn Jr (eds.), *Railway Imperialism* (Westport, CT, 1991), p. 2; Robert Young, *Postcolonialism: An Historical Introduction* (Oxford, 2001), p. 41.

²² For example, estimates suggest that more than forty nationalities were working on the construction of the Madeira-Mamoré Railway between 1909 and 1911. See: Manoel Rodrigues Ferreira, *A Ferrovia do Diabo* (3rd edn., São Paulo, SP, 2005), p. 212, 235, 272 and 285.



created by a form of imperialism which involved ‘the practice of power through facilitating institutions and ideologies’.²³

As already suggested the cover photograph of *Ferrovias* (fig. 8) can be read as a ‘text’ and thus interpreted as a snapshot of the various subaltern and postcolonial positions between Brazil and Britain.²⁴ Dr. Carvalho, looking directly ahead just over the photographer’s head, appears determined and in control. Just behind him the Prince, holding a railwayman’s cap, is gazing away to his left and for a moment appears lost in a foreign land. What is assumed to be one of his British aides, holding a newspaper, strides ahead on the Prince’s left looking the opposite way in a preoccupied manner. Behind and around them the cohort of Brazilian railway bosses, politicians and military figures descends the stairs adding, it seems, to the royal visitor’s unease.

The press photograph, after Roland Barthes, is *of* something, ‘contrary to the text which, by the sudden action of a single word, can shift a sentence from description to reflection’, and here a member of the British royal family is walking down a flight of stone steps surrounded by a group of stern-faced men in suits.²⁵ In the words of Susan Sontag, ‘to photograph is to confer importance’, and this photograph appears to be a journalistic record of the event, historical ‘proof’ of the visit, taken with a flashbulb in a hurry as the men walk towards the camera without looking directly at it.²⁶ It is neither a posed nor a formal picture and in this way it brings a sense of immediacy and informality to the unfolding official visit. To the viewer comes the realisation that this is a stolen moment: Prince Philip does not appear to be a willing participant in that, for this snapshot at least, he was not allowed to pose. On page two of the same edition of the magazine is a more relaxed picture of the royal visitor standing in conversation with the head of the railway. It is significant that each of these two photographs

²³ Young, *Postcolonialism*, p. 27.

²⁴ Liz Wells (ed.), *Photography: A Critical Introduction* (2nd edn., London, 2000), pp. 17-35, and pp. 102-108; Linda Hutcheon, *The Politics of Postmodernism* (2nd edn., London, 2002), pp. 114-120.

²⁵ Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography*, Trans. Richard Howard (New York, NY, 1981), p. 28.

²⁶ Susan Sontag, *On Photography* (London, 2002 [1977]), p. 28.

has been chosen for its particular location in the pages of this edition of the magazine.

Susan Sontag goes on to make the point that a photograph can alter ‘the meaning of value’ that is accorded to the subject.²⁷ The royal visitor is, by definition, an important person but underneath the events recorded by this photograph is an anti-imperial message which conveys an image of Brazilian railway management regaining control of British technology and business culture. Again, the framing of the photograph is significant in that it scrupulously includes a wide view of the numerous Brazilian dignitaries rather than a tight shot of the railway superintendent and the Prince. It suggests that strength in numbers is the way to reign victorious. It also presents the male body in full length, giving a view of the surrounding open space that is most definitely a public and masculine one, rather than an interior feminine space.²⁸ I am aware that, as here, the reading of the particular cultural outputs and performances in this study is but one possible interpretation; however a start has to be made somewhere on what has so far been an unexamined aspect of Brazilian culture and society. Further, this study does not make any detailed comparisons between Brazil and other countries, even though for some purposes use is made of work by cultural analysts such as Ian Carter.²⁹

To return to the front cover of *Ferrovias*: reading a photograph, which in itself is, as Roland Barthes suggests, a fleeting testimony of the past, uncovers just one story in the jigsaw of Brazilian culture.³⁰ This thesis ranges over a number of media in order to put the railway in Brazil into a wider cultural context. The web of significances is large and complex, as suggested by the following brief example.

²⁷ Sontag, *On Photography*, p. 28.

²⁸ Derrick Price and Liz Wells, ‘Thinking About Photography: Debates, Historically and Now’, in Liz Wells, *Photography*, pp. 43-44.

²⁹ Carter, *Railways and Culture in Britain*.

³⁰ Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, pp. 87-89.

2. The São Paulo Railway

The idea for this particular railway line was conceived in the 1850s, set down on paper in the form of a concession published as an Imperial decree, and granted to a Brazilian consortium in 1856.³¹ One member of that group was the baron and viscount Mauá, described by Gilberto Freyre as an anglophile, who received his business training as a young man during an extended working visit to London.³² The concession was then lost, by what some Brazilian historians say were underhand methods, after the British construction firm became insolvent and the baron of Mauá, unable to fund the losses, was forced into bankruptcy.³³ The railway passed fully into British control and services were inaugurated and operated from the port of Santos through São Paulo to Jundiaí by British senior and middle management in a foreign land from 1867 to 1946. A foreign business organisation and technology now controlled the transport of passengers and freight across the landscape. It was a transport monopoly that linked Jundiaí and São Paulo with the port of Santos for the export of coffee and the ‘import’ of hundreds of thousands of European immigrants destined to work on the plantations.³⁴ In this respect the railway was a catalyst for the growth of Italian, Japanese and German cultural influences within a significant area of Brazil.

Foreign-owned utility companies were subjected to scrutiny by the national and provincial governments who had given the original concessions, as well as by the press.³⁵ The British-owned railway company was often publicly criticised, particularly after rail accidents, and resulting court cases. Local expatriate managers were aware of the sensitivities of their passengers and the

³¹ Moyses Lavander Jr and Paulo Augusto Mendes, *SPR: Memórias de uma Inglesa* (São Paulo, SP, 2005), p. 16.

³² Gilberto Freyre, *Inglezes no Brasil: Aspectos da Influência Britânica sobre a Vida, a Paisagem e a Cultura do Brasil* (3rd edn., Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 2000 [1948]), p. 78.

³³ Compare, for example, Lavander Jr. and Mendes, *SPR*, pp.19-23; Antonio Soukef Junior and Maria Inês Dias Mazzoco, *Cem Anos Luz: A Hundred Light Years* (São Paulo, SP, 2000), pp. 27-28; Jorge Caldeira, *Mauá: Empresário do Império* (São Paulo, SP, 1995), pp. 413-423; and Visconde de Mauá, *Autobiografia (Exposição aos Credores)* (3rd edn., Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 1998 [1878]), pp. 150-163.

³⁴ Odilon Nogueira de Matos, *Café e Ferrovias: A Evolução Ferroviária de São Paulo e o Desenvolvimento da Cultura Cafeeira* (4th edn., Campinas, SP, 1990).

³⁵ Colin M. Lewis, *Public Policy and Private Initiative: Railway Building in São Paulo, 1860-1889* (London, 1991), pp. 27-40; Summerhill, *Order against Progress*, pp. 34-57.

legislators, and realised that even the company's very identity was being challenged. Linguistically the British had a battle on their hands to maintain their chosen name for the railway. In June 1871 the railway superintendent, D. M. Fox, wrote to a colleague, 'Our company's title in the "Publica Forma" should be *São Paulo Brazilian Railway Company (Limited)*'.³⁶ In fact the company was registered in England as the *San Paulo (Brazilian) Railway Company Limited*; it was known to readers of Portuguese language newspapers in Brazil as the *S. P. Railway*, and colloquially as the *Inglesa* – a name that persists today. Gilberto Freyre has noted that Brazil has a well-established tendency to 'receive, assimilate, adopt, develop, recreate, and brazilianise foreign ideas',³⁷ and certainly the British company was unable to properly establish its desired name in either Brazilian governmental documents or the press.

The familiar name, *Inglesa*, survived the official name-change to *Estrada de Ferro Santos à Jundiaí (EFS-J)* which happened when the foreign concession ended and the railway was taken over by the Brazilian authorities. In 1957, upon the advice of a team of USA and Brazilian consultants, a significant part of the country's railway system was nationalised and the *EFS-J* became part of Region Four of the national network. Passenger services came under the control of the Companhia Paulista de Trens Metropolitanos (*CPTM*) in 1992, when the railway became 'Linha A' and 'Linha D' of the suburban São Paulo network (fig. 13, p. 172).³⁸ Its visitors' book, started in 1927 and closed in 2003, has the unadorned signature 'Philip, 18 March 1962' tucked away in between over one hundred and fifty pages of gracious comments and thanks.³⁹

Even as Prince Philip was making his tour of the railway the remnant of the British company, by then part of an investment portfolio held by a porcelain maker, was continuing to press its claim for compensation in the Brazilian courts, complaining that between 1961 and 1963 it had lost out on the latest

³⁶ Arquivo do Estado de São Paulo, São Paulo, SP, *E. F. Santos a Jundiaí 1871-1872*, E00656, p. 41, D. M. Fox to Murray, 28 June 1871.

³⁷ Freyre, *Ingleses no Brasil*, p. 28.

³⁸ Schoppa, *150 Anos do Trem*, pp. 92-97.

³⁹ RFFSA/SPR Archive, São Paulo, SP, *São Paulo Railway Co., Visitantes 1927-*, p. 55.

round of appeals because of the poor postal service which had delayed the publishing of lower court judgements by many months.⁴⁰ The Company was slowly dying with ill-grace as the Brazilians were in the limelight taking control of British royalty. On the pages of *Ferrovias* history was being altered, with no direct mention of any of the names for the British company which had previously run the line. The reader is left with the impression that, even if it was built by foreign engineers, it had for ever been the *EFS-J*. Its leading managers had now become Brazilian as the English names were erased from the written histories; the transport experience had become Brazilian. Records of correspondence from the British Embassy in Rio de Janeiro suggest that the Prince's trip from São Paulo city by rail to a private weekend retreat near the city of Campinas in 1962 was laid on at the initiative of the Brazilian authorities and had never been in the original plans of the organisers of the Royal tour.⁴¹ This can be interpreted as an indication that control of events and the railway itself had been taken away from the British and were now fully under the organisational capabilities of the Brazilians. It was the office of the governor of the State of São Paulo that had raised the idea of using the railway, and not the British officials organising the royal tour.⁴² In effect Brazil was offering back to the service of Britain what had once been its own; an act that can be read as a challenge to the earlier informal railway imperialism.

Other changes were happening: The São Paulo Railway Athletic Club (SPRAC), founded in 1903 as a football and sports club for employees when the railway was in British hands, changed its name after the concession ended in 1946 to Nacional A.C.⁴³ Indirectly the *São Paulo Railway* had helped to bring football from England to Brazil: Charles Miller, born in Brazil of British parents and for a time an employee in the stores department of the railway, is credited

⁴⁰ Wedgwood Museum and Archives, Stoke-on-Trent, *S.P.R. Investments Ltd: Shareholders Minutes to May 1977*, San Paulo (Brazilian) Railway Company Limited, Statement to Shareholders, 31 December 1964, p. 10

⁴¹ The National Archives, London, FO 372/7607, Item TR027/14, Caryl Ramsden to Dugald Malcolm, 17 November 1961.

⁴² Orthographic note: Where State is capitalised in this study it refers to a specific legal entity for example the State of São Paulo, or São Paulo State. Where it is not capitalised it refers to a geographic area, for example the state of São Paulo or São Paulo state.

⁴³ Lavander Jr and Mendes, *SPR*, pp. 291-292.

with bringing the sport to Brazil in 1895.⁴⁴ Yet here also, recent accounts have Miller as a 'joven paulistano' (young person of São Paulo) to stress that his place of birth makes him Brazilian despite the nationality of his parents.⁴⁵ Elsewhere song writers were using the railway as inspiration for carnival themes, poets and writers were creating an image of a transport technology that was bringing conflict between tradition and modernity and between urban and rural, and painters were capturing on canvas the process of transculturation of this large technical cultural system. Later museums would be created from closed branch lines and redundant rolling stock.

For the passengers the experience of travelling on Brazil's railways was becoming an enduring misery. By 1983 a survey of 2,400 passengers conducted in Rio de Janeiro (a figure that represented 2.3% of the city's daily total of rail passengers) by the national rail authority, the *RFFSA*, found that 45% of passengers arrived at their destination more than five minutes late, 66% had to wait more than ten minutes for a train home after work and just under half of all respondents said there was a lack of both seats and standing room on rush-hour trains. The carriages were dirty, full of hawkers selling biscuits and chewing gum, and a worrying 77% of those questioned said they travelled in fear of being assaulted.⁴⁶ Civil unrest and rioting at railway stations, sometimes in protest at travel conditions and at other times as a manifestation of a general disquiet at political events, had occurred sporadically throughout the twentieth century.⁴⁷

So the cover of *Ferrovias* magazine from 1962 is part of a connected web of cultural representations of the railway in Brazil. It reveals a range of meanings, a host of connections and stories from international diplomacy and business across almost one hundred years. It also suggests that what was once

⁴⁴ Ibid; Josh Lacey, *God is Brazilian: Charles Miller, the Man who Brought Football to Brazil* (Stroud, Glos., 2005), pp. 99-102.

⁴⁵ Hilário Franco Júnior, *A Dança dos Deuses: Futebol, Sociedade, Cultura* (São Paulo, SP, 2007), pp. 60-61.

⁴⁶ RFFSA – Diretoria de Transporte Metropolitano, *Pesquisa de Opinião Pública: Rio de Janeiro*, (Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 1983).

⁴⁷ José Alvaro Moisés and Verena Martinez-Alier, 'Urban Transport and Popular Violence: The Case of Brazil', *Past and Present*, 86 (1980), 174-192.

British technology had now been Brazilianised in its business and political control and, I would suggest, in its cultural identity. This particular aspect, the transculturation of the railway, will be discussed further in chapter 2.

3. Thesis structure

This study is not an economic or political history of the railway in Brazil. The complexity of ownership of each of the lines over the course of the past 160 years, ranging from private-foreign, to private-domestic, state and federal, followed by an incomplete nationalisation in the 1950s and a subsequent privatisation in the 1990s means that the subject is beyond the scope of a single volume. In 1888 there were some sixty-five companies, and in 1954 there remained forty-four separate lines in operation.⁴⁸ Today there are twenty-three rail operators including freight, suburban and tourist passenger companies.⁴⁹ A number of works of economic history have been published in English covering case studies and specific time periods, and in Brazil there is a steady stream of books recounting the stories of individual lines and companies. A range of these latter works will be discussed in chapter 3.

This study, in analysing Brazilian railway culture, will examine a number of aspects of the railway as experienced across the country. The chapters that follow are grouped into two sections. Part one, 'The Railway and Culture in Brazil' examines the interpretations of the railway experience in Brazil from 1865 to 2003. These representations range from the daily ride to work on a late-running overcrowded suburban train to childhood memories of rural trips to see uncles and aunts; from the inclusion as a narrative linkage in a TV soap opera about Italian immigrants to the evocative smells of burning coal and wood in a locomotive's firebox. Sources considered will include railway autobiographies and the manner in which they seek to insert their authors' names into history, and how artists, poets and musicians have found inspiration from travel by train and

⁴⁸ Schoppa, *150 Anos do Trem*, pp. 33-34, p. 156.

⁴⁹ Agência Nacional de Transportes Terrestres [ANTT], *Evolução Recente do Transporte Ferroviário* (Brasília, DF, 2007), p. 2.

the presence of the tracks in the landscape. What will emerge is evidence of a duality of views about the railway in Brazil: the tensions between urban and rural, between tradition and modernity, and between national and foreign. Part two, 'The Past into the Present', uses this historical context to investigate the meanings in museums of railway heritage and the way visitors are engaging with the displays.

The chapters that follow in part one examine the emergence of meanings over time and demonstrate that there is no single identifiable metaphor created by the railway in Brazil, but rather a series of interpretations which reveal the feelings of tension inherent in this large system. The changes in the railway's significance from 1860 to the present day reflect its function, place within, and effect upon Brazilian society and at the same time the influence of that society upon the transport system. This struggle for meaning is most evident in fiction, television, cinema, poetry and popular music: all cultural engagements carried out during the railway's existence in Brazil. Dualities of meaning of the railway ensemble have been (and still are being) negotiated in these media forms.

Chapter 2 begins by outlining the key concepts used in this study of the railway in Brazil. By critiquing Wolfgang Schivelbush's notion of the 'railway ensemble', and developing Thomas Hughes's method of studying industrial-scale networks, the idea of a *large technical cultural system* is introduced.⁵⁰ Schivelbush says that with the advent of the railway 'route and vehicle became technically conjoined...' which allowed this mode of transport to be thought of as a system or ensemble of machine, track, and landscape.⁵¹ Whilst Hughes, concerned as he is with the generation and supply of electricity, notes 'those who seek to control and direct them must acknowledge the fact that systems are evolving cultural artefacts rather than isolated technologies'.⁵² This systems analysis encourages a broader understanding of the railway ensemble in terms of

⁵⁰ Wolfgang Schivelbusch, *The Railway Journey: The Industrialization of Time and Space in the 19th Century* (Berkeley, CA, 1986); Thomas Hughes, *Networks of Power: Electrification in Western Society, 1880-1930* (Baltimore, MD, 1983).

⁵¹ Schivelbusch, *The Railway Journey*, p. 16.

⁵² Hughes, *Networks of Power*, p. 465.

both geographical spread and artistic medium than Schivelbush's more limited focus of analysis. This means for instance that film studies, literary and art criticism, postcolonial critique and museum studies are variously employed in approaching Brazilian railway culture. My approach seeks to put cultural aspects centre stage within the ensemble of the railway. The 'technology' of the railway is understood to be both the machines themselves and the regular activity of building, owning, and operating such a system. 'Culture' is considered in more detail in chapter 2 but in brief it is taken as both a product – the effect such a system or ensemble has on the meanings as shared in a particular society, for example as the inspiration for paintings, songs, film and television – and as a process experienced when the railway is travelled on, written about, and visited in a museum. The previous discussion about the front cover of the *Ferrovia* magazine introduced two other terms which will be developed in chapter 2, the concepts of 'transculturation' and 'hybridity' as understood in the context of the railway system in Brazil.

Armed with this heuristic of the railway ensemble in Brazil the chapters that follow each identify and analyse an aspect of cultural production, starting in Chapter 3 with an examination of the writing of railway history by Brazilian authors. Ian Carter, considering comparisons between Britain, France and the USA, observes that the railway ensemble changed its character as the technology spread across the world:

Born in Britain, the modern railway's machine ensemble bundled together many different technical, economic and social novelties in that place. But the modern railway picked up subtly different inflections as export trades developed, coloured by local meanings in other national jurisdictions.⁵³

Hence I will be searching for evidence in published histories and autobiographies of narratives which suggest this process of transculturation. Chapter 3 identifies two tendencies in this process: firstly the 'othering' of the foreign (i.e. British) engineers who were active in the technology transfer, often by writing them out

⁵³ Carter, *Railways and Culture in Britain*, p. 12.

of history or emphasising the work of their Brazilian colleagues instead; and secondly the attempts by former railway workers to write themselves into the history of the railway through their autobiographical writings. These are interpreted as anti-imperial stances, taken up by a group of male authors which has been producing histories and autobiographies, in some cases with limited print runs, but achieving an influence that was far greater and long-lasting. These authors have been the Brazilian engineers and administrators publishing works that appear to be intended for consumption by colleagues. Yet their output has had implications elsewhere as this genre has been discovered and quoted by historians in the academy. This particular anti-imperial discourse has thus persisted until the early twenty-first century when a new wave of social historians began to write alternative histories and accounts, for example of women at work in the railway ensemble, which challenge the prevailing view of the railway.⁵⁴

Chapter 4, which investigates the railway in fictional novel-length writing from the 1880s to the 1980s, uncovers an active and continual discussion about the railway in Brazil during this period. This dialogue stretches across literary genres ranging from Naturalism, Realist and Magic Realism to a work in the canon of the New Historical Novel of Latin America. Brazilian fiction has a tendency to draw on dualities, the attraction of opposites, and conflicts born out of difference for its plotlines; as Paul Dixon notes one of the most popular authors who uses this device to reflect upon the inequalities and divisions in Brazilian society has been Jorge Amado.⁵⁵ Certainly this technique is used for the railway in the novels considered in this chapter, and taken together they build towards a continued discussion in Brazil of the meaning of this transport technology. The railway ensemble is variously presented as a masculine technology in opposition to feminine instability, as a bringer of conflict between rural and urban in the duality of the dangers of modern city life and the stultifying conservatism of country living, and as a pivotal technology that

⁵⁴ Lidia Maria Vianna Possas, *Mulheres, Trens e Trilhos: Modernidade no Sertão Paulista* (Bauru, SP, 2001).

⁵⁵ Paul B. Dixon, 'Malandro Heaven: Amado's Utopian Vision' in Keith H. Brower, Earl E. Fitz and Enrique Martínez-Vidal, *Jorge Amado: New Critical Essays* (New York, NY, 2001), p. 61.

represents a link between civilisation and barbarity. These writers from both the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries show how the cultural significance of the railway in Brazil has been the subject of continual negotiation and transculturation.

The relatively small size of the book publishing industry in Brazil, historically low literacy levels, and a resulting lack of a tradition for reading the printed word mean that apart from television adaptations these novels have had a relatively small circulation in society. That does not however imply that they have been without influence. Chapter 5 thus moves from the reading matter of the elites towards mass media forms; from poetry and thence to popular music in search of further railway influences. Here the duality and the basis for negotiation are much clearer: each of the examples from a span of over one hundred years returns to the axis of rural innocence versus urban roguishness; tradition against modernity – the essential elements of the transculturation of the large technical cultural system.

Chapter 6 examines the railway as reflected in its portrayal in cinema and television drama. Here the dualities of this technology are revealed, conflicts which have endured through the previous chapters and the transculturation process. It is significant that the moving image, and in particular television, marked Brazil's entry into the global cultural community of the mid to late twentieth century, albeit as Tânia Pellegrini remarks, on the periphery.⁵⁶ The railway ensemble in cinema and television is portrayed as an object to be questioned: does it represent modernity and if so what about the traditions and the old ways of life that it may be obliterating in its tracks? How can the railway be reconciled with its inclusion in both the rural and urban landscapes, bearing in mind that for many it was the means of migration to the metropolis? Once the technology has been implanted and regular passenger and freight services introduced where does this leave the natural environment through which the tracks run? These dualities of modern/tradition, urban/rural and

⁵⁶ Tânia Pelligrini, 'Aspects of Contemporary Production of Brazilian Culture', Trans. Laurence Hallewell, *Latin American Perspectives*, 27 (2000), 122-143.

nature/technology appear to be interlinked in the examples of television and film production discussed in chapter 6.

The issue of modernity is central to the railway in Brazil as a large technical cultural system, and it is picked up again in chapter 7 in particular through one possible reading of the manner in which Brazil's artists painting with oil on canvas have depicted the technology in the landscape. From the work of Tarsila do Amaral in the 1920s, a major figure of the Brazilian Modernist movement, through to the works of Glauco Pinto de Moraes in the 1970s an uneasy relationship is revealed between art and the railway. Indeed it is plausible to suggest that the interrogation of the railway ensemble by these artists has been pointed and critical at times. The duality here is between technology as an icon of modernity and the train as a destroyer of tradition without the locomotive itself ever becoming a sublime object at the hands of the artists discussed here. A pattern emerges in part one of this study (chapters 3 to 7) where both high and popular/mass cultural media productions highlight these dualities. In working through the tensions in these conflicting meanings there has thus been an enduring process of negotiation from the 1860s until the first decade of the twenty-first century.

Part two, 'The Past into the Present' (chapters 8 and 9), suggests that the negotiation process, understood here as the transculturation of the railway, has been temporarily stabilised by its museumification since the mid 1970s. This has happened in two ways: one through the federal organs of state, and the other through community engagement with the relics of railway technology. What has been produced is a hybrid that represents the railway in Brazilian culture in the early twenty-first century. Chapter 8 thus explores the involvement of the Brazilian state in the organisation of the railway ensemble once items of technology had passed their useful operational life in daily service. This involved organising paper archives, designating rolling stock either as worthy of preservation, restoration and display, or as scrap, and creating museums where the public could engage with this technology. The Brazilian government has for much of the twentieth century had a close interest in managing cultural

production, from its involvement with the development of, amongst other forms, a country-wide radio service, the promotion of music genres, and the creation of narratives in national museums.⁵⁷ Such a close management of the heritage sector in particular has led to Brazilian audiences largely abandoning state-run museums which depict national histories.⁵⁸ This, it is argued, has also been the case with railway museums set up in the 1980s by the federal rail authority, the *Rede Ferroviária Federal (RFFSA)*. Here in these museums, some of which have since closed their doors or been taken over by other bodies, a combination of a lack of official commitment for funding and display development and a public mistrust of state cultural management has led to these sites being mostly ignored by the public at large.

In contrast the volunteer-led railway preservation movement that first emerged in the late 1970s has become an important sector in the specialist leisure travel market in Brazil, taking thousands of visitors on more than a dozen restored steam lines each year. So in Chapter 9 this study examines the activities of the *Associação Brasileira de Preservação Ferroviária (ABPF)*, Brazilian Rail Preservation Association). It is here, in the heritage rides of this not-for-profit non-governmental organisation, that a sense of community engagement with the past is being created. A number of these rail heritage sites today enjoy some of the highest visitor figures of any attraction in the museum sector in Brazil. In analysing this phenomenon it is argued that what is on display is not a deracinated or even post-modern heritage experience but rather part of a large technical cultural system that has come to rest for the time being with a settled meaning. The conflicts played out in other media forms, between urban and rural, tradition and modernity, have been resolved and the railway ride has become part of the museum in negotiation with a participating public. It is here, in the heritage rides and museum exhibitions, that the Brazilian public is able to

⁵⁷ Doris Fagundes Haussen, 'Radio and Populism in Brazil: The 1930s and 1940s', *Television & New Media*, 6 (2005), 251-261; Othon Jambeiro, Andréa Ribeiro, Fabiano Brito and Elaine Costa da Silva, 'O Estado Novo, o Rádio e seus Órgãos Reguladores', *Contemporanea*, 1 (2003), 205-221; Daryle Williams, *Culture Wars in Brazil: The First Vargas Regime, 1930-1945* (Durham, NC, 2001), pp. 135-191.

⁵⁸ Myrian Sepúlveda dos Santos, 'Brazilian Museums, Public Policy and the Missing Public', *Journal of Latin American Cultural Studies*, 10 (2001), pp. 79-80.

come to terms with the railway ensemble and to accept its place in contemporary society. The process of transculturation which has involved tensions, dualities and conflicting messages has been resolved and a settled form of the railway ensemble has been temporarily created.

The dualities have been replaced with a hybrid railway ensemble that is the *railway-in-Brazil*: it is represented by a weekend-afternoon journey in an antique carriage pulled by a steam locomotive. The technology is neither old nor modern; it has become out-of-time. The words ‘toy’, ‘dinosaur’ and ‘ghost’ have been used by one commentator to describe this condition but these have negative connotations out of keeping with the hybridity observed elsewhere in this research.⁵⁹ Rather, the railway ensemble maintains its own natural dignity at those steam sites where volunteers and visitors crowd onto the trains on a Saturday and Sunday afternoon. Yet by being out-of-time does not mean to say that the railway ensemble has become completely a-historical since visitors, as noted in chapter 9, are likely to remark on the lack today of such public transport and its perceived absence of environmental damage compared to the motor car. Links between past and present are being made by many museum visitors. There is also no remaining conflict between rural and urban because the heritage railway ride is a relatively short one, and will always return the visitor to their waiting car or tour bus; indeed the journey is circular. There may be a twinge of *saudade* that this slow form of transport does not exist anymore, but that is overcome by the feelings of pride that this was a form of technology that helped make parts of Brazil what they are today. In the process these visitors have constructed and reawakened personal memories away from the official national histories constructed by the state.

This study concludes by observing that Brazilian railway culture has, at the beginning of the twenty-first century, arrived at a temporary hybrid state, as a result of some one hundred and sixty years of transculturation. This process has been carried out partly through repeated engagement with the subject matter of

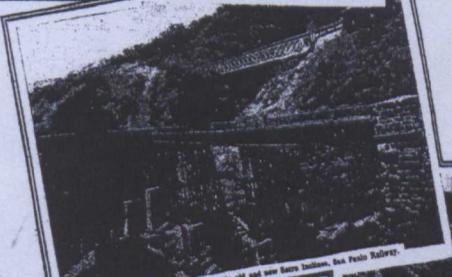
⁵⁹ Francisco Foot Hardman, *Trem Fantasma: A Ferrovia Madeira-Mamoré e a Modernidade na Selva* (2nd edn., São Paulo, SP, 2005), pp. 51-52.

the railway ensemble by writers, artists and performers. The result, at least in the museum environment, has been a railway ensemble that engages with a Brazilian public directly on its own terms. This present day engagement is the result of a railway ensemble which since the 1860s been subsumed into the everyday of Brazilian life by the passengers, drivers, engineers and administrators. Some of the old locomotives and rail artefacts have been preserved; a few are used as tourist spectacles; much has been scrapped. A lot has been forgotten, but much has been remembered.

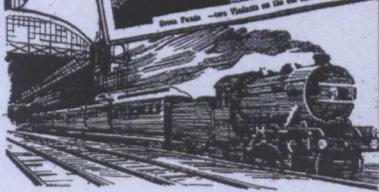
A theoretical framework



Tax Station, São Paulo, São Paulo Railway, showing Administrative Offices.



São Paulo — old and new lines, São Paulo Railway.



São Paulo Railway, showing connection with other lines.

THE
SAN PAULO (BRAZILIAN)
RAILWAY COMPANY LTD

THE STAIRWAY TO BRAZIL'S COFFEE COUNTRY.

THE San Paulo Railway was completed and opened for traffic in the year 1867, and for the past 60 years it has constituted the natural channel for the flow of imports and exports to and from the State of São Paulo and adjacent States. The system has been continuously developed and improved, and to-day it provides a service fully equal to the heavy demands of passenger and commercial traffic.

Starting from the splendid port of Santos, the railway, a double track line of 16, 100 gauge, follows the level country until it reaches the foot of the mountain range Serra do Mar. It climbs to a height of 2,500 feet by means of a series of inclined planes, each of a gradient of 1 in 12, and stretching altogether for a distance of 7 miles. Over this section the ordinary trains are propelled by means of steel wire ropes. From Alto da Serra the line continues to the city of São Paulo, where it connects with the Central Railway of Brazil for Rio de Janeiro, and with the Sorocabana Railway. At Jundiaí, the terminus of the line, connection is made with the Paulista Railway, which with its connecting railways serves the famous coffee zone.

As to the total traffic, the San Paulo Railway alone carries annually 7,000,000 passengers and 4,000,000 tons of goods. Eleven passenger trains daily run in each direction between Santos and the City of São Paulo. Trains to and from the interior are run at frequent intervals throughout the day.

III, GRESHAM HOUSE,
OLD BROAD ST., LONDON, E.C.



Map of the São Paulo Railway, showing connections with other lines.

Fig. 9 Advertisement, *The Times*, 21 June 1927

1. Introduction

It is 1927. An upper middle-class family, members of the *nouveau-riche* of São Paulo, settle into a Pullman carriage that is taking them on the all-day journey from Rio de Janeiro back home. The family group includes a German governess and an Afro-Brazilian maid. The precocious young daughter, Laurita, sits next to the carriage window, reading the names of the stations one syllable at a time as they go past. She calls out the names on the sides of the buildings while her family indulge her: ‘Cascadura’, ‘I know dear, be quiet’, ‘Bângu’, ‘How funny, dear’, ‘Barra Mansa, mummy!’ ‘What, dear?’

Until, on the last leg of the long hot journey, the steam train slows down at another station this time much closer to São Paulo, and Laurita announces in a loud voice to the whole carriage as she reads from the sign that comes into view, ‘...and, it’s La-va-tor-y! Mummy this station is Lavatory!’ The ladies die of embarrassment, the whole carriage – including a Norwegian traveller – bursts out laughing, and the father stands up as if to slap his daughter. He is suddenly at a loss for words and for a moment does not know how to deal with the situation. Finally he sits down and in an exasperated murmur tells Laurita, ‘It’s not Lavatory, my daughter... it’s Taubaté.’¹

This Brazilian railway joke, included by Mário de Andrade in his coming-of-age novel *Amar, Verbo Intransitivo*, contains reflections of some of the themes and concepts used in this present study. Whilst the consideration in chapter 1 of the visit of Britain’s Prince Philip served to highlight some of the struggles and interchanges of informal empire, this anecdote about Laurita captures some of the atmosphere of the Brazilian railway travel experience. The journey has been long and slow, some five hundred kilometres on the single track of the *E.F. Central* between Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo, and the joke encapsulates this physical distance through the naming of the stations passed through. Indeed the large scale involved serves to heighten the comic impact of

¹ Mário de Andrade, *Amar, Verbo Intransitivo* (17th edn., Belo Horizonte, MG, 2002 [1927]), pp. 123-130.

the child's reading of the wrong sign. The joke is also dependent on the technology, and the manner in which the carriage window frames the outside world which for Laurita becomes an opportunity to show off her new-found reading skills. Further, the humour is a cultural expression of the railway: it is a performance in writing by the author which reflects the manner in which the train and the carriage, and people's behaviour whilst travelling, have inspired him to narrate this incident. Without at this stage defining the terms involved it is significant that Mário de Andrade, a Modernist author, is writing about modern technology carrying a family that is attempting to retain its surface veneer of traditional values. And finally the railway is a system, each part of which is required to be present in order for the joke to work: the locomotive pulling the carriages along the tracks, the view from the window, the station names on the buildings, and the fellow passengers. In short the railway can be considered as a 'large technical cultural system', a heuristic which will be defined shortly.

The seats are covered in imitation leather, the windows have to be shut to stop the dust and hot cinders flying into the carriage, to which the child Laurita complains to her father that she does not know how to read through a window. The Norwegian is a disapproving lady who becomes hot and uncomfortable as the temperature inside the carriage gradually rises and the discomfort becomes unbearable. The airless carriage lurches along, passengers bump their heads, and Mário de Andrade describes it as a 'shameful Brazilian voyage' as if he is uncomfortable himself with the enactment of foreign railway technology in the domestic landscape.² Scandinavia may be disapproving, but throughout the entire novel it is the German governess who is the teacher both of scholastic subjects and of love. The European influence can be read as being both the railway technology and the mass immigration from Europe experienced by Brazil at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries.³ Indeed, the fact that Mário de Andrade casts the railway journey within the telling of a childish joke suggests that the idea of the railway in Brazil might not be being taken seriously.

² Ibid, p. 125.

³ Boris Fausto, *A Concise History of Brazil*, trans. Arthur Brakel (Cambridge, 1999), p. 173.

Overall this story reveals a number of dualities inherent in the railway in Brazil. There is a tension between the traditional values of the Brazilian family and the modernity of the transport technology which appears to confront the respect and manners expected of children by their parents. Secondly, the father is confused in the semi-public space of the railway carriage which contains up to fifty strangers, including foreigners, about whether to treat it as part of the private home or the public street – a dialectic identified by Roberto DaMatta as central to understanding Brazilian life.⁴ When his daughter embarrasses him he simply does not know how to react. Thirdly, the story is a foretaste of the conflict between urban and rural which, as this study will demonstrate, is an essential element of the portrayal of the railway in Brazilian cultural production. The journey starts and finishes in the two major cities of Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo; in between are the small towns, villages and halts whose names evoke at best an indifferent response from the child's parents. This serves to highlight the divide between the metropolis and the countryside. There is therefore a series of negotiations underway here about the meaning of the railway in Brazil. This will be identified later in this chapter as reflecting the process of the transculturation of the railway.

In order to develop a heuristic with which to think about the railway in Brazil this thesis takes as its starting point the manner in which Anglophone academics have been considering the railway, and how there has developed over the past decade an approach to writing about the culture of the railway.

2. Writing the railway: the European experience

This study concentrates on the reactions to the railway ensemble amongst Brazilian writers and artists producing works for domestic consumption. In contrast material written by English-speaking authors about the railway in Brazil forms a small body of work which falls into four genres: firstly the academic

⁴ Roberto DaMatta, *Carnivals, Rogues, and Heroes: An Interpretation of the Brazilian Dilemma*, trans. John Drury (Notre Dame, IN, 1991), pp. 63-73.

histories which have so far tended to be political and economic analyses, and secondly the technically descriptive works of enthusiasts who may have been inspired to write accounts of the building of Brazilian lines after travelling to the region. English-language academic writing on the railways will be discussed shortly, whilst the output of rail fans is briefly considered in the next chapter. The third type is the memoirs of railway workers who spent part of their lives in Brazil. Two have been produced about the *Madeira-Mamoré Railway* in the Amazon region and are mentioned in chapter 4.⁵ Another, by Terence Hanson, is an account of his time as a railway engineer working in north-east Brazil under British and then Brazilian bosses from 1927 to 1959.⁶ The fourth and final genre is travel writing, of which two examples will be briefly mentioned here. Firstly H. M. Tomlinson's account of his voyage across the Atlantic, and down the river Amazon, to visit the *Madeira-Mamoré Railway* to watch it being built.⁷ It shares with the previous works mentioned an approach to Brazil that highlights the tough terrain, the inhospitable jungle, and the dangerous exotic 'otherness' of building a railway in a country such as Brazil. In addition, Rudyard Kipling wrote a series of newspaper articles about his visit to Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo in 1927, one of which described his journey on the *São Paulo Railway*.⁸ During his trip to Brazil, Kipling, who was well known for his evocative poems of the Victorian British Empire, resorted to making comparisons with continents and places with which he was more familiar. Of the social life of the upper classes and English expatriates in the city of São Paulo he wrote,

The Clubs ...have nothing whatever to learn in luxury, detail, and equipment from any quarter. They mix memories of Bombay and Calcutta with their own special arrangements, and (unless one wholly mistakes the atmosphere) have the large, easy acceptances of Johannesburg in the old days.⁹

⁵ Neville Craig, *Recollections of an Ill-fated Expedition to the Headwaters of the Madeira River in Brazil* (Philadelphia, PA, 1907); Frank Kravigny, *The Jungle Route* (New York, NY, 1940).

⁶ Terence Hanson, *A Railway Engineer in Brazil* (London, 1989).

⁷ H. M. Tomlinson, *The Sea and the Jungle* (London, 1912).

⁸ Rudyard Kipling, *Brazilian Sketches* (Bromley, Kent, 1989 [1927]).

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 38.

For him the trip on the *São Paulo Railway* which took him down the Serra do Mar to the docks of Santos and his boat home was a journey through an exotic landscape filled with wondrous British technology operated by phlegmatic English and Scots.¹⁰ Brazilians did not feature prominently in his accounts of the region.

For much of the late twentieth century the writing of railway history in the English language had tended to concentrate on how the railways had been icons of modern development and progress. But in the last fifteen years or so a more complex picture has started to emerge, as noted in a recent series of exchanges in the *Journal of Transport History*, published in England since 1953. In 2002, for example, Margaret Walsh observed that ‘for too long the subject area has had a predominantly, if not exclusively, masculine appearance’.¹¹ She added that up until the second half of the twentieth century,

Traditionally transport history was narrative, focussing on firms, modes of transport, entrepreneurs or governments. It often consisted of micro-studies, was limited in its scope and subject matter and made little attempt to discuss transport as a whole.¹²

Gijs Mom, as the *Journal’s* deputy editor, said a year later that the challenge of contextualising the railways (and indeed the entire field of transport and mobility) in cultural terms had been proposed but not as yet fully taken up.¹³ More recently Colin Divall and George Revill attempted to pin down a working definition and develop a notion of the idea of ‘culture’ in railway and transport studies.¹⁴ They suggested whereas the railway has previously been studied as a product in terms of political and economic analysis it should also be considered in terms of a performance or process. This notion of thinking about technology and culture as mutually constitutive processes will be expanded later in this

¹⁰ Ibid, p. 54.

¹¹ Margaret Walsh, ‘Gendering Transport History: Retrospect and Prospect’, *Journal of Transport History*, Third Series, 23 (2002), p. 1.

¹² Ibid, p. 2.

¹³ Gijs Mom, ‘What Kind of Transport History Did We Get? Half a Century of JTH and the Future of the Field’, *Journal of Transport History*, Third Series, 24 (2003), p. 132.

¹⁴ Colin Divall and George Revill, ‘Cultures of Transport: Representation, Practice and Technology’, *Journal of Transport History*, Third Series, 26 (2005), 99-111.

chapter, and in chapter 9 will be seen to resonate with the view of the volunteer-run railway museums in Brazil which describe themselves as ‘dynamic museums’.

So, one opinion has been that some railway history, in the British tradition, has broadly tended to be a celebration of progress and company development that has largely ignored the cultural and social contexts in its enthusiasm to create an icon out of the locomotive. Ian Carter, contemplating the Anglophone world, observed that ‘railway history is a flourishing cottage industry’ and asserted that it was a sphere where ‘vigorous criticism remains trammelled in a narrow range’.¹⁵ Carter’s own study breaks out of this mode through a detailed analysis of a number of cultural representations of the railway: oil painting in England and France, novels from England, France and Russia, and crime writing in England. He builds a picture of the ‘relationships between railways and culture in Britain, the country which gave modern railway its birth’,¹⁶ identifying moments when the image of the railway as technology’s new frontier is contested and finds ‘the train’s status as modernity’s epitome lingers in some other places’ even in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries.¹⁷

Much of Ian Carter’s inspiration was drawn from a book first published in Germany in 1977 and translated into English in two years later. It is Wolfgang Schivelbusch’s *The Railway Journey*.¹⁸ Together, Ian Carter and Wolfgang Schivelbusch provide the intellectual starting point for this present study. Wolfgang Schivelbusch’s key term is the ‘machine ensemble’, the etymology of which idea he traces back to the 1820s and the early realization that the railway was ‘a machine consisting of the rails *and* of the vehicles running on them’.¹⁹ He discusses several aspects of this ensemble; the panoramic view from the carriage window, the contrasting layout of carriages between compartments and open-

¹⁵ Ian Carter, *Railways and Culture in Britain: The Epitome of Modernity* (Manchester, 2001), p. 4.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 292.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 302.

¹⁸ Wolfgang Schivelbusch, *The Railway Journey: The Industrialization of Time and Space in the 19th Century* (Berkeley, CA, 1986 [1979]).

¹⁹ Schivelbusch, *The Railway Journey*, p. 17. Emphasis in original.

plan seating, the changes to concepts of space and time created by this form of transport when it was first introduced, the way passengers dealt with a faster form of travel and its dangers, and how the railway station and its location in the city changed the urban landscape. His analysis is specifically about the early decades of railway travel in Europe and the USA, from the 1830s to the 1890s, and he uses sources such as fictional writing, technical and medical reports, travel writing, and art to support his argument. But his key aim is mentioned only in his brief bibliographical survey at the end of the book, where he suggests that his primary interest has been to investigate ‘the process of assimilation’ of the railway into society.²⁰ Early on in his study he makes the point that, ‘The traveler (sic) perceived the landscape as it was filtered through the machine ensemble.’²¹ More specifically he says later, ‘Travel by rail, being pulled by the power of steam, was experienced as participation in an industrial process.’²² What this all suggests is that the ensemble is in fact not only the rails and the vehicles but some larger system which includes railway stations, cities, and the operation of the railway. However, for Schivelbusch the ensemble is in reality primarily the journey itself, hence the title of his book. On this subject he examines in detail the technological aspects of nineteenth century railway travel: the shocks, the changes, and the very essence of modernity that high speed travel seemed to bring to passengers in Europe and North America at that time. His analysis concentrates on the cultural meanings attached to the technological and physical aspects of the railway: the industrial fatigue, the design of bogies and carriages, the iron and glass architecture, the velocity developed by such machines. What he does not do is to venture much further than the interior of the moving railway carriage.

Michael Freeman says Schivelbusch ‘...recovers the *experience* of the railway in a way which transcends all the statistical manipulations of the econometricians as well as even the most compelling of railway company

²⁰ Schivelbusch, *The Railway Journey*, p. 199.

²¹ *Ibid*, p. 24.

²² *Ibid*, p. 72.

institutional histories'.²³ Freeman complains that before 1999 few railway historians had engaged with Schivelbusch's work.²⁴ His observation appears to be justified, although twenty years after its first German publication Schivelbusch was cited as a major influence by Lynne Kirby in her 1997 examination of the railway and silent cinema in Europe and North America in the early years of the twentieth century.²⁵ She uses his term 'panoramic perception', which describes the effect of looking out of a moving railway carriage, and calls Schivelbusch a cultural historian.²⁶ She also refers to his work when considering the psychological effects of travel, shock, railway stations, and the changing of space and time as space is opened up and time annihilated by the building of the railway and its operation. She summarises the other themes she is able to investigate in this manner as 'tourism, voyeurism, seduction, [and] romance of the rails...'; all of which have endured into the era of sound in movies.²⁷

Since then, Schivelbusch's work has gained a wider currency. Peter Bishop, who studies the way in which a north-south railway line across Australia 'has been imagined in terms of its place-related meanings', calls *The Railway Journey*, a 'classic study'.²⁸ Worthy of note is that whilst Schivelbusch contemplates the nineteenth century railway, Bishop is analyzing the completion of a transcontinental route in the late twentieth century. This suggests that the idea of the railway as a machine ensemble has a usefulness that is not merely limited to the European Victorian era. Bishop develops Schivelbusch's approach through the use of a metaphor for the Alice Springs to Darwin rail project in Northern Australia. He identifies it as a 'corridor' which he then discusses from three vantage points: from outside the train – in other words the national and nationalistic standpoint and the landscape descriptions; from inside the train –

²³ Michael Freeman, 'The Railway as Cultural Metaphor: "What Kind of Railway History?" Revisited', *Journal of Transport History*, Third Series, 20 (1999), pp. 164-165. Emphasis in original.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 164.

²⁵ Lynne Kirby, *Parallel Tracks: The Railroad and Silent Cinema* (Exeter, Devon, 1997), p. 12.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 243.

²⁸ Peter Bishop, 'Gathering the Land: The Alice Springs to Darwin Rail Corridor', *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 20 (2002), p. 297.

using travellers' tales; and finally from the trackside – looking at the land issues from alongside the line and the people who live next to the corridor. Bishop thus widens the scope of Schivelbusch, bringing the *Railway Journey* outside the carriage. This is also suggested by Colin Divall and Andrew Scott who note that Schivelbusch's approach to thinking about the railway could be a useful one for museum and exhibition designers.²⁹ They identify Schivelbusch as one analyst who provides 'a multiplicity of perspectives on the meaning of transport and travel' who can potentially influence curators in the way they develop displays of the railway, subject – they add – to their institutions providing sufficient resources.³⁰ Nicholas Daly is another academic researcher, this time in the field of literary studies and in particular Victorian melodramas, who acknowledges the influence of this German writer:

Schivelbusch's work convinced me that the way in which the middle class as much as the working class went through a species of "retraining" in order to survive in an industrialized society was a fruitful field of enquiry.³¹

Daly examines English drama and novels of the 1860s which had sensational story lines, often involving mystery and intrigue such as Wilkie Collins's *The Woman in White*, that included the railway as part of the narrative but were not necessarily 'about the railway in any simple sense'.³²

So for Schivelbusch the railway was the tracks, locomotives, the station buildings, the bridges and cuttings, the timetables, the companies, and the passengers in the carriage. For Peter Bishop it is also the landowners along the trackside, the landless indigenous, government agencies, and the passengers. Ian Carter adds the travel, the writing, and the painting, whilst Divall and Scott include the possibility of museum displays. This present study further extends the machine ensemble to include the singing, the filming, and the museumification of the railway – in Brazil. This requires a heuristic embracing

²⁹ Colin Divall and Andrew Scott, *Making Histories in Transport Museums* (London, 2001).

³⁰ *Ibid*, p. 92.

³¹ Nicholas Daly, *Literature, Technology, and Modernity, 1860-2000* (Cambridge, 2004), p. 4.

³² *Ibid*, p. 46.

the concept of the railway as an ensemble that includes both the physical presence and the idea of the railway as expressed through the performance of various cultural forms. In its physical form it is a system that comprises track, carriages, bridges, line-side equipment, stations and good yards to name but a few items. In its cultural form (and a discussion of 'culture' follows shortly), part of the ensemble includes the television shows, the movies, the novels, the songs and the poetry which express ideas and feelings about the physical forms of the railway. The next section of this chapter explains the manner in which 'ensemble' can be regarded as synonymous and interchangeable with the word 'system'.

3. The Large Technical Cultural System

The railway is a complex technology connected to its component parts and wider society by webs of significance, in a similar way to Clifford Geertz's view that '...man is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun.'³³ Geertz continues by asserting, 'I take culture to be those webs, and the analysis of it to be therefore not an experimental science in search of a law but an interpretive one in search of meaning.'³⁴ In a similar way, this study does not propose 'a law', as Geertz describes, but rather a heuristic with which to examine and understand the meanings of the railway in Brazil. The railway in Brazil can be regarded as a large cultural-physical item which spreads across the geography of Brazil: it is both technical in nature, and also creates a web, or system, of significances and meanings that range from the way passengers use the trains to the manner in which artists write, sing, paint and act in response to this system.

Although Schivelbusch and subsequent writers acknowledge this, they do not systematically consider the challenges posed by the complexity of the 'machine ensemble'. By contrast, Thomas Hughes was concerned to write an analysis of the network of companies which generated and supplied electric

³³ Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (2nd edn., New York, NY, 2000), p.5.

³⁴ Ibid.

power to consumers in both Europe and North America.³⁵ His aim was to find a way of thinking about complex organisational structures in a flexible way and ‘...not simply [write] a history of the external factors that shape technology’.³⁶ Electricity involves multiple actions and actors, from finding raw materials and transporting them to a power station for the generation of supplies, to the technology which organises the regulation and distribution of the electricity from the power station to the final consumer. It can involve the study of business history, management theory, politics, geography, physics, engineering, and the sociology of consumer societies. It also involves analysing the manner in which technological advances are made. Those historians of technology who have followed Hughes’s lead are ‘...refusing to take technology as a given, they insist on viewing it as a malleable product of human history, no more and no less given than culture or politics’.³⁷ Hughes’s technique of analysis is to split the electricity industry into a series of units, or areas, of investigation which can then be recombined in order to build up an analysis of the system as a whole. In the process he develops the notion of what he calls a Large Technical System (LTS). This can be developed into a theoretical framework which enables the complex ‘railway ensemble’ to be studied as a techno-cultural phenomenon.

Hughes’s idea is that a LTS should be thought of as having four distinct phases: invention, technology transfer, growth, and momentum.³⁸ In his classic study, *Networks of Power*, Hughes takes the reader through each of these four stages from the initial work of the Edison Company in Chicago and New York, the transfer of its technologies to Berlin and London, its development and the eventual momentum of the technological system.³⁹ Along the way Hughes includes chapters featuring case studies of specific areas, either geographic or technical, of his system. It is the final phase of ‘momentum’ that, for Hughes,

³⁵ Thomas Hughes, *Networks of Power: Electrification in Western Society, 1880-1930* (Baltimore, MD, 1983).

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

³⁷ Eric Schatzberg, ‘Culture and Technology in the City: Opposition to Mechanized Street Transportation in Late Nineteenth-Century America’, in Michael Thad Allen and Gabrielle Hecht (eds.), *Technologies of Power: Essays in Honour of Thomas Parke Hughes and Agatha Chipley Hughes* (Cambridge, MA, 2001), p. 58.

³⁸ Hughes, *Networks of Power*, pp. 14-15.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

expresses the 'culture' of these large systems; the shared internal values and attitudes of the organisation which, combined with external pressures of, for example, government agencies and educational institutions, stabilize a certain configuration of the network.⁴⁰ It is these expectations of the managers and workers taken together with political interaction that maintain the active system. These four stages were later refined by, for example, Iskender Gökalp who identified a period of consolidation and decline as another option for the fourth phase.⁴¹ In doing so, Gökalp recognised that the use of the LTS model could be problematic: it introduces so many variables at different levels of analysis, from politics and economics to individual psychology, that it is difficult to establish a one-size-fits-all approach to such systems analysis. Even so, Thomas Hughes maintains that the LTS remains a flexible concept that serves to aid in thinking about a complex organisation.⁴² It is particularly useful precisely because it allows analysis at multiple levels of detail: from the grand history to micro-analysis. It also includes a dynamic that acknowledges the process of change within the system, which is not always necessarily the same as a time-related linear progression.

Hughes's approach was, in effect, to take the ideas of systems analysis prevalent in sciences such as biology and computer programming and to apply them to the development of a technological industry. He said of his work, 'this loosely structured model has been used to bring order and comprehensibility to the myriad events in the history of electric power systems'.⁴³ Hughes's ideas and the LTS model have been used primarily in the fields of science and technology studies and the history of technology.⁴⁴ What is now proposed is to develop this heuristic to emphasise firmly the importance of 'culture', not just in the business and political senses that Hughes implied. To this end the term 'Large Technical

⁴⁰ Ibid, p. 15.

⁴¹ Iskender Gökalp, 'On the Analysis of Large Technical Systems', *Science, Technology, & Human Values*, 17 (1992) 57-78.

⁴² Hughes, *Networks of Power*, p. 7.

⁴³ Ibid, p. 17.

⁴⁴ Gabrielle Hecht and Michael Thad Allen, 'Introduction: Authority, Political Machines, and Technology's History' in Michael Thad Allen and Gabrielle Hecht (eds.), *Technologies of Power: Essays in Honour of Thomas Parke Hughes and Agatha Chipley Hughes* (Cambridge, MA, 2001), pp. 3-4.

Cultural System' (LTCS) is introduced here as a refinement of Hughes's original concept.

'Large' because the subject of inquiry, the railway, has occupied a substantial space in geographical terms and across time. The railways in Brazil mapped themselves along the existing routes of export, by and large connecting the immediate interior with the nearest ocean port on the Atlantic coast. However the word 'large' is an imprecise term that supposes comparison with some other quantifiable object or idea. Mention will be made during the course of this study of railways in Rio Grande do Sul, Minas Gerais, Espírito Santo, Rondônia, Alagoas, Bahia and Sergipe. However for the main part, and in order to keep this study to manageable proportions, it will concentrate on the state of São Paulo with regular excursions into Rio de Janeiro state. The time period will be broadly from the early 1850s until the present day. Ronald Schneider says 'Brazil is so diverse that generalizations about it run the risk of being either bland platitudes of the lowest-common-denominator variety or averages that mask great variations.'⁴⁵ Meanwhile, Gilberto Freyre warns that 'São Paulo is only São Paulo and not all of Brazil.'⁴⁶ Even so, in São Paulo state the railway was most actively developed as a transport system and became at times central to the politics, commerce, and artistic production of daily society; reflected perhaps in the popular saying that São Paulo has long been the economic 'locomotive of Brazil'.⁴⁷ This present study sets out to be wide ranging but does not claim to be exhaustive. Neither does it attempt to be comparative with other nations and cultures; that is the subject of future research. Never the less it is perhaps worth observing that the present geographical area of the state of São Paulo (248,209.4 km²), is a similar size to the total land area of the United Kingdom.⁴⁸ In 1914, at

⁴⁵ Ronald M. Schneider, *Brazil: Culture and Politics in a New Industrial Powerhouse* (Boulder, CO, 1996), p. 1.

⁴⁶ Gilberto Freyre, *New World in the Tropics: The Culture of Modern Brazil* (New York, NY, 1971 [1959]), p. 265

⁴⁷ Mário de Andrade, *Macunaíma*, trans E. A. Goodland (London, 1984 [1928]), pp. 76-77; René Fernandes Schoppa, *150 Anos do Trem no Brasil* (Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 2004), p. 92.

⁴⁸ Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística (IBGE), *Brasil em números – Brazil in Numbers*, Vol. 14 (Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 2006), p. 49. The UK has a land area of 242,514 km² see: Office for National Statistics, *Annual Abstract of Statistics*, No. 140 (London, 2004), p. 5, table 1.1.

the end of the first rail boom in Brazil, São Paulo state had 26,062 kilometres of track.⁴⁹ In 1910 Britain had 32,164 kilometres.⁵⁰

‘Technical’ can take various meanings according to the context in which it is used. Historians of technology have noted three possible uses for the word, firstly it can signify artefacts such as the railway, its buildings and its rolling stock or secondly it can refer to the daily activity of running such a system. Thirdly it can mean the knowledge involved in the planning, building or development of a railway line or network.⁵¹ This study includes all three of these meanings in order to examine the railway as a ‘technical’ system that is both a product and a process. This notion of highlighting the verb and the noun forms, the process and the state, is also stressed by Hans Jonas who identifies ‘modern technology [as] an enterprise and a process, whereas earlier technology was a possession and a state’.⁵² Three examples demonstrate how railway technology can be so regarded. Firstly, it is the heritage ride as a feeling of movement. Modern-day Brazilian museum visitors, for example, prefer not to linger near the steaming technological artefact of the locomotive to talk with the driver, but instead to enjoy the communal experience of travelling, talking and laughing together in a restored carriage. This study comments on the manner, by way of a second example, in which cinema has depicted the daily operation of suburban railway networks and the experience of feeling lost and alone in the midst of a turbulent crowd. Thirdly, consideration is given to those Brazilian engineers who once were involved in building and developing railway lines and in retirement chose to write their memoirs in an effort to show off their technical knowledge and insert themselves into history. Finally it is worth noting more generally that technology, in the form of machinery, its operation and the application of knowledge, can change the experience of travel. Schivelbusch notes ‘the railway

⁴⁹ Figure from IBGE – DNEF (Departamento Nacional de Estradas de Ferro) quoted in Francisco Ferreira Neto, *150 Anos de Transportes no Brasil* (Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 1974), p. 131.

⁵⁰ Jack Simmons, *The Victorian Railway* (London, 1991), p. 317.

⁵¹ Wiebe E. Bijker, Thomas P. Hughes & Trevor J. Pinch, ‘Introduction’, in Wiebe E. Bijker, Thomas P. Hughes & Trevor J. Pinch, (eds.), *The Social Construction of Technological Systems: New Directions in the Sociology and History of Technology* (Cambridge, MA, 1989), pp. 3-4.

⁵² Hans Jonas, ‘Towards a Philosophy of Technology’, in Robert C. Scharff and Val Dusek (eds.), *Philosophy of Technology: The Technological Condition: An Anthology* (Oxford, 2003), pp. 191-192.

completes the detachment from nature...⁵³ In this vein the alternatives in Brazil before the train's arrival were walking or horseback; that was until the widespread development in the 1950s of paved roads, air-conditioned long-distance buses, the automobile, and more recently the airlines too.

Eric Schatzberg, a historian of technology influenced by Thomas Hughes, states that, 'To make technology an integral part of mainstream history, historians must also acknowledge technology's power to transform social relationships and culture.'⁵⁴ 'Culture' remains a notoriously difficult concept to pin down. The discipline of 'railway studies' that has emerged in Europe and elsewhere in the past twenty years has had a long-standing problematic relationship with cultural studies, primarily because no agreement has been reached on what 'culture' means in the transport context.⁵⁵ For his part, Thomas Hughes appears to take it to be largely the values espoused by organisational structures within a given system, a notion one might term 'business culture'.⁵⁶ Raymond Williams observed the complexity of meaning in the English form of the word, and noted that 'culture in all its early uses was a noun of process: the tending of something' long before it came to describe an abstract product – a change in meaning that emerged in Britain around the time of the Industrial Revolution.⁵⁷ This point is taken up by Colin Divall and George Revill who argue that both 'culture' and 'transport' should be considered in their dual nounal and verbal meanings – in other words that the active physical process of creating culture should be reasserted.⁵⁸ That means firstly identifying culture (à la Williams) in its three modern forms in relation to 'transport' and 'mobility': as a work of artistic practice, as the intellectual development of mankind and as a way of life for a group of people, and then secondly identifying 'culture' here as

⁵³ Schivelbusch, *The Railway Journey*, p. 20.

⁵⁴ Eric Schatzberg, 'Culture and Technology in the City', pp. 58-59.

⁵⁵ See, for example, Freeman, 'The Railway as Cultural Metaphor'; Mom, 'What Kind of Transport History Did We Get?'; Mike Featherstone, 'Automobilities: An Introduction', *Theory, Culture & Society*, 21 (2004), 1-24; Divall and Revill, 'Cultures of Transport', pp. 102-103; and the ensuing exchanges in *Journal of Transport History*, Third Series, 27, (2006), 138-149.

⁵⁶ Hughes, *Networks of Power*, pp. 363-403.

⁵⁷ Raymond Williams, *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society* (2nd. edn., London, 1983), p. 87.

⁵⁸ Divall and Revill, 'Cultures of Transport', p. 101.

a process: how it operates and how it works to connect the fibres and activities of a society together both literally and figuratively.

This study draws on such ideas to examine how the railway has been represented in the cultural production of autobiographies, histories and fictions. It will also examine the contemporary performance of the railway's past in the creation of present-day museums and live steam experiences. Culture as a process is taken to be the manner in which federal railway museums, as analysed in chapter 8, failed to engage with a widespread audience and the way in which a volunteer network of preservationists, as outlined in chapter 9, was created. At the same time culture is regarded as a product in the form of films, television series, books, oil paintings and music, whilst recognising that the act of travelling – itself a cultural, or meaningful, experience – is often featured within the narratives of these higher-order cultural products or representations.

'System' is taken to denote that the railway is a complex machine ensemble, affected by and affecting many aspects of society. This study uses the words 'system' and 'ensemble' interchangeably, acknowledging that both Thomas Hughes and Wolfgang Schivelbusch were to greater or lesser extents attempting to analyse the electricity industry and the railway respectively as multi-faceted and interlinked networks. Hughes's strength is that he acknowledges the complexity of the system he is examining, whilst Schivelbusch highlights the cultural aspects of his ensemble yet fails to explicitly recognize that the railway is a similarly complicated organism. The LTCS thus moves beyond both by marrying the complexity acknowledged in the systems analysis of Thomas Hughes with the cultural analysis of Wolfgang Schivelbusch. Hughes says all systems '...share the characteristic of interconnectedness – i.e. a change in one component impacts on the other components of the system'.⁵⁹ Ian Carter, in his study of railway culture in Britain, takes as his starting point the view that the railway is a system, and that the railway itself can act as an inspiration to

⁵⁹ Hughes, *Networks of Power*, p. 6.

cultural production such as the representations of literature and art.⁶⁰ This is where the ‘material’ and the ‘cultural’ aspects of the railway ensemble join together. The interconnectedness of technology and humans, particularly in the museum environment, has been raised by recent observers. Leonardo Mello e Silva, a sociologist from the Universidade de São Paulo, recognises that industrial heritage is bound up in and by a network of actors that are both animate and inanimate:

If we think about a history of technology that not only incorporates the machine or the equipment but also its distance from or proximity to the human element of the operation then industrial heritage has much to contribute.⁶¹

Here he is arguing that without an explanation of the social context of machinery a museum of industrial artefacts has no means of connecting with its audience and contributing to understanding and learning. Similarly, Tony Bennett points out that museums can be conceived as networks where objects and people interact,⁶²

...to fabricate new entities as a result of the distinctive procedures (of abstraction, purification, transcription, and mediation) through which they work on and with the gatherings of heterogeneous objects that they assemble.⁶³

Thus the railway can be regarded as a complex system where humans and hardware combine in a network. The railway in Brazil was a construct that included, amongst other things, foreign and domestic actors together with items of physical technology and the landscape. As an ensemble, or a system, it variously encompassed groups such as passengers, shareholders (at home and abroad), state and federal government bodies, farmers who used its services to get products to port for export, and museum visitors. It included in equal

⁶⁰ Carter, *Railways and Culture in Britain*, pp. 1-3.

⁶¹ Leonardo Mello e Silva, ‘Patrimônio Industrial: Passado e Presente’, *Patrimônio – Revista Eletrônica do IPHAN*, No. 4 (Mar-Abril 2006), ‘<http://www.revista.iphan.gov.br/materia.php?id=164>’ (23 June 2008).

⁶² Tony Bennett, ‘Civic Laboratories: Museums, Cultural Objecthood and the Governance of the Social’, *Cultural Studies*, 19 (2005), 521-547.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 523.

measure the technology, hardware, and artefacts such as rail tickets, carriages, stations, platforms, tracks, uniforms, wagons, books, reports and buildings which refused to merge into the background.⁶⁴ The use of the past tense in the foregoing suggests the system was frozen in time; this is not the case. Instead this study examines the cultural production borne by the railway since its inception in the 1850s until the present day; its poetry, music, fiction, autobiography, histories and museums. Indeed, what a heuristic such as the LTCS allows for, indeed demands, is changes to the railway through time and in time. The relationships here are complex, fluid and messy. So, a train driver becomes a passenger when he sits in the carriage and presents his pass, and becomes a museum visitor when he spends his Sunday afternoon looking at old locomotives. Likewise, the steam locomotive becomes an item of heritage once it has passed its working lifespan.

This thesis, in recognising the complexity of the railway ensemble in Brazil, identifies and examines in turn a number of the elements in the system in chapters 3 to 7. Such a method of isolating each factor and analysing it is one that is carried out in Large Technical Systems analysis in such fields as biology and biochemistry.⁶⁵ Chapters 8 and 9 seek to put the ‘system’ back together again with a discussion of the representation of the railway’s past in the present-day at museums and heritage steam sites in Brazil.

4. Transculturation and hybridity

Two terms are used during the course of the following chapters that require defining. Transculturation and hybridity are ideas that can and have been used in varying ways according to the background and methods of the particular researcher, particularly in the area of Latin American studies,⁶⁶ so it will be useful here to outline the way this study uses these two words. Transculturation

⁶⁴ Anni Dugdale, ‘Materiality: juggling sameness and difference’, in John Law and John Hassard, (eds.), *Actor Network Theory and After* (Oxford, 1999), p. 118.

⁶⁵ Gökalp, ‘On the Analysis of Large Technical Systems’, pp. 69-71.

⁶⁶ Fernando Ortiz, *Cuban Counterpoint: Tobacco and Sugar*, trans. Harriet de Onís (Durham, NC, 1995 [1940]); Néstor Canclini, *Hybrid Cultures: Strategies for Entering and Leaving Modernity* (Minneapolis, MN, 2005 [1995]).

is taken to be a process whereby meanings from different societies are presented together, negotiated and actively discussed. Hybridity is the state, or position, where the negotiation of meaning through transculturation has been concluded to create a single form that has no inherent dualities in its meaning. Hybridity is not necessarily a permanent state rather it is, for that moment, the position where the process has come to a halt and differences have been negotiated to a temporary agreement.

The idea of building railways in Brazil is recorded in an imperial decree of 1835, with the first line coming into operation in 1854.⁶⁷ Concessions were issued and foreign engineering companies (often British but also French and Belgian until the start of the twentieth century and thereafter mostly North American) were contracted to build the lines.⁶⁸ Ownership of the railway companies took several forms, from private domestic to state, federal or foreign shareholders. One of the most profitable foreign-owned routes, which took advantage of its monopoly over the transportation of exports to the port of Santos was the *São Paulo Railway* which remained under British control from the commencement of service in 1867 until 1946 when it was taken over by the federal government of Brazil.⁶⁹ Here then was a foreign technology that was ripe for undergoing a negotiation of meaning once in operation on Brazilian soil. It is therefore appropriate to discuss some of the many ways the process has been understood in the context of Latin America.

The idea of Brazilian culture having the ability to change and adapt domestic as well as outside and foreign influences was put forward by Oswald de Andrade as Brazil's 'flexible ability to assimilate the alien', a form of cultural

⁶⁷ Schoppa, *150 Anos do Trem no Brasil*, pp. 20-22.

⁶⁸ Irving Stone, 'British Direct and Portfolio Investment in Latin America Before 1914', *The Journal of Economic History*, 37 (1977), 690-722; Richard Downes, 'Autos over Rails: How US Business Supplanted the British in Brazil, 1910-28', *Journal of Latin American Studies*, 24 (1992), 551-583; Charles A. Gauld, *The Last Titan: Percival Farquhar 1864-1953, American Entrepreneur in Latin America* (Stanford, CA, 1972), pp. 228-242.

⁶⁹ Moysés Lavander Jr and Paulo Augusto Mendes, *SPR, Memórias de uma Inglesa* (São Paulo, SP, 2005), p. 24 and pp. 179-181.

cannibalism named by him as ‘Antropofagia’ in 1928.⁷⁰ Fernando Ortiz, in 1940, writing about tobacco and sugar in Cuba first suggested the term ‘transculturation’ in the Latin American and Caribbean context as a way of describing and analysing the complexity of the colonial and indigenous interconnections in the rise of the cultivation and trade in these two commodities.⁷¹ It is thus a way of thinking about cultural influences, both from within and from abroad, that flow in both directions. Ortiz’s argument is that ‘acculturation’, a term still widely used, carries with it only a sense of a one-way transfer of ideas and practices whereas transculturation includes a sense of negotiation by both sides and ‘the process of transition from one culture to another’.⁷² He goes on to urge that the idea of transculturation be used as a means of analysing other countries in the Americas, not just Cuba.⁷³ Alberto Moreiras regards the concept as one that was used to support the idea of populist and nationalistic movements, prevalent at that time, because he identifies in Ortiz’s work an ‘ideology of social integration’ in the way that outside and foreign forces had become assimilated into a description of a nation’s make-up.⁷⁴ Mark Millington sounds a note of caution about the use of Ortiz’s ‘transculturation’, however he argues that it is for the study of Latin America perhaps ‘the least bad option’ and a way of analysing and thinking about the ‘local ... tactical adaptation to external forms’.⁷⁵ This study regards this in a positive manner, as does Millington in his conclusion, since the Brazilian transculturation of the railway ensemble has been just such a specific local reaction which has involved discussion, debate, adaptation, and maybe in a few instances rejection of aspects of the system by the people most directly affected by it.⁷⁶

⁷⁰ Piers Armstrong, *Third World Literary Fortunes: Brazilian Culture and its International Reception* (Cranbury, NJ, 1999), pp. 27-28.

⁷¹ Ortiz, *Cuban Counterpoint*, pp. 97-98.

⁷² *Ibid*, p. 102.

⁷³ *Ibid*, p. 103.

⁷⁴ Alberto Moreiras, *The Exhaustion of Difference: The Politics of Latin American Cultural Studies* (Durham, NC, 2001), p. 264.

⁷⁵ Mark Millington, ‘Transculturation: Contrapuntal Notes to Critical Orthodoxy’, *Bulletin of Latin American Research*, 26 (2007), p. 260 and p. 265.

⁷⁶ *Ibid*, pp. 267-268.

Elsewhere, Mary Louise Pratt introduces the term ‘transculturation’ in its ethnographic sense, which she says is used ‘...to describe how subordinated or marginal groups select and invent from materials transmitted to them by a dominant or metropolitan culture.’⁷⁷ Pratt uses the idea of transculturation primarily to explore not the reception and adaptation of foreign ideas on the periphery but the manner in which the subjugated are portrayed to audiences in the metropole through written accounts by European travellers. William Rowe and Vivian Schelling also acknowledge the anthropological roots of ‘transculturation’ and say it is ‘...concerned with the mutual transformation of cultures, in particular of the European by the native’.⁷⁸ For Peter Beardsell this is ‘...a more ‘voluntary’ process, in which hierarchy should play no part’.⁷⁹

Roberto Schwarz employs the term ‘misplaced ideas’, to include practices and ideas that may have originated in Europe, and notes that by Brazil ‘...adopting them [it] did not imply that we reproduced the social system of their countries of origin’.⁸⁰ This present study regards the concept of ideas being ‘misplaced’ as erroneous, suggesting that there is perhaps a ‘right’ and a ‘wrong’ way for societies to carry out their affairs. Instead this study prefers to use the idea of transculturation to examine the way in which the railway ensemble, as a large technical cultural system, has been varied, altered, negotiated and represented for a domestic audience in Brazil. Transculturation is understood here to be a process by which, through debate (although not necessarily formally debated) and contrasting opinions, a new meaning is created. In the course of analysing this process a series of dualities and tensions are observed in the way the railway is portrayed in the various media discussed in the chapters that follow. The debates are identified as being carried out in the production of formal representations of the railway, either in paint, in works of literature, or in poetry and song. It has been a continuous transculturation from the very first

⁷⁷ Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (London, 1992), p. 6.

⁷⁸ William Rowe and Vivian Schelling, *Memory and Modernity: Popular Culture in Latin America* (London, 1991), p. 18.

⁷⁹ Peter Beardsell, *Europe and Latin America: Returning the Gaze* (Manchester, 2000), p. 173.

⁸⁰ Roberto Schwarz, *Misplaced Ideas: Essays on Brazilian Culture*, ed. John Gledson (London, 1992), p. 34.

railways until the present day and can still be observed particularly in television and cinema productions.

From a consideration of ‘transculturation’ I now turn to the idea of hybridity. Néstor Canclini, an Argentinian based in Mexico, had such problems with his use of the word ‘hybrid’ in his study of Latin America’s struggle between enduring tradition and late-arriving modernity that he felt the need to write a new introduction to his book *Hybrid Cultures*.⁸¹ In his 2005 introduction he admitted that he had not clearly defined the word itself ten years previously when the first English edition of his book was published. He therefore takes the reader through the biological sense (of cross-breeding), the social (where new ideas are created through tourism and migration) to the linguistic and cultural senses where a mixing of forms of expression occurs through art, television, cinema and radio.⁸² An example he gives of this latter sense of hybrid is the blending of pre-Columbian art with that from Spanish colonizers.⁸³ He also makes the important point that he is concerned ‘...that the object of study is not hybridity but the process of hybridization’.⁸⁴ Canclini is concerned to identify forms of hybridity in Latin America where tradition meets modernity, and where fragments of each mix together for example where ‘Renaissance iconography and avant-garde experimentation nourish the advertising for technological advances’.⁸⁵ Canclini accepts that hybridity is not necessarily a stable state, and the process of hybridization involves a negotiation which makes it a ‘...translation term along with syncretism, fusion, and other words employed to designate particular kinds of mixing’.⁸⁶ Alberto Moreiras takes a more global view and sees cultural hybridity as a result of subaltern relationships, in fact he regards it as a flexible identity that never reaches closure.⁸⁷ In his opinion this struggle of negotiation between societies means that, ‘Hybridity has today developed into a code word associated to a large extent with hegemonic

⁸¹ Canclini, *Hybrid Cultures*, pp. xxiv-xxv.

⁸² *Ibid*, p. xxvii.

⁸³ *Ibid*, p. xxvii.

⁸⁴ *Ibid*, p. xxvii.

⁸⁵ *Ibid*, p. xl.

⁸⁶ Canclini, *Hybrid Cultures*, p. xliii.

⁸⁷ Moreiras, *The Exhaustion of Difference*, p. 275 and pp. 293-296.

politics'.⁸⁸ In order to counter what he regards as this inherent and unequal power relationship Moreiras argues against a straight forward notion of global versus local or centre versus periphery and instead advocates the idea of a form of two-way negotiation which he terms a 'double articulation'.⁸⁹

The foregoing demonstrates that there is no single concept of 'hybridity' when it comes to thinking about Latin America in general and Brazil in particular. It is a debate that is continuing, and as Matthias Röhrig Assunção notes

Since hybridity (both biological miscegenation and cultural hybridism) is at the very core of the way Brazil is constructed as a nation, it is only understandable that Brazilians of all backgrounds want to revisit this issue.⁹⁰

In this present study a distinction is made between the *process* of negotiating a meaning and the *stable* meaning established at a particular point in time (although I do not go as far as to suggest that stability implies finality). In order to distinguish between the process and the product the term 'transculturation' is used to denote the *process* of translation, negotiation and blending that Canclini calls the process of hybridization. It is also argued that 'trans-' implies a sense of movement, further supporting the definition used here. The negotiations are, as Moreiras suggests, beset with the relative power positions of the centre and the periphery yet there is evidence of the two-way process he identifies. An example of this would be the portrayal of an English railway manager by Jorge Amado in his novel, *Gabriela, Clove and Cinnamon*: a man who is regarded as an 'other' in the way after fifteen years of living in Brazil he has failed to become more than 'an elderly Englishman, thin and silent', yet at the same time is admired for his ability to drink local rum and sire a son by his Brazilian mistress.⁹¹ This duality between English/Brazilian is an example of what this study terms

⁸⁸ Ibid, p. 280.

⁸⁹ Ibid, p. 281.

⁹⁰ Matthias Röhrig Assunção, 'Brazilian Popular Culture or the Curse and Blessings of Cultural Hybridism' *Bulletin of Latin American Research*, 24 (2005), p. 160.

⁹¹ Jorge Amado, *Gabriela, Clove and Cinnamon*, trans. James. L. Taylor & William Grossman (New York, NY, 1988 [*Gabriela, Cravo e Canela*, São Paulo, SP, 1958]), pp. 259-260.

transculturation, the process of negotiating a meaning for the railway ensemble. The process ‘transculturation’ is identified as being present in the manner in which the railway is portrayed in art, television, film, fiction, poetry and music as analysed in chapters 3 to 7.

Once this fluid state reaches a stable form, where a meaning for the railway is for a time established and agreed upon, it has become what this study terms a ‘hybrid’ state. This is the point where the dualities and conflicts between the meanings of the railway ensemble have been worked through to produce a single identifiable meaning. Hence this study avoids talking about a *process* of hybridization since it regards hybridity as a state not a process. That process is denoted as transculturation. In this respect ‘hybrid’ is taken to have a meaning much closer to its original biological sense, where it is the product or off-spring, of a reproduction process (transculturation), that contains elements and traces of both parents. A settled, hybrid, meaning for the railway is identified in the museums of working steam heritage organised and operated by volunteer enthusiasts that have emerged in Brazil during the last three decades of the twentieth century, and analysed in chapters 8 and 9.

Alberto Moreiras notes that ‘Latin Americanism shares with orientalism the fact that it too must be understood as an apparatus for mediation for transcultural social relations.’⁹² In seeking a mediated analysis of Brazil this study attempts to avoid notions of ‘backwardness’ and ‘originality’. These are concepts that Silviano Santiago sees as loaded terms which imply a centre and periphery. Instead Santiago prefers to think in terms of Latin America ‘...actively and destructively diverting the European norm and resignifying preestablished and immutable elements that were exported to the New World by the Europeans’.⁹³

⁹² Moreiras, *The Exhaustion of Difference*, p. 129.

⁹³ Silviano Santiago, *The Space In-Between: Essays on Latin American Culture*, ed. Ana Lúcia Gazzola (Durham, NC, 2001), p. 30.

5. Post-colonialism, informal empire or railway imperialism?

At the heart of the process of transculturation and the creation of any hybrid meaning is the acknowledgement that two ideas from different backgrounds have come together. In this case it is the railway, as a European technology, which has been built and operated in Brazil since the 1850s. It is this situation which requires consideration of the terms colonial, empire, and their derivatives ‘post-colonial’ and ‘informal empire’. In this study the phrase ‘informal empire’ is used, a term that is still being debated more than fifty years since it was first coined.⁹⁴ John Gallagher and Ronald Robinson used the phrase to describe Britain’s overseas activities during the long nineteenth century in regions of the world where it had not established direct colonies, and which were not ‘coloured red on the map’.⁹⁵ The analogy they used was an iceberg, where Britain’s informal empire was that part below the waterline.⁹⁶ Matthew Brown reflects that there is still no single agreed concept of ‘informal empire’, as the essays in his edited volume demonstrate.⁹⁷

This present study, like Charles Jones, makes a distinction between ‘imperialism’ as a doctrine or policy and ‘informal empire’ as a state of affairs.⁹⁸ Hence the activities of the British railway companies in the nineteenth century and the North American ones in the early twentieth in building railways and in some cases operating them in Brazil were part of the informal empires of the two countries. The relationships between those railway companies which were owned by foreigners and the Brazilian authorities was often complex, subtle, improvised, ad-hoc, and fluid. It was a dense and sometimes ambiguous relationship that each of the individual companies had with the state regulators

⁹⁴ See in particular: Matthew Brown (ed.), *Informal Empire in Latin America: Culture, Commerce and Capital* (Oxford, 2008), and the discussion by many of the contributors to this volume of: John Gallagher and Ronald Robinson, ‘The Imperialism of Free Trade’, *Economic History Review*, New Series, 6 (1953), 1-15.

⁹⁵ Gallagher and Robinson, ‘The Imperialism of Free Trade’, p. 1.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

⁹⁷ Matthew Brown, ‘Introduction’, in Brown (ed.), *Informal Empire in Latin America*, pp. 1-2; see also Andrew Thompson, ‘Afterword: Informal Empire: Past, Present and Future’, in Brown (ed.), *Informal Empire in Latin America*, pp. 229-231.

⁹⁸ Charles Jones, ‘Finance, Ambition and Romanticism in the River Plate, 1880-1892’, in Brown (ed.), *Informal Empire in Latin America*, p. 126 and p. 146.

and vice-versa. For this reason this study avoids using the term ‘railway imperialism’ since it runs the danger of focussing on political actions where ‘...inequalities of wealth and power can all too easily be used to flatten out historical complexity by reducing dynamic, multiple and contradictory relations to a set of narrow and polarising terms’.⁹⁹

‘Railway imperialism’ was an expression coined by Clarence Davis and Kenneth Wilburn for the title of their edited collection of essays.¹⁰⁰ In the light of five decades of interventions in the ‘informal empire’ debate the title of their volume may be regarded as problematic. Indeed in an introduction and conclusion to the volume Ronald Robinson acknowledges that ‘several different types of railway imperialism emerge from these experimental studies’,¹⁰¹ and

The experimental notion of “railway imperialism” suggests that the railroad was not only the servant but also the principal generator of informal empire; in this sense imperialism was a function of the railroad.¹⁰²

The range of countries analysed in the Davis and Wilburn collection reveal how unstable the term ‘railway imperialism’ is. It was certainly part of a policy and doctrine as far as the building of lines in India, Canada, South Africa and Mexico by British, Dutch and U.S. companies. However in the case of China between 1895 and 1939 the complexity of ownership – which was similar to the case of Brazil – and the multiplicity of foreign concerns involved meant that ‘much of the diplomacy of railway imperialism had to do with conflicts over concessions for construction of railways rather than actual construction and operation of lines’.¹⁰³ In the case of British involvement in building railways in Argentina,

⁹⁹ Jennifer L. French, “‘Literature Can Be Our Teacher’”: Reading Informal Empire in *El ingles de los güesos*’, in Brown (ed.), *Informal Empire in Latin America*, p. 188.

¹⁰⁰ Clarence B. Davis and Kenneth E. Wilburn Jr (eds.), *Railway Imperialism* (Westport, CT, 1991).

¹⁰¹ Ronald E. Robinson, ‘Conclusion: Railways and Informal Empire’, in Davis and Wilburn Jr (eds.), *Railway Imperialism*, p. 175.

¹⁰² Ronald E. Robinson, ‘Introduction: Railway Imperialism’, in Davis and Wilburn Jr (eds.), *Railway Imperialism*, p. 2.

¹⁰³ Clarence B. Davis, ‘Railway Imperialism in China, 1895-1939’, in Davis and Wilburn Jr (eds.), *Railway Imperialism*, p. 158.

William Fleming cautions that the relationships were so complex that 'railway imperialism' may indeed not be an appropriate term to use.¹⁰⁴

It would thus appear sensible to avoid using the term 'railway imperialism' which would suggest some doctrine or policy was at work, and instead refer to the 'informal empire' of the railway. This would describe the state of affairs of the relationships between the host country and the technicians and managers who had been contracted to carry out the implementation of the technology and the operation of the system. It would allow for the particular complexities of each case to be analysed without resorting to generalities. Thus D. C. M. Platt says that 'there is no denying that foreign monopolies could and did hold a nation to ransom; the British-owned São Paulo/Santos Railway (sic) did so for decades'.¹⁰⁵ Whilst this was a view borne out in some of the Brazilian historiography, which observes that it was the most profitable railway in Latin America from 1876 to 1930, it appears to be a specific case and not part of an overall policy.¹⁰⁶ Other railways operated under differing commercial and local ownership pressures.

If empire is a complex concept, then 'colony' is equally problematic because of the events of history. Brazil was certainly deeply influenced by Europe in the early nineteenth century; but because in 1808 the Portuguese court was exiled to Brazil it cannot perhaps be described correctly as a 'colony'.¹⁰⁷ Brazil at that moment actually became the centre of the Portuguese empire.¹⁰⁸ Independence in 1822 led to Brazil becoming its own 'empire' under the

¹⁰⁴ William J. Fleming, 'Profits and Visions: British Capital and Railway Construction in Argentina, 1854-1886', in Davis and Wilburn Jr (eds.), *Railway Imperialism*, pp. 73-74.

¹⁰⁵ D.C.M. Platt, 'Economic Imperialism and the Businessman: Britain and Latin America before 1914', in Roger Owen and Bob Sutcliffe (eds.), *Studies in the Theory of Imperialism* (London, 1972), p. 300.

¹⁰⁶ Lavander Jr and Mendes, *SPR, Memórias de uma Inglesa*, p. 34; Schoppa, *150 Anos do Trem no Brasil*, pp. 95-96.

¹⁰⁷ Leslie Bethell, *On Democracy in Brazil Past and Present*, University of London, ILAS Occasional Papers no. 7 (1994), p. 18, note 3.

¹⁰⁸ Fausto, *A Concise History of Brazil*, pp. 64-67; Schneider, *Brazil: Culture and Politics*, pp. 37-38.

Emperors Dom Pedro I and II, with a republic being declared in 1889.¹⁰⁹ This, by extension, means that ‘postcolonial’ has to be nuanced, as David Rock suggests when thinking about the continent more generally:

Latin American postcoloniality went far beyond the conventional binary relationship between European colonizers and the indigenous colonized and extended to the multiple ties between Europeans and Europeanising creoles. Not only victimised by external imperialism, Latin America long endured the onslaughts of internal colonialism.¹¹⁰

The definition of and separation between centre and periphery have since the early nineteenth century repeatedly changed their focus and meanings, shifting not only from Lisbon to Rio de Janeiro, from Paris to London and then to New York, but also within Brazil itself. The railways in Latin America had complex relationships with all those they encountered and Colin M. Lewis considers the relationship between State legislators in São Paulo and the national and foreign railway companies during the late nineteenth century and finds a similarly complex political and economic structure.¹¹¹ In a more recent essay he paints a picture of Argentina which was just as intricate as that in Brazil during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.¹¹² Indeed he suggests that as far as Argentinian historiography was concerned ‘negative misconceptions, which came to the fore in the 1930s, had ... a pernicious impact on subsequent writing about the British-Argentinian relationship’.¹¹³ He goes on to suggest that informal empire is typified where there is ‘a balance of mutual (not necessarily equal) benefit in the relationship’.¹¹⁴ William Summerhill who, using counterfactual economic cost-benefit analysis, says any claim that British and other foreign railway builders and operators made profits at Brazil’s expense is a

¹⁰⁹ Fausto, *A Concise History of Brazil*, pp. 76-147; Schneider, *Brazil: Culture and Politics*, pp. 38-44.

¹¹⁰ David Rock, ‘The British in Argentina: From Informal Empire to Postcolonialism’, in Brown (ed.), *Informal Empire in Latin America*, p. 51.

¹¹¹ Colin M. Lewis, *Public Policy and Private Initiative: Railway Building in São Paulo, 1860-1889* (London, 1991).

¹¹² Colin M. Lewis, ‘Britain, the Argentine and Informal Empire: Rethinking the Role of Railway Companies’, in Brown (ed.), *Informal Empire in Latin America*, pp. 99-123.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 99.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 121.

tenuous one at best.¹¹⁵ In a bold conclusion he asserts that ‘...Brazilians, rather than foreigners, reaped the vast bulk of the benefits that railroads created’.¹¹⁶ There were, he admits, a wide range of individual winners and losers and possibly an uneven distribution of the gains within Brazil itself, but it does act as a warning not to assume a one-way relationship. This will be examined in more detail in the chapters that follow.

6. The moderns

The railway in Brazil was regarded as one of the technologies which brought modernity to the nation, or at any rate was closely involved in its arrival, and was used in the early twentieth century as a positive symbol of progress.¹¹⁷ Since this present study identifies a persistent duality in the representation of the railway as the tension between tradition and modernity it is necessary to discuss the ideas behind the words ‘modern’, ‘modernity’, and ‘Modernism’.

Mike Gonzalez and David Treece begin their survey of poetry in Latin America (both the Spanish-speaking nations and Portuguese-speaking Brazil) with the observation that ‘The modern experience in Latin America rests on a series of paradoxes.’¹¹⁸ Europe’s trajectory from feudal agriculture to industrial democracy saw amongst other things the development of cities and transport infrastructures, the rise of factory systems and overall a growth in material wealth.¹¹⁹ Latin America’s experience was different, hence the paradox:

¹¹⁵ William R. Summerhill, *Order against Progress: Government, Foreign Investment and Railroads in Brazil 1854-1913* (Stanford, CA, 2003).

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 194.

¹¹⁷ Odilon Nogueira de Matos, *Café e Ferrovias: A Evolução Ferroviária de São Paulo e o Desenvolvimento da Cultura Cafeeira* (4th edn., Campinas, SP, 1990), pp. 166-168; Francisco Foot Hardman, *Trem-Fantasma: A Ferrovia Madeira-Mamoré e a Modernidade na Selva* (2nd edn., São Paulo, SP, 2005); John King, ‘Introduction’, in John King, (ed.) *The Cambridge Companion to Modern Latin American Culture* (Cambridge, 2004), p. 1.

¹¹⁸ Mike Gonzalez and David Treece, *The Gathering of Voices: The Twentieth-Century Poetry of Latin America* (London, 1992), p. 1.

¹¹⁹ Peter Mathias, *The First Industrial Nation: The Economic History of Britain 1700-1914* (2nd edn., London, 2001), pp. 2-8.

‘Powerless to affect or control matters, the liberation of the productive forces in the metropolis yielded only new forms of alienation on the periphery.’¹²⁰

The question exists of how to define ‘modern’ in the Brazilian case. Colin Divall and Andrew Scott, studying European railway museums, note that it is the ‘archaic transport’ that appears to interest collectors and museum visitors.¹²¹ Contrast this with Francisco Foot Hardman, a socio-linguist from São Paulo who has written a study of the railway and modernity in Brazil, who on a visit to Spain and Germany in the mid-1980s is struck by the thought that all that is ‘ancient’ in Europe is ‘modern’ in Brazil.¹²² This would suggest a difficulty in the use of the term ‘modern’ in the Brazilian case. The implication is that ‘modern’ may be less of a physical state and more a way of perceiving and reading signs in Brazilian society. This study therefore reads the railway ensemble in Brazil for representations of the ‘modern’ which are consistently put forward as a tension with tradition.

William Rowe and Vivian Schelling refer to the previously mentioned paradox and, making a distinction with regards to Latin America, ‘...use the term modernization to refer to technological and economic changes without the assumption that these necessarily lead to modernity’, where this last term is taken to refer to a wider set of political and cultural values.¹²³ The difficulty of pinning terms down comes when considering what was known as Brazil’s *arte moderna* movement in the 1920s. This is referred to in this study as Brazil’s Modernist (or *Modernista*) movement. Modernism in the realm of art is seen as a break from the nineteenth century, although the word itself ‘is a term that masks conflict and upheaval and any number of contradictory positions’.¹²⁴ In the case of Brazil its most visible face was in the 1922 Modern Art Week in São Paulo, where artists involved were subsequently given the generic label ‘Modernist’ to

¹²⁰ Gonzalez and Treece, *The Gathering of Voices*, p. 1.

¹²¹ Divall and Scott, *Making Histories in Transport Museums*, p. 2.

¹²² Hardman, *Trem Fantasma*, p. 24.

¹²³ Rowe and Schelling, *Memory and Modernity*, p. 31.

¹²⁴ Vassiliki Kolocotroni, Jane Goodman and Olga Taxidou, ‘Introduction’, in Vassiliki Kolocotroni, Jane Goodman and Olga Taxidou (eds.), *Modernism: An Anthology of Sources and Documents* (Edinburgh, 1998), p. xvii.

describe their output.¹²⁵ The paradox remains: this art style found some of its influences in the technology of, for example, the railway but also used 'traditional' rural and indigenous inspiration for its works. The critic Valerie Fraser says the work of artist Tarsila do Amaral internalised '...aspects of European modern movements such as Fauvism and cubism, but transform[ed] them into paintings that are Brazilian in form, colour, content and intention'.¹²⁶

Kim Clark, in her study of the railway and nationhood in Ecuador, states that 'The railway was a great symbol of modernity throughout Latin America.'¹²⁷ That may well be the case, but this study will show that in Brazil it was a symbol that was contested and encompassed contradictions and dualities during much of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. These were the symbols of a railway ensemble that closely linked it with the tensions between urban and rural.

7. Audiences

The large technical cultural system of the railway in Brazil reaches out to several audiences. Audiences which are described as elite, mass and popular are identified throughout the rest of this study, and in some cases they intersect and overlap. Oil paintings featuring depictions of the railway, as discussed in chapter 7, are consumed by and large by elite audiences who have had access to galleries and exhibitions. Chapter 3, with its reading of Brazilian histories of the railways likewise identifies an elite audience for such works. Here this group is defined as those able to read, willing to afford the price of a book and with an interest in exploring the history of the railways. The audience for printed works in Brazil has been a limited one.¹²⁸ Literacy levels have historically been low and the quantity of books printed has been similarly small. This is a point that will also be taken up in chapter 4 where fictional writing on the railway is considered. However stories originally written in book form and read by relatively few

¹²⁵ Jacqueline Barnitz, *Twentieth Century Art of Latin America* (Austin, TX, 2001), p. 57.

¹²⁶ Valerie Fraser, 'Art and Architecture in Latin America' in King, (ed.) *Modern Latin American Culture*, p. 214.

¹²⁷ A. Kim Clark, *The Redemptive Work: Railway and Nation in Ecuador, 1895-1930* (Wilmington, DE, 1998), p. 41.

¹²⁸ Randal Johnson, 'Brazilian Narrative', in King (ed.), *Modern Latin American Culture*, p. 119.

Brazilians often become transformed into material for mass audiences when they are adapted for cinema and television.

This study recognises the problems in distinguishing between ‘mass’ audiences and ‘popular’ audiences in Brazil. Stephanie Dennison and Lisa Shaw, after Rowe and Schelling, argue that European notions of a class distinction of the audiences for high and low culture do not easily apply to the case of Brazil.¹²⁹ So, for example, television soap operas are enjoyed by all sections of Brazilian society. This has the effect of making such a cultural product ‘popular’, whilst at the same time television broadcasting itself is deemed to be a form of ‘mass’ entertainment. This point will be discussed in more detail in chapter 6 which analyses television and cinema and the railway. It finds that the audiences have changed over time and according to the particular programme or film on offer for viewing. In the same way, popular music is enjoyed by a wide cross-section of society’s members, as considered in chapter 5.

Chapters 8 and 9 consider the audience for museums of railway history. In the case of the official railway museums set up under the responsibility of the federal railway company in the 1980s the public did not appear in any substantial numbers. For the volunteer-run museums that have been created since the late 1970s the audience, which has been growing steadily, is predominantly middle class and may be described as professional rather than elite.

What follows is an analysis of a number of aspects of the railway in Brazil as a large technical cultural system. The foregoing suggests that the railway in Brazil is a complex ensemble that resists straight forward reduction to an economic or political historical account. For convenience, the analysis proceeds according to individual media. However the ordering of the chapters is not intended to imply any hierarchy of cultural distinction or audience size.

¹²⁹ Stephanie Dennison and Lisa Shaw, *Popular Cinema in Brazil, 1930-2001* (Manchester, 2004), pp. 1-2; Rowe and Schelling, *Memory and Modernity*, pp. 2-3.

The Railway and Culture in Brazil

Writing Brazil's railway histories

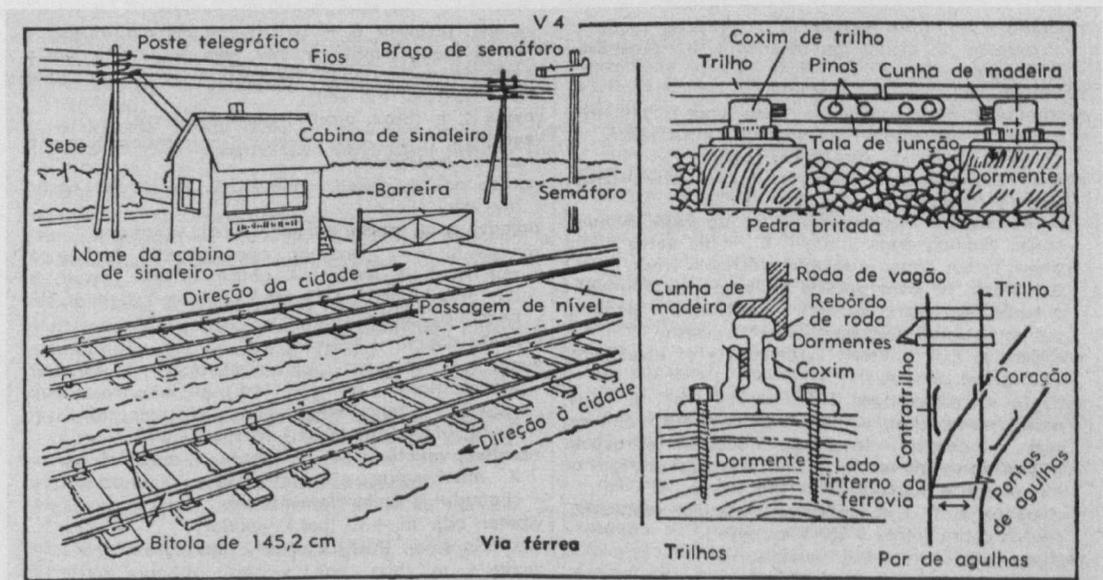


Fig. 10 'Via Férrea', *Novo Michaelis Dicionário Ilustrado* (2 vols, São Paulo, SP, 1962), vol 2, p. 1292.

1. Introduction

This chapter examines the Brazilian historiography of the railway ensemble by reflecting on the style and content of a series of railway histories published from 1884 to the present day. It will demonstrate how the telling of a history of the railways in Brazil has been heavily influenced by two volumes printed in 1884 and 1903 and still used as major reference sources until relatively recently. This has produced a tendency towards a single unified narrative of the evolutionary progress of the railway across the years which, this study suggests, has influenced the manner in which the railway has been represented in fiction, television, cinema, art, and popular music. The railway ensemble has in many histories been claimed as 'Brazilian', effectively ignoring or negating its foreign roots. This has allowed other media forms to concentrate on the domestic dualities of the technology: the conflicts, for example, between tradition and modernity and between rural and urban.

This present chapter begins by considering Brazilian historiography between the 1880s and the early 1970s. It then examines a number of railway histories written during this period, discussing how events have been described, and what may have been omitted. Following from this an analysis will be made of the small but growing tendency for railway workers and their families to publish, often with their own money, works of biography and personal testimony. Here will be identified attempts by some former railway workers to insert themselves into the records of history of the railway ensemble, and for others to provide stories which potentially serve to reinforce the emergence of social histories and the use of oral testimonies edited by academic researchers in recent years.

This chapter demonstrates that a single narrative tendency was produced up to the 1970s which was largely based on the circular referencing of secondary sources. Hayden White observes that history, as a means of explaining

something, needs a story which itself requires a plot in order to be a story.¹ White was thinking about the writing of history principally in Europe and North America from the mid-nineteenth century onwards, yet his comments that historiography has a tendency to fit into some four set patterns of description appear to be appropriate to the case of Brazilian railway histories during the same period. In the case of Brazil a singular nationalistic narrative came to be repeated across the decades. In part this was because of a lack of publicly available primary sources, but the result has been an uncritical account of Brazil's railway history that sought to stress the uniqueness of the nation's technological transport experience. Hayden White noted of history in the West that it sought to make strange and unusual information familiar by fitting its explanation into the cultural experiences of those who read it.² In such a manner events that were distant in time and space could come to be understood. One example from Brazilian railway historiography that could mirror such a tendency is the habit for a number of historians to consistently refer to the various laws, decrees and legal documents relating to the early railways and their concessions. It is a narrative technique which has the effect of grounding the foreign investment and engineering in a domestic Brazilian legality, blurring its origins.

2. The writing and publishing, up to 1972, of history in Brazil.

Two bibliographical review articles written by North American academics serve to provide a summary of material published in Brazil from the end of the First World War until the early 1970s.³ These studies are used here to provide a brief overview of the process of writing history in Brazil during that part of the mid twentieth century when a number of the titles considered in this chapter were published. Neither of the essays highlights any Brazilian studies of railway

¹ Hayden White, *Tropics of Discourse: Essays in Cultural Criticism* (Baltimore, MD, 1978), p. 62.

² *Ibid*, p. 86.

³ Stanley J. Stein, 'The Historiography of Brazil, 1808-1889', *The Hispanic American Historical Review*, 40 (1960), 234-278; Thomas E. Skidmore, 'The Historiography of Brazil, 1889-1964', *The Hispanic American Historical Review*, Part I in: 55 (1975), 716-748 and Part II in: 56 (1976), 81-109.

history which suggests that the subject in itself was not, before the 1970s at least, of particular interest to scholars outside Brazil.

Stanley Stein reviews books and essays written and published in Brazil between 1918 and 1958 about the historical period 1808 to 1889.⁴ He finds that the number of titles published increased in part due to the growth of the middle class and a larger reading public, but also because by the mid-twentieth century, 'as the rate of Brazilian modernization accelerated, [it] encouraged many to look to the past for insight into the manifold problems of their times'.⁵ It may have been reassurance they were looking for, or even to try to explain past mistakes.⁶ Stein's reading of works that have studied the period of rule by Emperor Dom Pedro II from 1840 to 1889 identifies two contrasting descriptive styles, the first a conservative uncritical approach which marked out much historical writing published from 1890 to the mid 1920s, and secondly from this period onwards a liberal tendency which strove to explain present problems as symptoms of past weaknesses:

Revisionists rather than muckrakers, these historians looked at the economic and social aspects of the empire which the older historians had avoided or handled superficially.⁷

Stein identifies no major railway historian or general transport study in his review of the literature published up to the late 1950s. However he does note that in the 1930s, during the first Vargas regime, writers tended to ignore Brazil's pre-1889 industrial and financial history apart from concentrating on the life and work of the baron of Mauá.⁸ Stein's observation, originally made in his 1960 essay, that 'the biographical approach to economic history of the empire is useful, but to generalize about the fate of business enterprise from Mauá's experience is misleading' still holds a ring of truth today amongst the work of railway historians who continue to highlight the man's rise and fall during the

⁴ Stein, 'The Historiography of Brazil, 1808-1889'.

⁵ Ibid, p. 234.

⁶ Ibid, p. 234.

⁷ Ibid, p. 254.

⁸ Ibid, p. 265. The baron of Mauá's involvement in the *São Paulo Railway* is mentioned in chapter 1 of this present study.

construction phase of the railways in Brazil.⁹ Stein's conclusion is that the liberal tendency amongst historians failed to offer lessons from history for mid-twentieth century Brazil, instead a conservative celebratory and uncritical approach to writing history largely prevailed.¹⁰

Thomas Skidmore continues the analysis of the historiography of Brazil in two articles which chart material published up to 1972 about the historical period 1889 to 1964.¹¹ He agrees that well after the end of empire and into the republican age 'history writing was still in the hands of amateurs' with little academic training.¹² This is reflected in the lack of footnotes and accurate referencing in the majority of railway histories until as late as the 1990s and also a tendency to rely on description over analysis and political contextualisation. Piers Armstrong agrees with this point and sums up the different approaches of analysts:

The Brazilian essayists suggest the continuity of the positivistic intellectual approach of the late nineteenth century, which tends to fuse data drawn from various disciplines in a speculative reading ultimately based on a subjective notion of some kind of national essence. The outsider Brazilianists, working within a frame of contemporary North American academia, come from a postdisciplinary perspective.¹³

Armstrong is here summarizing his readings of writings by Brazilians from the 1930s until the 1990s, including such names as Gilberto Freyre and Roberto DaMatta, and comparing their academic style with English-speaking researchers such as Robert Levine and Marshall Eakin.

As universities emerged and developed from the 1930s onwards more rigorous historical methods began to be employed, although a tendency until the

⁹ Stein, 'The Historiography of Brazil, 1808-1889', p. 267. Jorge Caldeira, *Mauá: Empresário do Império* (São Paulo, SP, 1995).

¹⁰ Stein, 'The Historiography of Brazil, 1808-1889', p. 278.

¹¹ Skidmore, 'The Historiography of Brazil, 1889-1964', Part I and Part II.

¹² Skidmore, 'The Historiography of Brazil, 1889-1964', Part I, p. 718.

¹³ Piers Armstrong, 'The Brazilianists' Brazil: Interdisciplinary Portraits of Brazilian Society and Culture', *Latin American Research Review*, 35 (2000), p. 229.

late 1960s had been to concentrate on elitist histories.¹⁴ Skidmore also notes that until the late 1950s published works on the subject of Brazil's industrialisation were 'meagre' and in his review essay mentions no works specifically on railway history.¹⁵ Cotton textiles, steel production and the machine tools industries are however mentioned as subjects of enquiry.¹⁶ He adds that up to the early 1970s there was little analysis by Brazilian researchers of the role of foreign private investment in Brazil.¹⁷ Studies of the coffee industry in the states of Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo have long been numerous, but it was not until the 1970s onwards that Brazilian academics were making explicit connections between railway development and the spread of coffee plantations.¹⁸

Since then the study of the railways in Brazil has proved to be a fertile ground for Brazilian academics, particularly in the state of São Paulo. Six works are highlighted here. Odilon Nogueira da Matos began the current trend in 1974 when he examined how the spread of the railway network in the state helped to facilitate the export of coffee.¹⁹ Since then, Francisco Foot Hardman has published a version of his doctoral thesis on modernity and the railway, Nilson Ghirardello has carried out a study of the manner in which urban settlements developed along the route of the *Noroeste do Brasil*, Lidia Possas has carried out archival research and oral history interviews with women employed by this railway company, and Álvaro Tenca has used personal testimonies to compile an account of workplace training and staff development at the *Cia Paulista*.²⁰ A review of the railway architecture, the use of iron as a building material, and its preservation has been carried out by Beatriz Mugayar Kühl who is another

¹⁴ Skidmore, 'The Historiography of Brazil, 1889-1964', Part I, p. 718; Skidmore, 'The Historiography of Brazil, 1889-1964', Part II, p. 84.

¹⁵ Skidmore, 'The Historiography of Brazil, 1889-1964', Part II, p. 93.

¹⁶ Ibid, p. 93.

¹⁷ Ibid, p. 99.

¹⁸ Ibid, pp. 100-102; Odilon Nogueira de Matos, *Café e Ferrovias: A Evolução Ferroviária de São Paulo e o Desenvolvimento da Cultura Cafeeira* (4th edn., Campinas, SP, 1990 [1974]).

¹⁹ Matos, *Café e Ferrovias*.

²⁰ Francisco Foot Hardman, *Trem Fantasma: A Ferrovia Madeira-Mamoré e a Modernidade na Selva* (2nd Edn., São Paulo, SP, 2005 [1988]); Nilson Ghirardello, *À Beira da Linha: Formações Urbanas da Noroeste Paulista* (São Paulo, SP, 2002); Lidia Maria Vianna Possas, *Mulheres, Trens e Trilhos: Modernidade no Sertão Paulista* (Bauru, SP, 2001); Álvaro Tenca, *Senhores dos Trilhos: Racionalização, Trabalho e Tempo Livre nas Narrativas de Ex-alunos do Curso de Ferroviários da Antiga Paulista* (São Paulo, SP, 2006).

researcher to concentrate her attentions on the São Paulo area.²¹ These recent publications all carry the full array of academic apparatus, but later in this chapter it will be demonstrated how these works have used a small number of secondary sources for key parts of their arguments. Elsewhere a series of books has been published by enthusiasts since 2000 which mostly celebrate the newly-created private railway freight operations and include many photographs and detailed technical information about locomotives and rolling stock both pre and post privatisation.²²

The academic study of the railways of Brazil by researchers based in institutions in other countries has grown steadily in recent years but has tended to be economic and political in nature. William Summerhill weighed up the economic costs and benefits to Brazil of this foreign investment and found Brazil to be the 'winner', Colin Lewis looked at the relationships between the Brazilian authorities and foreign capitalists during the first two decades of railway building in the state of São Paulo, and Charles Gauld provided a positive biography of Percival Farquhar who was the major North American industrialist involved in Brazilian railways and utilities in the first decade before World War One.²³ Geographically bounded case studies include Robert Mattoon's examination of the involvement of coffee plantation owners in railway investment in São Paulo state, and Peter Blasenheim's account of railway building in the state of Minas Gerais.²⁴ Non-academic histories aimed at the railway enthusiast market have

²¹ Beatriz Mugayar Kühl, *Arquitetura do Ferro e Arquitetura Ferroviária em São Paulo: Reflexões sobre a sua Preservação* (São Paulo, SP, 1998).

²² Helio Suêvo Rodriguez, *A Formação das Estradas de Ferro no Rio de Janeiro: O Resgate da sua Memória* (Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 2004); José Emílio de Castro H. Buzelin and João Bosco Setti, *Ferrovias Centro-Atlântica: Uma Ferrovia e suas Raízes* (Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 2001); José Emílio de Castro H. Buzelin, Eduardo J. J. Coelho, and João Bosco Setti, *MRS Logística S.A. – A Ferrovia de Minas, Rio e São Paulo* (Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 2002); José Emílio de Castro H. Buzelin, *Carros Budd no Brasil – 1: Os Trens que Marcaram Época* (Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 2002); Eduardo J. J. Coelho and João Bosco Setti, *A E.F. Vitória a Minas e suas Locomotivas desde 1904* (2 vols, Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 2000 & 2003); Eduardo J. J. Coelho, *Locomotivas Articuladas: As Gigantes da Era do Vapor no Brasil* (Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 2003).

²³ William R. Summerhill, *Order Against Progress: Government, Foreign Investment and Railroads in Brazil 1854-1913* (Stanford, CA, 2003); Colin M. Lewis, *Public Policy and Private Initiative: Railway Building in São Paulo, 1860-1889* (London, 1991); Charles A. Gauld, *The Last Titan: Percival Farquhar 1864-1953, American Entrepreneur in Latin America* (Stanford, CA, 1972).

²⁴ Robert H. Mattoon Jr, 'Railroads, Coffee, and the Growth of Big Business in São Paulo, Brazil', *The Hispanic American Historical Review*, 57 (1977), 273-295; Peter L. Blasenheim,

also been produced in English, most of which tend to include a high number of photographs and much technical detail. These include Charles Small's three-volume 'Brazilian Steam Album' series, Trevor Rowe's overview of the continent's major lines, and Paul Catchpole's account of the *São Paulo Railway*.²⁵

This chapter now analyses some of the key early works of railway history written by Brazilians (all male) and published in Brazil for a domestic audience. The first two texts are important because their influence can be traced through much of the subsequent writing in Brazil about railway history.²⁶ The audience for all of these works has, with one exception, been limited. Until recently, when the use of cheap printing methods and improved literacy became widespread, the audience in Brazil for the written word was a relatively small one confined broadly to the educated elite who had the inclination and money to be able to afford books. Details of the publishing of books and audiences in Brazil will be given in chapter 4 which examines the railway in Brazilian fiction. Books printed in the late nineteenth century and for much of the twentieth were often published with the financial backing of a State or business sponsor, as noted in this chapter. Their print run would not be expected to exceed one thousand initially. Later with the advent of computer typesetting self-publishing became a popular option as will be seen by the range of works of autobiography discussed later in this chapter, all of which were produced by small local printing firms.

'Railroads in Nineteenth-Century Minas Gerais', *Journal of Latin American Studies*, 26 (1994), 347-374.

²⁵ Charles S. Small, *Brazilian Steam Album* (3 vols, Canton, OH, 1985); D. Trevor Rowe, *The Railways of South America* (Alcester, Warwickshire, 2000); Paul Catchpole, *A Very British Railway* (St. Teath, Cornwall, 2003).

²⁶ Francisco Picanço, *Viação Ferrea do Brazil: Descrição Technica e Estatistica de Todas as Nossas Estradas de Ferro* (Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 1884). [original contemporary Portuguese spelling]; Adolpho Augusto Pinto, *Historia da Viação Publica de São Paulo (Brasil)* (São Paulo, SP, 1903).

3. Francisco Picanço and Adolpho Pinto: the key texts of Brazilian railway history

One of the first major national studies of the railway industry in Brazil was published in Rio de Janeiro in 1884, during the last years of Emperor Dom Pedro II's reign and five years before the creation of a republic.²⁷ Francisco Picanço's *Viação Ferrea do Brazil* was a geographical list of the states of Brazil with each railway line appearing in alphabetical order.²⁸ Picanço described himself as a civil engineer and a founder of the magazine 'Revista de Engenharia'. His work reads as an attempt to classify and bring under control this modern technology which at the hands of foreign engineers was spreading itself across the landscape. The railways were less than three decades old and the provincial authorities were increasingly involved in monitoring and supervising the activities of the growing industry.²⁹ In this context Picanço's book would have been a timely publication, even if he complains in his preface of a lack of statistics for rail traffic and rolling stock. Subsequent historians in Brazil have, until the late 1970s, used the information he gathered as primary data, rather than returning to original railway company and state legislative documents. For much of this period the lack of official records in the public domain has meant many historical researchers have been limited in this way.³⁰ However the practice of using secondary sources for railway histories has important implications. Paul Waters, the translator into English of Pedro Telles' chapter on early Brazilian railways in his 1994 two-volume 'History of Brazilian Engineering' notes that Telles himself admits he relies heavily on secondary sources, and that

In Brazil most secondary material was written, consciously or otherwise, by nationalists who were only too keen to create the myth of exploitation by foreigners.³¹

²⁷ Emilia Viotti da Costa, *Brazilian Empire: Myths & Histories* (2nd. edn., Chapel Hill, NC, 2000), pp. 202-233.

²⁸ Picanço, *Viação Ferrea do Brazil*.

²⁹ Lewis, *Railway Building in São Paulo*, p. 2.

³⁰ Skidmore, 'The Historiography of Brazil, 1889-1964', Part I, p. 719.

³¹ Paul E. Waters, 'Preface', in Pedro Carlos da Silva Telles, *A History of Brazilian Railways: Part 1 – The First Railways*, trans. Paul E. Waters (Bromley, Kent, 1987), p. 6.

Picanço's 1884 volume categorises each railway with a list of statistics that describe its geographical, financial and legal status: length, capital costs, value of shares, and relevant Decrees and Laws. By listing the legal concession documents Picanço was able to anchor each railway to the Brazilian legal apparatus. He was not the only writer to take this approach, the effect of which is to imply that Brazilian authorities had 'control' of the foreign-owned railways.

There is also evidence of the nationalistic nature of his writing, aimed at an audience of domestic elites. Picanço is less than impartial in his descriptions of foreign-controlled rail companies such as the *São Paulo Railway*.³² One delicate but highly significant touch is the manner in which he renames this railway. Instead of using the English name of the line he calls it the 'Estrada de Ferro Santos a Jundiáhy'.³³ It is an act of Brazilianisation that diminishes the British who built, owned and managed the line until 1946. In fact it was only in this year that the line's name officially became *E.F. Santos à Jundiáí* when it formally came under Brazilian government control as the concession came to an end. Picanço pre-empted history by sixty-two years.

Brazilian commentators have noted that their fellow countrymen and women have a high regard for etiquette, social formality, and hierarchy so the different conventions used by Picanço in naming Brazilian versus British engineers are revealing.³⁴ Picanço uses neither Mr. nor Senhor. He calls, for example, British engineers only by their surname and uses full names for Brazilians throughout his text. Compare for example 'The Grota Funda viaduct... was built by the English engineer Brunlees',³⁵ to a note on the neighbouring *Companhia Paulista*: 'as well as a large number of small works, the line has the bridge over the River Piracicaba, built by the engineer Antônio

³² Picanço, *Viação Ferrea do Brazil*, pp. 274-287.

³³ Ibid. The entire section is titled 'E. F. de Santos a Jundiáhy' (sic), with 'S. Paulo (Brazilian) Railway Company' in small letters under the section heading.

³⁴ Roberto DaMatta, *Carnivals, Rogues, and Heroes: An Interpretation of the Brazilian Dilemma*, trans. John Drury (Notre Dame, IN, 1991), p. 156.

³⁵ Picanço, *Viação Ferrea do Brazil*, pp. 281-282; Catchpole, *A Very British Railway*, pp. 8-9.

Rebouças'.³⁶ The Brazilian engineer, and his brother André, were important constructors of railways across the landscape, the professional equals of Sir James Brunlees, yet Picanço accords differing naming etiquettes to English and Brazilians in a consistent manner throughout his work. Picanço was inserting anti-informal railway empire messages into his text for future generations of historians to repeat.

This nationalistic approach to naming and titles pervades many of these histories. Adolpho Augusto Pinto, who describes himself on the title page as a civil engineer, published his 'Historia da Viação Publica de São Paulo' in 1903 through one of the few publishing firms of São Paulo at that time, Vanorden & Cia.³⁷ A second edition of this three-hundred page review of horse, river, coastal, and train travel in this single Brazilian state was published under the imprint of the State of São Paulo in 1977.³⁸ As a State inspector of railways he became a thorn in the side of the foreign-owned *São Paulo Railway*, a point he emphasises in his autobiography to be discussed later in this chapter. Despite its title two thirds of the book is devoted to a description of the railways of São Paulo state at the end of the nineteenth century. In 'Viação Publica' he adopts a nationalistic tone by consistently referring to the 'estrada inglesa' and the 'Companhia Inglesa' instead of the official name of the railway. He uses the informal, less reverential, forms more often than he uses *São Paulo Railway* which he italicises, suggesting and emphasising its foreignness to the Brazilian reader.³⁹ Pinto also effectively Brazilianises the *São Paulo Railway*, for example, when he attributes the building of 'the inclined planes' to Emilio Schnoor a 'former pupil of the Escola Central, today the Escola Polytechnica (sic), of Rio de Janeiro' whilst glossing over the fact that these were the second set of lines to be built.⁴⁰

³⁶ Picanço, *Viação Ferrea do Brazil*, p. 291; Pedro Carlos da Silva Telles, *História da Engenharia no Brasil* (2 vols, 2nd. edn., Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 1994), vol. 1, pp. 454-455.

³⁷ Adolpho Augusto Pinto, *Historia da Viação Publica de São Paulo (Brasil)* (São Paulo, SP, 1903); Laurence Hallewell, *Books in Brazil: A History of the Publishing Trade* (Metuchen, NJ, 1982), pp. 169-170.

³⁸ Adolpho Augusto Pinto, *História da Viação Pública de São Paulo* (2nd. Edn., São Paulo, SP, 1977). All subsequent references are taken from the original 1903 edition.

³⁹ Pinto, *Historia da Viação Publica*, p. 117. Here, for example, he uses 'ingleza' three times and only refers to the '*S. Paulo Railway*' when quoting directly from official contracts.

⁴⁰ Pinto, *Historia da Viação Publica*, p. 101.

Other accounts make it clear that the original inclines, which took the railtrack up the 800 metres of the Atlantic escarpment, were designed by Daniel M. Fox, an Englishman, and it was the new inclines, opened in 1899 as a result of increased demand, that were engineered by Emilio Schnoor amongst others.⁴¹ Nonetheless, Pinto prefers to point out that Schnoor's work 'is worthy to be called a monument' and 'in its magnitude and technical importance... [it] has no equal in the world'.⁴² Pinto does not mention the British engineers by name, nor does he make it clear that Schnoor's task was to double the line capacity by building the second inclines. Instead he gives the impression that he was actually responsible for building the original track inaugurated in 1867.⁴³

Pinto's description of the railways concentrates on the legislation, regulation and inspection of the lines and the companies that built and operated them. His clear interest is in recording the manner in which the State regulated and controlled the railways, with the suggestion that foreign companies such as the *São Paulo Railway* were interested purely in profit for their English shareholders and not at all in providing Brazilians with cheap and reliable passenger and freight services.⁴⁴

These two volumes, by Picanço and Pinto, have been reused by generations of Brazilian railway historians and are still quoted today as key references to the formative years of the industry. Consider six of the works mentioned earlier in this chapter which are examples of the current academically rigorous style, all of which have footnotes and bibliographies. Firstly, Odilon De Matos uses Pinto extensively, particularly for his section on the development of the early railway, and in a footnote describes Pinto as 'indispensable for the study of travel in São Paulo'.⁴⁵ Matos subsequently becomes a major source of

⁴¹ Compare, for example, Catchpole, *A Very British Railway*, pp. 9-15; Telles, *História da Engenharia no Brasil*, vol. 2, p.125; Moysés Lavander Jr and Paulo Augusto Mendes, *SPR: Memórias de uma Inglesa* (São Paulo, SP, 2005), p. 33 and 61.

⁴² Pinto, *Historia da Viação Publica*, p. 97, and p. 101.

⁴³ Luiz Gonzaga Godoi Trigo, *Viagem na Memória: Guia Histórico das Viagens e do Turismo no Brasil* (São Paulo, SP, 2000), pp. 127-131.

⁴⁴ Pinto, A., *Historia da Viação Publica*, p. 176.

⁴⁵ Matos, *Café e Ferrovias*, p. 70, note 25.

information for future studies. Francisco Foot Hardman refers to Benévolo, who is mentioned in the next section of this chapter, as well as Picanço, in his widespread study.⁴⁶ Beatriz Kühl uses Pinto and Matos for most of her railway history, as well as drawing upon Hardman, and Vasconcellos who is discussed in the next section of this chapter.⁴⁷ The interconnected web of circular references continues: Nilson Ghirardello uses Matos and Pinto;⁴⁸ Lidia Possas uses Hardman and Matos – which itself draws heavily on Pinto...⁴⁹ The only academic work of recent years that does not use this circle of references is Álvaro Tenca's, reflecting the fact that his micro-study is an examination of training and workplace staff development and not a 'traditional' history of the *Cia Paulista*.⁵⁰

So far this chapter has identified how two key railway texts, first published in 1884 and 1903, have been used and re-used by successive writers leaving no space for any alternative histories of the railways in Brazil. The next section will discuss two works, published in the 1920s and 1953, which both take a classificatory approach to describing the railway and in a similar way have come to be used and reused in subsequent histories.

4. Classification and description: Max Vasconcellos and Ademar Benévolo

Max Vasconcellos, a lawyer who worked for the *E. F. Central* from 1910 to 1938, produced what probably became in the first half of the twentieth century one of the most popular descriptive books about the railway in Brazil.⁵¹ He created a five-hundred page work that was a mixture of gazetteer, guide, history book and manual of instructions for railway travel on the *E. F. Central*. The first

⁴⁶ Hardman, *Trem Fantasma*.

⁴⁷ Kühl, *Arquitetura do Ferro e Arquitetura Ferroviária em São Paulo*.

⁴⁸ Ghirardello, *À Beira da Linha*.

⁴⁹ Possas, *Mulheres, Trens e Trilhos*.

⁵⁰ Tenca, *Senhores dos Trilhos*.

⁵¹ Max Vasconcellos, *Vias Brasileiras de Comunicação: A Estrada de Ferro Central do Brasil – Linha do Centro e Ramaes* (Rio de Janeiro, RJ), six editions were published between c1925 and 1947.

two editions of his 'Vias Brasileiras de Comunicação' were published in Rio de Janeiro by a private printing works; by the fifth his publisher was the long-standing government-owned *Imprensa Nacional*.⁵² There is evidence to suggest that over the space of twenty-two years this book sold more than twenty thousand copies, making it a consistently popular volume.⁵³ What Vasconcellos has done is begin this volume with a history of the construction and operation of the *E. F. Central* and then to list every town and city along the *E. F. Central's* network, with street plans, photographs and local information. His guide extends across the border of Rio de Janeiro state, the home of the *E. F. Central*, to the neighbouring state, where he comments that

São Paulo is the Brazilian state best served by the railways. From the Estação da Luz [Luz Station] of the *São Paulo Railway* or from the São Paulo station of the *Sorocabana* there are trains that leave for the capital [Rio de Janeiro], almost all the paulista towns, the neighbouring states, and the republics of Uruguay, Argentina and Bolivia. The rail link between São Paulo and Santos is made by twenty trains per day – thirty on Sundays and public holidays.⁵⁴

His book includes seating plans and carriage layouts of rolling stock used by the *E.F. Central* and for passengers unfamiliar with the etiquette of Brazilian railway travel he reprints an extract from the conditions of carriage:

People who cannot travel: people who are drunk, indecent, or improperly dressed.

Seating: so long as there is not numbered seating, a passenger has the right to occupy the first available place he finds; if he leaves his seat temporarily, he has the right to reoccupy it so long as he has left something on the seat, with the exception of a newspaper or magazine. Passengers who are under one metre in height will be sold half-price tickets.⁵⁵

⁵² Hallewell, *Books in Brazil*, pp. 26-31.

⁵³ In a preface to the 5th edition (1934) Vasconcellos suggested that about 15,000 copies had been produced in total so far. The 6th edition (1947) consulted at the library of the *Museu do Imigrante*, São Paulo, SP, has the number '3288' stamped on the publisher's page suggesting a print run of either four or five thousand. From this an estimate of just over twenty thousand copies is reached.

⁵⁴ Vasconcellos, *Vias Brasileiras de Comunicação*, (2nd edn., Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 1927), pp. 301-302.

⁵⁵ Vasconcellos, *Vias Brasileiras de Comunicação* (5th edn., Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 1934), pp. 43-45.

There is no direct evidence in the various editions of Vasconcellos' guide book that this work was financially supported or approved by the *E. F. Central*. In any event the volume represents a substantial promotional device for railway travel in this region of the Brazilian capital. His book, which contextualised a history of the *E. F. Central* into a Brazilian mode of travelling, described and catalogued an important transport network that spread out from its headquarters in Rio de Janeiro to link the neighbouring states of Minas Gerais and São Paulo. By 1911 the *E. F. Central* had almost 1,992 kilometres of lines.⁵⁶ Vasconcellos had helped remove any traces of foreign railway culture and operation of a technology that was built in 1858 by British engineers but taken over by the Brazilian government after early financial difficulties.⁵⁷ Vanconcellos was likely to be the source of information and advice for thousands of Brazilian families in the 1920s and 30s, newly wealthy and able to take long journeys by rail out of Rio de Janeiro to the interior and neighbouring states.

In the 1930s Max Vasconcellos wrote a companion volume, this time a guide to the branch lines of the *E. F. Central*.⁵⁸ At just over two hundred pages this is half the size of its sister publication and as well as details of the railway he includes information on how to use the telegraph and telephone services, the networks of both utilities following closely the route of the railways.⁵⁹ He remarks that he is preparing a similar guide to the *Leopoldina Railway* (there is no evidence that this was ever published) and also mentions that improvements were being made to the road system, that the number of cars was beginning to increase, and regional and transatlantic air travel was starting; both means of transport that were to come to dominate in the second half of the twentieth century.⁶⁰ The closest modern equivalent to Vasconcellos's gazetteer, but lacking his historical detail, is the 'Guia Quatro Rodas' ('Four-Wheeled Guide') which

⁵⁶ René Fernandes Schoppa, *150 Anos do Trem no Brasil* (Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 2004), pp. 84-85.

⁵⁷ Rodriguez, *A Formação das Estradas de Ferro no Rio de Janeiro*, pp. 20-23.

⁵⁸ Max Vasconcellos, *Vias Brasileiras de Comunicação: Estrada de Ferro Central do Brasil: Linha Auxiliar* (3rd edn., Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 1935).

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 209-211.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 201-206.

has been published nationally since 1965 and as its name suggests is based on road travel.⁶¹

Another work to adopt the classificatory approach, and to unequivocally link railway history to governmental legislation is Ademar Benévolo's 'Introdução à História Ferroviária do Brasil' (Introduction to Railway History in Brazil), which carried the subtitle 'a social, political and historical study'.⁶² It was published in 1953, with the support of the Director General of the Departamento Nacional de Estradas de Ferro (DNEF), 'aimed at new rail professionals' and celebrating the first one hundred years of the railway industry in Brazil.⁶³ The approval of a federal government agency such as this is evidence that this book represented an 'official' account of the railway industry which described its history for a Brazilian domestic audience. Compare, for example, the British view of the railways owned by its countrymen which was expressed in comments published by the British Chamber of Commerce of São Paulo that said of the *São Paulo Railway*,

British engineers have the credit for constructing the first railway in the state of São Paulo. ... Once again it may be said that a British railway opened the door that let prosperity into São Paulo.⁶⁴

This was not the version of events given by Brazilian writers such as Ademar Benévolo. His history of Brazilian railways suggests it was government legislation and legal control that was in fact the key to developing the transport system. He chooses to use as his example another British-controlled railway, the *Estrada de Ferro Recife ao São Francisco*. His book was printed by one of the newspapers in Recife, Pernambuco, the *Folha da Manhã*, on newsprint.⁶⁵ That it is a cheaply-produced edition is one matter; that it has come, not from Rio de

⁶¹ Guia Quatro Rodas, *Brasil 2004* (São Paulo, SP, 2003), p. 4.

⁶² Ademar Benévolo, *Introdução à História Ferroviária do Brasil: Estudo Social, Político e Histórico* (Recife, PE, 1953).

⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

⁶⁴ British Chamber of Commerce of São Paulo and Southern Brazil, *Facts About the State of São Paulo* (São Paulo, SP, c1951), p. 48.

⁶⁵ Figures suggest that in 1953 just sixteen books were produced in Pernambuco. See: Hallewell, *Books in Brazil*, p. 382.

Janeiro (still the capital of Brazil at that time) or from São Paulo, is significant because it is a work of historical description that has chosen to focus on the first railway concession to be granted in Brazil's northeast.⁶⁶ The line eventually came under the control of the *Great Western of Brazil Railway* and together with other British railways in the region the English style of management came to be identified in the novels of Jorge Amado.⁶⁷ Ademar Benévolo lays out his seven-hundred page study using as chapter headings the clauses of the railway concession, the *Estrada de Ferro Recife ao São Francisco*, Decree no. 1,030 of 7 August 1852. In doing so he transforms the railway process into a mapping of the landscape by the Brazilian legal and political system. Benévolo reflects on the growth of the industry, its workers, its language and the modernity it gave to Brazil:

The steam locomotive already presented all the characteristics of modern progress: it was certainly a costly technology, demanding relatively heavy track and special bridges for its passage.⁶⁸

As well as the changes from horse-drawn transport he notes that this technology brought with it a new language of travel, but he stresses that words adopted from the English language were given a particular Brazilian turn.⁶⁹ He uses the example of the English word 'railway', which he notes in both Spanish and Iberian Portuguese became literally translated from 'iron way' into 'ferrocarril'. Conversely he states that 'from the first concessions of 1853 onwards the phrase "estrada de ferro" was much more appropriate in Brazil'.⁷⁰ Benévolo does not put forward a particularly convincing argument for this point, but nevertheless does assert Brazil's linguistic independence from Europe over the naming of technology.

⁶⁶ Schoppa, *150 Anos do Trem no Brasil*, p. 144.

⁶⁷ Tagore Villarim de Siqueira, 'As Primeiras Ferrovias do Nordeste Brasileiro: Processo de Implantação e o Caso da Great Western Railway', *Revista do BNDES*, Rio de Janeiro, 9 (2002), 169-219; Jorge Amado, *Gabriela, Clove and Cinnamon*, trans James. L. Taylor & William Grossman (New York, NY, 1988 [1958]).

⁶⁸ Benévolo, *História Ferroviária do Brasil*, p. 65.

⁶⁹ *Ibid*, p. 51.

⁷⁰ *Ibid*, p. 51.

A more sympathetic approach is taken by a fellow Pernambucano also fascinated by the English language and the railways. Gilberto Freyre identifies in his study, *Inglese no Brasil*, first published in 1948, words such as cróssima [railway crossing], troli [trolley], vagão [wagon], iarde [yard], esnobe [snob], lanche [lunch], pudim [pudding], futebol [football], golquipa [goalkeeper], and 'hora inglesa' [punctuality].⁷¹ The latter idiom, he says, refers to a Brazilian view that the British have a culture of timekeeping that is overly rigid and does not allow for a relaxed attitude towards appointments and deadlines. The turn of phrase is still in use today.

Ademar Benévolo evokes the idea of an industrial community being formed by the technology, 'apparently separated by distance, the "railmen" [sic] constituted a family much more than the families of workers in the big industrial firms'.⁷² He also notes that during the first hundred years of the railway in Brazil the family structure had ingrained itself:

This, by the way, is in the European tradition – the blacksmith and the blacksmith's son – the doctor and the doctor's son. In Brazil, and in America generally, this concept of professional tradition does not exist – apart from in the military classes – but it is a well defined tendency for the sons of railwaymen to follow in their father's footsteps.⁷³

Evidence of this tendency is found in a recently published volume of oral histories, 'Meu Pai Foi Ferroviário', to be discussed later in this chapter.

In 1974 the Ministry of Transport published a homage to itself, and the creation of the independent nation, under the title of '150 Years of Transport in Brazil'.⁷⁴ Written by Francisco Ferreira Neto this book presents a Brazil-centred

⁷¹ Gilberto Freyre, *Inglese no Brasil: Aspectos da Influência Britânica sobre a Vida, a Paisagem e a Cultura do Brasil* (3rd edn., Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 2000), pp. 66-67 and p. 102. Charles Miller, the Brazilian-born son of British parents and a one-time employee of the *São Paulo Railway Company*, is credited with introducing football to Brazil. See: Josh Lacey, *God is Brazilian: Charles Miller, the Man who Brought Football to Brazil* (Stroud, Gloucestershire, 2005).

⁷² Benévolo, *História Ferroviária do Brasil*, p. 45.

⁷³ Benévolo, *História Ferroviária do Brasil*, p. 48.

⁷⁴ Francisco Ferreira Neto, *150 Anos de Transportes no Brasil* (Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 1974). Published, in the event, 152 years after Brazil's 1822 independence.

version of the history of transport and suggests that yesterday's mistakes were being directly addressed and solved by the military regime which took control in 1964. It is an example of government-controlled propaganda rewriting history to glorify the ruling elites. Ferreira Neto presents, in the space of a twenty-five page chapter, a history of the railway in Brazil; the story of what he calls 'an instrument of progress'.⁷⁵ The construction phase is glossed over and presented as a list of lines opened, together with glowing mentions of Brazilian engineers involved in the planning, construction and operation of these lines.

Government control is, throughout, seen as right and necessary. For example in 1946 the concession for the British operation of the *São Paulo Railway* had almost run its full natural term and was due to revert to Brazilian State ownership. Ferreira Neto elides this event into the aftermath of the Second World War and transforms it from an inevitable occurrence into a decisive moment for Brazil's leaders:

England ... found itself in debt due to the destruction it had suffered. With its finances exhausted it was motivated to freeze its external debt meaning that there was no possibility of obtaining material in Brazil in exchange for credit. In order to make good use of the resources in question, it was necessary [for the Brazilian Government] to take action to acquire the English railway companies which still operated in Brazil and so, in this manner, the existence of foreign capital in internal transport activities came to an end.⁷⁶

He says that despite some opposition at the time, such a step was in the best interests of the passengers and freight customers. He then observes that in 1954 the whole system had been linked together so that 'it was possible for a train to leave the extreme south of Brazil and reach Natal' (a distance of over 4,000 kilometres).⁷⁷ Whilst promoting national unity this is also a geographical and technical sleight of hand since Brazil's 'network' runs on at least three different track gauges.⁷⁸

⁷⁵ Ferreira Neto, *150 Anos de Transportes*, p. 108.

⁷⁶ Ferreira Neto, *150 Anos de Transportes*, p. 123.

⁷⁷ Ferreira Neto, *150 Anos de Transportes*, p. 123.

⁷⁸ Telles, *História da Engenharia no Brasil*, vol. 1, pp. 387-393.

In 1985 José Sarney took office as Brazil's president. His appointment by direct elections effectively brought to a close twenty-one years of military rule.⁷⁹ In Juiz de Fora, in the interior of the state of Minas Gerais, Eduardo David published his history of the railway under the imprint of his professional body the Associação de Engenheiros da E.F. Central do Brasil (AECEB).⁸⁰ His audience was his railway colleagues, as he indicated in his first sentence:

Effectively, the Central do Brasil railway does not exist anymore. The lines that for many years have been under a single command, are today divided and in some cases closed down. But, for our AECEB, the old borders are still valid. Therefore it is important to remember our origins.⁸¹

In the space of one hundred pages of text and pictures Eduardo David presents a nostalgic history, concluding with the statement that,

In some small way, if I have managed to awake an interest in the past of the Central do Brasil Railway, a respect for the former railway workers and, through an understanding of our origins, a greater capacity to diagnose and resolve the problems of the future, then I will have reached the objective that I set for myself.⁸²

In keeping with the genre of Brazilian railway historical writing, David plays down the British involvement. The official inauguration day of the *Central* is described as the 'birth', and everything before this moment of ten o'clock in the morning of 29 March 1858 is the 'pré-natal' [gestation] phase. He also includes a deft Brazilianisation of Thomas Cochrane, a British man awarded one of the first railway concessions, by mentioning his family connections. He describes

⁷⁹ Boris Fausto, *A Concise History of Brazil*, trans. Arthur Brakel (Cambridge, 1999), p.313

⁸⁰ Eduardo Gonçalves David, *127 Anos de Ferrovia* (Juiz de Fora, MG, 1985). The *E.F. Central do Brasil* linked the states of Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, and Minas Gerais. In 2006 its remaining network carried freight whilst the suburban lines around Rio de Janeiro were used for passenger services.

⁸¹ David, *127 Anos de Ferrovia*, p. 5.

⁸² David, *127 Anos de Ferrovia*, pp. 91-92.

Cochrane as a homeopathic doctor and father-in-law of the writer José de Alencar.⁸³

David tells the story of the *Central do Brasil* railway as a religious cycle. His section headings are 'gestation', 'birth', 'infancy', 'youth', 'maturity', 'old age', 'death and rebirth', and finally 'new phase'. The modernity that the railway brings is, for him, determined by Brazilian actors: the coffee barons, the politicians and the railway engineers. What David shares with Ferreira Neto, Benévolo and Vasconcellos is a desire to fit the railway into a classificatory system in order to explain, and come to terms with, its complexity. Whilst David uses a religious cycle of birth, death and resurrection, Ferreira Neto follows a political timeline that reflects the era of the early 1970s when it was published. Benévolo also uses the instruments of politics, by adopting the clauses of a railway contract as his chapter headings. Finally, Vasconcellos approaches the railway as a landscape to be listed, quantified and recorded in alphabetical order of the towns through which it passed. His work represents the appearance in Brazil of the railway gazetteer.

5. Autobiographies

Away from historical narratives of a general nature, this chapter now considers a number of memoirs published by people who worked and travelled on the railways. They include reminiscences from the state of São Paulo of the *São Paulo Railway*, the *Cia Paulista*, the *E.F. Sorocabana* and the *E.F. Noroeste do Brasil*. In the states of Minas Gerais and Rio de Janeiro there are memories from the *E.F. Leopoldina*. These reminiscences are of some value because they represent the views of mostly non-elites, with the professions of those who are featured in these publications ranging from telegraphist to station master and from electrician to government inspector of railways. There has been a

⁸³ David, *127 Anos de Ferrovia*, p. 6. For details of José de Alencar's place in the Brazilian literary canon see: Randal Johnson, 'Brazilian Narrative', in John King (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Modern Latin American Culture* (Cambridge, 2004), pp. 119-135. Dr Cochrane was a cousin of Lord Thomas Cochrane, 1775-1859, an admiral of the British Navy. See: Eugenio Vargas Garcia, *Anglo-American Rivalry in Brazil: The Case of the 1920s*, University of Oxford Centre for Brazilian Studies Working Paper CBS-14-00(P) (Oxford, 2000), p. 20.

significant increase in the number of these mostly self-published memoirs, four of which mentioned were written since 2000, together with others in circulation elsewhere in Brazil.⁸⁴ This body of work bears comparison with Britain, where Tim Strangleman has studied working-class railway autobiography.⁸⁵ He finds a similar large quantity of published railway recollections that vary at times from nostalgia to self-promotion, and which have been produced by an almost identical group of skilled male craft workers.⁸⁶ In Brazil's case these works also include a group not analysed by Strangleman: white-collar and middle-management grades. Whilst approaching these Brazilian works with caution due to any tendencies by the authors to look back nostalgically over a working life and the temptations by some to play up their role in the events of history, the publications are read here for the way in which these workers encounter the foreign technology and the British managers.⁸⁷ They are used here to provide further evidence of the workings of informal empire.

Adolpho Augusto Pinto, as well as publishing his 'Historia da Viação Publica de São Paulo (Brasil)' in 1903, wrote a series of personal memoirs before he died in 1930. These were apparently found by a cousin in the family papers in 1959 on the centenary of Pinto's birth, and with the support of the newspaper *O Estado de São Paulo* were prepared for publication.⁸⁸ An edition of his autobiography was printed and published under an imprint of the State of São Paulo in 1970 and, given its date of printing, has an official feel to its physical presentation that emphasises the military dictatorship years.⁸⁹ Hélio Damante, who writes a preface dated August 1969 to this edition, observes that Pinto lived

⁸⁴ Gabriel Ruiz Pelegrina, *Memórias de um Ferroviário* (Bauru, SP, 2000); Joaquim Moreira Júnior, *Estações da Minha Vida* (Belo Horizonte, MG, 2002); Vilma Viana, *O Ventre da Maria-Fumaça* (Porto Alegre, RS, 2006); João Ferreira, 'Memórias de Paranapiacaba', in João Ferreira, Silvia Helena Passarelli & Marco Antonio Perrone Santos, *Paranapiacaba: Estudos e Memória* (Santo André, SP, 1990), pp. 1-31.

⁸⁵ Tim Strangleman, 'Constructing the Past: Railway History from Below or a Study in Nostalgia?', *Journal of Transport History*, Third Series, 23 (2002), 147-158.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 154-155.

⁸⁷ Tim Strangleman urges caution, for the same reasons of nostalgia and inaccuracy, when reading British railway memoirs but remains a strong supporter of their inclusion as research source materials. *Ibid.*, pp. 154-156.

⁸⁸ Hélio Damante, 'Prefácio', in Adolfo (sic) Augusto Pinto, *Minha Vida: Memórias de um Engenheiro Paulista* (São Paulo, SP, 1970), p. 5.

⁸⁹ Pinto, *Minha Vida*.

through the end of the monarchy and up to the beginning of the Getúlio Vargas era.⁹⁰ For the reader he is introduced as a 'vigilant nationalist' who stopped the British-owned *São Paulo Railway* overcharging its freight customers, and prevented 'international appetites' from taking over the Brazilian privately-owned *Cia Paulista* railway.⁹¹

The main text written by Pinto is dated in the introduction as 22 April 1929, his seventy-third birthday and one year before his death.⁹² Over the course of one hundred and thirty-five pages he takes us from his Catholic upbringing in São Paulo state as one of seventeen children, his training as a civil engineer at the Escola Politécnica in Rio de Janeiro, and his first job with the *Companhia Cantareira e Esgotos* which supplied water and sewage treatment services in São Paulo.⁹³ He finishes in his 'serene and tranquil old age' with a declaration that he has never accepted political positions, despite being offered them, and reaffirms his religious faith with details of his good works for the Church in the city of São Paulo.⁹⁴

This autobiography serves to set Pinto on a pedestal in the Paulista railway industry. It was, apparently, he alone who during his two years (1885-1887) working as the national government's 'engenheiro fiscal' (auditor and inspector of railways) responsible for checking the *São Paulo Railway* discovered that the company was charging freight tariffs based on a 'fictitious' rate of ninety kilometres instead of the real distance between São Paulo and Santos of seventy-nine, and subsequently reduced the tariff rates by some fourteen percent: 'the first reduction carried out by the *São Paulo Railway*'.⁹⁵ Since he says this case was one of 'high importance' for the interests of São

⁹⁰ Hélio Damante, 'Prefácio', p.6.

⁹¹ Ibid, p. 7.

⁹² Pinto, *Minha Vida*, p. 10.

⁹³ Ibid, pp. 12-23. For a brief review of the *Companhia Cantareira e Esgotos* between 1877 and 1892 see Gerald Michael Greenfield, 'Dependency and the Urban Experience: São Paulo's Public Service Sector, 1885-1913', *Journal of Latin American Studies*, 10 (1978), pp. 47-53.

⁹⁴ Pinto, *Minha Vida*, p. 135 and pp. 103-120.

⁹⁵ Ibid, pp. 27-29.

Paulo, his vigilance seems to have paid off despite what he describes as resistance from the railway company.⁹⁶

Pinto then spent a further thirty-six years, until his retirement, with the *Cia Paulista*, a railway owned by Brazilian investors.⁹⁷ He rose to become the head of the central administrative offices of the company and engineering adviser to the director.⁹⁸ He describes how one of his actions was to open a public telegraph office in the administration block and how 'the *São Paulo Railway* immediately protested against the opening of this agency to the public,' because it competed directly against them.⁹⁹ Triumphantly he records that 'it was not hard to help the directors defend the interests of the [*Cia. Paulista*], make the *Inglêsa* withdraw its complaints, and maintain a service which was of great help to the public and a new source of revenue for the *Paulista*'.¹⁰⁰

It is, overall, a personal story that serves to insert Adolpho Pinto into Brazil's railway history and to glorify one man's crusade against the British-owned *São Paulo Railway*. There is no mention of these two stories in any other Brazilian histories of the railways, and they represent the high points of the life he describes for himself. We find a man who has risen from humble beginnings, fought against the foreign railway interests, gained righteous victories and written an account of his own life as if it were a justification for his time on earth before going to meet his Maker.

The *São Paulo Railway* had, under the terms of its concession, a monopoly in rail transport between São Paulo and the port of Santos. No other rail line was allowed to be laid within thirty kilometres in each direction.¹⁰¹ That was finally ended when the *Sorocabana Railway* opened its tortuous and lengthy Mayrink-Santos link in 1937 after nine years of expensive building work.¹⁰² It

⁹⁶ Ibid, pp. 27-29.

⁹⁷ Ibid, p. 79.

⁹⁸ Ibid, p. 33.

⁹⁹ Ibid, pp. 33-34.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid, p. 34.

¹⁰¹ Lavander Jr and Mendes, *SPR, Memórias de uma Inglesa*, p. 15.

¹⁰² Ibid, p. 174.

was over twice the length of the *São Paulo Railway* route, but for nationalists it represented a snub to the British: Brazilian engineering had succeeded in breaking a foreign monopoly.¹⁰³ Antônio Francisco Gaspar was an electrician who joined the *Sorocabana* in 1909, starting work at a rural branch line station at the age of eighteen as a porter.¹⁰⁴ In 1930 he published his 'Historico da Estrada de Ferro Sorocabana', a collection of documents charting the first five years of the railway company's life which emphasised the wholehearted commitment of Brazilian investors, managers, directors, engineers and construction workers.¹⁰⁵ Because of the book's timeframe it studiously avoids the short-lived involvement between 1907 and 1914 of North American directors and European shareholders and the later ownership by the Brazilian authorities after this group's bankruptcy.¹⁰⁶ Gaspar's book about the early years of the *Sorocabana* does, however, end with a chapter titled 'curious notes' which concludes with a credit to the man who took many of the photographs for his book. He was, according to Gaspar, 'Frank José Speers, the brother of the former superintendent of the *São Paulo Railway* and close friend of George Oetterer, the first General Inspector of the *Sorocabana*'.¹⁰⁷ In 1928 we are told that Frank J. Speers became ill and moved to Santos to recuperate but died there one year later.¹⁰⁸ So ends Gaspar's book, with the frailty of the English: a nation added as a curiosity at the end of a triumphal account of the first five years of the *Sorocabana*.

Such an volume is likely to have been well received in Brazil in 1930 when it was first published, and Gaspar reveals his admiration for Getúlio Vargas in a separate book of autobiographical observations entitled 'Short History of the Mayrink-Santos: My Work in the Service of this Line between Mayrink and Samaritá' published thirty-two years later in his retirement.¹⁰⁹ The work is a collection of official contracts, railway documents and newspaper

¹⁰³ Ibid, p. 176.

¹⁰⁴ Antônio Francisco Gaspar, *Pequeno Histórico da Mayrink-Santos: Meus Serviços Prestados a Essa Linha entre Mayrink e Samaritá* (Sorocabana, SP, 1962), p. 53.

¹⁰⁵ Antônio Francisco Gaspar, *Histórico do Início, Fundação, Construção (sic) e Inauguração da Estrada de Ferro Sorocabana: 1870-1875* (São Paulo, SP, 1930).

¹⁰⁶ Gauld, *The Last Titan: Percival Farquhar 1864-1953*, pp. 173-176.

¹⁰⁷ Gaspar, *Histórico do Início*, p. 237.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid, pp. 237-238.

¹⁰⁹ Gaspar, *Pequeno Histórico da Mayrink-Santos*, pp. 164-167.

articles mixed in with observations from his personal diaries and poetry. He spent his working life with the *Sorocabana* and as an electrician was part of the team that installed the telegraph along the Mayrink-Santos line.¹¹⁰ The monopoly-busting route accepted freight in 1937, and the official opening was in the following year when the president, Getúlio Vargas, travelled in the end carriage of a six-car luxury train. Gaspar describes the 'huge crowd that ran to the end of the platform' in Santos, and Vargas who 'appeared at the carriage door smiling for the people waiting to see him'.¹¹¹ He concludes that 'the transport of passengers on the Mayrink-Santos link had, in this manner, the most brilliant inauguration'.¹¹² Here again, another writer is inserting himself into a nationalistic reading of events in the railway history of Brazil: the electrician writing his memoirs at the age of seventy stressing how his working life had been dedicated to the 'progress of our nation'.¹¹³

Ralph Mennucci Giesbrecht begins his series of short essays about the railways in the State of São Paulo with a story told by his grandfather in 1912.¹¹⁴ It is a journey by a young man along a rural stretch of the *Cia Paulista* network, and his romantic flirtation with a girl opposite him in the carriage who had 'ebony hair ... big black mysterious eyes ... and strong full lips that inspired the diabolic temptation of a kiss'.¹¹⁵ It is but a fleeting exchange of glances as the girl gets out of the train a couple of stops later, but the episode is given poignancy by Giesbrecht through its use as the opening to a collection of memories and recollections by family and friends of a bygone age in the state of São Paulo. For him it is an idyll where people travelling on trains could meet and converse, and watch the beautiful countryside on what was always a slow journey compared to modern buses, cars and aeroplanes.¹¹⁶ He recognises that from the 1950s decline began to set in as the railways in São Paulo, by now

¹¹⁰ Ibid, pp. 118-120.

¹¹¹ Ibid, p. 166.

¹¹² Ibid, p. 167.

¹¹³ Ibid, p.5.

¹¹⁴ Ralph Mennucci Giesbrecht, *Um Dia o Trem Passou por Aqui* (São Paulo, SP, 2001), pp. 15-16.

¹¹⁵ Ibid, p. 15.

¹¹⁶ Ibid, p. 41.

under the control of government either at State or federal level, were beginning to cut costs.¹¹⁷ He expresses his anger at the persistent closure of stations and branch lines, of overcrowding, badly maintained rolling stock and of poor service.¹¹⁸

The second half of his book becomes a lament for the passing of the passenger railways of rural São Paulo state.¹¹⁹ Giesbrecht mixes oral testimony with descriptions of abandoned stations, strikes, public unrest and more passenger service closures through the 1990s. Mention is made of several riots by passengers during the morning rush hour between Jundiaí and Estação da Luz on the route of the former *São Paulo Railway* in the 1980s and 90s because of late running or non-existent trains.¹²⁰ He concludes that when services out of the city of Campinas were finally stopped in 1999 'the few passengers who got on the trains were fanatics in search of adventure or beggars'.¹²¹ His history is a patchwork of experiences from the second half of the twentieth century of passengers who travelled the lines of the interior of São Paulo state. His anger is directed at those in charge of railway policy from the 1950s to the present day; his sadness is that a lack of care by the authorities towards the railway system had led to their inevitable decline and the end of long distance travel in São Paulo state. He ends with the reflections of a friend who exclaimed to him "My God! What happened to our railways?"¹²² Giesbrecht's book is a carefully constructed critique of Brazilian government policy towards the railways from the nationalisation of the 1940s and 50s and the privatisations of the 1990s. He represents a new generation of railway historians, one less concerned with the struggles over informal empire for the control of the idea of the railway in Brazil, and more worried about what the Brazilian authorities themselves have created from the remnants of the ensemble once the foreigners have left. Ralph Giesbrecht finds the Brazilian government agencies negligent in their duty of care.

¹¹⁷ Ibid, p. 63.

¹¹⁸ Ibid, pp. 63-73.

¹¹⁹ Ibid, pp. 81-141.

¹²⁰ Ibid, p. 117.

¹²¹ Ibid, p. 134.

¹²² Ibid, p. 141.

Not a work of single autobiography, but a collection of oral histories recounted by the sons and daughters of railway workers, 'Meu Pai Foi Ferroviário' is a book published as the result of a project undertaken in Jundiaí in 2006.¹²³ The approach of this volume is unusual because it delivers railway testimonies at one remove. It consists of sixty-six edited essays written by five researchers who spoke to the offspring of railway workers in the town, asking them to recall their parents' working lives. In this respect it is a book of memories about memories and demonstrates how the recollections of the railway ensemble have been handed down from one generation to another. The title, translated as 'My Father Was a Railwayman', encapsulates this oral inheritance. What emerges is a patchwork of memories stretching back over much of the twentieth century; at times sentimental and mawkish for their father (no mothers are mentioned for their work on the railways) but at others brutally honest about the long hours, dangerous conditions and low pay of many of those who worked for the *Cia Paulista* and *São Paulo Railway*. José Tonelli started as a workman on the *E. F. Santos à Jundiaí* (formerly the *São Paulo Railway*) and rose to become a signalman.¹²⁴ He worked nineteen years on the railway and, according to his son, after an eight-hour shift he worked part time as a carpenter as well as a stonemason in order to earn sufficient money for his growing family.¹²⁵ What makes this collection of oral histories significant is that these are the lives of the locomotive cleaners, the metal shop workers, the boilermakers, the office workers, the station masters, and the drivers and firemen who made up the working classes of these two railway companies in São Paulo state. The majority are of Italian immigrant descent and their sons and daughters make a point of this in their oral testimonies, reflecting the background of many of those who settled the interior of São Paulo state from the 1880s onwards. The family of one worker, Fioravante Basilio Maglio, remarks that by 1945 more than half of the staff of the *E.F. Mogiana* was Italian or of Italian descent.¹²⁶ A number reflect on the fact that their fathers took part in industrial action against their employers for

¹²³ Eusébio Pereira dos Santos (ed.), *Meu Pai Foi Ferroviário* (Jundiaí, SP, 2006).

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 93.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 93.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 197.

improved pay and conditions and a similar number of testimonies state that a perk of the job was free passes for travel on the railway, or reduced fares on other lines. José Storarri worked for the *Cia. Paulista* for twenty-eight years, until his retirement in 1975. His daughter recalls how she was taken on an eight-hour ride to see her grandparents in a first-class carriage during the school holidays, all on the company's free passes.¹²⁷ The number of testimonies that mention the travel concessions for railway workers suggests that this benefit was held in high esteem by many workers. It enabled them to spend holidays with parents and grandparents who lived many kilometres away, a small respite from the hard working lives their fathers experienced. Despite this there is a degree of nostalgia for the industry that emerges from these oral histories. The final testimony in the book is from the son of Hermenegildo Martinelli, for forty years a railway man, who by the time he retired was responsible for the accounts department of the *Cia. Paulista*.¹²⁸ His son says,

If Hermenegildo were still alive he would be very sad about the situation of the railways today. With the passage of time the railway has been run down by unknown administrators. What we need to remember is that the railway is one of the most romantic means of transport in the world; it is sentimental, beautiful, efficient and economic. It is important to us, in spite of all the tradition we had, in spite of all the European technology that was installed here by its best technicians. It is a shame!¹²⁹

This is the son of a railway worker expressing regret for the way Brazilian administrators have, since the 1950s, allowed the railway industry to fall into decline. This is portrayed as 'others', unknown political forces somewhere away from the local and regional management of the railway where his father worked. These sentiments will be raised again in chapter 9 when the volunteer preservation movement of the 1970s is analysed and the manner in which it negotiated with federal railway agencies in order to preserve the steam heritage.

¹²⁷ Ibid, pp. 150-151.

¹²⁸ Ibid, pp. 245-248.

¹²⁹ Ibid, p. 247.

Joaquim Moreira Júnior was persuaded by his daughter to write down his recollections over a period of seven years and to have them published in 2002.¹³⁰ His autobiography serves to validate his life as a railway worker and a politician. This is, after Roberto DaMatta, part of a Brazilian tendency to emphasise the 'person' above the 'individual'.¹³¹ DaMatta argues that the Brazilian archetypal hero is never seen as a common man but as a special 'person' who becomes a role model, and is perhaps even above the normal rules of society.¹³² Conversely he regards an 'individual' in its Brazilian sense as being someone who has voluntarily become as indistinguishable as possible amongst the mass of common people.¹³³ His argument centres on the concept that the idea of an 'I' is associated in Brazil with the idea of a 'person' and not the 'individual' who is merely the indistinguishable member of a crowd.¹³⁴

After all, how can a semihierarchized society operate with a heavy dose of individualism and egalitarianism? To individualize means, above all, to detach oneself from such traditional units as the house and family...¹³⁵

Such thinking would suggest that writing an autobiography and thereby inserting one's name into history is a way in which an 'individual' who has spent his life as simply part of the system can rise up to become a 'person'. Joaquim Moreira Júnior divides his life into four 'stations' and the narrative becomes a journey from infancy, through his work on the railways, to his political life and finally his voyage to Europe to visit Italy and Portugal, the countries of his parents.

Moreira Júnior says he followed his father and worked at the Além Paraíba railway workshops of the 'English' *E. F. Leopoldina* between 1924 and 1944.¹³⁶ He worked closely with the British managers of the workshops and was

¹³⁰ Moreira Júnior, *Estações da Minha Vida*.

¹³¹ DaMatta, *Carnivals, Rogues, and Heroes*, p. 204.

¹³² *Ibid.*, p. 204.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, p. 203.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 173.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 182.

¹³⁶ Moreira Júnior, *Estações da Minha Vida*, p. 11, and 22. The *E. F. Leopoldina* was opened in 1874 funded by Brazilian and British capital. It went into liquidation in 1897 re-emerging as a British-registered company, 'The Leopoldina Railway Limited', until being taken over by the Brazilian state in 1950. See Schoppa, *150 Anos do Trem no Brasil*, pp. 86-89; Antonio Soukef

eventually promoted to head of the administrative office.¹³⁷ The view he presents of these foreign railway staff who managed some one-thousand workers at the repair shops in Além Paraíba is a mixture of dedication and bemusement. The 'English' were controlling masters who ran the department with strict rules to be obeyed, yet they did not seem to be able to live 'Brazilian' lives.¹³⁸ The company provided water, basic education and housing for workers, but it was always necessary to treat the English with respect and a certain distance.¹³⁹ Yet at the same time he identifies what he regards as strange extremes of behaviour in his male English-speaking superiors: how two of them dressed up as bride and bridegroom for a carnival party (their conduct later led to their dismissal by the company), and how another was always methodical and punctual at work, always wore a white suit and panama hat, and drank whisky, but did not mix with women, 'despite Além Paraíba always entering the "Miss Minas Gerais" contest and winning two or three times'.¹⁴⁰ Moreira Júnior insinuates that perhaps there was something wrong with the sexual preferences of these foreigners, and he leaves the reader with enough doubt to be able to regard the 'English' as lacking the fully rounded personalities of Brazilians whose ancestors, like the author's, were from southern Europe. As to the end of the foreign concession on the *E. F. Leopoldina*, Moreira Júnior explains that with the rise of trade union power in the 1930s 'the English could no longer maintain discipline in the workplace' and so the railway company passed into Brazilian state ownership.¹⁴¹ A similar othering of English railway workers occurs in the reminiscences of João Ferreira whose father worked for the *São Paulo Railway* in the late 1930s and early 1940s.¹⁴² Ferreira talks about 'os ingleses' (the English) but they are never named. He mentions plenty of his Brazilian compatriots but 'the English' remain as ghosts in the story, playing tennis in their club in the company town of Paranapiacaba at the upper winding station of

Junior and Vito D'Alessio, *Leopoldina Railway: 150 Anos de Ferrovia no Brasil* (São Paulo, SP, 2005), p. 71.

¹³⁷ Moreira Júnior, *Estações da Minha Vida*, p. 89.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 57.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 37-38, 54, and 57.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 44-45 and pp. 92-94.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 133.

¹⁴² Ferreira, 'Memórias de Paranapiacaba', pp. 1-31.

the railway. He mentions a 'Mr Harp' who lived in the divisional manager's residence, but says he never had the opportunity to visit the grand house.¹⁴³

In contrast to Moreira Júnior's working life amongst English bosses, Gabriel Ruiz Pelegrina recounts his life working as a telegraphist and electrician on the *E. F. Noroeste do Brasil* from 1940 to 1978.¹⁴⁴ Like the Moreira Júnior, Pelegrina also entered local politics and both autobiographies include their share of name dropping and self congratulation at the public service given by each railwayman. The *E. F. Noroeste do Brasil* was owned by the Brazilian Government, managed by army colonels, and was run as a military operation even down to the job titles and uniforms of the various departments.¹⁴⁵ In army fashion he recalls fondly his staff number (7307) and mixes his own personal accounts with a more general, unreferenced, history of this railway from the start of construction in 1905.¹⁴⁶ In this manner he is adding his name to the history of the railway and stressing his importance in events.

6. Concluding remarks

This chapter has examined a range of three styles of written histories, firstly the traditionally structured narratives published between the 1880s and the early 1970s that established a framework for subsequent writing on the subject. These were primarily descriptive, occasionally discursive and at times overtly nationalistic. The second group of writings is identified with the emergence of a fully-fledged academic body of work from the 1980s onwards which include references and the wider use of primary documentary sources and oral testimonies. However the tendency has been noted for these works to rely at times on the first group and for assumptions and generalisations to be repeated in these newer works. Despite this there is evidence of a growing body of micro-studies which are re-examining the place of particular parts of the railway industry in Brazil. Specific examples would include a study on women who

¹⁴³ Ibid, p. 28.

¹⁴⁴ Pelegrina, *Memórias de um Ferroviário*.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid, pp. 31-33.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid, p. 59.

worked for the *E. F. Noroeste do Brasil* and the workforce training and apprenticeship schemes at the *Cia Paulista*.¹⁴⁷ Both studies draw on primary sources and oral histories to offer particular insights into working life on the railways in the interior of São Paulo state in the mid 20th century. The third group of writings is classified as works of reminiscences. It includes autobiographies by former railway workers, written family portraits of parents, and edited collections of interviews with retired workers and their sons and daughters. This third grouping, which has emerged in the past decade, serves to balance what has previously been a top-heavy historical view of the railways in Brazil. The autobiographies published in the last ten years have had a tendency for the writers to attempt to highlight their own importance to events in Brazilian railway history; this is to be expected and does require caution when reading such accounts. However, despite such reservations they can offer a potential glimpse into the views and attitudes of 'ordinary' workers rather than the owners, chief engineers and national political leaders.

The 'traditional' histories published before the 1970s were written for the most part to be read by friends, politicians, sponsors, fellow engineers and rail executives of the men who authored the books. Direct criticism of the ruling authorities, the structuring and restructuring of the railway system, their former employers, the treatment of passengers, and the working regimes was generally avoided. Riots, unrest, strikes and revolts, of which there were a number over the years, are not highlighted.¹⁴⁸ Indeed, worker unrest on the Brazilian railways and the influence of trade unions is a potential field for further research. Some of the oral testimonies of the children of railway workers collected in the volume 'Meu Pai Foi Ferroviário' make passing reference to occasions when their fathers either joined strikes or suffered intimidations from pickets, but these are

¹⁴⁷ Possas, *Mulheres, Trens e Trilhos*; Tenca, *Senhores dos Trilhos*.

¹⁴⁸ Michel M. Hall & Marco Aurélio Garcia, 'Urban Labor', in Michael L. Conniff & Frank D. McCann (eds.), *Modern Brazil: Elites and Masses in Historical Perspective* (Lincoln, NE, 1989), pp. 161-191; José Alvaro Moisés and Verena Martinez-Alier, 'Urban Transport and Popular Violence: The Case of Brazil', *Past and Present*, 86 (1980), 174-192.

consistently told in veiled terms without mention of the actual context of each incident.¹⁴⁹

What the 'traditional' historical accounts published before 1972 did offer was a uniformity of style that attempted to link the linear development of the railway technology to the apparatus of state in the form of the decrees, laws and concession contracts issued by provincial and national governments. That the state appeared to be 'in control' sent a nationalistic message that was further entrenched by the manner in which non-Brazilian names were shortened, changed or written out entirely. This descriptive style of writing persisted until the 1970s when more analytical approaches began to emerge. However, as has already been mentioned, in the case of Odilon de Matos and his examination of the linkages between the geographical spread of the coffee plantations and the building of railway lines, analysis was based on the foundations of the long-standing nationalistic discourse.

This narrative style presented to the Brazilian public who read these works was the story of a technology that embodied modernity, and had become specifically Brazilian rather than a foreign engineering triumph. Such a style of explanation is identified by Emilia Viotti da Costa as a persistent tendency by Brazilian historians to search for a 'Brazilian specificity' that marks out the difference from Europe.¹⁵⁰ The process of transculturation here has involved a negotiation about the railway in Brazil, from the traditional histories, to the academic analyses and the oral testimonies. Instead of the similarities it is the specific differences (from Europe in general and Britain in particular) that have been identified by these writers. In each of these three groups of narrative works the foreign railway technology is approached, moulded, and cast in a Brazilian form. Where Europeans may have regarded the railway as evolving from the first experiments and trials by Hackworth, the Stephensons and others, for Brazilians it was as if the railway came to be portrayed as an act of Creation with the

¹⁴⁹ Santos, *Meu Pai Foi Ferroviário*. For example the testimonies concerning José Sebastião Tonelli, a striker, pp. 92-94, and João Mazoni, a strike breaker, pp. 113-115.

¹⁵⁰ Costa, *Brazilian Empire: Myths & Histories*, p. 172.

English engineers quickly written out of the early historical narratives. The analysis of the process of the transculturation of the railway ensemble continues with its treatment in fictional written narratives: here, as the next chapter demonstrates, it becomes a problematic duality that pitches the city against the country and modernity against tradition.

1. Introduction

From the railway as represented in works of factual history this study now turns its attention to fictional representations of the ensemble in Brazilian literature. The aim is to build up an understanding of what exactly was being negotiated during the process of transculturation of the large technical cultural system. The novels analysed in this chapter, which were published between 1888 and 1980, reveal a common tendency to present the railway as a tension between opposites. These are identified as the dualities of urban/rural and modernity/tradition and are seen not just in the novels but also, as will be discussed in the chapters that follow, in television and cinema, art, and songs and poetry about the railway. This tendency forms the persistent questioning of the railway ensemble during the transculturation of the railway in Brazil.

Randal Johnson notes how the novel as a form of cultural production was slow at first to emerge, and 'Brazil's literary narrative ...gained full force only in the second half of the nineteenth century'.¹ This coincided with the coming of the railways and the emergence of an educated bourgeoisie.² From the 1850s this small group was witnessing the technology being built, using it for the first time and was beginning to include it in their literary output. Gilberto Freyre puts the full impact of the railways slightly later when he says of the nineteenth century '...only in the seventies did they become a serious factor in the economic and social life of the country'.³ Writing styles were at this time heavily influenced by Europe even if the subject matter itself was about Brazil.⁴ An example from 1888 is the first work to be discussed in this chapter: Júlio Ribeiro's *A Carne*

¹ Randal Johnson, 'Brazilian Narrative' in John King (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Modern Latin American Culture* (Cambridge, 2004), p. 119.

² Nelson Werneck Sodré, *Síntese de História da Cultura Brasileira* (20th edn., Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 2003), p. 54.

³ Gilberto Freyre, 'Social Life in Brazil in the Middle of the Nineteenth Century', *The Hispanic American Historical Review*, 5 (1922), p. 605.

⁴ Johnson, 'Brazilian Narrative', pp. 120-124; Roberto Schwarz, *Misplaced Ideas: Essays on Brazilian Culture*, ed. John Gledson (London, 1992), p. 46.

[The Flesh] which follows the style of Émile Zola and presents a starkly naturalistic description of events.⁵

Literary historians who have analysed this period of writing in Brazil have used genre titles adopted by French literature, reflecting the strong influences of Parisian culture on Brazilian literary output during the long nineteenth century.⁶ Gerald Martin describes Joaquim Maria Machado de Assis, a writer who adopted French literary styles, as

...Latin America's only truly great novelist in the century after Independence [post 1822] and one of the masters of the genre [of city-novels akin to Balzac and Dickens] in the Western world.⁷

Published two years after Ribeiro's work, 'Quincas Borba' is the second novel to be analysed here. It uses a journey by train as a backdrop to life-changing events which bring into conflict the rural and the urban.⁸

From the beginning of the twentieth century literary styles emerged that were identifiably Brazilian rather than versions of European genres.⁹ Two writers have been selected for discussion here, firstly two of Jorge Amado's novels that include the railway in their narrative backdrop: *Gabriela, Clove and Cinnamon* (1958) and *Tereza Batista: Home from the Wars* (1972).¹⁰ Finally, from 1980 there is Márcio Souza's novel, *Mad Maria*, which explores the thin line between civilisation and barbarity during the building of a railway in the inhospitable jungle of the Brazilian Amazon.¹¹

⁵ Júlio Ribeiro, *A Carne* (Cotia, SP, 2002 [1888]); Johnson, 'Brazilian Narrative', p. 124. Zola himself used the railway to dramatic effect in his 1890 novel, *La Bête Humaine*.

⁶ Piers Armstrong, *Third World Literary Fortunes: Brazilian Culture and its International Reception* (Cranbury, NJ, 1999), p. 25.

⁷ Gerald Martin, *Journeys through the Labyrinth: Latin American Fiction in the Twentieth Century* (London, 1989), p.108.

⁸ Machado de Assis, *Quincas Borba*, trans. Gregory Rabassa (Oxford, 1998 [Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 1891]).

⁹ Johnson, 'Brazilian Narrative', pp.124-127.

¹⁰ Jorge Amado, *Gabriela, Clove and Cinnamon*, trans. James. L. Taylor & William Grossman (New York, NY, 1988 [*Gabriela, Cravo e Canela*, São Paulo, SP, 1958]); Jorge Amado, *Tereza Batista: Home from the Wars* trans. Barbara Shelby (London, 1983 [*Tereza Batista Cansada de Guerra*, São Paulo, SP, 1972]).

¹¹ Márcio Souza, *Mad Maria*, trans. Thomas Colchie (New York, NY, 1985 [Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 1980]).

Just as Brazilian literary styles were slow to emerge in comparison with Europe, widespread demand for such output was at first limited. The printed word in Brazil in the mid-nineteenth century was a media form produced by and for the elites that by the late twentieth century had begun to include the growing middle class. As Randal Johnson notes,

...fictional narrative has largely been a form of expression produced by and for a privileged minority of Brazilians. In absolute terms the number of people with the cultural disposition and cultural capital necessary to consume literary works has grown progressively over time, as access to public education and literacy has expanded, but it continues to be limited in relation to the country's total population.¹²

The reading of books in Brazil had thus been for the nineteenth and much of the twentieth century the preserve of the educated elites, a market estimated to have been from 1870 to 1970 consistently around five or six percent of the population.¹³ It is estimated that in 1890 as much as 89% of the nation was illiterate.¹⁴ William Rowe and Vivian Schelling assert that in Latin America the written word had 'tended to play an oppressive role', and a ruling elite may have used it to maintain power in the manner in which religious and legal rules were laid down upon indigenous peoples.¹⁵ The railway in Brazilian fictional narrative was largely seen through the eyes of the members of the elite who wrote about it, and as this study demonstrates this group's negotiating of a meaning for the railway would in due course come to be replicated in television versions of a number of these literary works.

From a very low base, the absolute number of readers of printed works increased steadily during the period under consideration. It is reported that 173,000 books were produced in São Paulo state in 1926, a figure that had risen

¹² Johnson, 'Brazilian Narrative', p. 119.

¹³ Laurence Hallewell, *Books in Brazil: A History of the Publishing Trade* (Metuchen, NJ, 1982), pp. 428-429.

¹⁴ Eva Bueno, 'Brazilian Naturalism and the Politics of Origin', *MLN*, 107 (1992), pp. 377-378.

¹⁵ William Rowe and Vivian Schelling, *Memory and Modernity: Popular Culture in Latin America* (London, 1991), p. 205.

to 6.7 million by 1946.¹⁶ In comparison there were 4.6 million inhabitants in 1920 rising to 7.2 million in 1940.¹⁷ Even if the proportionate increase in books was significant it still represented an approximate ratio of less than one book produced per year in the 1940s per head of the total population of the state of São Paulo.

From the military coup of 1964 onwards artistic output was gradually restricted and by the early 1970s official censorship was being imposed on many forms of cultural production.¹⁸ However Tânia Pellegrini argues that despite the restrictions the actual censorship that was implemented was patchy and did not fully prevent a growing publishing industry responding to demand.

This public, although restricted to the middle class, was no longer composed of a tiny elite as in the forties and fifties. Such factors as demographic increase and a quantitative growth in elementary and secondary education contributed to its expansion, helping to shape a basically urban, schooled body of cultural consumers.¹⁹

The point about an urban readership is important to bear in mind as this chapter suggests that one of the dualities of the railway is between city and countryside. Pellegrini presents figures which suggest that the national publishing market was expanding rapidly, 'from 43.6 million books published in 1966 to 254.4 million in 1980'.²⁰ This, she argues, is a dramatic increase even given Brazil's economic inequalities and pervading high illiteracy rates. Although she cautions that behind these figures there were only a handful of Brazilian authors who could be classed as best-sellers.

The few writers who were successful – ranging from the distinctive Jorge Amado to the more modern Márcio Souza – were bricks in the façade

¹⁶ Richard M. Morse, 'São Paulo Since Independence; A Cultural Interpretation', *The Hispanic American Historical Review*, 34 (1954), p. 440.

¹⁷ Pierre Monbeig, *Pioneiros e Fazendeiros de São Paulo*, trans. Ary França and Raul de Andrade e Silva (São Paulo, SP, 1984), p.24.

¹⁸ Tânia Pellegrini and Sabrina E. Wilson, 'Brazil in the 1970s: Literature and Politics', *Latin American Perspectives*, 21 (1994), p. 59; Boris Fausto, *A Concise History of Brazil*, trans. Arthur Brakel (Cambridge, 1999), pp. 290-291.

¹⁹ Pellegrini and Wilson, 'Brazil in the 1970s', p. 59.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 61.

that disguised the inertia of a market frozen for decades at the same printings of 3,000-5,000 copies per title.²¹

Randal Johnson notes that 'even [in 2000] ... it is not uncommon for a novel's initial print run to be no more than 3,000 copies'.²² Silviano Santiago calls figures such as these 'ridiculous and depressing' in comparison to European or North American publishing.²³ Nelson Werneck Sodré points out that the present day geographical market for books continues to be in the generally more prosperous centre-south of Brazil.²⁴

What this development of publishing suggests is that from very limited influence in the late nineteenth century, the novel today now has comparatively a much more widespread audience but cannot be regarded as a mass medium. One important change is the manner in which literature has moved from the page to other forms of cultural production. This echoes Roger Chartier's view that the printed form is not just the text within the covers of a book but, in the case of two examples he cites, is also both the image of the words and pictures on the page and the oral connections that books and printed matter can make either by being read aloud or in the manner in which the written text is constructed to mimic speech.²⁵ For the case of the novels mentioned in this study, three have been turned into mini-series by TV Globo, Brazil's leading broadcaster: *Gabriela* (1975),²⁶ *Tereza Batista* (1990)²⁷ and *Mad Maria* (2005)²⁸ opening up their portrayal of the railway in their narratives to mass audiences, albeit in the

²¹ Ibid, p. 62.

²² Johnson, 'Brazilian Narrative', p. 119. Other estimates put a typical print run at between five and ten thousand. See: Armstrong, *Third World Literary Fortunes*, p.134. An estimate in 2005 suggests an average of 6,000. See: Carlo Carrenho, 'The Brazilian Book Publishing Industry and its Current Challenges', *Publishing Research Quarterly*, 21 (2005), p. 79.

²³ Silviano Santiago, *The Space In-Between: Essays on Latin American Culture*, ed. Ana Lúcia Gazzola (Durham, NC, 2001) p. 79.

²⁴ Sodré, *Síntese de História da Cultura Brasileira*, pp. 154-155.

²⁵ Roger Chartier, 'General Introduction: Print Culture', in Roger Chartier (ed.), *The Culture of Print: Power and Uses of Print in Early Modern Europe*, trans. Lydia G. Cochrane (Cambridge, 1989), pp. 5-8.

²⁶ Mark A. Dinneen, 'Print Media and Broadcasting' in Jon S. Vincent, *Culture and Customs of Brazil* (Westport, CT, 2003), p. 112.

²⁷ Antonio da Silveira Brasil Junior, Elisa da Silva Gomes and Maíra Zenun de Oliveira, 'Os Maias – A Literatura na Televisão', *Revista Habitus*, no. 2 (2004), Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro, '<http://www.habitus.ifcs.ufrj.br/pdf/2antonio.pdf>' (14 June 2008).

²⁸ Marleine Cohen, *Uma Saga Amazônica: Através da Minissérie Mad Maria* (São Paulo, SP, 2005).

case of the first two as minor references. Writers in Brazil in the first decade of the twentieth century now have comparatively much more influence and a wider audience for their ideas, not just in print but in a number of media forms.

2. Júlio Ribeiro, *A Carne* (1888)

The first novel to be discussed here has been considered by some critics as derivative and scandalous. *A Carne* has been identified as one of Brazil's 'roman maudits', censored for many decades because of its explicit sex, as well as being one of the first examples of a narrative that blamed '...the blacks for white lasciviousness'.²⁹ Gerald Martin identifies *A Carne* as one of the 'sub-Zolaesque, Naturalist novels tinged with Romanticism which were so prevalent in Brazil in the last two decades of the nineteenth century'.³⁰ Indeed, the preface to the first edition of the novel included a gushing dedication in both French and Portuguese to '...the Prince of Naturalism, Émile Zola'.³¹ Eva Bueno sees in Ribeiro's style a flattering 'imitation of an artistic formula developed in Europe' which was adopted by Brazilian writers of this genre.³² Dorothy Loos points out that 'of all the foreign influences operative on Brazilian writers, the French has been the strongest' and 'Zola, more than any other... influenced several generations of novelists in Brazil'.³³ She goes on to say that two passages in *A Carne* are 'strikingly similar' to scenes written by Zola.³⁴

Júlio Ribeiro (1845-1890) was a self-taught linguist, born in Minas Gerais, and died in São Paulo state, who in 1881 published *Gramática Portuguesa* which was according to José Veríssimo 'one of the more notable products of our copious literature in this genre'.³⁵ Veríssimo, writing in 1916,

²⁹ José de Carvalho, 'Images of the Blackman in Brazilian Popular Culture', *Série Antropologia*, Universidade de Brasília, No. 201 (1996), <http://www.unb.br/ics/dan/Serie201empdf.pdf> (12 June 2008).

³⁰ Martin, *Journeys through the Labyrinth*, p. 68.

³¹ Ribeiro, *A Carne*, p. 319.

³² Bueno, 'Brazilian Naturalism', pp. 386-387.

³³ Dorothy S. Loos, 'The Influence of Émile Zola on the Five Major Naturalistic Novelists of Brazil', *The Modern Language Journal*, 39 (1955), p. 3.

³⁴ Loos, 'The Influence of Émile Zola', pp. 5-6.

³⁵ José Veríssimo, *História da Literatura Brasileira: De Bento Teixeira (1601) a Machado de Assis (1908)* (7th edn., Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 1998 [1916]), pp. 340-341.

observed that Ribeiro's father was 'North American' and his mother Brazilian and went on to dismiss *A Carne* as 'an obscene scandal of a novel'.³⁶ Eva Bueno says the genre of naturalism in Brazilian fiction, coming as it did after the romanticism which marked much of the nineteenth century's literary output, was an

...attempt to represent [Brazil] as a whole composed of contradictory parts, each highly intensified and exacerbated, consisting of blacks, mulattoes, masculinized women and homosexuals or feminised men.³⁷

The subject matter of this genre also often includes themes of violence, greed, dishonesty and cruelty.³⁸ *A Carne* is an example of Brazilian writing that explores a duality. Gerald Martin identifies this enduring theme across Latin America in stories which cast male versus female, America versus Europe, the New World versus the Old World, and city versus rural.³⁹ These dualities are present in Brazilian writing about the railway, and in subsequent chapters it will be found in poems, art, television dramas and cinema productions. For Júlio Ribeiro the railway is, by its association with the male character in this novel, a well-organised technology that brings routine and discipline to Nature's sensually disorganised landscape.

Critical reaction long remained negative to *A Carne*, for example Richard Morse's 1954 essay on São Paulo's cultural history dismissed the novel as 'a social-Darwinian jeremiad lacking art or compassion'.⁴⁰ Eva Bueno offers another reading of such works and suggests that 'by attempting to enable the idea of the nation as an entity composed of different people, [they] rewrote the idea of nation from the periphery'.⁴¹ Indeed, part of the work of *A Carne* was to

³⁶ Ibid, p. 340 and p. 342. The poet Manuel Bandeira came to Ribeiro's defence when he used his speech upon acceptance of a chair at the Academia Brasileira de Letras in 1940 to criticise Veríssimo's comments. 'Discurso de Posse: Manuel Bandeira', *Academia Brasileira de Letras*, '<http://www.academia.org.br/abl/cgi/cgilua.exe/sys/start.htm?infoid=653&sid=249>' (12 June 2008).

³⁷ Bueno, 'Brazilian Naturalism', p. 363.

³⁸ Mónica Lebron, 'Naturalism in New Climes: Argentina and Brazil', *Excavatio*, 4 (1994), p. 131.

³⁹ Martin, *Journeys through the Labyrinth*, pp. 11-13 and p.17.

⁴⁰ Morse, 'São Paulo Since Independence', p. 433.

⁴¹ Bueno, 'Brazilian Naturalism', p. 391.

negotiate the position and boundaries of the categories of gender, race and class.⁴² In this respect such negotiation can be seen as part of the transculturation process.

A Carne was published in 1888 at a turning point in Brazilian politics, in the year that slavery was abolished and just one year before the new republic was proclaimed.⁴³ José de Souza Martins reads the railway in *A Carne* as a 'person', as an 'agent, not just of modernity, but also of modern social and political relations'.⁴⁴ He adds, 'the railway of Júlio Ribeiro was, fundamentally, the expression of order and progress: the railway was republican'.⁴⁵ It was also masculine in the way it was appropriated by the male lead in the novel for his travels across the state of São Paulo.

The story centres on the character of Lenita. Her father dies when she is twenty-two leaving her, as the only child, a fortune in railway stocks and shares.⁴⁶ She goes to live on an isolated sugar plantation in the interior of São Paulo state where she meets and falls tragically in love with Manuel Barbosa the son of the house. Barbosa has been educated in Europe, married and separated (but not yet legally divorced) from a Parisian woman, has spent a considerable time in England and speaks a little of the 'língua dos bifes'.⁴⁷ One day a leading commissary business in Santos goes bankrupt. The old colonel faces losing a substantial amount of money and so sends his son to see what can be saved.⁴⁸ Barbosa sets off for the first leg on horseback for the three hundred kilometre journey wearing his *guarda-pó*, the long white over-cape or dustcoat used by

⁴² Ibid, p. 393.

⁴³ Fausto, *A Concise History of Brazil*, pp. 126-142.

⁴⁴ José de Souza Martins, 'A Ferrovia e a Modernidade em São Paulo: a Geração do Ser Dividido', *Revista USP*, 63 (2004), p. 14.

⁴⁵ Martins, 'A ferrovia e a modernidade', p. 11.

⁴⁶ Ribeiro, *A Carne*, p. 69.

⁴⁷ Ibid, p. 95. Literally translated as 'language of the beefs', it is a pejorative Brazilian term for the English who are described as *bifes* or *ros-bifes* [roast beefs]. For other racial descriptors see: Gilberto Freyre, *Inglêses no Brasil: Aspectos da Influência Britânica sobre a Vida, a Paisagem e a Cultura do Brasil* (3rd edn., Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 2000), p.45.

⁴⁸ Ribeiro, *A Carne*, p. 132.

travellers to protect their clothes on journeys.⁴⁹ He then joins a train of the *São Paulo Railway* at São Paulo for the final seventy-six kilometre descent by rail to Santos.

At this point in the story Júlio Ribeiro switches from the third person narrator to the first person in the form of a letter sent by Barbosa to Lenita. It amounts to just under one tenth of the full novel's length and describes his railway trip and visit to Santos. This narrative switch has the effect of breaking the flow of the growing relationship between the two characters, and throwing a spotlight instead on the railway technology. Calm and apparently unemotional, Barbosa's letter reads as if he is writing to a business colleague rather than a woman. His journey is described in reverse: first there is a description of the climate on the Atlantic coast at Santos his final destination, and then follows with details of his railway journey. The summer heat on the coast is like a furnace, the seafood is delicious, the people are polite, and the countryside he has just travelled through is awesome:

The mountains reach out from the depths of the ocean, rising, emerging, and coming up abruptly to close the horizon with their high peaks covered by the clouds, bordering onto heaven like grey beards on a gigantic castle wall.⁵⁰

Barbosa is looking back at the mountain down which he has just travelled by train. The reader is presented with a picture of the port of Santos as a hive of activity, all focussed on transport and the transshipment of coffee exports from the railway, onto mules, into warehouses, onto docksides and into ships. It is a male preserve, with rugged stevedores mostly of Portuguese descent, 'moving quickly as if someone had just sounded a bugle'.⁵¹

After painting a portrait of his arrival Barbosa then goes on to describe his journey. Here Júlio Ribeiro is able to give his readers a description of the *São*

⁴⁹ Ibid, pp. 136-137. Machado de Assis also mentions this clothing accessory used in railway travel in *Quincas Borba*, p. 29.

⁵⁰ Ribeiro, *A Carne*, p. 159.

⁵¹ Ibid, p. 162.

Paulo Railway and its 793 metre descent by cable and brake engines of the Serra do Mar.⁵² The author includes a certain amount of technical detail for the benefit of contemporary readers, yet the key image he creates is that the railway has become fully engaged with the 'social life of the modern São Paulo'.⁵³ From a male letter-writer it is evocative prose:

This is the top of the mountain range.
 Some ten metres ahead it opens up, tearing into empty space, a huge opening where you can see the far off horizon, a greyish confusion of sky and mountain that haunts and humiliates the imagination.
 The inclined planes of the railway start here. Powered by the winding engines the social life of the modern São Paulo goes up and down, the passenger carriages and the goods wagons.
 When you get on the slope and you start to descend the scene becomes powerfully imposing. On one side, almost within arm's reach, are immeasurable altitudes, as if chiselled into the rock, covered in moss and lichen, stealing the sky from view. Through large caverns in the cliffs emerge waterfalls of white frothy cascades, already fused into jets, already spread into sheets of water.
 On the other side, far away, the mountain range stretches into the distance, in all its wild magnitude.⁵⁴

Such views are still there for twenty-first century road travellers to experience, except there is no locomotive that 'vomits' smoke: a machine that Ribeiro reminds his readers is not Brazilian,

The *Inglesa* railway from Santos to Jundiá is a grandiose monument to modern industry...⁵⁵

...The service is regular and so well organised that for the most part there is just one track to serve trains coming up as well as going down. The line has been functioning for more than twenty one years and still there has not been a single disaster. Amazing, no?⁵⁶

The author calls the railway by its familiar name, the *Inglesa*. Being British it is of course punctual and reliable yet Ribeiro remains non-committal by

⁵² Ibid, pp. 167-174. Ribeiro has the altitude of the Serra do Mar at 793 metres, other sources have it as 731 metres between Santos and São Paulo. See: Moysés Lavander Jr and Paulo Augusto Mendes, *SPR: Memórias de uma Inglesa* (São Paulo, SP, 2005), p. 25.

⁵³ Ribeiro, *A Carne*, p. 168.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Ibid, p. 171.

⁵⁶ Ribeiro, *A Carne*, p. 172. In 1901 a second inclined plane was officially opened to cope with the increased demand. See: Lavander Jr and Mendes, *SPR: Memórias de uma Inglesa*, p.67.

allowing the reader to interpret for themselves the question 'Amazing, no?' However the narrative force of Ribeiro's writing serves to underline that the railway is male and reliable, in contrast to the emotionally charged incidents that Lenita has previously experienced in her life on the plantation. These eighteen pages of Barbosa's letter have been more of a promotional travelogue for the *São Paulo Railway* than a love letter, yet Lenita is beside herself with joy at the final sentences when Barbosa confesses to missing her company and blames her for his feeling such emotion towards her.⁵⁷

Barbosa eventually returns unexpectedly to Lenita and the narrative reverts to descriptions of plantation life, of which Ribeiro observes 'up until 1887 life was completely feudal in the interior of the province of São Paulo'.⁵⁸ The railway is now ignored, a narrative switch that suggests the author is implying the transport technology is bound up with the image of the rational male lone traveller and has no part to play in the brutal ancient world of the sugar plantation.

Lenita discovers she is pregnant, leaves for São Paulo, marries a doctor, and makes plans to take the train from São Paulo to Rio de Janeiro and then by steamship to travel to Europe.⁵⁹ Barbosa injects himself with poison and dies. The ending is sudden, and provides the moral of the story that desires of the flesh such as those experienced by these two lovers lead to destruction. Here it is the man that has become the victim while the woman leaves with a child and a husband on a voyage back to the Old World.

The railway, here characterised by the foreign-controlled *Inglesa*, is part of this duality: it is the engine that drives the new republican age of technology and binds the social webs of São Paulo state. Ribeiro has presented the *São Paulo Railway* through the male gaze of his hero Barbosa and in doing so has vested in the technology a male rationality that is in opposition to the brutality of

⁵⁷ Ribeiro, *A Carne*, pp. 173-174.

⁵⁸ *Ibid*, p. 199.

⁵⁹ *Ibid*, p. 273.

slavery and plantation life. Yet this image is confused by the novel's ending since it is here that rationality breaks down and the roles are reversed for Barbosa, previously a calm character in comparison to the emotional outpourings of Lenita. It is she who walks assuredly out into a new life while he takes the extreme emotional response of suicide. No wonder one critic, Eva Bueno, highlights the tendency of Brazilian naturalist novels to be 'contradictory both within and among themselves...' and that 'the texts seem at times baffled and overwhelmed by ideological pulsations'.⁶⁰ The image of the railway is likewise uncertain: on the one hand a marvel of technology and on the other a foreign-controlled operation on Brazilian soil which remains a world away from daily domestic life. A novel published three years later, not in São Paulo but in what was at that time the capital of Brazil, Rio de Janeiro, would continue the negotiations over the duality of the railway ensemble, and at the same time provide contemporary readers with an insight into life inside the railway carriage.

3. Joaquim Maria Machado de Assis, *Quincas Borba* (1891)

Machado de Assis is widely regarded as Brazil's most important writer. He was born in Rio de Janeiro in 1839, spent most of his life there and died in 1908.⁶¹ José Veríssimo, in 1916, called him 'the most eminent figure in our literature'.⁶² In his four-hundred-page history of Brazilian literature charting the period 1601 to 1908 Veríssimo devotes the last nineteen pages to Machado de Assis.⁶³ Randal Johnson says 'Machado de Assis ...quite consciously inserted his mature work into the Western literary tradition, explicitly rejecting the picturesque nationalist concerns of his predecessors'.⁶⁴ In this respect he is concerned less with politics and more with manners. *Quincas Borba* is one of those novels that examine 'the dark corners of human nature, relationships and Brazilian society'.⁶⁵ Machado de

⁶⁰ Bueno, E., 'Brazilian Naturalism', p.393.

⁶¹ David T. Haberly, 'Introduction', in Joaquim Maria Machado de Assis, *Quincas Borba* (Oxford, 1998), pp. xi-xii; Veríssimo, *História da Literatura Brasileira*, p. 393.

⁶² Veríssimo, *História da Literatura Brasileira*, p. 393.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, pp. 393-412.

⁶⁴ Johnson, 'Brazilian Narrative', p. 121.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 125.

Assis uses the self-referential touches in his narrative that mark him out as 'a nineteenth century descendant of Laurence Sterne' with a nod towards Cervantes.⁶⁶ Most plaudits for Machado de Assis come from readings of *Memórias Póstumas de Bras Cubas* (1881). *Quincas Borba* has been subjected to relatively less critical analysis despite being the sequel to *Memórias Póstumas de Bras Cubas*, and for example José Veríssimo only makes passing reference to *Quincas Borba* in his detailed summary of Machado de Assis's work.⁶⁷ Roberto Schwarz however does analyse *Quincas Borba* and finds it to be an accurate reflection of Brazilian social life of the period.⁶⁸

The railway appears early-on in *Quincas Borba*, by way of an evocative memory by our hero, Rubião, as he sits in his Rio de Janeiro mansion reflecting on the events of the past year. The story of Rubião's inheritance is told as if in flashback:

...he was remembering the first meeting, at the Vassouras station, where Sofia and her husband were getting on the train, into the same car on which he was coming from Minas. It was there that he discovered that set of luxuriant eyes that seemed to be repeating the exhortation of the prophet: Come unto the waters all ye who thirst.⁶⁹

The latter reference appears in the Old Testament book of Isaiah and reads:

Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.⁷⁰

The tension Machado de Assis creates here is between the Biblical prophecies of Jesus and the subsequent salvation for mankind, with the carnal promises which Rubião thinks he detects in Sofia. This moral conflict is used to tease the reader before the start of the narrative proper, and we return to the railway carriage just over twenty pages later where the encounter is unravelled at a different pace.

⁶⁶ Martin, *Journeys through the Labyrinth*, p. 164 and p. 239.

⁶⁷ Veríssimo, *História da Literatura Brasileira*, p. 407.

⁶⁸ Schwarz, *Misplaced Ideas*, p. 101.

⁶⁹ Machado de Assis, *Quincas Borba*, p. 7.

⁷⁰ Isaiah 55:1, *King James Authorised Version*.

Strangers meeting on a train is an enduring fictional motif.⁷¹ Rubião is travelling from Barbacena in the state of Minas Gerais to Rio de Janeiro, a distance of some 370 kilometres.⁷² It was a journey that was likely to have lasted a full day.⁷³ The married couple get into the train carriage halfway through his journey at Vassouras and 'Palha [Sofia's husband] noticed Rubião, whose face, among so many frowning or bored people, was the only one that was calm and satisfied'.⁷⁴ Machado de Assis has preceded this observation that rail travel might be unexciting with a veiled implication that such travel also demands caution from a passenger who is surrounded by strangers:

They sat down on the two seats opposite Rubião and arranged the baskets and packages of souvenirs they were bringing from Vassouras, where they'd gone to spend the week. They buttoned up their dusters and exchanged a few words in low voices.⁷⁵

The public space of a railway carriage is one that has to be negotiated and the placing of possessions is a key act.⁷⁶ The wearing of 'dusters', full-length cotton over-capas known in Portuguese as guarda-pó, would indicate a passenger was potentially wealthy enough to be able to afford such protection from the sparks and soot which regularly flew in through the open carriage windows and otherwise ruined everyday clothing. Having arranged their possessions the couple talk in quiet voices, acknowledging that the railway carriage is a

⁷¹ Ian Carter, *Railways and Culture in Britain: The Epitome of Modernity* (Manchester, 2001), pp. 212-219; Lynne Kirby, *Parallel Tracks: The Railroad and Silent Cinema* (Exeter, Devon, 1997), pp. 82-89.

⁷² This was on the main line of the *E. F. Central*, a government-owned company which changed its name upon the declaration of the republic two years previously, in 1889, from *E. F. Dom Pedro II*. See: Ralph Mennucci Giesprecht, 'Barbacena', *Estações Ferroviárias do Brasil* (16 March 2008), 'http://www.estacoesferroviarias.com.br/efcb_mg_linhacentro/barbacena.htm' (23 May 2008). For further technical aspects of this stretch of line as featured in *Quincas Borba* see: Fausto Cunha, *Caminhos Reais, Viagens Imaginárias: Estudo sobre os Meios de Transporte na Ficção Brasileira* (Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 1974), pp. 92-93.

⁷³ Adolpho Pinto, writing in 1903, says 'The normal speed of passenger trains of 1.6 metre gauge, not including waiting time at stations, is 50 km/h'. *História da Viação Pública de São Paulo (Brasil)* (São Paulo, SP, 1903), p. 113.

⁷⁴ Machado de Assis, *Quincas Borba*, p. 29. Vassouras, in Rio de Janeiro state, is some 120 kilometres from the capital.

⁷⁵ Machado de Assis, *Quincas Borba*, p. 29. 'Dusters' is the North American translator's rendering of 'guarda-pó', known in England as 'dustcoat'.

⁷⁶ Carter, *Railways and Culture in Britain*, p. 213.

threatening place even if it does mean a return home from the countryside to the city. Yet this danger is also an opportunity for new encounters:

Cristiano [Palha] was the first to start a conversation, telling him that railroads trips were boring, to which Rubião replied that they were. For someone used to muleback, he added, the train was boring and uninteresting. One couldn't deny, however, that it was progress. "Of course," Palha agreed. "Great progress."⁷⁷

Whilst the railway as a mode of transport was still being negotiated in terms of its modernity it was for the novelist in late nineteenth century Brazil, as in Europe, really the only sensible mode of rapid long distance travel for his characters to take and thus warranted inclusion in the narrative.⁷⁸ The conversation that ensues between the strangers is wide-ranging, and a male preserve.

Sofia was barely listening. She only moved her eyes, which she knew were pretty, focussing them now on her husband, now on the one he was speaking to.⁷⁹

Machado de Assis concentrates on this one aspect, keeping the narrative promise he had given at the start of the novel. Once the conversation has been underway for some time the three introduce themselves

The exchange of names relaxed them a little. Sofia didn't join in the conversation, however. She loosened the reins of her eyes, which she let follow their own desires.⁸⁰

Machado de Assis is teasing the reader here, indicating the possibility of future indiscretions between Rubião and Sofia after this first encounter in the railway carriage. The stage has been set: a single man has come into a substantial inheritance and in confiding in a husband and wife he has never met before about his new wealth their lives are destined to be intertwined for much of the rest of

⁷⁷ Machado de Assis, *Quincas Borba*, p. 29.

⁷⁸ Carter, *Railways and Culture in Britain*, p. 168.

⁷⁹ Machado de Assis, *Quincas Borba*, p. 29-30.

⁸⁰ *Ibid*, p. 30.

the novel. Palha almost admits to what might happen later in the story when he advises Rubião,

“Don't repeat your situation to strangers. I thank you for the trust you've shown me, but don't expose yourself to the first person you meet. Discretion and accommodating faces don't always go together.”⁸¹

Precisely what Rubião has just failed to do. So the railway is an enclosed space where strangers can meet, secrets can be exchanged, plots hatched, and desires kindled. Given the fact that the railway was still a relative novelty, Machado de Assis is both reporting on the new technology and at the same time teaching Brazilians about the dangers of the train. The duality between the rural and the urban has also been revealed by the journey. Machado de Assis has cast the city as the place for Rubião's downfall, confirming Gerald Martin's assertion that in Latin American literature generally ‘...there have been a great many novels deploring city life and its repressive aspects, and very few indeed celebrating its liberation’.⁸² When Rubião accepts the offer of dinner the next day he is startled by the change:

Sofia was much better at home than on the train. There she'd been wearing a cape, even though she had her eyes uncovered; here she had her eyes and her body in plain view, elegantly clad in a cambric dress, showing her hands, which were pretty, and the beginning of an arm.⁸³

She is here playing out her duality as confident home-maker in the domestic setting, contrasting with the guarded female in the masculine public realm of the open-plan railway carriage.⁸⁴ Machado de Assis has worked consistently to build up this and other tensions involving the railway ensemble: between the rural (Barbacena/Vassouras) and urban (Rio de Janeiro); between slow and fast, ancient and modern, naivety and knowingness, simplicity and deceit. Later Palha dismisses Rubião as ‘bumpkin’ when Sofia reveals to her

⁸¹ Machado de Assis, *Quincas Borba*, p. 32.

⁸² Martin, *Journeys through the Labyrinth*, p. 119.

⁸³ Machado de Assis, *Quincas Borba*, p. 33.

⁸⁴ Kirby, *Parallel Tracks*, pp. 82-89.

husband that Rubião has declared his love for her.⁸⁵ It is, perhaps, the only reaction open to him when he admits that he owes a substantial amount to Rubião and it is better to dismiss him as 'wet behind the ears' and 'a simpleton' rather than snub him by cutting off all contact.⁸⁶ The price of loans from a 'friend' may be that he is free to flirt with your wife, after all. In this episode Sofia is portrayed as a strong woman who does not fully appreciate her own sensuality. Palha and his wife Sofia are bound together by trust, and circumstances dictate that money must determine their reactions to unexpected events. Machado de Assis presents his reader with the train carriage as a place of potential danger. Rubião recalls the memory when he finally declares his love to Sofia,

I still haven't forgotten... our train trip, when we were both travelling along with your husband in the middle. Do you remember? That trip was my undoing. Ever since that day you've held me captive.⁸⁷

The journey to modernity is, for Machado de Assis, a dangerous one with no going back and no mercy for the weak or faint-hearted. *Quincas Borba* is a cautionary tale about '...nineteenth-century Brazilian efforts to adopt modern European mores and mechanisms'.⁸⁸ The railway is the initiator, or catalyst, however Rubião's eventual downfall, slide into madness, and return to Barbacena are handled by Machado de Assis without referring to modes of transport.⁸⁹ Our hero's rise to riches and civilised Rio de Janeiro society in the first half of the story has been couched in terms of the train ride from the rural to the urban. His return trip becomes one that moves through an emotional space rather than a physical one. The reader is left to fill in the gaps and imagine how Rubião returns to his home town; leaving us with a feeling that back in his rural origins he is rootless. The city has stripped the last remaining vestiges of humanity from him; civilisation has spat out the victim and left him back where he belongs. This point of view is strengthened by the conflict in the reader's

⁸⁵ Machado de Assis, *Quincas Borba*, p. 70.

⁸⁶ Machado de Assis, *Quincas Borba*, pp. 72-73.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 146.

⁸⁸ Celso Favaretto, 'The Misadventures of Unity: An Afterword', in Joaquim Maria Machado de Assis, *Quincas Borba*, trans. Gregory Rabassa (Oxford, 1998), p. 275.

⁸⁹ Machado de Assis, *Quincas Borba*, pp. 265-266.

mind between the title of the book and its narrative content. Quincas Borba is a philosopher who dies within the first few pages of the novel. Rubião then looks after the philosopher's dog, also called Quincas Borba, and spends much of the novel wondering if the dog is a reincarnation of the dead philosopher. In this way title and content, past and present, philosopher and dog, modernity and tradition, become confusing and confused trajectories.

4. Jorge Amado, *Gabriela, Clove and Cinnamon* (1958)

Over the space of the seventy years since *Quincas Borba* was first published the view of the railway as an icon of modernity had changed, as evidenced in two works by Jorge Amado. He uses the railway to begin both stories: in *Gabriela, Clove and Cinnamon* the train is introduced right at the start when Nacib's cook abandons her job at his bar, and takes 'the eight o'clock train for Água Preta to live with her son'.⁹⁰ In his 1972 novel, *Tereza Batista*, the train provides the link between the past and the present; between civilisation and the *sertão*, the poor north-eastern backlands of the interior,

If you really want to know for certain all about Tereza Batista's beginning, just take the *Leste Brasileira* train to where the outback begins. That's where she had her start, and maybe the folks who still live there can tell you the details about how it was.⁹¹

Both works are from his later literary period, when he left behind his Marxist social criticism and began to write fiction that was 'replete with sensuality' and lighter in tone with its 'social satire ... carefully disguised as fun and humour'.⁹² The two novels reflect an approach that David Foster describes as a 'highly romanticized version of an exotic black culture ranged against a stereotypically racist white one'.⁹³ This subject content has caused some discomfort amongst literary critics, but all recognise Amado's world-wide appeal. Gerald Martin says Jorge Amado was 'undoubtedly Brazil's best known

⁹⁰ Amado, *Gabriela*, p. 1.

⁹¹ Amado, *Tereza Batista*, p. 5.

⁹² L. Clark Keating, 'The Guys and Dolls of Jorge Amado', *Hispania*, 66 (1983), p. 343.

⁹³ David William Foster, 'Spanish, American and Brazilian Literature: A History of Dissonance', *Hispania*, 75 (1992), p. 967.

twentieth-century novelist'.⁹⁴ By introducing the railway in each of these novels Amado is linking the landscape of his north-eastern Brazil to what he regards as the traditional technology of the steam locomotive. But he is also suggesting that the railway is perhaps an out-dated form of travel. In *Tereza Batista*, for example, it is the railway that brings smallpox to devastate the town of Boquim.⁹⁵ Given that the railway station in Boquim was opened in 1913 Amado is suggesting here that after just a few decades modernity, in the form of the train, has turned into a vector which brings death.⁹⁶ Until that point, the little town of Boquim has been 'an earthly paradise, an Eden lost in the sertão'.⁹⁷

It is in the novel *Gabriela, Clove and Cinnamon* that the railway is most strongly featured, and is portrayed as an old technology incapable to competing with 'modern' road transport. *Gabriela*, was Amado's first move away from leftist polemical works. It is 'sentimental rather than ideological, voluptuous rather than passionate, and inherently colourful and picturesque...' and started to turn Amado into '...without doubt the most marketable Brazilian novelist of all time'.⁹⁸ Celso Lemos de Oliveira says

...beginning with *Gabriela, Cravo e Canela* in 1958, Jorge Amado began to draw on an inexhaustible vein of local color and erotic humour for his novels, and the result has been a phenomenal success.⁹⁹

For Randal Johnson, Jorge Amado is 'undoubtedly...the most popular and widely translated of the North-eastern novelists'.¹⁰⁰ But he does concede that the likes of Paulo Coelho have more recently become massively popular thanks to the effects of the 'neo-liberal marketplace, which favours accessibility over complexity'.¹⁰¹

⁹⁴ Martin, *Journeys through the Labyrinth*, p. 69.

⁹⁵ Amado, *Tereza Batista*, pp. 239-289. The 1983 English translation renders the spelling of the Sergipe town as Buquim. This present study uses the current Brazilian orthography of Boquim.

⁹⁶ Ralph Mennucci Giesbrecht, 'Boquim', *Estações Ferroviárias do Brasil* (1 October 2007), http://www.estacoesferroviarias.com.br/ba_propria/boquim.htm (14 June 2008).

⁹⁷ Amado, *Tereza Batista*, p. 264.

⁹⁸ Martin, *Journeys through the Labyrinth*, p. 70.

⁹⁹ Celso Lemos de Oliveira, 'Brazilian Literature and Art: From Colonial to Modern', *Hispania*, 75 (1992), p. 997.

¹⁰⁰ Johnson, 'Brazilian Narrative', p. 129.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid*, p. 134.

Gabriela is the story, set in 1925 in Amado's birthplace of Ilhéus in the state of Bahia, of two people: a simple rural girl from the backlands, the *sertões*, and a naturalised Brazilian born in Syria who arrived on Brazilian soil at the age of four.¹⁰² She is identifiable as one of Amado's 'sexy larger-than-life female leads'.¹⁰³ Both characters are outsiders in Ilhéus where Gabriela prefers to walk around barefoot and Nacib is known by all as 'Turk', a name he despises for its errors in geography, politics and culture. Gabriela ends up both as Nacib's cook and romantic partner.

Mundinho is also an outsider, who arrives from Rio de Janeiro to challenge the political dynasties of the plantation owners, the 'colonels'. This conflict between the local and the outsider is a theme running through the novel and the 'tall Englishman of the railroad' is added in passing to this list early in the narrative.¹⁰⁴ He is mentioned again two hundred pages further on where this manager and his wife are identified as foreigners who have failed to become Brazilianized even after fifteen years of living in Brazil:

This Mr. Grant was an elderly Englishman, thin and silent, who had lived in Ilhéus since 1910. He was known and addressed simply as Mister. His wife, a tall blonde of free-and-easy and somewhat masculine manner, could not bear to live in Ilhéus and had moved to Bahia some years ago. Of her early days in the town there remained only the memory of her then extremely young figure and of a tennis court that her husband built for her on a piece of ground belonging to the railroad; after her departure it was invaded by weeds. ...Mister would not leave Ilhéus; he adored the good white rum made there, played poker dice, and unfailingly got drunk every Saturday at the Golden Nectar. On Sundays he went hunting somewhere nearby. He lived in a fine house, surrounded by gardens, with an Indian woman by whom he had a son.¹⁰⁵

The implication being that the railway manager and his wife were not enjoying their peccadilloes in the manner of the 'locals' who got drunk, abandoned their partners, had illegitimate children and generally lived their lives

¹⁰² Amado, *Gabriela*, p. 42.

¹⁰³ Martin, *Journeys through the Labyrinth*, p. 69.

¹⁰⁴ Amado, *Gabriela*, p.43.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid*, pp. 259-260.

in a 'Brazilian' way. Jorge Amado creates sensual narratives where his characters embody an innocent guilt-free bacchanalian outlook but the English railway manager – who also happens to be the British vice-consul – fails to count as 'Brazilian' because his rigid weekly routine and his wife's doubtful sexuality do not conform to the relaxed informality and rampant heterosexuality of the novel's other characters. 'Mister' is the embodiment of the railway ensemble, accepted as Brazilian only up to a point. However later in the novel his name is mentioned by a drinker in a bar-room conversation as an example of a man who would drink no other caçacha (rum) than the local Ilhéus brand: 'And he was a connoisseur.'¹⁰⁶ So perhaps amongst some locals at least he was beginning to be accepted, at least for his intake of alcohol. Indeed, in the macho world of the bar a man's ability to hold his drink might be regarded as a sign of being cultured. In contrast, when a visiting school examination supervisor travels up from the national capital and gives a public talk it is made clear that whatever the quality of his lecture he has confirmed that Ilhéus is more 'civilized' than Rio de Janeiro because he failed to hold his drink: 'Two swigs of good local rum and he was pie-eyed.'¹⁰⁷

A further surprise comes at the New Year Ball when 'Mister' goes to the dance accompanied by his wife who happens to visit him regularly at this time of year.¹⁰⁸ The transculturation of the railway continues at its slow pace, and at every mention throughout the novel Amado insinuates that the railway and 'Mister' are both somehow old-fashioned and not fully brazilianized. For Amado it is road transport that represents the coming technology of the late 1920s where this story takes place. The dual themes of outsiders and modernity are combined in the character of the exporter Mundinho Falcão who is seen as a threat to the old style of planter-rule, where the self-styled 'colonels' who own the cacao (cocoa) estates serve as the de-facto local government. He is the promoter of modern forms of transport, by backing the new bus service from the Atlantic coastal city of Ilhéus to a neighbouring inland town and by proposing that the

¹⁰⁶ Amado, *Gabriela*, p. 336.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid*, p. 408.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid*, p. 418.

bay is dredged and a port created so that the harvest can be loaded directly onto international freighters and thus avoid the extra journey, and costs, involved in taking the cacao to Bahia.¹⁰⁹ Amado is, by inference, linking road and ocean-going transport with modernity. A new bus route, the Southern Bahia Bus Line, is inaugurated on the day after the cook, Filomena, sets out two hours early to wait at the railway station, saying 'I have no faith in trains'.¹¹⁰ Several times in the novel the bus, and road transport in general, is held up as a positive form of travel compared to the railway: 'Pretty soon nobody will go by train. There's a difference of an hour', says Nacib who tries to reassure two elderly spinsters of the safety of the bus service.¹¹¹

The railway is linked to the ancient regime of the cacao landowners, the 'colonels', on several occasions. One, Ramiro Bastos, had once done a lucrative deal with 'the Englishmen of the railroad' not to build a road that competed with the line.¹¹² When the colonel finally dies at the age of eighty-three the old patriarchal era comes to an end. The *Ilhéus-Conquista Railroad* is among those organisations, families, and individuals who send obituary notices to the local paper.¹¹³ Earlier when Mundinho Falcão – Amado's icon of modernity and the new order – finally begins his electioneering in earnest he confuses some of the electorate:

A number of persons waited at the railroad station on the day of his arrival, but they were disappointed; Mundinho came by the highway in his new automobile, a sensational black car which aroused great curiosity as he drove through the streets.¹¹⁴

Here we see Amado presenting road transport as the epitome of modernity. The railway landscape meanwhile is described in less than positive terms. With widespread droughts in the backlands, a steady migration of rural workers to the

¹⁰⁹ Amado, *Gabriela*, p. 284.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 37 and p. 40.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 69.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, p. 87, and p. 94.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 464.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 363.

large towns has meant temporary camps on the outskirts have sprung up. Jorge Amado describes this as

The so-called slave market behind the railroad station was the place where migrants from the drought area waited for employment. The colonels would go there to hire workers and trigger men, and housewives went there to look for servants.¹¹⁵

These migrants, with their dreams of riches, are desperate second class citizens 'They had heard frightening tales of death and violence, but they had heard also about the rising price of cacao'.¹¹⁶

Amado clearly delineates tradition and modernity in terms of the rural and the urban. One of the plantation owners, Colonel Coriolano Ribeiro, is summed up in terms of his attachment to the old colonial ways of life.

He was an old-fashioned man of simple habits and simple needs; his only extravagance was to keep a girl in a house in town. He spent most of his time on the plantation, which he loved. He came to town from time to time, always on horseback, for he disdained the greater comfort of the trains and buses.¹¹⁷

Here the line from the past to the present is made clear, with the horse signifying the ancient regime and road transport the era of modernity. The railway, for Amado, never quite achieves full Brazilian citizenship; that is something conferred on his female lead. Piers Armstrong sees in the free-spirited character of Gabriela a subtle 'abstract symbol of a national identity'.¹¹⁸ Meanwhile 'Mister' is left in the northeast with his absent wife, his young mistress, his bottle of local rum, and his out-dated railway to manage.

¹¹⁵ Amado, *Gabriela*, p. 76.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid*, p. 154.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid*, p. 138.

¹¹⁸ Armstrong, *Third World Literary Fortunes*, p. 95.

5. Márcio Souza, *Mad Maria* (1980)

The final novel to be considered in detail takes an even bleaker approach to the railway ensemble, with a darkly pessimistic and humourless view of society's descent into barbarity. Márcio Souza's *Mad Maria* is Brazil's only novel about the railway, rather than the previous works which have used the railway purely as a narrative device. Gerald Martin calls Souza a 'valiant' author who during the years of military rule ended up losing his job in the Ministry of Culture after the publication of his first novel, a political satire called *The Emperor of the Amazon* (*Galvez, Imperador do Acre*, 1976).¹¹⁹ Both this and *Mad Maria* are identified as part of the New Historical Novel genre which emerged in the late 1970s in Latin America.¹²⁰ Traits of this genre include the free adaptation, and sometimes distortion, of historical facts with the inclusion of both real people and fictitious characters.¹²¹ Seymour Menton suggests that this genre may have been inspired by a number of factors including a 'questioning of the role of Latin America in the world after five hundred years of contact with Western civilization'.¹²² *Mad Maria* is a novel that directly interrogates the involvement of foreigners in the Brazilian railway industry.

The story follows five characters of different nationalities in 1911, all of whom have been caught up in the building of a railway in the Amazon region of Brazil, the *Estrada de Ferro Madeira-Mamoré*. It took three attempts to build this 364 kilometer line between 1868 and 1912.¹²³ Estimates suggest that over six thousand men died in the disease-ridden jungle conditions.¹²⁴ So closely does *Mad Maria* follow historically documented events that the publisher's disclaimer, 'This work is a novel. Any similarity to actual persons or events is purely coincidental', has little real weight. This book blurs the boundaries

¹¹⁹ Martin, *Journeys through the Labyrinth*, p. 264; Also see: Robert E. DiAntonio, 'The Aesthetics of the Absurd in "Galvez, Imperador do Acre": The Novel as Comic Opera', *Hispania*, 70 (1987), p. 270, note 6.

¹²⁰ Seymour Menton, *Latin America's New Historical Novel* (Austin, TX, 1993), p. 2.

¹²¹ Menton, *New Historical Novel*, pp. 22-25.

¹²² *Ibid.*, p. 29.

¹²³ Manoel Rodrigues Ferreira, *A Ferrovia do Diabo* (3rd edn., São Paulo, SP, 2005), pp. 74-74 and p. 290.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 302.

between history and fiction, and in the process has caused some confusion for readers. Indeed, when the novel was turned into a mini-series by TV Globo and broadcast in 2005 the historian Manoel Rodrigues Ferreira complained that the dramatisation was not accurate enough.¹²⁵

In English-language travel writing and reminiscences of the period the *Madeira-Mamoré Railway*, built at the geographic heart of Latin America deep in the Amazon jungle with no links apart from the river network to any other transport system, became a symbol of romantic, dangerous, and exotic railway construction projects.¹²⁶ However Márcio Souza uses the story of its construction to launch a critique of informal empire. He opens his narrative by introducing us to some of his five characters.¹²⁷ Finnegan – he is never given a first name – is a young Irish doctor who is revolted by the physical and mental brutality of the tropical working conditions. He is based on the written reports of doctors Walcott, Belt and Lovelace between 1908 and 1911.¹²⁸ Márcio Souza uses Finnegan as the reader's conscience during the awful events that unfold in the novel, as he stands by as a helpless witness to the human disaster. Stephan (sic) Collier, an English construction engineer, is created by Souza as a composite of the hard-bitten senior staff employed by the North American contractors, *May, Jekyll and Randolph*.¹²⁹ The third character, an actual person in history, is Percival Farquhar, a North American entrepreneur who between 1904 and 1914 controlled much of the railway industry in Brazil.¹³⁰ Souza paints Farquhar as a Yankee businessman fallen from his Quaker origins into a world of lies, deceit, adultery, murky politics and bullying. The image created is not a flattering one.¹³¹ Márcio Souza says cynically,

¹²⁵ Manoel Rodrigues Ferreira, personal communication, 11 February 2006.

¹²⁶ Neville Craig, *Recollections of an Ill-fated Expedition to the Headwaters of the Madeira River in Brazil* (Philadelphia, PA, 1907); H. M. Tomlinson, *The Sea and the Jungle* (London, 1912); Frank Kravigny, *The Jungle Route* (New York, NY, 1940).

¹²⁷ Souza, *Mad Maria*, pp. 3-14.

¹²⁸ Ferreira, *A Ferrovia do Diabo*, pp. 221-233.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 196.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, p.206 and pp. 332-336. For a detailed biography see Charles A. Gauld, *The Last Titan: Percival Farquhar 1864-1953, American Entrepreneur in Latin America* (Stanford, CA, 1972).

¹³¹ Souza, *Mad Maria*, pp. 71-77.

He adored Brazil, because it afforded him such tremendous profits and because its people, the Brazilians, behaved in such delightfully arbitrary fashion – much as an audacious playwright might attempt to turn his dramatic flop into a hit farce.¹³²

Souza is characterizing a view from within Brazil that its place in international relations has been dependent during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries on Britain and for much of the twentieth on the United States of America.¹³³ For Souza the railway ensemble thus becomes part not of informal empire but of imperialist design, a distinction discussed in chapter 2.¹³⁴

The fourth character is Joe Caripuna who represents Brazil in its conquered and colonized form by both other nations and modern technology. In Souza's novel he is an indigenous Brazilian, named after his tribe by Dr. Finnegan who has looked after him when rail workers cut his hands off for stealing from a construction camp.¹³⁵ Joe goes on to learn to play piano with his feet and Souza has him sold by Percival Farquhar to P.T. Barnum's circus in New York.¹³⁶ Joe's story compares in some respects to Manoel Ferreira's account of an (unnamed) Caripuna Indian who had his diseased right foot amputated by railway doctors and was given a prosthesis sent from the United States.¹³⁷

The fifth major character in *Mad Maria* is Consuelo Campero. She is a fictitious young widow from Spanish-speaking Bolivia. As the only female lead character in an otherwise male-dominated world she is sent into madness after her husband dies trying to haul a grand piano over the treacherous river rapids.¹³⁸ By the end of the novel she is working with Dr. Finnegan in the hospital as a contract worker for the railway, nursing Joe Caripuna, but all the while never

¹³² Ibid, p. 76.

¹³³ Ronald M. Schneider, *Brazil: Culture and Politics in a New Industrial Powerhouse* (Boulder, CO, 1996), pp. 204-218.

¹³⁴ Charles Jones, 'Finance, Ambition and Romanticism in the River Plate, 1880-1892', in Matthew Brown, (ed.), *Informal Empire in Latin America: Culture, Commerce and Capital* (Oxford, 2008), pp. 144-146.

¹³⁵ Souza, *Mad Maria*, p. 182.

¹³⁶ Ibid, p. 384.

¹³⁷ Ferreira, *A Ferrovia do Diabo*, pp. 241-242.

¹³⁸ Souza, *Mad Maria*, p. 35-38.

loosing her aura of personal sadness and tragedy. The black humour and absurdity of her character, exemplified in the idea of taking a piano up a series of waterfalls, is lost in the bleakness of the rest of the novel.

Márcio Souza, through his narrative, builds up chapter by chapter a vision of purgatory. We know it is a temporary state because 'civilization' is described as being elsewhere. The railway construction site at Abunã in the jungle becomes a hellish foreign country within Brazil, itself populated by temporary workers from other lands. Away south in Rio de Janeiro the Yankee capitalist, Percival Farquhar, is carrying out his 'sordid' schemes to dupe the simple-minded Brazilian politicians, themselves caught up in a web of paternalism and deceit.¹³⁹ The irony is that Joe Caripuna thinks the disease-ridden railway workers are 'civilized', whilst we the readers are shown that the *civilized* politicians and businessmen in Rio de Janeiro are guilty themselves.¹⁴⁰

What he [Farquhar] struggled to achieve in such a country as this was the right chemistry between his inspired shenanigans and the no less inspired violence of Brazil herself.¹⁴¹

Not only is Souza critiquing foreign railway empires but also Brazil's own political structure. The duality constructed here is between the infighting, intrigue, and nepotism of the political and social circles of upper class Rio de Janeiro life and the inferno of the railway construction site, where the jungle heat reaches thirty-two degrees centigrade, is a 'filthy oven' and a 'stinking hell'.¹⁴² The construction site is 'one of the most inhospitable regions on earth' and a place where both religion and civilisation have come to an end.¹⁴³ However Rio de Janeiro's high society seems to be similarly morally corrupt. It is a 'war of civilisation', not only in the jungle but also in the drawing rooms of Rio de Janeiro.¹⁴⁴

¹³⁹ Souza, *Mad Maria*, p. 135.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 69-71.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 171.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 10 and p. 18.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 60, pp. 81-82, and p. 113.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 163.

Halfway through the novel Márcio Souza turns his attention to the locomotive and over the course of ten pages introduces a technological actor that appears to have humane traits which the rest of the novel's characters seem to lack. Indeed she is named for the first time:

Mad Maria began to roll slowly off the solid ground of tested tracks and onto the new rails nestled in their bed of matted branches. The Englishman nervously anticipated the mastodonic progress of the cowcatcher, driving wheels and trailing truck over the newly compacted sector. Gallagher [the engine driver] handled her gingerly, easing her on to the new section, while behind him his stoker agitatedly followed the operation with palpable vigilance. Finally Mad Maria ground to a halt at the end of her five meters, where the tracks had yet to be braced onto the sleepers. Stationary, she still billowed giant puffs of steam.¹⁴⁵

The act of laying the track across the swamps in the Abunã district brings about a feeling of satisfaction from the workers. It is pride in a job well done and Souza has used the locomotive, a large dinosaur with a beating heart, to induce these emotions so lacking in the rest of the novel. The duality still holds: between city and jungle, between civilised hell and a jungle inferno, but the railway ensemble has been uncoupled to allow the locomotive to become a living being with feelings. Mad Maria breaks down and it is her driver, Tom Gallagher, who lovingly crawls inside the firebox to mend the boiler.¹⁴⁶ The gynaecological point is not missed but none-the-less she proves herself to be a dignified, even regal, lady for Collier as he watches the repairs and reflects.

...for a madwoman, Maria carried out her duties quite rationally. And though a woman, she was gallantly resisting where many strong, hard men had already been humbled. In a real sense that locomotive governed everyone with her caprice and indifference. She was like a queen bee in a hive of corrupt and routed worker bees. And she was ever-present, imperturbable, day after day staring down at her workers from behind all her nuts and bolts, licking the tracks with her iron teeth.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁵ Souza, *Mad Maria*, p. 151. Brazilian Portuguese has *locomotiva* (locomotive) as a noun of feminine gender.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid*, pp. 154-156.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid*, p. 158.

It is these ten pages of reflection in the middle of the narrative that give this emotionally draining novel its heart.¹⁴⁸ Meanwhile back in the capital city political and business morality continues to decline. Souza is emphatic that his land, Brazil, has become defiled by arrogant foreign capitalists and in the process mankind's humanity has been sacrificed. The only respite has been the brooding regal femininity of the locomotive.

Ah, what a beautiful land is our Brazil, where an author who writes in a neo-Latin tongue can compose an entire novel filled with Anglo-Saxon names. And where there once was a locomotive called Mad Mary, Marie Folle, María Loca, Maria Louca, Mad Maria, Mad Maria, MAD MARIA!¹⁴⁹

The author has presented a story of mankind's descent into barbarism served up as a parable about Brazil's domestic politics under military rule and its economic dependency of the 1970s. The railway ensemble is the means by which this downward journey happens, through the greed and ambition of the elite and the pestilential life of the construction workers. But in the midst of this hell is the woman, the locomotive, who in her madness sits serenely watching a society destroy itself.

Souza's novel is, as has been noted, the only one of these texts to feature the railway as a central character: without it the novel would not exist. It may be concluded that the tendency in Brazilian literature, when writers chose to include the railway, is to use it as part of the background narrative. This would also be true of Geraldo Ferraz's *Doramundo* (1956), a hard-boiled murder-mystery set in the village of Paranapiacaba in the early 1940s when the *São Paulo Railway* was controlled by British owners and managers.¹⁵⁰ This novel, although located in a company town, is not *about* the railway but is read both as 'a commentary on crime in its social context' and the way in which it is talked about.¹⁵¹ The setting

¹⁴⁸ Ibid, pp. 148-158.

¹⁴⁹ Souza, *Mad Maria*, p. 387.

¹⁵⁰ Geraldo Ferraz, *Doramundo* (3rd edn., São Paulo, SP, 1975 [1956]).

¹⁵¹ Naomi Lindstrom, 'Doramundo by Geraldo Ferraz: The Problem of Talking about Crime', in Randal Johnson, *Tropical Paths: Essays on Modern Brazilian Literature* (New York, NY, 1993), pp. 77-78.

is incidental to the action and Ferraz uses the semi-closed community as a narrative device to create the necessary claustrophobia required for his murders.¹⁵² Overall this body of fictional work in Brazil that includes mentions of the railway appears to mirror Ian Carter's findings in British literature. His search for a canon which features the railway as a central character and might be thus termed 'the railway novel' concludes that strictly speaking Britain has none, despite the popular notion that *Dombey and Son* by Charles Dickens is just that.¹⁵³ He says, 'It is quite possible to discuss *Dombey and Son* without ever noticing trains'.¹⁵⁴ Such works as this include the railway as a narrative device and not as a central actor, in a similar fashion to the Brazilian writing of Júlio Ribeiro, Machado de Assis and Jorge Amado.

Brazil's leading television network, TV Globo, adapted Souza's novel into a miniseries which ran for thirty-five commercial-hour episodes between January and March 2005. It was an adaptation by Benedito Ruy Barbosa, a leading scriptwriter who as mentioned in chapter 6 was involved in the creation of a number of major drama series. Female characters, costumed in lush frocks, feature more prominently in the miniseries than in the novel. Indeed, Souza concentrates in his novel on just one character: that of Consuelo the young Bolivian widow left alone in the jungle, whereas the television version develops the characters of the female lovers and companions of the rich politicians and businessmen in Rio de Janeiro. This is a conscious attempt by TV Globo to attract a female audience to what was originally a male-dominated narrative. In a similar manner the central character of Dr. Finnegan had his character softened. The young emotionally tortured doctor of the novel becomes in the television miniseries a suave American, troubled by what he witnesses but eventually 'cured' by his brief love affair with Consuelo.

¹⁵² The same approach is made in the 1976 film version, directed by João Batista de Andrade and produced by Raiz Produções Cinematográficas, São Paulo, SP, which confines the railway to wide shots of locomotives on the *São Paulo Railway* behind the opening credits.

¹⁵³ Carter, *Railways and Culture in Britain*, pp. 26-27 and 74-75.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid*, p. 75.

6. Concluding remarks

The ensemble of the railway has through these works of fiction been given a less than positive connotation: ranging from the mild old-fashioned technology described by Jorge Amado to the outright distaste of Márcio Souza. In between there has been the masculine order portrayed by Júlio Ribeiro and the urban unease instilled by Machado de Assis.

The publication dates of these works span a period of ninety-two years and each writer is as much a product of his own era as is his approach to narrative style and subject. However each in his own way demonstrates a tendency to enter into a negotiation of the railway in terms of the dualities presented to the reader: between masculine order and feminine disorder for Ribeiro, between urban and rural for Machado de Assis, between tradition and modernity for Amado and between civilisation and barbarity for Souza. These dualities will be observed to be persistent motifs in a further literary form: that of poetry.

Poetry, song and the railway

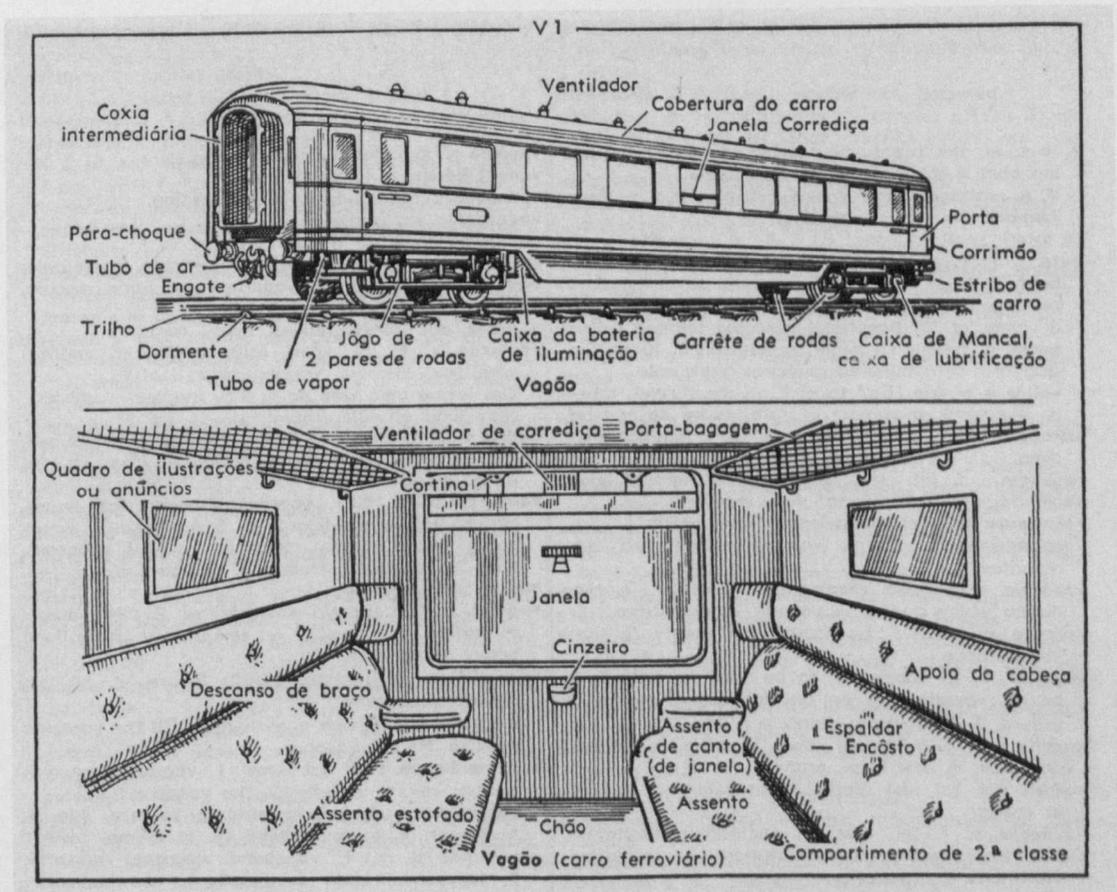


Fig. 12

'Vagão', *Novo Michaelis Dicionário Ilustrado* (2 vols, São Paulo, SP, 1962), vol 2, p. 1276.

1. Introduction

Just as narrative fiction in Brazil, discussed in the previous chapter, has portrayed the railway in a number of guises ranging from, on the one hand, quaint old-fashioned English eccentricity to imperialist threat on the other, so too has poetry written in Brazil from 1865 to 1980 offered to its audiences a range of views and opinions. In fact the verses presented here suggest that there is yet to emerge through poetry and song lyrics a unified metaphor for the railway ensemble in Brazil. Writers have presented conflicting interpretations since the mid nineteenth century which do not appear to correlate directly with the history of the development of the railways in Brazil. So, for example, attempts to appropriate a romantic image of the train for religious and spiritual allegory are made both in the 1870s and the 1970s. In a similar manner the railway is interrogated early on over its claim to safety and from the mid twentieth century onwards its symbolic place as an icon of modernity is repeatedly called into question. This chapter will thus suggest that as far as poetry and song lyrics are concerned the negotiations are still continuing as part of the transculturation of the railway ensemble.

In a similar manner to the novel in Brazil as outlined in the previous chapter, the influence of poetry spreads far beyond the immediate bounds of its initial limited publication and readership. Laurence Hallewell says publishers in the mid- to late-nineteenth century understood that they could make relatively easy and quick money from publishing poetry, however ‘poets became known, more often by giving public recitals, than by being read’.¹ The following century brought little in the way of improved financial rewards for poets themselves, but did witness Brazilian poetry establishing itself as an identifiable literary form. The impact of Brazilian poets in the twentieth century is regarded by literary critics as significant, and today they argue that ‘poetry lies at the heart of the debates and practices that have shaped the country’s cultural history’ for much of

¹ Laurence Hallewell, *Books in Brazil: A History of the Publishing Trade* (Metuchen, NJ, 1982), p. 105.

the period since the early 1920s.² Elizabeth Bishop and Emanuel Brasil, in an introduction to their anthology of twentieth century Brazilian poetry, say first editions by individual poets often had print runs of just three hundred copies.³ They go on to identify a literate elite group of readers for poetry in printed form and note that even in the 1970s this remained relatively small in number.⁴ For this group of literary poets during the major part of the past two centuries their income has depended either on patronage or on full-time employment typically in newspapers or government departments.⁵ As will be observed later in this chapter a number of these poets find their material appropriated by other media forms, transforming their work into mass and popular pieces. Elsewhere Brazil has a strong oral popular tradition, for example, with the poetry of the northeast, known as *cordel*, which often appears in cheap printed form.⁶ One example of this is 'Os Coletores da Great Western' by Leandro Gomes de Barros.⁷ It was written and published in 1916 by Barros who was one of the North East's most prolific popular poets.⁸ Using the typical sarcasm of this genre he recounted how the British-owned *Great Western of Brazil* railway was increasing the number of ticket inspectors in an effort to stop fare dodging.

No longer can you travel for free
Not even the Englishman's mother!⁹

It appeared that Barros was criticising the foreign managers for such a tough crackdown that even affected those who might have been expected to be eligible for free travel.

² Mike Gonzalez and David Treece, *The Gathering of Voices: The Twentieth-Century Poetry of Latin America* (London, 1992), p. 65.

³ Elizabeth Bishop and Emanuel Brasil, 'Introduction', in Elizabeth Bishop and Emanuel Brasil, *An Anthology of Twentieth-Century Brazilian Poetry* (Hanover, NH, 1972), p. xiv.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. xiv.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. xiv; Hallewell, *Books in Brazil*, p. 105.

⁶ Mark Dinneen, *Listening to the People's Voice: Erudite and Popular Literature in North East Brazil* (London, 1996), pp. 26-32.

⁷ Leandro Gomes de Barros, 'Os Coletores da Great Western', in Laís Costa Velho, *Pequena Antologia do Trem: A Ferrovia na Literatura Brasileira* (Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 1974), pp. 64-66.

⁸ Dinneen, *Listening to the People's Voice*, p. 86, note 10.

⁹ Não viaja mais no mole/Nem mesmo a mãe do inglês!

This chapter also includes analysis of popular songs of the 1960s onwards which deal with the railway. This study discusses poetry and song in the same chapter because the writers and artists have, certainly from the mid-twentieth century onwards, found themselves switching between poetry and song and between their two associated audiences with relative ease. For example, Vinicius de Moraes regarded initially as a 'traditional' poet had from the late 1950s onwards a successful collaboration creating Bossa Nova songs with Tom (Antônio Carlos) Jobim and João Gilberto including in 1963 the international hit, 'Garota de Ipanema' (The Girl from Ipanema).¹⁰ Tom Jobim also added music to Manuel Bandeira's 'Trem de Ferro' among other of his poems.¹¹ Musical movements including Tropicalia of the late 1960s which featured artists such as Caetano Veloso and Gilberto Gil also relied heavily on the lyrical message in their compositions.¹² The strong linkage between melody and lyrics is regarded as a particular enduring trait of Brazilian songwriting which continues today as new genres such as rap emerge.¹³ This suggests that it is appropriate to discuss both poetry and song lyrics together, and that because of the cross-over and repetition between poetry and popular music the potential audience for a number of the works discussed here is likely to be both broad based and enduring.

This chapter assumes that the writers of these poems and song lyrics, many of whom were from the middle and upper classes, by the 1970s were less likely to travel by rail. This was due largely to the sustained promotion of automobile transport at the expense of the railways in the first part of the twentieth century which led to a gradual decline of long distance rail travel in Brazil.¹⁴ At the same time urban rail travel was becoming so unreliable that buses were preferred in cities. Estimates in the mid 1970s indicate that, for

¹⁰ Gonzalez and Treece, *The Gathering of Voices*, pp. 247-248.

¹¹ The poem, discussed later in this chapter, was written by Bandeira in 1936. It was set to music by Tom Jobim and performed by Olívia Hime on her 1987 album 'Estrela da Vida Inteira Manuel Bandeira' as part of a project to celebrate the centenary of Bandeira's birth.

¹² Gonzalez and Treece, *The Gathering of Voices*, pp. 313-319.

¹³ David Treece, 'Rhythm and Poetry: Politics, Aesthetics and Popular Music in Brazil since 1960', in Anny Brooksbank Jones and Ronaldo Munck (eds.), *Cultural Politics in Latin America* (Basingstoke, Hants, 2000), pp. 30-31.

¹⁴ Richard Downes, 'Autos over Rails: How US Business Supplanted the British in Brazil, 1910-28', *Journal of Latin American Studies*, 24 (1992), pp. 582-583.

example, on the *E. F. Central do Brasil* in greater Rio de Janeiro only four to eight percent of passengers were from the middle class, and the majority were from the poorer sections of society.¹⁵ The implication is that with only a few exceptions these poems were likely to have been written about the *idea* of rail travel rather than the actual experience. This could go some way to explain the persistence of romantic notions about the railway in Brazil which will be seen in some of the examples that follow. For the rest the railway represented a public means of transport that was at times slow, dirty and unreliable. These are the two descriptive tendencies that will be identified in the rest of this chapter.

2. Pedro Taques de Almeida Alvim: the railway out of control

‘O Bichinho Vai Correndo...’ (The Little Thing Runs Away...), from 1865, is attributed to Pedro Taques de Almeida Alvim, a journalist who wrote a regular satirical column for the *Diário de São Paulo*.¹⁶ Here he takes a sideswipe at the new railway technology in a poem that was published shortly after the official inauguration of the first section of the *São Paulo Railway*.¹⁷ It was, in Alvim’s eyes, an inauspicious day when on 6 September 1865 the ceremonial train between São Paulo and Santos left the tracks killing the driver and injuring a number of the distinguished guests, delaying the official opening by twenty-four hours.¹⁸

The little thing runs away
 Just like a firecracker:
 It goes straight away to Santos
 Smoking its cigar
 Which looks like a chimney

The wagon runs quickly;
 Who is scared to die?

¹⁵ José Alvaro Moisés and Verena Martinez-Alier, ‘Urban Transport and Popular Violence: The Case of Brazil’, *Past and Present*, 86 (1980), p. 177.

¹⁶ Carlos Pimentel Mendes, ‘Trem não é Cabrito’, *Histórias e Lendas de Cubatão* (16 July 2007), ‘<http://www.novomilenio.inf.br/cubatao/ch021.htm>’ (14 June 2008).

¹⁷ Pedro Taques de Almeida Alvim (atrib), ‘O Bichinho Vai Correndo...’ in Pedro Calmon, *História do Brasil na Poesia do Povo* (new edition, Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 1973), pp. 251-253.

¹⁸ Moysés Lavander Jr and Paulo Augusto Mendes, *SPR: Memórias de uma Inglesa* (São Paulo, SP, 2005), pp. 23-24.

Everyone's crashed on the mountain
 The steam just hisses,
 A person dies without a groan

...
 Who is scared to die
 On such a "safe" route?
 The journey is delightful!
 There's fresh water on the mountain
 To bless the grave.

Better safe than sorry:
 That's friendly advice:
 If you want a pleasant ride
 There are plenty of horse and carts – without fear
 Really cheap there at Sé.¹⁹

The *São Paulo Railway* was a novelty. It was the first line to be opened in the state of São Paulo, the emerging economic powerhouse of Brazil with its growing coffee exports and westward expansion. British shareholders had funded English and Scottish engineers who employed recent agricultural settlers and imported labour from across the world to build the line.²⁰ It was a triumph of engineering over the landscape: a rope-hauled railway up through the 731-metre-high Atlantic escarpment, the Serra do Mar.²¹ Mankind had at last conquered nature with the forces of industrial technology rather than just his own bare hands. Previously mule trains, thousands of them, had transported goods and produce up and down between Santos and São Paulo.²² Brazil had long created icons of the brave pioneers who went west in search of indigenous slaves and new lands, the *bandeirantes* of the new frontier, but now the steam locomotive was able to achieve in a couple of hours what had previously taken days on the

¹⁹ O bichinho vai correndo/Que parece um busca-pé:/Vai a Santos num momento/Fumegando o seu charuto/Com ares de chaminé/O vagão corre ligeiro;/Quem tem medo de morrer?/Caem todos lá na serra./O vapor é só quem berra,/Morre a gente sem gemer/.../Quem tem medo de morrer/Numa estrada tão "segura"?/O passeio é delectável!/Há na serra água potável/P'ra benzer a sepultura./Seguro morreu de velho:/Quem avisa amigo é:/Quem quiser dar bons passeios/Tem carrinhos – sem receios/Bem baratos lá na Sé.

²⁰ Lucia Lamounier, *The 'Labour Question' in Nineteenth Century Brazil: Railways, Export Agriculture and Labour Scarcity*, LSE Department of Economic History Working Paper no. 59/00 (2000).

²¹ Lavander Jr and Mendes, *SPR: Memórias de uma Inglesa*, pp. 25-31.

²² William R. Summerhill, *Order Against Progress: Government, Foreign Investment, and Railroads in Brazil, 1854-1913* (Stanford, CA, 2003), pp. 18-28; Lavander Jr and Mendes, *SPR: Memórias de uma Inglesa*, pp. 8-13.

backs of reluctant mules through the forest tracks. This notion of velocity is central to this poem. Wolfgang Schivelbusch notes that pre-industrial travel was at the natural pace of an animal whilst the new railways in Europe, for writers of the time, took passengers faster than nature had intended.²³ The train is a 'bichinho', a 'little thing', which becomes an insignificant item with a root meaning in Brazilian Portuguese that is connected to animals such as mice or worms. The connotation is a negative one which reduces the train back towards its natural form and becomes 'the little animal/insect/thing'. The pre-industrial relationship between man, nature and travel is reclaimed.

Here the poem, a vicious satire, lampoons the new technology. It is an absurd creation, smoking a cigar like a muleteer but behaving erratically like a noisy firecracker destroying the silence and the smells of the natural environment. It not only brings the fear of death but actual loss of life as well. The redemption is given by Nature herself who waits stoically to provide the water from a mountain stream with which to bless the grave of the dead engine driver. Alvim rejects the new technology and has the locomotive reduced to a small animal while the natural environment, the old timely order of things, looks on patiently. His advice to potential travellers is to boycott the railway and for those who insist on travelling to think about a short urban promenade instead. He advises that the horse and carts for hire in the central square of the Praça da Sé in São Paulo offer a safer and cheaper option. Yet this is not an alternative, it is a negation of the very existence of the railway journey down the mountain from São Paulo to the port of Santos. This fear and rejection of new technology also occurred in Europe and Julie Wosk identifies it as part of the complex process artists went through in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in Europe and North America to evaluate the new technology.²⁴ Here she uncovers differing ideas, observations, opinions and 'slivers of experience in a disruptive, disjunctive industrial era', which taken together begin to build to offer an

²³ Wolfgang Schivelbusch, *The Railway Journey: The Industrialization of Time and Space in the 19th Century* (Berkeley, CA, 1986), pp. 52-57.

²⁴ Julie Wosk, *Breaking Frame: Technology and the Visual Arts in the Nineteenth Century* (New Brunswick, NJ, 1992).

understanding of the complexity of the reactions to new technology.²⁵ In a similar manner, Alvim demonstrates one of the negative reactions to the railway ensemble. However one thing he does not highlight directly and explicitly is an anti-imperial sentiment. Even though this has not been an auspicious start to the railway in the state of São Paulo there is no reference in these verses to the fact that this technology has been constructed by foreign entrepreneurs and engineers. Nationality does not seem to be an issue at this point, or perhaps that is because São Paulo in the late nineteenth century was a city dominated by the European immigrants recently arrived from Italy, Spain, Germany and Portugal.

A version of this poem was included in 'Ferrovia', the monthly staff magazine of the *E. F. Santos a Jundiaí* (formerly the *São Paulo Railway*), a special edition of which was published in 1967 to commemorate the centenary of the line.²⁶ The poem appeared under the headline, 'The influence of the railway on Brazilian life', but no comment was made about the actual events of 1865. The assumption may be drawn that the editors of the magazine felt the message in the verses was clear enough for the readers. Employees would be able to reflect on the history of the *São Paulo Railway* and observe that the British managers may not have taken their responsibilities towards passenger safety seriously enough. By extension the inference would be that the Brazilian government's control of the line since 1946 was of a superior quality.

3. Castro Alves and Raul Seixas: spiritual connections

Three years after the disastrous inaugural train on the *São Paulo Railway* a young student lawyer was in 1868 studying in São Paulo. Castro Alves, a supporter of the abolition of slavery, was born in Bahia, north-eastern Brazil, to a landowning family and came south to continue his studies. He had his foot amputated after a hunting accident, and returned home to the north-east but never

²⁵ Ibid, p. 6.

²⁶ 'A Influência da Estrada de Ferro na Vida Brasileira', in *Ferrovia*, Vol. XXXII, No. 1 (February 1967), p. 21.

fully recovered and died in 1871, aged 24.²⁷ Shortly before his death a collection of poems, 'Espumas Flutuantes', was published. The second poem considered here is an extract from 'O Livro e a América' (The Book and America) published in that collection.²⁸

Ye, which the temple of ideas
 Opens wide to the multitudes,
 For the shining baptism
 Of the great revolutions,
 Now that the railway train
 Wakes the tiger on the mountain
 And frightens the naked Indians,
 Make this "king of the winds"
 - Rider of the thoughts,
 - Proclaimer of the big light!...²⁹

This is a poem that combines religious imagery with visions of the New World and Columbus. The 'temple of ideas' signifies a holy place, a sacred quarter previously denied to the masses. In Old Testament terms this suggests the inner sanctum where only high priests were allowed. But the steam train brings with it a technological and spiritual revolution, allowing the experience of renewal, baptism and unrestricted access for the multitudes to previously sacred places in the temple. So just as the Bible changes people and brings a New Testament intimacy with God, Alves sees industrial technology with a New World optimism: a force for change that 'wakes the tiger' and proclaims itself king over the very elements of nature – wind and light. William Rowe identifies Castro Alves as a leading exponent of Brazil's nineteenth century style of poetry: 'Unlike Spanish America, Brazil produced a Romantic poetry in the strong, historical, sense of the word.'³⁰ Alves is regarded as one of the leading nineteenth century exponents of this form.

²⁷ William Rowe, 'Latin American Poetry', in John King (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Modern Latin American Culture* (Cambridge, 2004), p. 151.

²⁸ Castro Alves, 'O Livro e a America', in *Espumas Flutuantes* (São Paulo, SP, 1997 [1870]), pp. 20-23.

²⁹ Vós, que o templo das idéias/Largo – abris às multidões,/P'ra o batismo luminoso/Das grandes revoluções,/Agora que o trem de ferro/Acorda a tigre no cerro/E espanta os caboclos nus,/Fazei desse "rei dos ventos"/– Ginete dos pensamentos,/– Arauto da grande luz!...

³⁰ Rowe, 'Latin American Poetry', p. 151.

Castro Alves plays down the technological modernity of the railway and instead emphasizes its spiritual, redemptive qualities. The locomotive can, he suggests, awaken nature and create a renaissance culture peopled by kings each one of whom is a 'rider of the thoughts'. If this change is a form of baptism and rebirth, then it is technology that is the agent in this process of revolution. The train, for Alves, becomes almost god-like as the 'king of the winds'. This poem is the closest Brazilian railway poetry gets to creating a sublime experience, where the locomotive is the religious redeemer. David Nye has observed that in the United States of America in the nineteenth century metal machines had a tendency to become the objects of worship and that the railway was at the forefront of the creation of this technological sublime: 'the rugged western landscape and the transcontinental railroad were complementary forms of the sublime that dramatized an unfolding national destiny'.³¹ There is no direct evidence that a similar highly developed and widespread attitude towards technology emerged in Brazil. Here Castro Alves casts the steam train in a more fundamental religious role as not only something worthy to be worshipped but a baptizer, a 'proclaimer', and an active agent for change. His reference to the locomotive is seen as a prediction of the coming railway revolution in Brazil, and is used as a historical marker by the academic José Sebastião Witter in his preface to a history of the railways in São Paulo state originally written in 1973.³² The implication is that it was the railway ensemble that heralded the start of the technological revolution in São Paulo state. By implication Alves had subsequently become a prophet.

Religion is a key part of the social fabric of Brazil. From the Jesuit missionaries of the sixteenth century to the twentieth-century growth of Pentecostalism, the enduring presence of spiritism and the relative decline of traditional Catholicism, belief and faith are central to the cultural construct of

³¹ David E. Nye, *American Technological Sublime* (Cambridge, MA, 1994), p. 76.

³² J. S. Witter, 'O Café e as Ferrovias (A Tentativa de um Prefácio)', in Odilon Nogueira de Matos, *Café e Ferrovias: A Evolução Ferroviária de São Paulo e o Desenvolvimento da Cultura Cafeeira* (4th edn., Campinas, SP, 1990 [1973]), p. 9.

Brazilian identity.³³ Today a Brazilian making a first encounter with a stranger is more likely to enquire which church their new companion frequents than to ask what job he or she does. Religion is taken in this manner as a stronger social contextualiser than professional standing. That Alves regards the locomotive in religious terms is thus a reflection of the daily presence of faith and belief in society, and an ability to transcribe the experiences of life into a religious context.

There are resonances of Castro Alves's spiritual imagery to be found in a song written and recorded by the Brazilian Raul Seixas in 1974, 'O Trem das Sete' (The Seven O'clock train). This is Seixas' ode to the dawning of the New Age of Aquarius, which begins:³⁴

Hey, hey the train
Emerging from behind the blue mountains
See the train
Hey, hey the train
Comes bringing from afar the ashes of the Old Age³⁵

Here too the train, coming from the Sertão, the backlands, brings God, angels, and religious symbols such as trumpets, the sky, the heavens and the stars. The imagery of the railway technology presented a picture for Castro Alves in 1871 of Christian temples involving baptism and the creation of new life. For Raul Seixas just over one hundred years later the early morning train brings with it both the remains of the old era and the struggle for a new dawning and is thus a spiritual link between tradition and modernity, although Seixas' idea of modernity was one less centred on the socio-economic manifestations and more on the mystic and pagan New Age aspects.³⁶ For both poets the railway is associated with new life and regeneration, one from a Christian point of view the other from a New Age perspective. For Seixas the train is neither a positive or

³³ Antônio Flávio Pierucci and Reginaldo Prandi, 'Religious Diversity in Brazil: Numbers and Perspectives in a Sociological Evaluation', *International Sociology*, 15 (2000), 629-639.

³⁴ Raul Seixas, 'O Trem das Sete', in Sylvio Passos and Toninho Buda, *Raul Seixas: Uma Antologia* (9th edn., São Paulo, SP, c1994), p. 168.

³⁵ Ói, ói o trem/Vem surgindo detrás das montanhas azuis/Olhe o trem/Ói, ói o trem/Vem trazendo de longe as cinzas do Velho Aeon.

³⁶ Toninho Buda, 'Um Estudo Crítico', in Passos and Buda, *Raul Seixas*, pp. 11-23.

negative piece of technology but instead is the only effective means of transport for this life-renewing force he is calling down from the mountains.

4. Manuel Bandeira: questioning modernity

Sixty six years after Castro Alves, a poem by Manuel Bandeira was published called 'Trem de Ferro' – although it is more popularly remembered by its first line, 'Café com Pão'. Manuel Bandeira was born in Recife in north-eastern Brazil in 1886 and died in 1968.³⁷ For a short time as a young man he worked in the offices of the *E. F. Sorocabana* in São Paulo where his father also worked.³⁸ At night he studied architecture at the Polytechnic of São Paulo but quit after falling seriously ill in 1903.³⁹ The poem was originally published in Bandeira's 1936 collection of poems 'Estrêla da Manhã'. Its use of repeated phrases and its rhythm when spoken aloud mimic the sound of the wheels of the train on the tracks. The poem itself has become a popular classic and many Brazilians can recite the first lines with ease.⁴⁰ In 1987 it was set to music by Tom Jobim.

Coffee and bread
 Coffee and bread
 Coffee and bread
 Virgin Mary what was that,
 Train driver?

Now, yes
 Coffee and bread
 Now, yes
 Flying, smoking
 Running, surrounding
 Hey, mister fireman
 Light the fire
 In the firebox
 Because I need
 Lots of power
 Lots of power

³⁷ Rowe, 'Latin American Poetry', pp. 143-144.

³⁸ Manuel Bandeira, 'Cronologia de Manuel Bandeira', in *Estrêla da Vida Inteira* (2nd edn., Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 1970), p. xli.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Manuel Bandeira, 'Trem de Ferro', in *Estrêla da Vida Inteira* (2nd edn., Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 1970), pp. 145-146.

Lots of power

Oh...

Turn tail, animal

Turn tail, people

Past the bridge

Past the pole

Past the pasture

Past the bull,

Past the cattle

Past the tree branch

From the shrub

Leaning over

In the stream

I want

To sing!

Oh...

When I was arrested

In the cane field

Each stick of sugar cane

Was an inspector

Oh...

Beautiful girl

In the green dress

Give me your lips

To quench my thirst

Oh...

I'm going away I'm going away

I don't like it here

I was born in the backlands

I'm from Ouricuri

Oh...

Going in a hurry

Going running

Going so fast

That I can only take

Few people

Few people

Few people.⁴¹

⁴¹ Café com pão/Café com pão/Café com pão/Virge Maria que foi isto maquinista?/Agora sim/Café com pão/Agora sim/Voa, fumaça/Corre, cêrca/Ai seu foguista/Bota fogo/Na fornalha/Que eu preciso/Muita fôrça/Muita fôrça/Muita fôrça/Oô.../Foge, bicho/Foge, povo/Passa ponte/Passa poste/Passa pasto/Passa boi/Passa boiada/Passa galho/De ingazeira/Debruçada/No

'Trem de Ferro' takes up the rhythm of the train, evoking speed, force and power: power to scatter cattle and to transform itself across the landscape. Bandeira was a poet who experimented in a number of his pieces with patterns of speech and rhythms.⁴² The regional, non-metropolitan, feel is emphasized through the spelling of some words to reflect the northeastern dialect, for example 'Virge Maria' instead of 'Virgem Maria'. The poem has a naïve quality reflected in the repetitive rhythm, which hints at Bandeira's view of the childish nature of the train technology. Yet the simplicity of rhythm hides a darker story. Mike Gonzalez and David Treece identify in a number of poems of this period doubts about the arrival of twentieth century life as reflected in 'the consciousness of a kind of absurd falseness about the notion of Brazil's modernity'.⁴³ That unease is presented by Bandeira here in this poem where something which sounds like a child's poem is actually the desperate cry of a simple man from the countryside caught up in the unstoppable technology of modernity. Bandeira here reveals the duality of rural versus urban, the slow traditional pace of country life compared to the frenetic rush of the city, and calls out to be released from the modern age. In the last verse the technology gives a reply, and warns that it can 'only take/few people'.

The locomotive is not named once, but the men who work on it are: the driver and fireman. Instead of invoking the machine directly its rhythm is cited: 'café-com-pão'. It is a poem of movement, of love, and of a lost present. The protagonist is from the backlands, he is a country boy full of innocence but has become tainted by modernity after his flight and arrest in the sugar cane field and his loss of innocence with the beautiful girl. This image of the female as potentially unattainable yet ordinary in her green dress is found elsewhere in Bandeira's poetry.⁴⁴ She is the one who will give the kiss that will quench his

riacho/Que vontade/De cantar!/Oê.../Quando me prendero/No canaviá/Cada pé de cana/Era um oficiá/Oê.../Menina bonita/Do vestido verde/Me dá tua bôca/Pra matá minha séde/Oê.../Vou mimbora vou mimbora/Não gosto daqui/Nasci no sertão/Sou de Ouricuri/Oê.../Vou depressa/Vou correndo/Vou na tôda/Que só levo/Pouca gente/Pouca gente/Pouca gente...

⁴² Rowe, 'Latin American Poetry', p. 153.

⁴³ Gonzalez and Treece, *The Gathering of Voices*, p. 80 and p. 83.

⁴⁴ *Ibid*, p. 160.

thirst and save him. 'I don't like it here,' he concludes of the city. The railway is thus a means of escape, a temporary transition to another place and time. Coffee and bread represents the most basic of breakfasts available to a Brazilian worker to start the day. However the locomotive is also a thing of fear. Our hero is scared of this modernity, so much so that he blasphemes by calling out to the train driver in the first verse, but invoking the Virgin Mary puts the narrator on a dangerous footing and in potential conflict with those in religious authority.

The reader is travelling with Bandeira, both from the backlands – blaspheming and wondering how the simple humble country life could have come to such a crisis point where one is riding on a piece of technology that is 'flying, smoking, running'. Even so, the reader recognizes that this steam locomotive is in the control of human forces, as the narrator calls out to the crew, 'Hey, mister fireman/Light the fire/... Because I need/Lots of power.' It is this technological beast, this iron monster controlled by mankind that has power over both animals and humans alike. What Bandeira is longing for is an escape from the present and a return to the simple life, a rural backwater that reminds him and the reader of the rural innocence of childhood.

The pressures of internal migration, of change from rural poverty to city slum, are highlighted in these lyrics, and the effects of such fundamental demographic changes have been the longstanding concern of non-governmental and religious organizations.⁴⁵ Brazilians in the 1930s were experiencing government-led exhortations to industrialise and to embrace modernity, linked by the State to the development of a more defined sense of nation through a representation of the past to a growing urban population.⁴⁶ Bandeira mentions the small backlands town of Ouricuri in Pernambuco, over one hundred kilometers from the nearest railway line, and 630 kilometres inland from the state capital of Recife where he was born. This northeastern state was for him his rural retreat in

⁴⁵ Cândido Procópio Ferreira de Camargo and others, *São Paulo, Growth and Poverty* (London, 1978), pp. 27-55.

⁴⁶ Daryle Williams, *Culture Wars in Brazil: The First Vargas Regime, 1930-1945* (Durham, NC, 2001), pp. 52-89.

times of sickness and stress. Unfortunately the railway locomotive is an uneasy technology that does not fully help in that return to innocence for him.

5. The Bissextos: the Leap Year Poets

William Rowe suggests that the decade of the 1930s for Brazilian poets such as Manuel Bandeira was a difficult period intellectually:

Poets found themselves caught between the rigid ideology of the Communist Party and the uselessness of individual isolation, in a situation where an oppressive state machine was seeking to take over all aspects of life.⁴⁷

The heady days of 1920s Modernism and the call from Oswald de Andrade for poets and writers to cannibalize Western culture and mix it with the ‘primitive’ of Brazil had given way to the political realities of life under the first period of rule by president Getúlio Vargas.⁴⁸ Bandeira himself was regarded as being on the fringes of the Modernist movement.⁴⁹ Yet William Rowe observes that Manuel Bandeira was a poet whose output could defy strict classification:

...the coherence of his work stretches across chronological divisions: his first poems were written before Brazilian *modernism*, and at the end of his life he was writing in the *concretista* mode.⁵⁰

Gilberto Freyre, writing in 1959, said ‘The poet Manuel Bandeira is great by any standard, his only deficiency being that he writes in the Portuguese language, a language that Brazilian pessimism sometimes describes as “clandestine”.’⁵¹ If he did have any sense of international isolation it would have been mitigated by his position in the Brazilian Academy of Letters, by his translations into Portuguese

⁴⁷ Rowe, ‘Latin American Poetry’, p. 146.

⁴⁸ Ibid, pp. 142-143.

⁴⁹ Gonzalez and Treece, *The Gathering of Voices*, p. 67.

⁵⁰ Rowe, ‘Latin American Poetry’, p. 153.

⁵¹ Gilberto Freyre, *New World in the Tropics: The Culture of Modern Brazil* (New York, NY, 1971 [1959]), p. 13.

of a number of European poets, and also by his championing in the 1940s of a group of minor poets whom he dubbed the *Poetas Bissextos*.⁵²

In 1940 Bandeira was elected to the Academia Brasileira de Letras.⁵³ His bibliography includes several anthologies of other Brazilian poetry, including separate volumes on the Romantics, the Parnassians, the Modernists and the Symbolists.⁵⁴ In 1946 he edited an anthology of thirty-five writers, a small number of whom were well-known in other walks of life such as Gilberto Freyre, the writer Euclides da Cunha and Aurélio Buarque de Holanda who was Brazil's leading lexicographer. None of those included in the anthology was known primarily for their poetry which was the reason Bandeira gave for calling them the *Poetas Bissextos*.⁵⁵ They were, he argued, writers who only occasionally published poetry adding jokingly that their work appeared only when the date was 29 February.⁵⁶ However his aim was not to diminish the status of their poetry, but rather to bring to the reading public's attention a new range of voices. He explains that their themes tend to be similar and limited to two areas: the pain of emotional misfortune and the harshness of daily life.⁵⁷ What emerges from a reading of this volume of collected poems is the significant number of poets who refer to rail transport: two mention trains in passing, two are about riding on trams, and three specifically use the train as a central image. It is these latter three that are discussed here. A further poem is about the temptation the poet feels towards the nighttime streets and the prostitutes who work after dark in the Lapa district of Rio de Janeiro where the arches of a viaduct carrying the Santa Teresa tramway are one of the many tourist symbols of the city.⁵⁸ The majority of these writers lived in Brazil's big cities where rail travel was a daily experience, and the mid-1940s was a time when the transfer of foreign owned railway companies to federal and State control was being completed. It would

⁵² 'Ano bissexto' in Brazilian Portuguese means 'leap year'.

⁵³ Manuel Bandeira, 'Cronologia de Manuel Bandeira', p. xlv.

⁵⁴ Ibid, pp. xlv-xlvii.

⁵⁵ Manuel Bandeira, 'Poetas Bissextos', in Manuel Bandeira, *Antologia de Poetas Brasileiros Bissextos Contemporâneos* (Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 1946), pp. 5-9.

⁵⁶ Ibid, p. 5.

⁵⁷ Ibid, p. 6.

⁵⁸ Francisco de Assis Barbosa, 'Noturno da Lapa', in Bandeira, *Antologia de Poetas Bissextos*, p. 61.

therefore seem appropriate that this transport technology should be appropriated as inspiration for a number of these works.

Aníbal Machado (1894-1964), a lecturer and short story writer, dedicates his poem 'A Locomotiva' (The Locomotive) to Manuel Bandeira and creates an image of the first train of the day, just before dawn, whose whistle calls out across the landscape.⁵⁹

Across the burnt fields
The locomotive's whistle sounds,
The long whistle of waking up.⁶⁰

His romantic image of the train bringing the sights and sounds of a new day, of a rebirth and regeneration, a growth from the ashes as Aníbal Machado presents it, is a persistent one in Brazilian poetry and echoes back to the work of Castro Alves and Raul Seixas mentioned earlier in this chapter. This view is taken a step further by Luís Aranha (1901-1987), a diplomat whose poem 'O Trem' (The Train) opens with an expression of his initial feelings of freedom and power associated with the railway.⁶¹ However Aranha changes course in the last verse of his poem to present a darker side to the technology:

Oh train!
Nothing in space can hold you back!
If I see your angry course,
My thoughts
Have a violent impulse
To follow your fury of war
To the ends of the earth.⁶²

But whilst the train represents for Luís Aranha a sense of individual liberty this is tempered by the dangerous forces he senses within the technology. It is powerful yet tempting him to a destructive and apocalyptic end. Again this is a

⁵⁹ Aníbal Machado, 'A Locomotiva', in Bandeira, *Antologia de Poetas Bissexto*, p. 28.

⁶⁰ Através de campos carbonizados/Apita, Locomotiva,/O longo apito de acordar.

⁶¹ Luís Aranha, 'O Trem', in Bandeira, *Antologia de Poetas Bissexto*, p. 119.

⁶² O' trem!/Nada no espaço te detém!/Se vejo a tua corrida brava/Meu pensamento/Tem um surto violento/Para seguir teu ímpeto de guerra/Até os confins da terra.

She has been carrying out an act that is against the rules by riding on the end balcony, yet this illicit activity brings her no joy and it is something even her friend gets bored with. Life, and the traditional things that bring a sense of place and a sense of belonging such as the farm and the family, appear to pass the viewer by without waiting or stopping for her. The railway ensemble is portrayed by Maria Machado as a deeply depressing piece of technology that removes contact with life, detaches an individual from all emotional contact, and is relentless in its continual movement away from the rural tradition.

6. Jorge Americano and Mário de Andrade: the railway as a symbol of São Paulo

In 1957, shortly after his retirement, Jorge Americano published the second of three volumes of his memoirs which contained short stories, poems and vignettes of life in São Paulo. He was born in 1891, died in 1969, and during his life worked as a lawyer, university academic and politician. His poem 'Cheiros que se Sentiam' (Evocative Smells) is a memory of São Paulo from the start of the twentieth century.⁶⁸ It is presented as a list in free verse, as a stream of consciousness from a man in his mid sixties who is sitting with his eyes closed taking a journey in his mind through central São Paulo in the early 1900s. Americano views the railway as a bitter-sweet memory, tempering to some extent the negativity of Maria Clara Machado.

Of wood smoke from the locomotives of the Sorocabana, and the
 coal of the São Paulo Railway.
 Of coffee roasted at home.
 The acrid smell of animal detritus at the horse taxi ranks.
 The smell of muscovado sugar and black sugar.
 Of hay and animal feed.
 Smells coming from the public urinals.
 The smell of the dust when the wind is blowing north-easterly.
 Of damp earth in gardens being watered at the end of the
 afternoon.
 Of water in a clay jar.

⁶⁸ Jorge Americano, *São Paulo Naquele Tempo: 1895-1915* (2nd. edn., São Paulo, SP, 2004), pp. 169-171.

Of pots of marmalade.
 Of the hot sun.
 Of the “ladies of the night”.
 Of jasmine and magnolia.
 The smell of sour sweat on the immigrant.⁶⁹

This is a man who has recently retired from public life, and who from his relatively privileged upper-class position is romanticising about the São Paulo of his boyhood days. It is significant that his first line is about the smell of the locomotive. This he links directly to the smell of coffee at home. The railway is presented as the most important aspect of the city’s memory yet it is not being used for travelling. *Americano* evokes the railway as a smell of coal and burning wood: an emotion felt at some distance from the everyday reality of riding inside a carriage compartment or negotiating the bustle of a ticket office and the crowded platform. What the poet gives us is the expression of how the odour of the locomotives pervaded the streets of central São Paulo where everyone, rich and poor, could smell them. Yet what he avoids is the physical closeness between him and his potential fellow passengers. These smells of coal and wood smoke have drifted from over a block away and are therefore both involved yet removed from the railway interior and instead he turns in the very next line to thoughts of home.

Whilst he experiences the railway ensemble from his detached position as a member of the elite, the sensations recalled by *Americano* are undoubtedly democratic ones: there is no sense in which any of these public smells could be discriminating however distant the reader is. Almost all of his evocations concentrate on the public space – the street – until towards the end of the poem, when he evokes a breast-feeding baby, a happy woman, fresh baked biscuits straight from the oven... and the smell of soapy washing drying in the sun. This sets out the railway smells as a special experience and the one single thing that,

⁶⁹ De fumaça de lenha das locomotivas da Sorocabana, e de carvão de pedra, da São Paulo Railway./De café torrado em casa./Cheiro acre de detritos de animais, nos estacionamentos de carros de aluguel./Cheiro de açúcar mascavo e de açúcar preto./De capim-melado e de capim-gordura./Cheiros vindos dos quiosques de mictórios./Cheiro de poeira em dias de vento noroeste./De terra molhada das regas dos jardins ao cair da tarde./De água de moringa de barro./De tachadas de marmelada./De sol quente./De “damas da noite”./De jasmin e de magnólia./Cheiro de suor azedo de imigrante.

for him, evokes the São Paulo of his childhood. The *E. F. Sorocabana* was, from 1910 to 1914, owned by a North American company and its imposing terminus was five hundred metres from the equally grand Estação da Luz of the *São Paulo Railway* in central São Paulo. Everything else in his list of evocations is quintessentially Brazilian – even the ‘smell of sour sweat on the immigrant’ is understood in the context of the significant influx of settlers during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to be Brazilian rather than foreign.

The link to coffee roasted at home immediately creates a public-private tension that does not exist elsewhere in his poem. He is, in effect, linking the smells of the railways to an intimate domestic moment – that hour, first thing in the morning, when the coffee is prepared. Back in the public sphere, freight trains passing through on the *São Paulo Railway* in particular would have the aroma of coffee beans: in 1900 thirty-four percent of the million tons or so of freight hauled was coffee through the city centre on its way to the docks at Santos for export.⁷⁰ *Americano* takes a romantic view of the past. By evoking smells he is, in his own mind at least, taking a walk through the physical landscape of the streets of central São Paulo. He is tracing a line from the central railway stations, through the dusty streets, the red light districts, the shops, the restaurants, to the safety of home. But the very start of his narrative journey the railway also links him to roasted coffee and a domestic smell. What is a very public transport system remains linked with the private sphere of fresh coffee. No other evocation, no other smell, has for *Americano* that link from the public to the private. But each of his evocations has a third-person feel about it – as if he is the detached observer rather than the participant.

Americano's nostalgic recollection of São Paulo at the turn of the twentieth century contrasts with a Mário de Andrade (1893-1945) poem from his collection ‘Hallucinated City’, which he published in 1922 and read during the Modern Art Week.⁷¹ Mário de Andrade's portrayal of São Paulo emerges as a

⁷⁰ Summerhill, W, *Order Against Progress*, p. 138, table 6.4.

⁷¹ Bishop and Brasil, ‘Introduction’, p. xix.

‘gloomy landscape of... foreign-owned railways and disillusioned farmers...’⁷²
 In ‘Paisagem n. 4’ (Landscape no. 4) he says,

At the intersection the English cry of the São Paulo Railway...
 But the windstorms of disillusion! The drop in coffee prices!
 The bankruptcies, threats, superfine audacities!...
 The farmers flee to their homes!... Cincinato Braga!...
 Far away Brazil with her arms folded...
 Oh! Maternal indifferences!...⁷³

For Mário de Andrade the city takes on a more politicised form. Here the harvest from the countryside is transported ready for shipping to port and to overseas markets. But the city is also a space where foreigners have taken control of the railway, and the political authorities in Brazil appear to him to be offering no defence of the domestic economy. The poem is a desperate call to arms, but Mário de Andrade knows that his exhortation for Brazil to defend itself against this foreign interference will not be heeded, and will be met with indifference.

Both Jorge Americano and Mário de Andrade have used the railway as an icon of urban São Paulo but each poet, separated by thirty-five years, employs the image in different ways. For Americano it is the memory of the smell of the locomotives, whilst for de Andrade it is the here-and-now of frustration felt at what seems to him to be national indifference to foreign exploitation. Mário’s fellow Modernist Oswald de Andrade also used rail travel as a symbol of urban São Paulo. ‘Pobre Alimária’ (Poor Brute) displays, according to Roberto Schwarz, a tension between modernity and tradition.⁷⁴ The poem tells of a scene in the 1920s when a horse and cart gets stuck in tramlines. It is carrying a group of lawyers to work. The horse tries to bolt and the driver whips it soundly. The tram car itself does not appear in the short poem, only the tramlines.⁷⁵ For Schwarz the duality of ‘avant-garde art versus provincial resentment’ as

⁷² Gonzalez and Treece, *The Gathering of Voices*, p. 71.

⁷³ Mário de Andrade, *Hallucinated City: Paulicea Desvairada*, trans. Jack E. Tomlins (Nashville, TN, 1968 [1922]), p. 75.

⁷⁴ Roberto Schwarz, *Misplaced Ideas: Essays on Brazilian Culture*, ed. John Gledson (London, 1992), pp. 108-125.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 112.

expressed in the two forms of transport finally breaks down and he says Oswald presents a ‘cheerful lyricism’ that proclaims, ‘This is what my country is like.’⁷⁶

7. Adoniran Barbosa: the railway and the *malandro*

From 1965 Adoniran Barbosa’s ‘Trem das Onze’ (Eleven O’clock Train) gives voice to one of Brazil’s most enduring male stereotypes, the *malandro*, the loveable rogue and street chancer who bends the rules yet has a heart of gold and a cheeky smile on his face.⁷⁷ Adoniran Barbosa, the son of poor Italian immigrants, was born in 1910 and died in 1982.⁷⁸ His education was limited and he spoke Portuguese with a heavy accent – part of his attraction to the masses. Barbosa variously lived in Valinhos, Jundiaí, Santo André and central São Paulo; all towns and suburbs in the state with strong links to the railway and his father worked for a time for the *São Paulo Railway*.⁷⁹ ‘Trem das Onze’ was one of the most popular sambas of 1965 to come out of the São Paulo music scene and despite its geographical references was even more of a hit in Rio de Janeiro.⁸⁰

I can’t stay, not even a minute longer, with you
 I’m sorry love, but it cannot be
 I live in Jaçanã
 If I miss this train
 Which leaves now at eleven
 The next is tomorrow morning
 And as well as this, woman, there’s something else
 My mother doesn’t sleep until I get home
 I’m an only child, I have to look after the house
 I can’t stay, I can’t stay...⁸¹

⁷⁶ Schwarz, *Misplaced Ideas*, pp. 117-118.

⁷⁷ Roberto DaMatta, *Carnivals, Rogues, and Heroes: An Interpretation of the Brazilian Dilemma*, trans. John Drury (Notra Dame, IN, 1991), pp. 207-211.

⁷⁸ Bruno Gomes, *Adoniran: Um Sambista Diferente* (Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 1987), p. 16 and p. 86.

⁷⁹ *Ibid*, pp. 16-17.

⁸⁰ *Ibid*, p. 63.

⁸¹ Adoniran Barbosa, ‘Trem das Onze’, in Gomes, *Adoniran: Um Sambista Diferente*, p. 64; Não posso ficar nem mais um minuto com você/sinto muito amor, mas não pode ser./Moro em Jaçanã,/se eu perder esse trem/que sai agora as onze horas/só amanhã de manhã./E além disso mulher/tem outra coisa,/minha mãe não dorme enquanto eu não chegar./sou filho único,/tenho minha casa pra olhar./(eu não posso ficar).

This is, on first reading, a song of love and separation. The train is the symbol of the physical distance between the two lovers. It is both the excuse and the reason for his breaking away from his girl. The assumption is that this woman is not his wife, the man is single and lives alone with his mother – or at least that is what he claims. However suspicion is raised by the number of times he stresses ‘I can’t stay, I can’t stay.’ The train is an excuse, but it is not a believable one. Instead the reader is given to understand that the singer will do anything to get away from his commitment to this girl. Indeed the question is raised as to whether he really does mean it when he implies in the second line ‘I love you very much...’, or rather has another conquest who is awaiting him because he states ‘it cannot be’. Doubt is cast on his real motives: does he in fact not want to go at all, but instead spend the night with this girl? After all, his mother may well not miss him for one night; he is an adult and able to look after himself. In the meantime he has until tomorrow morning to enjoy the delights of his new encounter.

By association with the malandro character the railway takes on a double meaning. On the one hand it is reliable and will take him back to his mother, yet on the other it is being used as a means either to split with the woman or to spend a night with her. The train has become an unreliable creature full of double meanings, doubtful intentions, and is almost certainly not to be trusted. On a practical level, the urban and suburban railways were actually mistrusted by many in this period as rising levels of complaints about poor levels of service and punctuality both in São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro culminated in three successive years of riots in the mid-1970s.⁸² Yet as a romantic device, the train in Barbosa’s hands is both an excuse and a weapon of seduction.

There is also a hint of the hero understanding the power of modern technology here: he has the option at his disposal – and the money too. He is saying, ‘I can leave or go, I am a free man. I have a means of transport available that is faster than walking and I can afford to buy a ticket if I wish.’ However,

⁸² Moisés and Martinez-Alier, ‘Urban Transport: The Case of Brazil’, pp. 174 – 192.

given the poor level of service it is questionable whether this was a real advantage. Across the urban sprawl of São Paulo transport provision had been observed by researchers to have been distributed unevenly from the early 1970s onwards, adding to substantial income inequalities for residents who live far from rail routes.⁸³ If he did, as he stated, live near a railway station, it could be imagined that he was relatively well-off and would be able to use the train to return safely after dark back home. One railway historian, Ralph Mennucci Giesbrecht, takes a literal interpretation of Barbosa's composition. He presents evidence that the train was in fact the 22.59hrs. from Vila Mazzei to Jaçanã on the *E. F. da Cantareira* to the north of central São Paulo.⁸⁴ Giesbrecht puts forward an argument to suggest that Barbosa used to film at cinema studios in Jaçanã. His habit apparently was to go drinking after work in Vila Mazzei, 1.07 kms away, preferring to take the short train ride back to Jaçanã late at night rather than walk the dark streets alone.⁸⁵

8. Kleiton & Kledir: the quality of service deteriorates

Poetry in Brazil during the final two decades of the twentieth century has, according to Mike Gonzalez and David Treece, had as one of its central themes the tensions between 'a totalitarian political order and the inescapable forces of a global capitalist economy'.⁸⁶ At the same time it has had to deal with the lingering duality between tradition and modernity.⁸⁷ Kleiton & Kledir, two brothers from the state of Rio Grande do Sul, were a popular musical duo in the 1980s.⁸⁸ Their song, 'Maria Fumaça' from their first album together released in 1980 became one of their enduring hits.⁸⁹ It tells of a passenger's complaint

⁸³ Camargo and others, *São Paulo, Growth and Poverty*, p.59.

⁸⁴ Ralph Mennucci Giesbrecht, 'Jaçana', *Estações Ferroviárias do Brasil* (27 May 2006), '<http://www.estacoesferroviarias.com.br/jjacana.htm>' (14 June 2008).

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Gonzalez and Treece, *The Gathering of Voices*, p. 324.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Matheus Levi, 'Kleiton & Kledir: Site Oficial' '<http://kleitonekledir.uol.com.br/>' (14 June 2008).

⁸⁹ Kleiton & Kledir, 'Maria Fumaça', *Discografia*, Kleiton & Kledir, 1980, '<http://kleitonekledir.uol.com.br/discografia/5indice.htm>' (14 June 2008).

about the appalling level of service into the station at Pedro Osório at the southernmost tip of Brazil.⁹⁰

This puffing billy is so slow it's almost stopped
 Hey Mr. fireman, put more fire in the firebox
 This kettle has to keep going until Friday
 At Pedro Osório station, yes sir.

If this train doesn't get there in time I'll miss my wedding
 Come on, get this coal on the fire
 This big fire is what will accelerate this bathtub
 The vicar is crazy and will put someone else in my place

...
 If it happens that I'm not married
 Someone will have to pay compensation
 And it'll be the president himself of the
 RFFSA.⁹¹

The melody of the train's whistle is taken by a flute and the song maintains a rhythm similar to a locomotive. The last line of the song, the initials of the state railway company the *RFFSA*, are repeated over and over to a final climactic crescendo. Sheer contempt for the unreliable locomotive is also highlighted in an earlier couplet when they ask 'Why not throw away this museum of old iron/And buy instead a modern Japanese train?'⁹² The Brazilian passenger train, for them, has lost any semblance of technological innovation. They compare it repeatedly to old-fashioned domestic equipment like a kettle and a bathtub. The groom takes his frustration out first on the fireman on the locomotive footplate, but by the end of the song his rage has transferred to the federal government and the president of the national railways. This lack of confidence from the public in the *RFFSA*, which was formed in 1957 as a federal-owned company that controlled the majority of the railway lines in

⁹⁰ Ralph Mennucci Giesbrecht, 'Pedro Osório', *Estações Ferroviárias do Brasil* (31 January 2008), 'http://www.estacoesferroviarias.com.br/rs_bage_riogrande/pedro.htm' (14 June 2008).

⁹¹ Essa maria fumaça é devagar quase parada/Ô seu fogueira, bota fogo na fogueira/Que essa chaleira tem que tá até sexta feira/Na estação de Pedro Osório, sim senhor/Se esse trem não chega a tempo vou perder meu casamento/Atraca, atraca-lhe carvão nessa lareira/Esse fogão é que acelera essa banheira/O padre é louco e bota outro em meu lugar/.../Se por acaso eu não casar/Alguém vai ter que indenizar/E é o presidente dessa tal/RFFSA.

⁹² Kleiton & Kledir, 'Maria Fumaça', Discografia, Kleiton & Kledir, 1980, 'http://kleitonekledir.uol.com.br/discografia/5indice.htm' (14 June 2008). Porque não joga esse museu no ferro velho/E compra logo um trem moderno japonês.

Brazil, is reflected in the manner in which it chose to present its railway heritage to the public; an issue which is explored in chapters 8 and 9 of this study.

9. Concluding remarks

The railway ensemble as depicted in this selection of poetry and popular music in Brazil from 1865 to 1980 reveals two tendencies amongst writers. The first is the presentation of a romantic image of the train and its capacity to bring change and spiritual renewal. The second is the tendency amongst poets to question this new form of technology and to ask whether modernity is all its supporters actually say it is.

Castro Alves in 1871 has the locomotive as a tiger waking up the countryside, a rebirth into the shock of the new. His was a new dawn that heralded and prophesied a Brazil no longer dominated by 'naked indians' but by the 'proclaimer of the big light'. As one of the country's leading Romantic poets he was expressing a prevailing view that appeared to be at odds with actual events. Six years earlier Pedro Taques de Almeida Alvim had published a satirical poem lampooning the inaugural train on the *São Paulo Railway* which had derailed, killing the driver and injuring several official guests. For Alvim the railway was a dangerous piece of transport technology; horse and carts were much more reliable and able to be controlled. His sceptical view of the railway ensemble would become an enduring one, but some poets have persisted in presenting a romanticised view of the train.

Aníbal Machado, in a poem published in 1946, talks about the first train of the new day reviving humanity and waking up those around it with its whistle. Raul Seixas in 1974 took this image a stage further with his evocation of the morning train bringing in the dawning of the New Age of Aquarius. In a nostalgic vein Jorge Americano in his 1957 poem uses the memory of the smells of the locomotives at São Paulo's mainline stations as the key to his remembering the city of his childhood. Yet here he is sensing the railway as an external observer, not actually travelling but bringing the idea of the railway into

the safety of the domestic surroundings of the home and family. In doing so he is removing the problems associated with the railway ensemble as a symbol of modern Brazil.

That is the task of the remaining poets considered in this chapter. Adoniran Barbosa, the singer and entertainer who used the image of the cheeky malandro in many of his songs, in 1965 showed how the street chancer and spiv of urban São Paulo could use the train as a bargaining tool to win or cast aside the attentions of a woman at will, and how the malandro could use the technology to assert his power and wealth. After all, if he could afford to take the train just one stop he must surely have had cash in his pockets; the alternative would be to do what poor people do: walk.

Luís Aranha, in his poem published in 1946, raises concerns that at first the railway may be a pleasant modern system of transport but behind that façade was potential violence that could only lead to an apocalypse. Maria Clara Machado saw the world flashing past her from the end balcony of her carriage. For her it was a lonely experience that took her away from the security and tradition of home and family. In a similar vein, Manuel Bandeira's 'Trem de Ferro' from 1936 draws on a sense of dislocation between rural and urban. His passenger desperately wants to escape from the modern city and return to his country roots, yet the locomotive just does not seem to go fast enough. For the Modernist poets of the 1920s the train epitomised the city of São Paulo. Mário de Andrade saw it as an example of foreigners exerting power over a supine Brazil. Oswald de Andrade used the symbol of the tramlines in the city's streets to highlight the tension between modernity and tradition.

Finally, Kleiton & Kledir in 1980 turned complaints about the reliability of the railway ensemble into a political issue. Their frustration at years of government underinvestment from the 1930s onwards, and its apparent preference for the development of the nation's roads, was initially directed at the fireman on the footplate. But by the end of their song they realised that the true responsibility lay with the president of the federal railway company. It was the

government that would have been to blame if the groom did not get to his wedding in time. Chapter 8 of this study will return to the issue of the state's involvement in the railway in the form of museums of rail history. It will demonstrate that an apparent lack of interest and engagement by the public at large led to a lack of significant audiences for this network of country-wide museum sites. In the meantime the next chapter continues the analysis of media representations of the railway, discussing television and film and highlighting the appearance again of the dualities of urban versus rural and modern versus traditional.

1. Introduction

The preceding three chapters have focussed in the main on printed media, and the railway ensemble's portrayal in factual, fictional narrative, and poetry. The previous chapter also included a discussion of examples of oral representations in popular song. This study now turns its attention to visual images of the large technical cultural system, noting that some of these cinema and television productions have themselves been inspired in turn by narrative fiction. By examining media forms one by one in this manner the intention is to build up an understanding of Brazilian railway culture. Each of these chapters forms part of this large technical ensemble.

Terrestrial television in Brazil has been regarded as playing to a mass audience, and as being created by hegemonic elites with political and business interests. With the arrival of direct satellite television and cable subscription services the television market is beginning to fragment at the beginning of the twenty-first century in Brazil.¹ Likewise cinema, until the advent of widespread television viewing in the 1960s and 70s was a mass medium. It has more recently become a middle and upper class diversion to go to an urban movie theatre, often part of a multiplex housed within a shopping centre catering for such groups to the physical exclusion of the masses (entry restrictions and careful security monitoring can exclude poor Brazilians from gaining access to the newer shopping developments). It would thus appear that both television and cinema show elements of being mass, popular and elitist cultural forms depending on when and how they are being viewed as well as on the subject matter contained in the programme or movie.

This chapter will analyse *Terra Nostra* (1999), a television *novela* about Italian immigration at the turn of the twentieth century in the state of São Paulo

¹ Beatriz Jaguaribe, 'The Shock of the Real: Realist Aesthetics in the Media and the Urban Experience', *Space and Culture*, 8 (2005), p. 74; Joseph D. Straubhaar, 'The Electronic Media in Brazil', in Richard R. Cole (ed.), *Communication in Latin America: Journalism, Mass Media, and Society* (Wilmington, DE, 1996), pp. 232-235.

and the development of the coffee industry.² Like soap operas in North America (and unlike their British versions) Brazilian *novelas* have closed story lines and reach a definite ending. *Terra Nostra* (Our Land) was made by the TV Globo network and cast the railway as an icon of progress at the close of the Brazilian empire from the late 1880s until the early years of the twentieth century. In short it has been part of the continuing process of negotiation of the place of the railway ensemble in Brazilian society. Cinema will be considered by discussing what, at the turn of the twenty-first century, was Brazil's best known movie *Central do Brasil* (Central Station), a film that opens with the image of the emotional wasteland of the big city railway terminus. Urban dislocation will be returned to with the gritty 2003 film *De Passagem* (Passing By), set in São Paulo, by way of a comic interlude in the form of Mazaroppi's 1958 movie, *Chico Fumaça*, which highlights the country bumpkin's superiority over modern technology.

The train, and the locomotive in particular, have had a close relationship with film from its earliest days in Europe. An examination of the railway and cinema has been carried out by Lynne Kirby who, in a similar manner to this present study, regards the railway as an ensemble. 'My aim', she says, 'is an illumination of the relations between the railroad and the cinema through several prisms...'³ Her survey covers the emergence of silent cinema in Europe, the United States of America, and Russia and the Soviet Union, from the 1895 Lumière brothers film *L'Arrivée d'un train en gare de La Ciotat* onwards. She clearly identifies the dualities of the train portrayed consistently as 'a blessing and a curse', as an ambivalent actor that variously provided a panoramic view of the world from its window, a shock of modern technology, a transgression and a jump-cut through the linearity of time, and a symbol through its timetables and operation of order and rationality.⁴ Her conclusions have resonances in the case of the cinema and the train in Brazil. Francisco Foot Hardman regards the feeling

² This study uses the Brazilian Portuguese word *novela* to refer to television series. Some English-language academics prefer to employ the term *telenovela* to make clear the medium.

³ Lynne Kirby, *Parallel Tracks: The Railroad and Silent Cinema* (Exeter, Devon, 1997), p. 11.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 6-7 and p. 27.

of shock to have largely disappeared by the late twentieth century in Brazil.⁵ From the first sense of the technology being ‘a goddess of progress’ the train, he says, has now become a child’s toy, an attraction in a theme park or a heritage steam ride.⁶ While this may be the case for the representation of the train and the railway ensemble in Brazilian museums, as will be discussed later in this study, its portrayal in movies and on television as an icon of movement, of progress, and of the problems of the lived urban experience has persisted. The three films featuring images of the train in Brazil to be discussed here show the railway to have a duality of roles bound up in its ensemble. In the city it is a dehumanising agent, but in the countryside it is mankind that is able to tame the technological beast. This tension will be examined later in this chapter, but first to a discussion of a major production by Brazil’s leading television company, TV Globo.

2. Television in Brazil

Television’s supremacy in the visual realm in Brazil since the late 1960s has meant that actors ‘...can earn a living in the electronic media, doing occasional movies and stagework between stints in *novelas* or miniseries’.⁷ Ronald Schneider makes the point that since the mid-1990s,

Millions of Brazilians are familiar with the country’s literary works through their television adaptations and see movies only on television, which has become even a lower-class household necessity.⁸

One such example is *Gabriela* (1975), an adaptation by TV Globo of Jorge Amado’s novel *Gabriela, Cravo e Canela* which was considered in chapter 4.⁹ Silviano Santiago argues that from the 1930s the idea developed of highlighting Brazil’s own regional differences which ‘were spotlighted by artists and social scientists in order to better characterize not only Brazil’s backwardness in the

⁵ Francisco Foot Hardman, *Trem Fantasma: A Ferrovia Madeira-Mamoré e a Modernidade na Selva* (2nd. edn., São Paulo, SP, 2005), pp. 51-52.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ Ronald M. Schneider, *Brazil: Culture and Politics in a New Industrial Powerhouse* (Boulder, CO, 1996), p. 200.

⁸ Schneider, *Brazil: Culture and Politics*, p. 200.

⁹ Mark A. Dinneen, ‘Print Media and Broadcasting’ in Jon S. Vincent, *Culture and Customs of Brazil* (Westport, CT, 2003), p. 112.

context of developed nations, but also the disregard of central government...’ for the rural regions which suffered their own social and economic privations.¹⁰ However at the beginning of the twenty-first century, with the widespread availability of television images made up of both a unified national product created by the TV Globo network and the inclusion of foreign television series in the schedules, he says that ‘the globalizing and alienating sameness that is instilled among the popular classes by the electronic media in an authoritarian manner distances Brazilians from Brazil’.¹¹ What emerges from this argument is a Brazil that is fragmenting into cultural groupings each with its own internal search for an identity whilst battling against a homogenising force. So today’s television *novelas*, such as *Terra Nostra*, can be viewed as a hegemonic product of the TV Globo company embraced by descendents of Italian immigrants as a symbol of the arrival and advancement of their forefathers in the new lands of São Paulo state over the past century, yet perhaps questioned and maybe even rejected by non-members of this social group who are in search of their own Brazilian identity.

Alberto Moreiras, drawing on work done in the area of subaltern studies by academics such as Gayatri Spivak, argues that ‘Historical identity, any notion of a historical collective, is always a function of economy in its expanded sense: of the relations between and inside groups.’¹² He goes on to say that ‘capitalism condemns collective identity (or difference) to an always reactive function...’ Hence the culture and perception of the railway in Brazil is a function, to a certain extent, of the very economic forces that brought it over the Atlantic Ocean in the first place and of the manner in which commercial television companies eventually portray it. The railway as viewed on cinema and television screens can be seen as elements in the series of representations of this complex network of influences and ideologies. It has been borne out of the foreign capital and engineering skills; operated by Brazilian managers; used by local passengers

¹⁰ Silviano Santiago, *The Space In-Between: Essays on Latin American Culture*, ed. Ana Lúcia Gazzola (Durham, NC, 2001), p. 172.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² Alberto Moreiras, *The Exhaustion of Difference: The Politics of Latin American Cultural Studies* (Durham, NC, 2001), p. 276.

themselves perhaps descendents of European immigrants, and turned into artistic creations by writers, producers and actors employed by often large commercial operations led by businessmen who use their cultural influence to make political allegiances and statements. These movies and programmes are then viewed and consumed by a public with its own personal and collective interpretations.

Joseph Straubhaar acknowledges this complexity within the Brazilian television industry, which he describes as ‘a thriving mass culture’ that produces a substantial proportion of domestic programming.¹³ He goes on to say,

The degree to which this Brazilian material represents an authentic popular culture depends on an industry structure and production process that is dominated by national elites, government, and multinational elites but is open to considerable assertion of local culture and interests.¹⁴

Elsewhere, in a separate essay, Straubhaar quotes a 1982 survey which suggests that the largest section of the audience for *novelas* is viewers who have no educational training. Eighty percent of this segment say they watch such programmes. Yet his survey also indicates that fifty-six percent of those with university degrees say they too watched *novelas*. This suggests that *novelas* have a broad appeal which transcends educational background, and by implication are watched by the majority of all social classes.¹⁵

Television broadcasting started in Brazil in 1950.¹⁶ From this time onwards newspaper and radio media magnates such as Francisco de Assis Chateaubriand (*Diários Associados*) and Roberto Marino (*O Globo*) turned their attention to the new visual technology.¹⁷ The military regime in power after the coup of 1964 stimulated television’s growth by offering loans to households wanting to buy a television set and by building a national telecommunications

¹³ Joseph D. Straubhaar, ‘Mass Communication and the Elites’, in Michael L. Conniff and Frank D. McCann (eds.), *Modern Brazil: Elites and Masses in Historical Perspective* (Lincoln, NE, 1989), p. 226.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Joseph D. Straubhaar, ‘The Electronic Media in Brazil’, p. 238.

¹⁶ Straubhaar, ‘Mass Communication and the Elites’, p. 235; Dinneen, ‘Print Media and Broadcasting’ p. 106.

¹⁷ Straubhaar, ‘Mass Communication and the Elites’, p. 235.

network which meant broadcast signals could be sent across the entire country.¹⁸ TV Globo was careful during the military years not to provoke the authorities and benefited greatly from both the military's support and a deal signed with Time-Life of the USA for investment and technical help in return for a share in TV Globo's profits. By 1971 the partnership was ended, but as a direct result TV Globo quickly expanded and soon came to dominate the national audience ratings from then onwards.¹⁹ Joseph Straubhaar observes that as the proliferation of television sets increased programming which was initially aimed at the elites in the early fifties tended by the late 1960s to include more soap operas, game shows, and comedies – popular genres which have endured until today.²⁰ He adds that, 'Scriptwriters became especially good at building telenovelas into a distinctive genre by drawing on regional and historical themes.'²¹ With the gradual relaxation of censorship by the military regime during the late 1970s and early 1980s the subject matter and critiques contained within television shows also began to change.²² As commercial privately-owned broadcasters, the major television network companies in Brazil are shaped today by the need to maximise advertising revenue; achieved by providing popular programming on a national level. The effects of this widespread consumption of television cannot, according to Ronald Schneider, be underestimated:

Within the realm of communications the electronic media – especially television – have come within a single generation to have an enormous impact, even greater upon the largely unschooled broad bottom of the social pyramid than upon those whose literacy and access to print media expose them to other sources of information and opinion.²³

And he argues that part of this influence is to create a homogenizing effect on national culture.²⁴ The audience, in particular for the *novelas*, is drawn from all

¹⁸ Straubhaar, 'Mass Communication and the Elites', p. 236

¹⁹ Dinneen, 'Print Media and Broadcasting', p. 108; see also Joseph D. Straubhaar, 'Brazilian Television: The Decline of American Influence', *Communication Research*, 11 (1984), pp. 228-229.

²⁰ Straubhaar, 'Mass Communication and the Elites', p. 238.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 239.

²² *Ibid.*

²³ Schneider, *Brazil: Culture and Politics*, pp. 191-192.

²⁴ Schneider, *Brazil: Culture and Politics*, p. 192. A point also made by Randal Johnson, who argues this has caused a 'one-sided flow of communication'. See: Randal Johnson, 'Film,

sections of society and areas of the country.²⁵ The influence of TV Globo's main 8 p.m. *novela*, which runs six nights a week, has been observed to be so great that one small village, São Sebastião, on the banks of the Rio Madeira opposite the city of Porto Velho in the Brazilian Amazon region arranged for its communal electricity generator to be turned off thirty minutes after each night's episode had finished.²⁶ The owners of TV Globo have been described as 'the foremost producers of Brazil's self-image in the domain of mass culture'.²⁷ It would also appear that their schedules can become actors determining people's daily collective routines.

Vivian Schelling identifies two elements which contribute to the success of *novelas* across Latin America: firstly that they replay the issues and conflicts directly affecting the lives of the audience such as poverty, urban living, and rural tradition. Secondly they concentrate, through melodrama, on the 'emotional life of the family'.²⁸ So in *Terra Nostra* the immigrant family is pitched against the modernity of the agricultural revolution happening in the state of São Paulo at the end of the nineteenth century, and in *Mad Maria* (2005) the producers who adapted the novel (which was discussed in chapter 4) for broadcast as a two-month, thirty-five part, mini series introduced the conflict between the urbanity of Rio de Janeiro high society and the squalid life of the railway construction camp in the jungle.

Another tendency of the *novelas* has been their luxuriant historical scenes and the glamorisation of the lives and loves of the rich elites. Commentators have noticed that such images may be a world away from the daily struggle of millions of Brazilians, yet their juxtaposition next to highly professional nightly

Television and Traditional Folk Culture in "Bye Bye Brasil", *Journal of Popular Culture*, 18 (1984), p. 125.

²⁵ Schneider, *Brazil: Culture and Politics*, p. 201.

²⁶ Personal observation, Porto Velho, Rondônia, 2000.

²⁷ Patricia Birman and David Lehmann, 'Religion and the Media in a Battle for Ideological Hegemony: the Universal Church of the Kingdom of God and TV Globo in Brazil', *Bulletin of Latin American Research*, 18 (1999), p. 148.

²⁸ Vivian Schelling, 'Popular Culture in Latin America', in John King (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Modern Latin American Culture* (Cambridge, 2004), pp. 187-188.

news bulletins serve to make all television output appear to be a stylised version of reality. Beatriz Jaguaribe notes,

If the *Jornal Nacional* was the reality principle shaping the nationwide televised imagined community, the soap operas of Rede Globo were the realms of fantasy that connected millions of viewers to the same fictional narrative.²⁹

Her point is that for a majority of the population the television is their only form of media with which to observe the wider world around them. Hence its potential power to influence and shape opinion is significant, particularly for the leading broadcaster, TV Globo.³⁰ That has begun to change in recent years as the advent of cable and satellite broadcasting in Brazil is weakening, albeit slowly, the hegemony of TV Globo.³¹

What follows is an analysis of the imagery of the railway in the title credits of *Terra Nostra*. There are two reasons for discussing the opening credits rather than the drama itself: firstly this sequence, of just over one minute in duration, is repeated in the opening portions of each episode and five second still images from these titles are used at each commercial break. Constant daily repetition over the course of ten months in the case of *Terra Nostra* gave these montages a familiarity and permanence in front of the viewer's gaze. Secondly, space in this study does not permit a detailed analysis of a total of 192 hours of television drama.

3. *Terra Nostra* (1999)

Critics note that TV Globo has very high production values.³² *Terra Nostra* was written by Benedito Ruy Barbosa, and since its broadcast has come to be evaluated as one of its most important *novelas* of the 1990s: 'a lavish and costly production of vast scope, tracing the experience of Italian immigrants to

²⁹ Jaguaribe, 'The Shock of the Real', p. 74.

³⁰ Ibid, p. 75.

³¹ Ibid, p. 74.

³² Stephanie Dennison and Lisa Shaw, *Popular Cinema in Brazil, 1930-2001* (Manchester, 2004), p. 210.

Brazil...'³³ It was according to Mauro Porto the most expensive *novela* produced by TV Globo up to that date, costing some US\$ 13.3 million for 221 episodes.³⁴ It ran from September 1999 to June 2000, six nights per week, in the prime eight o'clock evening slot. Each episode was a commercial hour, representing forty-five minutes of filmed drama and four commercial breaks totalling fifteen minutes. Barbosa, with a career in television scriptwriting stretching back forty years, was one of the most successful *novela* writers of the 1990s and returned a number of times to historical themes for his storylines including the screenplay for *Mad Maria* in 2005.³⁵

Terra Nostra is about Italian immigration at the beginning of the twentieth century.³⁶ The new arrivals replaced the slaves, after the abolition of slavery in 1888, on the coffee plantations in the interior of São Paulo state. In the confusion of disembarking from their transatlantic voyage at the port of Santos with hundreds of other new arrivals the young couple Matteo and Giuliana are separated. She, having already seen her parents die during the sea crossing, goes to live with a friend of the family who is a wealthy banker in the city. Matteo ends up working on the coffee harvest on the plantation deep in the countryside. The rest of the *novela* is a series of intrigues and sub-plots to make the reuniting of the two young lovers ever problematic. The melodramatic suspense is maintained right to the end, with the series finishing, not with the word 'fim' [end], but the caption 'this story doesn't end here...'³⁷

As to *Terra Nostra's* subject matter, Stephanie Dennison and Lisa Shaw point to the case of a number of cinema releases during the earlier part of the

³³ Dinneen, 'Print Media and Broadcasting', p. 112.

³⁴ Mauro P. Porto, 'Political Controversies in Brazilian TV Fiction: Viewers' Interpretations of the "Telenovela Terra Nostra"', *Television & New Media*, 6 (2005), p. 356, note 1; Aluizio R. Trinta, 'News from Home: A Study of Realism and Melodrama in Brazilian "Telenovelas"' in Christine Geraghty & David Lusted (eds.), *The Television Studies Book* (London, 1998), p. 276.

³⁵ Cacilda M. Rêgo, 'Novelas, Novelinhas, Novéisões: The Evolution of the (Tele)Novela in Brazil', *Global Media Journal*, 2 (2003), '<http://lass.calumet.purdue.edu/cca/gmj/sp03/gmj-sp03-rego.htm>' (14 June 2008). Comments appear in final section.

³⁶ Despite having the same title the *novela* has no connection with Carlos Fuentes, *Terra Nostra* (Mexico City, 1975).

³⁷ Nilson Xavier, 'Bastidores Terra Nostra', *Teledramaturgia*, '<http://www.teledramaturgia.com.br/alfabetica.htm>' (14 June 2008).

decade which were similarly set in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. They observe that these films use the immigrant as a vehicle to express the newly-arrived foreigners' (i.e. outsider) view of Brazil, rather than discuss the conditions of immigration or their transformation into society of the future.³⁸ One criticism levelled at *Terra Nostra* was its glossing of the mistreatment of Italian immigrants by the plantation owners: characters in the series state life is better in Brazil than back at home yet records suggest more than a third of immigrants actually returned to Italy at this time.³⁹ Mauro Porto has examined the first eight weeks of the *novela* for its political content. Using two scenes from the series he prompted discussion amongst six focus groups made up of residents of Brasilia, the capital of Brazil.⁴⁰ Amongst this group he identified a tendency, particularly amongst female viewers, to use the *novela* as a way of understanding Brazil's history and politics – both of the late nineteenth century and as a reflection or allegory of contemporary events.⁴¹

Up to 2004 *Terra Nostra* had been sold to a total of eighty-three countries (including the USA and Canada but not Britain), one of the highest distributions of a TV Globo *novela* to date.⁴² This re-exhibition has prompted a post-graduate research project carried out among a group of middle and upper-class women in Lisbon, Portugal, into the representation of gender in the *novela*.⁴³ Whilst the series may not have been historically accurate,⁴⁴ its melodramatic themes appear to have touched audiences both in Brazil and beyond. What is clear is that television companies across Latin America, TV Globo included, have a 'reach and power... [that] goes far beyond the area of popular culture and often enters

³⁸ Dennison and Shaw, *Popular Cinema in Brazil*, p. 206.

³⁹ Porto, 'Political Controversies in Brazilian TV Fiction' p. 346.

⁴⁰ Ibid, p. 344 and p. 347.

⁴¹ Ibid, pp. 355-356.

⁴² Xavier, 'Bastidores Terra Nostra'.

⁴³ Verónica Melo Policarpo, 'As Mulheres e a Telenovela: Um Estudo sobre a Recepção de "Terra Nostra"', *Agora.Net*, No. 3, n.d., Universidade da Beira Interior, Covilhã, Portugal, '<http://www.labcom.ubi.pt/agoranet/03/policarpo-veronica-mulheres-e-telenovela-terra-nostra.pdf>' (16 August 2008). In Europe in the mid-1990s Portuguese and Spanish broadcasters showed the highest number of Brazilian *novelas* of all countries in the region. See: Daniël Biltreyst & Philippe Meers, 'The International Telenovela Debate and the Contra-flow Argument: A Reappraisal', *Media, Culture & Society*, 22 (2000), p. 404.

⁴⁴ Porto, 'Political Controversies in Brazilian TV Fiction', p. 348.

the field of politics'.⁴⁵ Indeed whilst Aluizio Trinta suggests Brazilian *novelas* are constructed to tell a form of the national story in fictional form, other commentators assert that the export market is now a key area, and many story lines – including ones about Italian immigration – are constructed with a conscious foreign audience in mind.⁴⁶ Thus any discussion of the portrayal of the railway in *Terra Nostra* has to be understood as being targeted not purely towards a domestic audience.

The opening credits (fig. 14) come after the first five minutes or so of dramatic action. Straight after these credits is a commercial break. For Irene Penacchioni these frequent interruptions create their own narrative structure 'for which a split between information and fiction no longer exists'.⁴⁷ However it is taken as understood by the majority of researchers that audiences themselves are highly attuned to the devices of television narrative, both in fictional and factual forms, and are able to distinguish easily for themselves.⁴⁸ *Terra Nostra* follows the style developed by TV Globo for its *novelas*, a narrative format used by other channels as well, with the dramatic action starting directly after the previous programme's closing credits have finished with a five second identifying logo of the show's title appearing on screen. What follows is five minutes of the drama which builds to a mini climax and at this moment the opening credits appear before switching to the first of the commercial breaks. The credits of *Terra Nostra* themselves last one minute and seven seconds and are a series of stills and slow-motion overlaid images set to a romantic opera-style duet written by three Brazilian songwriters and performed in Italian by the Brazilian singer Agnaldo Rayol and the English soloist Charlotte Church.⁴⁹

⁴⁵ Emile G. McAnany and Antonio C. La Pastina, 'Telenovela Audiences: A Review and methodological Critique of Latin American Research', *Communication Research*, 21 (1994), p. 831.

⁴⁶ Trinta, 'News from Home', p. 284; Biltereyst and Meers, 'The International Telenovela Debate', p. 397.

⁴⁷ Irene Penacchioni, 'The Reception of Popular Television in Northeast Brazil', *Media, Culture & Society*, 6 (1984), p. 341.

⁴⁸ McAnany and La Pastina, 'Telenovela Audiences', pp. 833-838.

⁴⁹ *Tormento D'amore*, by Luiz Schiavon, Marcelo Barbosa and Antônio Scarpellini, performed by Agnaldo Rayol and Charlotte Church.

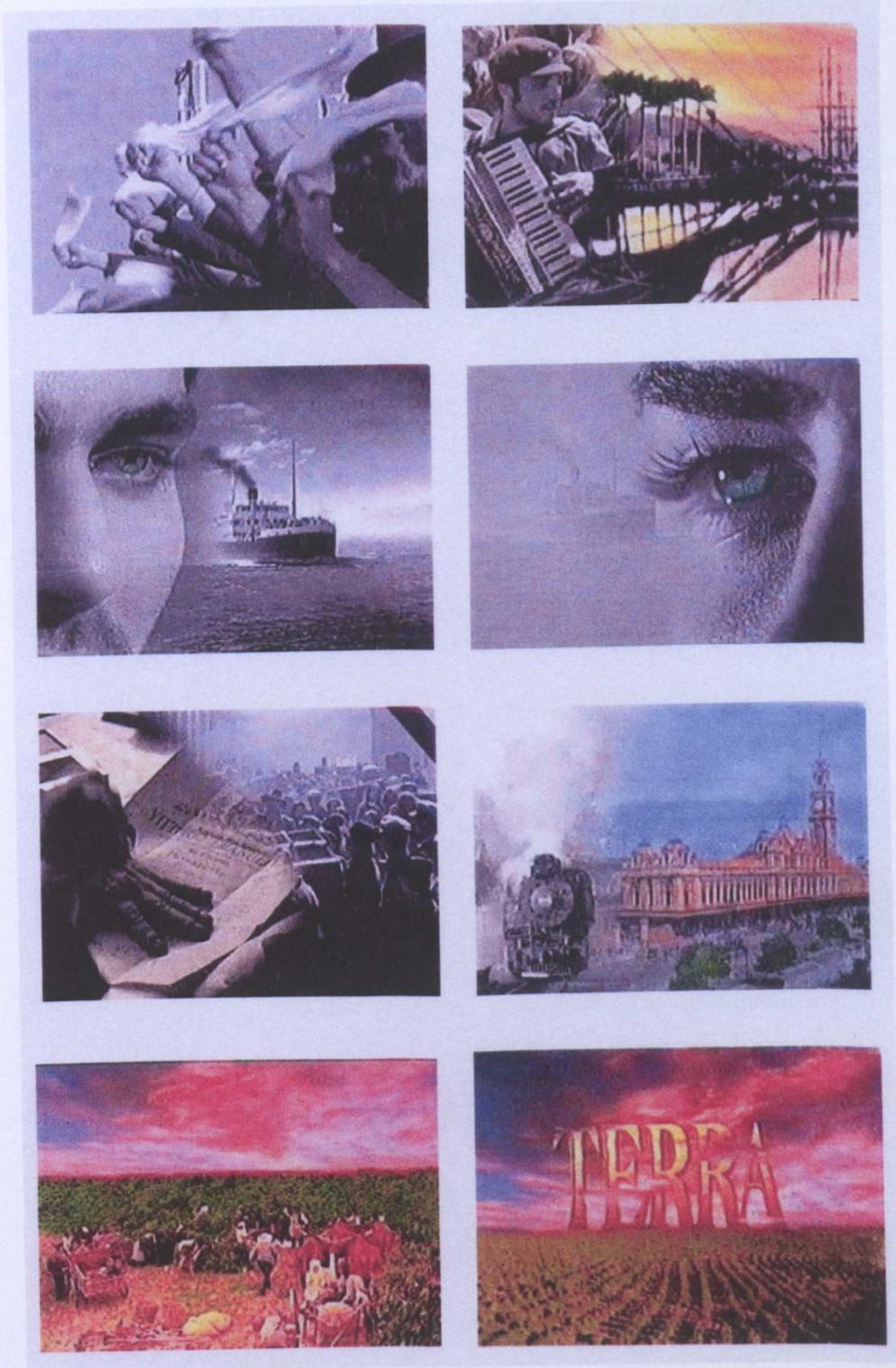


Fig. 14 Selected images from the opening title sequence, *Terra Nostra*, TV Globo (1999)⁵⁰

⁵⁰ Nilson Xavier, 'Terra Nostra: Abertura', *Teledramaturgia* (25 May 2008), <http://www.teledramaturgia.com.br/terraab.htm> (14 June 2008).

During this one minute title sequence, as the actor credits roll, the images cross fade to tell the 'story-so-far' as if for new viewers just joining the series. Hands raised waving white handkerchiefs signify the departure of the Italians, then set-up shots of Italian symbols such as the narrow streets hung with washing. This fades to a shot of an ocean-going liner and the sorrowful eyes of our romantic couple next seen embracing on deck of the boat during their on-board romance. From here the viewer sees the Italian culture arrive in the tropics, with a swarthy young male with a cloth cap and goatee beard playing the accordion in front of a line of palm trees at the port of arrival. Again the eyes of the two young lovers appear and these two separate images then dissolve into a crowd shot of the immigrants arriving and filling out their registration papers before fading into a montage of a steam locomotive and the Estação da Luz in São Paulo. The montage mixes through to suggest the train is moving from the urban cityscape of São Paulo out into the countryside. From here the viewer is presented with a shot of workers collecting the coffee harvest in the fields of the interior whilst above them is the appearance of the titles 'Terra Nostra' in gold in a landscape now mixed into an image of the serried ranks of coffee trees stretching in well cultivated lines to the horizon.

The locomotive here represents Brazilian modernity: Italy is a rural backwater from which escape by ocean steamer brings the immigrant to the bustle of São Paulo. The new world is civilised, organised and successful. It is surely intentional that the houses on the Italian hillside in the first few frames resemble the poor suburbs of modern day São Paulo and it from these images that the immigrants are escaping. A similar shot is used in the opening scenes of the 2003 movie *De Passagem* to establish the poverty of the southern suburbs of present day São Paulo, where what look like half-finished houses rise up to cover the hillsides. After leaving Italy, crossing the Atlantic, transferring to the train and then the immigration registration centre, the new settlers arrive at a majestic city with a central station (São Paulo's Estação da Luz) in all its regal and ecclesiastical splendour. The locomotive, itself billowing pure white smoke as if from an incense burner, is purifying and absolving the past – to deliver the new

arrivals into a Garden of Eden, a Promised Land which can, by them, be called Our Land.

These images are repeated in each episode and in themselves become not just iconic of the *novela*, but also develop a persistent narrative about Italian immigration to Brazil in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Mauro Porto observes that TV images can often be the major influence on viewers' perceptions of Brazil's complex history and, in this case, the treatment of newly arrived immigrants on the coffee plantations of the period.⁵¹ This opening sequence presents a romanticised reflection upon a period of history, in which the railway ensemble is deeply embedded, while avoiding any mention of the difficulties of Italian workers in coming to terms with working life in post-slavery plantations and in the newly founded industries in the city of São Paulo. Whilst some of these problems are dealt with in the plot of the *novela* itself, the viewer is repeatedly presented with the imagery of the opening credits which depicts a wholly positive experience of immigration. The railway, in this instance as a personification of Brazilian modernity, is complicit in this act of story telling.

Elsewhere Brazilian *novelas* with historical themes have not all been successes. The miniseries based on the Portuguese novelist Eça de Queirós's novel *Os Maias*, set in Portugal and shown on TV Globo in 2001, had a mixed reception by audiences and critics alike.⁵² Part of the problem for such productions is that they exist in the uncertain zone between erudite and mass culture.⁵³ The audience, expecting melodrama and high emotion, is occasionally presented with a story that achieves neither yet delivers a strong narrative and perhaps a cautionary tale as well. Antonio da Silveira Brasil Junior, Elisa da Silva Gomes and Maíra Zenum de Oliveira observe that the most successful television adaptations appears to be ones whose stories most closely reflect

⁵¹ Mauro P. Porto, 'Political Controversies in Brazilian TV Fiction', pp. 344-347.

⁵² Antonio da Silveira Brasil Junior, Elisa da Silva Gomes and Maíra Zenum de Oliveira, 'Os Maias – A Literatura na Televisão', *Revista Habitus*, no. 2 (2004), Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro, '<http://www.habitus.ifcs.ufrj.br/pdf/2antonio.pdf>' (14 June 2008).

⁵³ *Ibid*, p. 13.

contemporary daily life and issues.⁵⁴ Historical narratives thus need to key into the present to be popular with Brazilian audiences. As already noted, *Terra Nostra* was able to succeed because of its allegories of contemporary political events and because of the melodrama presented in the personal stories of the characters, their suffering, and their victories, that was played out on screen. Silveira Brasil Jr et al. argue that *Os Maias* fared relatively badly in the ratings because the subject matter, a story set in late nineteenth century Portugal, was not directly relevant to Brazilian audiences and because the pace of the narrative was too slow. In a similar manner the television version of *Mad Maria* (2005) by TV Globo had no sympathetic central character who was Brazilian. Those that could be identified as such in the drama were the politicians and elites of Rio de Janeiro who were involved in political intrigue and double dealing: not a positive image for the audience to warm to. The viewer was left, in the case of *Mad Maria*, with the doctors and engineers of the railway construction team in the jungle, all of whom were foreign characters – confusingly, perhaps, played by major Brazilian actors. *Mad Maria* thus failed to achieve major audience ratings because it did not tap into the elements of character that audiences could most readily identify with. Between them, *Terra Nostra* and *Mad Maria* reveal the negotiation underway into the place of the railway in society. On the one hand it is a sign of progress and the opening up of a new country by Old World Italian hands, and on the other the fact that it is this very landscape that is fighting back against the foreign technology which outsiders have tried to implant on these shores. The three movies to be analysed next reveal a further duality: that of the urban versus the rural.

4. Cinema in Brazil

Working out the distinction between popular and mass culture in the case of Latin America is, as William Rowe and Vivian Schelling note, a process of delicate interpretation of terms that were conceived to describe western

⁵⁴ Ibid, p. 6.

conditions and can become problematic when thinking about Latin America.⁵⁵ They note that three interpretations of 'popular culture' exist for the region as a whole: firstly a rural culture, secondly a form of culture that is created by the majority of the people, and thirdly a culture produced in opposition to the forces in power.⁵⁶ Stephanie Dennison and Lisa Shaw develop Rowe and Schelling's generalisations about the continent and apply them to the specific case of Brazil and its cinema industry.⁵⁷ They argue that national film output can be categorised as the latter two of these forms of popular culture in that it is 'a variant of mass culture, trying to copy the cultural forms of advanced capitalist nations...' and that it represents '...the culture of the oppressed, subaltern classes, in which their imaginary, ideal future is created'.⁵⁸ They also make the point that in Brazil any division between mass and popular culture is difficult since both can transcend the European notions of high and low culture. So in the case of Brazil, mass culture can be engaged with by members of all sections of society, and similarly popular culture (which does not have the large audiences of the former) can likewise have appeal to both elites and other sections of society.⁵⁹ For Dennison and Shaw popular cinema is popular 'in a straightforward numerical sense'; and they regard it as being, from the 1930s until the 1980s, an expression of the feelings and values of the lower classes in Brazilian society.⁶⁰

Throughout the 1950s the movies remained popular, in part due to the price of cinema admission being fixed as part of a government policy of encouraging the domestic film industry.⁶¹ One result was that 'it was common practice to buy a ticket for the cinema without even knowing which film was showing'.⁶² In the 1980s cinema admissions began to decline, and Brazil in common with Britain and the USA, experienced a rise in home viewing on VHS

⁵⁵ William Rowe and Vivian Schelling, *Memory and Modernity: Popular Culture in Latin America* (London, 1991), pp. 2-3.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

⁵⁷ Dennison and Shaw, *Popular Cinema in Brazil*.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 1-2.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 82.

⁶² *Ibid.*

video tape before the advent of multiplex cinemas in shopping malls.⁶³ These sites are the preserve of the Brazilian middle classes and as a result the cinema audience has shifted from a mass one to one with a more middle and elite profile. Brazilian national cinema is just as likely today to be seen on a DVD player (possibly a pirate disc copy) or very occasionally on a minor television station. The effect of the development of national television networks since the 1960s has meant that cinema as a whole has ‘...been marginalized within its own market’ and is only now in the first decade of the twenty-first century re-emerging within the genre of ‘world cinema’ to critical acclaim of specialised audiences at home and abroad.⁶⁴ As an example Randal Johnson compares the 1.3 million who watched the 1980 film *Bye Bye Brasil*, the fifth most popular movie of that year, with a typical audience for a *novela* produced by TV Globo which could be anything between thirty and forty million each evening.⁶⁵ Brazilian cinema from the 1930s to the 1980s took much of its influence from music-hall and circus forms, and hence there is a strong tradition in films of this period of slapstick humour and musical interludes.⁶⁶ One of the leading proponents of this style was Amácio Mazzaropi whose film *Chico Fumaça* (1958) will be analysed here.⁶⁷ Whilst he clowned around and occasionally burst into song on screen he was seen as a strong identifying character by audiences; revealed in *Chico Fumaça* when having saved the train from crashing and the loss of many lives he is taken to Rio de Janeiro and fêted.

Mark Dinneen says that in the 1960s and 1970s,

A major policy of the military government was to promote and sponsor the expansion of the mass culture industry, particularly cinema and television, as a means of controlling information and uniting the population behind its drive for rapid economic growth and modernization.⁶⁸

⁶³ John King, ‘Cinema in Latin America’, in John King (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Modern Latin American Culture* (Cambridge, 2004), p. 305.

⁶⁴ Johnson, ‘Film, Television and Traditional Folk Culture’, p. 125.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 126-127.

⁶⁶ Dennison and Shaw, *Popular Cinema in Brazil*, pp. 9-16.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

⁶⁸ Dinneen, ‘Print Media and Broadcasting’, p. 108.

This continued in the 1980s and from the 1990s a new style of cinema emerged, after the return to full democracy, denoted as the *retomada* (renaissance) of Brazilian film.⁶⁹ Two films, *Central do Brasil* and *De Passagem*, which both emerged around the turn of the twenty-first century will be considered to gain an understanding of the contemporary place of the railway ensemble in Brazilian cinema. John King holds up *Central do Brasil*'s national and international success as a key film in that renaissance.⁷⁰ It was given support by Robert Redford's Sundance Institute and funded in part by a Brazilian tax break scheme, known as 'Lei Rouanet', which allows large private companies to write off donations to cultural projects against their tax bill.⁷¹ *De Passagem* received financial support from local and national governments, being funded jointly by the Federal Ministry of Culture under a scheme to help low budget cinema projects as well as by the City of São Paulo's Department of Culture. Such support from government sources has led to a sustained re-growth in Brazilian cinema production from the 1990s onwards.⁷²

5. *Central do Brasil* (1998)

Central do Brasil is a road movie, a style of storytelling that director Walter Salles appears to be concentrating on with his *Terra Estrangeira* (1995) and *The Motorcycle Diaries* (2004), which starts in the chaos of the railway station and moves to the open arid spaces of the *sertão* in the northeast of Brazil. *Central* was the first of the Brazilian cinema productions of the 1990s to reach an international audience.⁷³ Lúcia Nagib says it launched Brazil 'back on the international scene after an absence that had lasted since the glorious days...of

⁶⁹ Dennison and Shaw, *Popular Cinema in Brazil*, p. 204; Lúcia Nagib, 'Introduction', in Lúcia Nagib (ed.), *The New Brazilian Cinema* (Oxford, 2003), p. xvii.

⁷⁰ King, 'Cinema in Latin America', p. 310.

⁷¹ Dennison and Shaw, *Popular Cinema in Brazil*, p. 211; The *Lei Rouanet* was introduced by the Federal government in 1991 it has been used to fund a wide range of artistic projects, not just cinema. See: Ministério da Cultura, 'Lei Rouanet: Informações Gerais', (2007) 'http://www.cultura.gov.br/apoio_a_projetos/lei_rouanet/' (5 June 2008).

⁷² José Álvaro Moisés, 'A New Policy for Brazilian Cinema', in Nagib (ed.), *New Brazilian Cinema*, pp. 3-22.

⁷³ Jorge Ruffinelli, 'Brazil 2001 and Walter Salles: Cinema for the Global Village?' in *Portuguese Literary & Cultural Studies*, no. 4/5 (Dartmouth, MA, 2000), p. 683.

the 1960s'.⁷⁴ It received a British Academy film award for best foreign film and two Oscar nominations, one for 'best foreign film' and another for Fernanda Montenegro, who plays Dora, in the category 'best actress'.

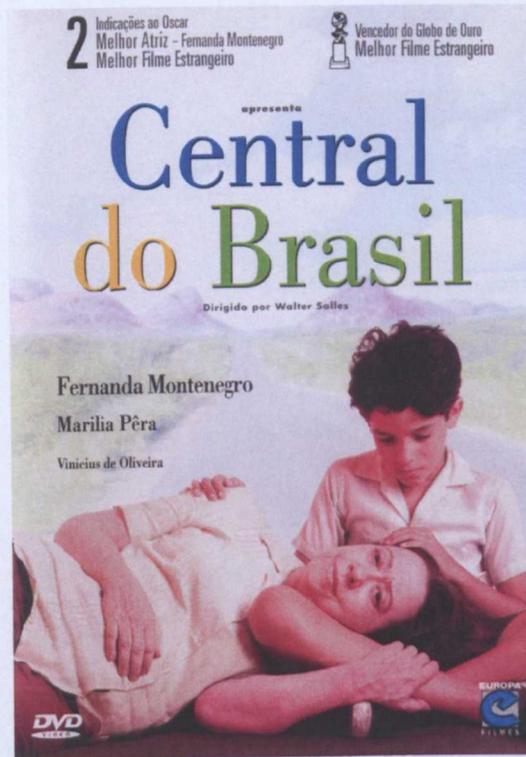


Fig. 15 DVD cover, *Central do Brasil*, director Walter Salles, Europa Filmes (Barueri, SP, 1998)

Jorge Ruffinelli observes that the film 'has been understood as a humanist film', an interpretation which led to its critical acclaim amongst a wave of similar films in the genre at festivals of the period.⁷⁵ *Central do Brasil* has the child as a figure of redemption and Ismail Xavier says,

Given its melodramatic tone, the film builds radical polarizations, including the worn-out cliché created by the opposition between the 'demoniac' city and the sacred countryside.⁷⁶

⁷⁴ Nagib, 'Introduction', in Nagib (ed.), *The New Brazilian Cinema*, p. xviii.

⁷⁵ Ruffinelli, 'Brazil 2001 and Walter Salles', p. 690.

⁷⁶ Ismail Xavier, 'Brazilian Cinema in the 1990s: The Unexpected Encounter and the Resentful Character', in Nagib (ed.), *New Brazilian Cinema*, p. 59.

A slightly less harsh viewing might reflect that, given Walter Salles' obvious storytelling talent, sometimes even old clichés can still tug at the audience's heartstrings. Luiz Zanin Oricchio is more generous:

It is that rare kind of film that is capable of delighting both specialist critics (or at least a considerable number of them, because pleasing them all is impossible) and the general public. To do this it retains an emotional and affective tone, that involves the audience without needing to blackmail them with the easy option of melodrama.⁷⁷

The film starkly reveals the duality between urban and rural: 'it is not by chance that *Central Station* starts with a powerful collective image: the impressive human mass coming out of the trains in Rio de Janeiro's Central Station, as if they were leaving jail, or were in a horse race toward an unpredictable end'.⁷⁸

Dora is a retired teacher who now works to support herself by writing letters for illiterate people on the station concourse. Josué's mother dies outside the station and Dora reluctantly becomes his guardian. After being tempted to sell him to illegal traffickers in human organs she escapes with the young boy and they travel north by bus to try and find his missing father. It is not the second part of the film, the 'road movie' element and self-discovery and redemption of Dora that will be concentrated upon here: that has been examined by others.⁷⁹ But here the discussion will concentrate on the opening scenes of the urban railway landscape. For Luiz Zanin Oricchio the railway station in *Central do Brasil* is 'a place synonymous with the forced migration caused by the huge disparities of development and thus unequal job opportunities that exist in Brazil'.⁸⁰

⁷⁷ Luiz Zanin Oricchio, 'The *sertão* in the Brazilian Imaginary at the End of the Millennium' in Nagib (ed.), *New Brazilian Cinema*, p. 150.

⁷⁸ Ruffinelli, 'Brazil 2001 and Walter Salles', p. 690.

⁷⁹ For example, see: Ruffinelli, 'Brazil 2001 and Walter Salles', pp. 690-691; Dennison and Shaw, *Popular Cinema in Brazil*, pp. 211-214; and essays by Ismail Xavier, Ivana Bentes and Luiz Zanin Oricchio in Nagib (ed.), *The New Brazilian Cinema*.

⁸⁰ Oricchio, 'The *sertão* in the Brazilian imaginary', p. 151.

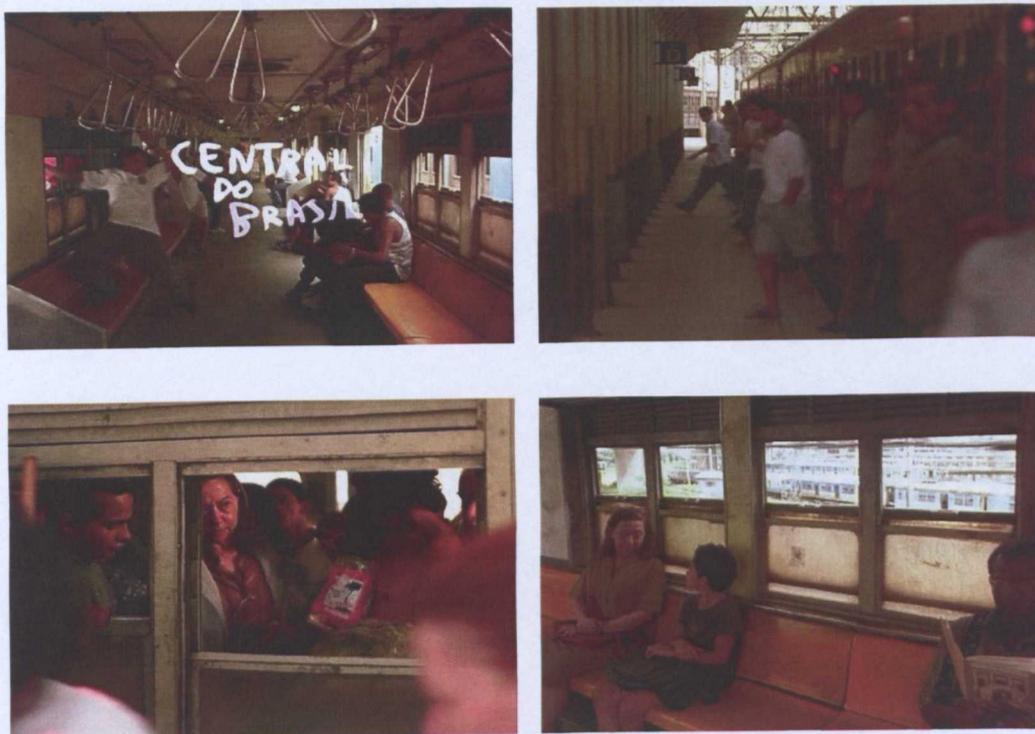


Fig. 16 Selected images from the opening scenes of *Central do Brasil*.

The opening credits (fig. 16) play out over Dora's walk through the crowded platforms to finally step on to her train home at the end of her day writing letters. The camera lets the viewer watch the crowds getting on and off the packed trains, building up a feeling of claustrophobia and loneliness. The first quarter of the film is set inside the railway station, and the camerawork with its predominantly tight close-ups give the impression of a dark foreboding and dangerous place. The viewer is never shown the outside of the station, formally known as the Estação Dom Pedro II but popularly called Central do Brasil, an art deco construction with an imposing clock tower that dominates the landscape of the surrounding city centre square. The rolling stock is dirty and rusty, the faces of the passengers are tired and perspiring, and their clothes are cheap and shabby.⁸¹ A petty thief is shot by two security guards after trying to snatch a cheap transistor radio from a stallholder and running off through the ticket

⁸¹ The scenes on the CBTU network at the Central station were shot in 1997. *SuperVia*, the private company appointed in 1998 to operate suburban railway services in greater Rio de Janeiro, has since 2002 undertaken a programme of renewing its rolling stock and introducing air-conditioned carriages. See: SuperVia: Trens Urbanos, '<http://www.supervia.com.br/>' (16 June 2008).

barriers and down the platform. The railway station is a place of chaos: passengers hang from the outsides of the carriages and one is seen riding illegally on the top near the overhead electric wires; the trains are so crowded that passengers pour in through the windows in an effort to get a seat. Dora is part of this long-suffering crowd who are all trapped as if prisoners inside the railway station.

The film takes its title from the city centre rail terminus in Rio de Janeiro, which itself is named after the former railway company that served the poor northern suburbs. Stephanie Dennison goes on to suggest that the film's title also evokes 'a journey to the heart of the nation, to the *real* Brazil', of the arid *sertões* of the northeast of Brazil – a recurring motif in *cinema novo* films of the 1960s and 1970s.⁸² Indeed, 'Brazil's negative features are ultimately left behind in the city' and 'the vast, open spaces of the *sertão* contrast with the bustle and dehumanisation of the city'.⁸³ It is also a film that evokes the religiosity of the poor northeast of Brazil, not only with its images of religious procession and saint-worship, but also through the naming of the young boy as Josué (Joshua) and his elder brothers Isaías and Moisés. The father who has disappeared is called Jesus, although characterising him as a drunken, irresponsible, absent husband and father rather complicates the image of salvation the viewer perhaps has for both the young boy and Dora at the end of the film.

As the film's storyline unfolds the railway comes to be left behind as Dora and Josué travel to the northeast by bus and by hitching lifts from passing lorry drivers. This is in contrast to the reading of the railway at key periods in other countries. John Stilgoe, writing about the United States of America between the 1880s and the 1930s, regarded the railway tracks as a corridor, along which 'flowed the forces of modernization, announcing the character of the

⁸² Stephanie Dennison, 'A Meeting of Two Worlds: Recent Trends in Brazilian Cinema', in *Journal of Iberian and Latin American Studies*, 6, (2000), p. 141. Emphasis in original. See also: Johnson, 'Film, Television and Traditional Folk Culture', p. 124.

⁸³ Dennison and Shaw, *Popular Cinema in Brazil*, p. 212 and p. 213.

twentieth century'.⁸⁴ For him modernity runs along this 'metropolitan corridor', as he terms the railway tracks, which reach out from the city and into the rural landscape. His positive analysis of visual images including photographs, advertisements and toy catalogues associated with the American railway suggests that this was a one-way flow from urban to rural. Yet he does refer at one point to the city railway terminal being a refuge 'away from urban scurry and congestion'.⁸⁵ For Stilgoe this means the passenger is able to take the modernity of the train with him/her out into the countryside without leaving that self-same urban modernity behind. From his account there appears to be no desire in the United States of America for a complete escape from the city. Wolfgang Schivelbusch has the railway station as a 'gateway' which is a term that suggests a more evenly balanced relationship between urban and rural.⁸⁶ Conversely, for Walter Salles, the director of *Central do Brasil*, the station is neither a refuge nor a gateway that offers, if needed, an opportunity to flee along the railway tracks: in one scene a young thief is shot whilst trying to escape from the station by running out along the tracks. Instead Salles abandons the railway, leaving behind the terminal building itself and escaping to the tranquillity of the countryside by other means of transport.

One explanation for Europe and Hollywood's continued fascination with the railway in cinema has been that the train contains the action.⁸⁷ On board the characters can act out stories that are free of the daily routines and social rules: murder, romance and intrigue all appear in train movies as if such morality were only allowed on a moving train. However *Central do Brasil* is a movie that uses the location of the railway station rather than the interior of the carriage to convey its message of the dangers of the big city. The train carriage in the opening scenes actually fails to contain anything: passengers are seen streaming in through open windows in a desperate effort to secure a seat (fig. 16). Moments later a thief runs clear through a train that has doors open on platforms to both

⁸⁴ John R. Stilgoe, *Metropolitan Corridor: Railroads and the American Scene* (New Haven, CT, 1983), p. 3.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 44.

⁸⁶ Wolfgang Schivelbusch, *The Railway Journey: The Industrialization of Time and Space in the 19th Century* (Berkeley, CA, 1986 [1979]), p. 174.

⁸⁷ Kirby, L., *Parallel Tracks*, p. 242.

the left and right. The camera tracks with him to emphasise the lack of boundary between the exterior and interior of the carriage. The railway thus becomes merged into the city experience and in this way the frame of the carriage window no longer can be read as offering a panoramic view of the world outside, as described in the nineteenth century European case by Wolfgang Schivelbusch.⁸⁸ Interior and exterior boundaries, conventions which have been established in Europe since the cinema began in its earliest days to portray the railway are broken down in this film. The train and the carriage are united with the platform, the booking hall and the station concourse as an ensemble in their own right. What remains is the vision of a relentless flow of people through this terminal building.

José Arthur Rios of the Law College at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro puts it starkly: 'Since the fifties railway transportation, in Brazilian metropolises, has been sensibly deteriorating in the same proportion as the urban and suburban population has increased.'⁸⁹ Poor timekeeping, cancelled trains and worn out rolling stock has, he says, contributed to vandalism, passenger unrest and fare-dodging for much of the late twentieth century. These concerns are all reflected in the opening scenes of *Central do Brasil* and contrast with the later sections of the movie where travel is by bus, lorry and pick-up truck. Here, even though the road transport technology may not be the latest model there is an openness and an un-crowded feeling in the way the vehicle interiors are shot and the characters, particularly the extras playing roles as fellow passengers, who show relatively relaxed and contented expressions.

6. *Chico Fumaça* (1958)

For Stephanie Dennison and Lisa Shaw the films that mock modernity and the urban lifestyle, such as *Chico Fumaça*, display a form of hybridity in that they reveal an 'interplay with pre-modern cultural forms and ideals, and with

⁸⁸ Schivelbusch, *The Railway Journey*, pp. 55-64.

⁸⁹ José Arthur Rios, 'On the Waves: A New Kind of Surf in Rio de Janeiro', *Crime, Law and Social Change*, 20 (1993), p. 161.

contemporary media'.⁹⁰ Here the viewer is presented with the country bumpkin averting a train crash (fig. 17), travelling to Rio de Janeiro by aeroplane, there to be congratulated, collect his reward, be tempted and ultimately reject the opportunities of urban excess, and to return with riches and the woman of his dreams to his country origins. The message is clear: that modern urban life is nothing in comparison with the simple rural lifestyle. Fun is being poked at the elites, at authority, and at the political administrators.⁹¹

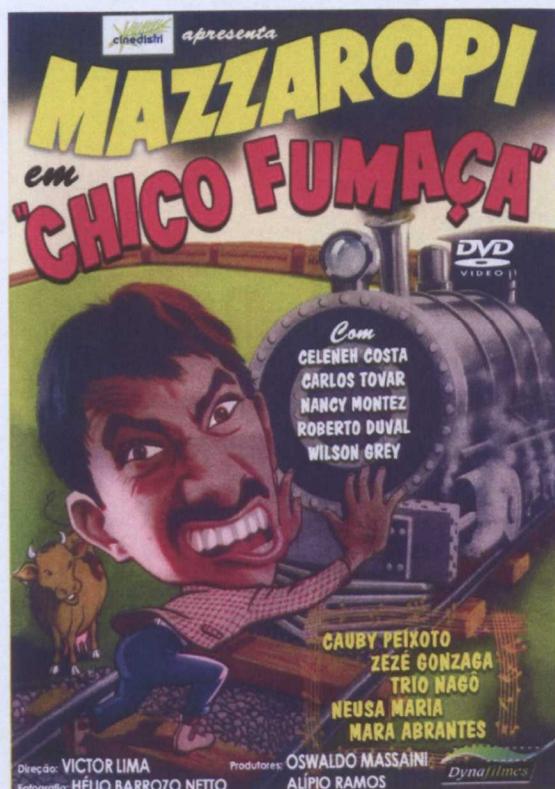


Fig. 17 DVD cover, *Chico Fumaça*, director Victor Lima, Dynafilmes (São Paulo, SP, 1958)

The shortcomings of public transport had been one of the many themes portrayed and made fun of in popular films of the 1930s and 40s which reflected the everyday experiences of movie-goers.⁹² By the 1960s the comedy films of the 1930s to 1950s were seen as 'vacuous, derivative and industrially produced',

⁹⁰ Dennison and Shaw, *Popular Cinema in Brazil*, p. 5.

⁹¹ *Ibid*, p. 84 and p. 94.

⁹² *Ibid*, p. 10.

particularly by those involved in the emerging style of *cinema novo*.⁹³ However, many Brazilians retain fond memories of the innocence of those early films, much as North Americans today would regard Marx Brothers films or movies by the Three Stooges.

Chico Fumaça was one of Mazzaropi's films produced before the military takeover in 1964. During a long movie career he appeared in the lead role in thirty-two films between 1951 and 1980.⁹⁴ During the years of the regime he reportedly befriended many of those in authority in the dictatorship and demonstrated clear conservative leanings. 'His films were understood as reinforcing both conservative moral values and the political and social status quo.'⁹⁵ The film opens with Chico Fumaça (literally 'Smoking Chico', or loosely equivalent to Smokey Joe), played by Mazzaropi, walking along the railway tracks and waving at the passing train. He is a simpleton who spends his time watching the passing trains, perhaps an early Brazilian trainspotter. 'Isn't the train beautiful?' he sighs, 'I've always wanted to be a train driver but never had the opportunity.' His reverie is broken by the landowner who takes Chico Fumaça's beloved (and only) cow as settlement for an outstanding debt. The first few scenes of the movie reemphasise for the audience how poor, unintelligent and simple our hero is. Yet paradoxically this bumpkin is engaged to the town's curvaceous schoolmistress Inocência, played by Celeneh Costa in the manner of Marilyn Monroe or Diana Dors. After a thunderstorm his one-room mud-brick house is destroyed leaving him walking along the railway track, his possessions tied in a knotted handkerchief on a stick over his shoulder. This image, Chaplinesque in its tragi-comic overtones (fig. 18), brings the pivotal moment in the story when he realises a landslip up ahead has taken out both rail tracks.

In a dramatic sequence a thundering passenger train, with a plate numbered 604, is filmed on the up line by a camera mounted on the rear of a locomotive travelling in the same direction just ahead at the same speed on the

⁹³ Ibid, p. 132.

⁹⁴ Dennison and Shaw, *Popular Cinema in Brazil*, p. 150.

⁹⁵ Ibid, p. 152.

down line. Such a shot, recorded by cameraman Hélió Barrozo Netto, would have required the entire stretch of both tracks to be closed to regular traffic for safety reasons. It conveys directly the image of awesome power and the potential for danger inherent in this steam technology. The *Estrada de Ferro Leopoldina* is given top billing in the special thanks in the opening credits. Just one year before this film was released in 1958 the *E. F. Leopoldina* was merged into the national rail company, the *RFFSA*, under federal government control and whilst its name would continue to be displayed on locomotives for another few years it had legally ceased to exist as a separate entity.⁹⁶ The *Companhia Estrada de Ferro Leopoldina* starting operating in 1874 and was officially launched by the emperor Dom Pedro II in 1877.⁹⁷ After initial financial difficulties the original Brazilian/English company went into liquidation and in 1898 the London registered *Leopoldina Railway Limited* took over the 2,900 kms. of track linking the states of Rio de Janeiro, Minas Gerais and Espirito Santo.⁹⁸ The network remained under British control until 1949 when, by agreement, it became the responsibility of the federal government's National Department of Railways under the Ministry of Transport and Public Works.⁹⁹ For much of its life the *Leopoldina* had been hampered by poor construction, lack of maintenance and worn out rolling stock.¹⁰⁰ This produced a public perception that may well have been noted by Mazaropi and his team in the choice of the *E. F. Leopoldina* to be the subject for this railway accident waiting to happen.

By successfully flagging down the speeding train Chico Fumaça becomes a hero, but we are reminded of the provincial nature of life in the rural interior when the train driver, after successfully stopping his locomotive in time, puts his head out of the cab window, greets Chico Fumaça by name, and asks him what the matter is. It then emerges that on board the train is the national leader of the *Partido Oportunista*, a satirical name underlined by the politician's continued

⁹⁶ Renê Fernandes Schoppa, *150 Anos do Trem no Brasil* (Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 2004), pp. 155-167.

⁹⁷ Schoppa, *150 Anos do Trem*, p. 86.

⁹⁸ Schoppa, *150 Anos do Trem*, pp. 86-88.

⁹⁹ Schoppa, *150 Anos do Trem*, p. 89.

¹⁰⁰ Antonio Soukef Junior and Vito D'Alessio, *Leopoldina Railway: 150 Anos de Ferrovia no Brasil* (São Paulo, SP, 2005), pp. 65-71.

attempt to make the rescue and his reward of 200,000 Cruzeiros to Chico Fumaça part of the election campaign. Later in the movie, when our hero is publicly presented with his cheque at a reception in Rio de Janeiro he fails to realise what a bank cheque is and asks if the politician has any banknotes instead. The party leader, misunderstanding Chico Fumaça's rural innocence in financial matters, becomes embarrassed and assures him that 'there *will* be enough money in the account tomorrow.' Such satire would not go unnoticed by audiences.

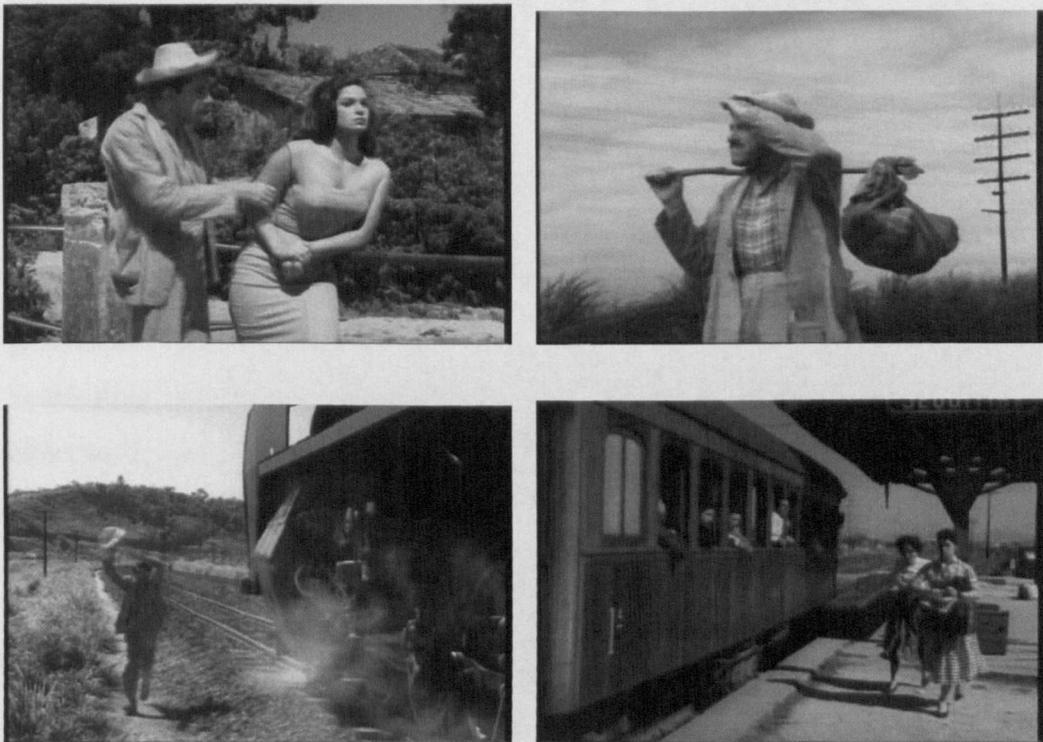


Fig. 18 Selected stills from *Chico Fumaça* starring Amácio Mazzaropi.

So far the country simpleton has shown that he can subdue the locomotive and control such awesome technology, yet just after the rescue when Chico Fumaça is told that he will have to fly by plane to Rio de Janeiro he is filled with fear and once on board proclaims, 'Why didn't I just leave the train to drop into the hole?' Such a rejection of technological modernity has been noted by other academics. For example, Emilia Viotti da Costa questions whether the concept of an urban modernity relentlessly taking over rural tradition and

eradicating the old country ways has not become a European mode of thought that has been applied inappropriately by Brazilian scholars.¹⁰¹ She notes examples of rural resistance to the 'progress' of city ways particularly in the enduring power of the large landowners.¹⁰² An example of this triumph of the 'rural' over the 'urban' can be seen in the films of Mazzaropi.

The clash of cultures can be seen most readily during the middle section of the film. To the sound of *Aquarela do Brasil*, the unofficial anthem of Brazil, Chico Fumaça is seen riding around in the back of a convertible luxury car gazing in awe at the skyscrapers and city landscape of Rio de Janeiro. But through it all this country-boy preserves his homespun intelligence: 'A night is a night anywhere,' he says, adding that 'A woman is a woman anywhere,' when told of the myriad of modern delights available in the big city. It is clear that this man is not tempted, and as he tells the radio interviewer in a deadpan delivery, 'I prefer my Inocência.' This is a message which through its use of irony, given his girlfriend's apparent sexuality, may well have provided consolation to audiences in the poor drought-stricken backlands as well as those recently arrived in the cities to try and earn a living.

As the story reaches its climax the movie, in character with the genre, has a ten minute musical interlude based around Chico Fumaça's night out on the town as a member of the audience in an expensive nightclub. His fiancé, Inocência, finds out about his revelling and sets off to rescue him (travelling first class, fig. 18), but not before Chico Fumaça has foiled a gang of international smugglers and more than doubled his original reward. Throughout his simplicity, honesty and good nature have helped him to triumph against the forces of politics, modernity and urban life. He gets the girl, the money and the easy life: a dream realised. Dennison and Shaw argue that Mazzaropi's films portrayed positive images of the lives of rural people, and by using the vocal intonations and dialects of the interior he was able to show how even without education and

¹⁰¹ Emilia Viotti da Costa, *Brazilian Empire: Myths & Histories* (2nd. edn., Chapel Hill, NC, 2000), pp. 172-173.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, pp. 173-201.

language skills the displaced could still triumph. For this reason his films were particularly popular in the urban areas of São Paulo which for many decades had witnessed a steady migration of people from the Northeastern states of the interior of Brazil.¹⁰³ His films conveyed simple ideas, with straightforward storylines and no hidden subtexts: the meaning was self-contained and the message was always clear, what you saw was what you were meant to see and take in.

In *Chico Fumaça* the locomotive, so powerful and dangerous in the opening scenes, is revealed as something that the honest country boy can have mastery over: modernity need not be, and indeed is not in this film, accepted as a pre-condition for a happy and successful life in the late twentieth century in Brazil. The train is humanised and has become a part of life in the countryside, and for this film at least that is where the railway stays. Since it is not part of the urban landscape, by implication the railway is situated in the true, down-to-earth, rural Brazil of the interior; a world away from the dreadful artifice of the big city. It is the next movie that will take this study back into that urban landscape to uncover the way in which the train can evoke a sense of loss and physical helplessness in the city-dweller.

7. *De Passagem* (2003)

Towards the end of the first decade of the twenty-first century it would appear that predictions of the demise of the Brazilian film industry have been somewhat premature.¹⁰⁴ Films such as *Cidade de Deus* (City of God, 2002) and *Carandiru* (2003) have appeared to start a new genre which may be called realist cinema. Beatriz Jaguaribe says 'these new realist texts respond to a demand for a lived experience that lends authority to the narrative account', and in her view they represent 'a wish to further agency, experience intensity, and encounter diversity'.¹⁰⁵ For Dennison and Shaw in particular these two movies 'share little

¹⁰³ Dennison and Shaw, *Popular Cinema in Brazil*, p. 153.

¹⁰⁴ Dennison and Shaw, *Popular Cinema in Brazil*, p. 226.

¹⁰⁵ Beatriz Jaguaribe, 'The Shock of the Real', p. 73.

of the good-humoured, light hearted spirit' of films of previous decades.¹⁰⁶ What they do have in common though is a continuing discourse which reveals the chaos of daily life and 'a determination to debunk the officially espoused myth of Brazil as an orderly, mature, "First-World" nation'.¹⁰⁷

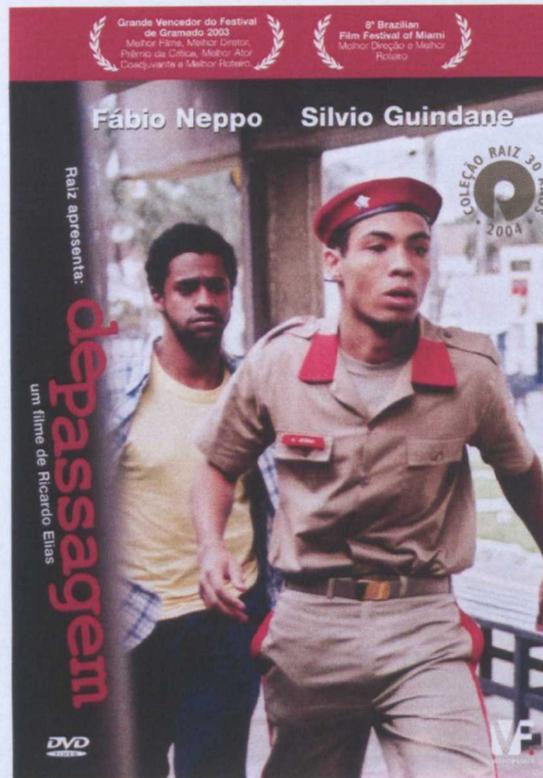


Fig. 19 DVD cover, *De Passagem*, director Ricardo Elias (Raizfilmes, 2003)

De Passagem is part of this realist genre, but lacks the hard edge of films such as *Cidade de Deus*. Whilst it does deal with issues such as drug trafficking, urban violence, death and gang warfare it addresses these topics with a lightness of touch that leaves the viewer with feelings of optimism and sympathy for the two main characters. It is a film of hope in a city that is tied together by an inhuman transport system that initially appears to offer no escape. Jefferson, a young man at the Military Training College in Rio de Janeiro, is allowed short

¹⁰⁶ Dennison and Shaw, *Popular Cinema in Brazil*, p. 234.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

compassionate leave to return home to the poor southern suburbs of São Paulo after his younger brother Washington, who has become involved in drug dealing, is found murdered.

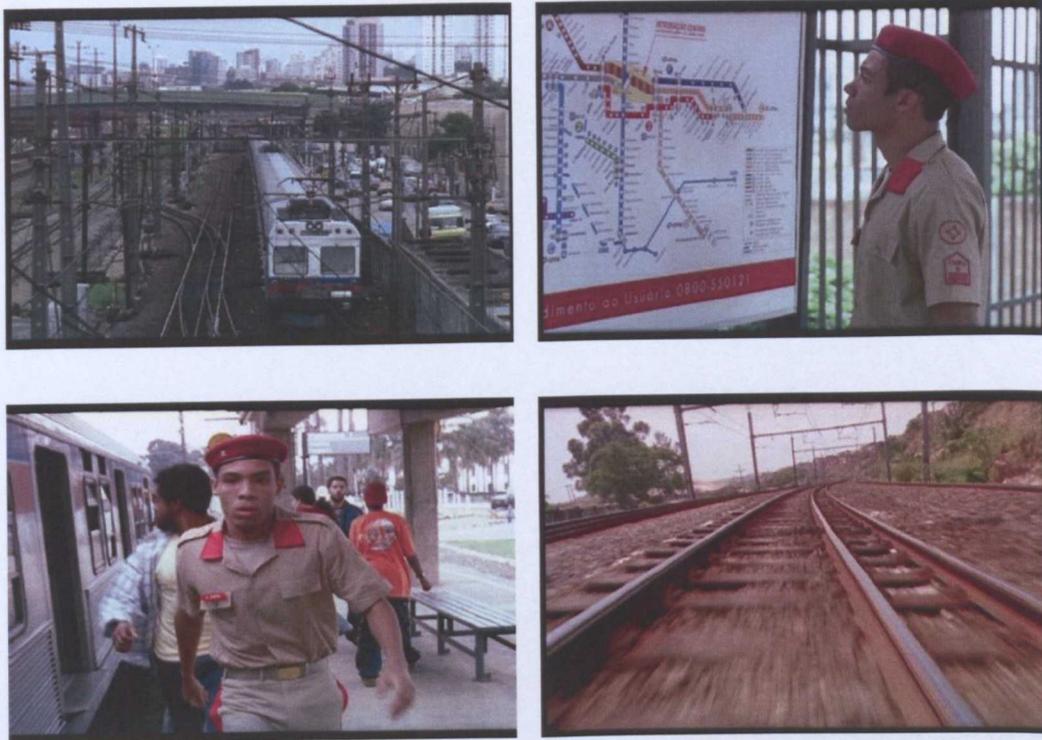


Fig. 20 Selected stills from *De Passagem*, starring Silvio Guidane and Fábio Nepo, 2003

The body has turned up in a northern suburb some two hours away by public transport. Joining him on his voyage across Latin America's second biggest city is his old childhood friend Kennedy. The film recounts through flashbacks the close friendship between these three men during their early childhood. The names of the three characters give them, in the eyes of the viewer, both a sense of superior dignity and an otherness: as if they really do not belong in the poor suburbs of São Paulo and have been trapped by some unfortunate circumstance such as when they were forced to deliver drugs for a dealer whilst still small boys. Jefferson remarks early on in the film that being called after American presidents is better than the three of them being named after pop stars or football players. His remark acknowledges a naming custom

that is prevalent in Brazil and also reinforces the plot line that these three are the firmest of friends. Their relationship, thus cemented by the naming of their characters, also serves as a reminder that Brazil can be a place where a person is defined through his/her relationships within the extended family.¹⁰⁸

De Passagem is a 'road movie' set in the city and based around the complexities and limitations of urban public transport. Jefferson and Kennedy start their journey on a bus and it is here that the two young men renew their childhood friendship. We are shown through flashback the story of their young drug running trip, a voyage which appears to mirror the adult journey: as children their voyage was into the world of drug dealing and as adults it is a journey of rediscovery of old friendships in time of adversity. The difference is that as boys it was Washington who was lured into drug dealing; today it is Jefferson and Kennedy who are searching for Washington's body.

Jefferson, who throughout the film is dressed in his military uniform, takes command and decides that the trip to the north of the city will be quicker by train. His vulnerability is revealed when he discovers that the map of the São Paulo metro and rail network (fig. 13) does not reflect his understanding of the city's reality. Forced to admit defeat and retrace their steps the two friends wait forlornly on a platform as the city's train network envelopes them in its web. The railway is revealed as a negative force in the big city: it refuses to allow individual expression or any degree of freedom. Passengers are confined and forced to follow the routes without any room for diversion. The big city has successfully overpowered the human spirit, and what started out as a voyage to rediscover memories of childhood and coming-of-age becomes a helpless losing of the self in the railway network.

The city becomes a confusing Kafkaesque experience as Jefferson and Kennedy discover that the police have taken the body from the northern suburb of Francisco Morato and transferred it to the city's morgue which entails a return

¹⁰⁸ Roberto DaMatta, *Carnivals, Rogues, and Heroes: An Interpretation of the Brazilian Dilemma*, trans. John Drury (Notre Dame, IN, 1991), pp. 64-66.

train journey back downtown. At this moment the railway becomes the agent that brings a sense of loss and disorientation to both the two young men and the viewer. This movie was shot with the help of *CPTM*, the São Paulo urban railway company which is owned by the State authority. By filming on specially organised trains and at off-peak hours the city appears to the viewer to be an empty space, devoid of the claustrophobia and crush of human bodies normally associated with travel on the São Paulo railway network. This adds to the bereavement felt by Jefferson for the death of his younger brother and the loss of orientation in the confusion of railway lines. On the other hand this image of relative emptiness on the cinema screen is in contrast to the mass of humanity that appears on the platforms and in the carriages of *Central do Brasil*.

Redemption comes at the end of the film, not through the railway, but from the gradual realisation by Jefferson and Kennedy that the body they have just officially identified is probably not Washington's and he could well have managed to have broken free from his drug dealing gang and gone into hiding (we are not told definitely, but we are given hope). The railway journey through the film is bracketed by bus rides, as if the bus gives a route from family life into the heart of the dark city ruled over by the train network from which escape is difficult. But once free of the lure of the train the escape back home is by bus.

De Passagem is a low budget movie that received backing from Petrobras (the Federal oil company), Embraer (Brazil's aeroplane manufacturer) and the State Governor of São Paulo. The movie received a number of favourable press reviews, and Ricardo Calil writing in the weekly news magazine *Época* remarked how the film showed São Paulo's suburbs to be filled with more than just the stereotypes of black criminality and 'demonstrates that it is possible to show another vision of the suburbs in Brazilian cinema'.¹⁰⁹ He, and other reviewers, remark on the film's relative gentleness and its 'anti-*Cidade de Deus*'

¹⁰⁹ Ricardo Calil, 'Em De Passagem, o Estreante Paulista Ricardo Elias Mostra Periferia e Negros sem Estereótipos', in *Revista Época*, 23 April 2004.

outlook.¹¹⁰ The film shows a human side to the struggle for life in São Paulo's poorer suburban neighbourhoods and it uncovers a massive urban sprawl that has at its heart a railway network that appears to suck human life into a web from which there is no escape without an emotional and introspective struggle. The urban railway may take us to different places, but it alone can determine how we get there and at what time.

8. Concluding remarks

This chapter has revealed how the railway ensemble has continued its journey of negotiation through television and cinema representations. Played out on-screen have been the conflicts between tradition and modernity, between the city and the open rural spaces, and between technology and the individual.

Modernity was presented in *Terra Nostra* through the image of the steam locomotive travelling majestically away from São Paulo's Estação da Luz to the coffee plantations of the interior of the state. Progress was being carried from Europe, through the rapidly expanding Brazilian city and out to the rural frontier, along the tracks. This was an unstoppable march of progress: never mind that the two young lovers had become separated on the dockside, the technology would not stop for them and would lead to a bright new future in the idyllic agricultural frontier of this new land.

The urban nightmare was the central theme of the opening sequences of *Central do Brasil*, where the railway station – the first arrival point for rural migrants up to the 1980s – was revealed as a soulless place. It was an emotional desert in the urban landscape where passengers were portrayed as caged animals or dehumanised prisoners. This film also breaks the landscape view afforded by the passenger's gaze from the frame of the carriage window: from the start of the movie one of the strongest images was of passengers boarding an empty train by struggling through open windows in an effort to find a seat. The interior and

¹¹⁰ Ricardo Calil, 'Em De Passagem'; Luiz Carlos Merten, 'O Delicado e Intimista "De Passagem"', *O Estadão de S. Paulo*, Caderno 2, 30 April 2004.

exterior gazes available to travellers have been broken down: the windows are no longer frames through which to view, but have become doors where the outside is allowed to come in.

The dehumanising aspect of the metropolitan landscape is further reinforced by the movie *De Passagem*, where the urban railway has effectively taken control and removed the power of free movement from the city dweller. The confusion of the network of lines creates a disorientating and frustrating landscape out of which escape is difficult. The railway ensemble has become neither modern nor picturesque, merely an actor devoid of feelings and human emotions in the metropolis.

Chico Fumaça restores the humanity to the railway, but has it as the compliant servant to even the most simple, poor and uneducated person. The locomotive is an accepted part of the rural landscape, but refuses to be viewed as sublime; instead its threatening power is brought under the control of a single human being. Thus the individual triumphs over technology, modernity appears to have eclipsed tradition, yet there remains an uneasy and uncertain relationship between the rural and the urban. This conflict is carried over into the next chapter where an analysis is carried out into how artists working with oil on canvas have portrayed the railway: the next part of the ensemble of the large technical cultural system of the railway in Brazil.

Painting the landscape: arts and order

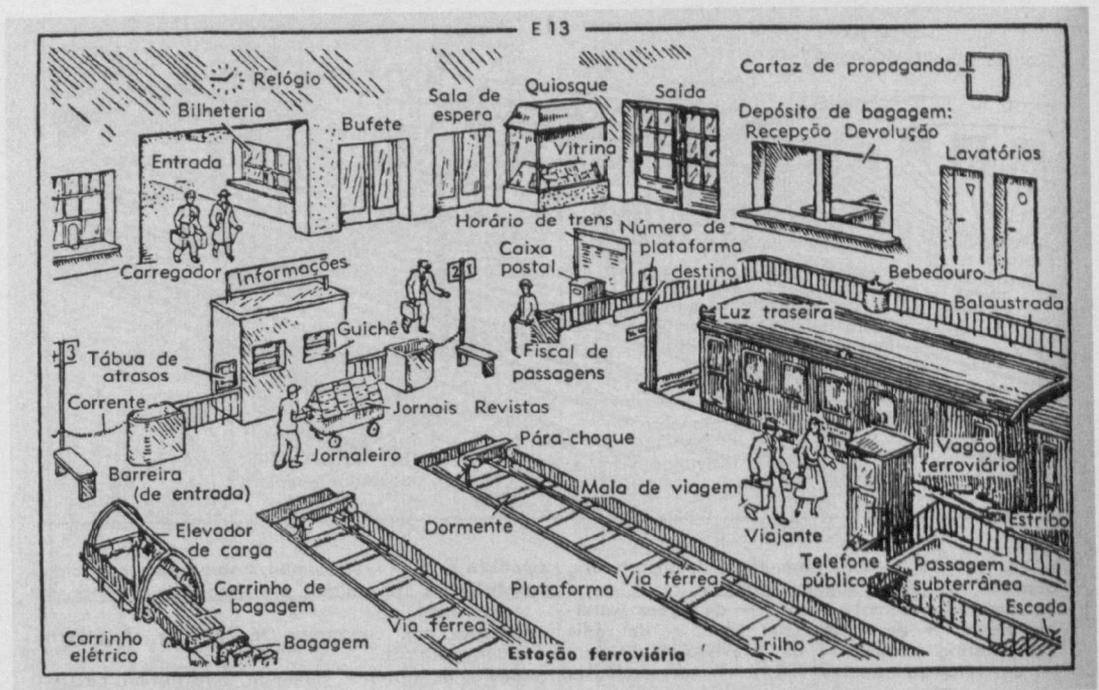


Fig. 21 'Estação Ferroviária', *Novo Michaelis Dicionário Ilustrado* (2 vols, São Paulo, SP, 1962), vol 2, p. 542.

1. Introduction

What has been emerging during the course of this study has been a persistent interrogation of the railway, as an ensemble. It is a technological system that has been the subject of negotiations between writers and artists on the one hand and the railway ensemble itself on the other. This process of transculturation has seen the railway presented in the form of dualities. The transport technology has never been completely taken for granted by artists and writers, but similarly the railway has never been centre-stage as a subject in the field of cultural production. In this respect it appears to have remained a secondary player to other subject matter which has inspired these artists. This is evidenced by the relatively low number of references to the railway in these cultural forms so far discussed. But it has not been forgotten entirely, and because of the repeated questioning of its meaning the railway ensemble has not been allowed to become regarded as a sublime image of technology as had occurred in North America in the mid- to late-nineteenth century.¹ If one technology was to become adored in Brazil it was perhaps the car. This was due to a mixture of pro-active U.S. business lobbying and Brazilian government acquiescence which led to the automobile becoming from the mid twentieth century onwards the new vehicle of modernity.² The apparent disinclination to gaze upon the image of the train for its technical beauty will be discussed in chapter 9 where it has been observed that museum visitors prefer not to take pictures of a locomotive in steam but of their friends and family in the carriage instead, and it does suggest a reason, for example, why the plinthing of locomotives in Brazil leads to what appears to be their abandonment within public spaces.³

This chapter will examine a number of oil paintings on canvas from the 1920s to the 1970s, all of which are in public collections. Compared to other

¹ David Nye, *American Technological Sublime* (Cambridge, MA, 1994) pp. 45-76.

² René Fernandes Schoppa, *150 Anos do Trem no Brasil* (Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 2004), pp. 173-177; Richard Downes, 'Autos over Rails: How US Business Supplanted the British in Brazil, 1910-28', *Journal of Latin American Studies*, 24 (1992), 551-583; Patrick Knight, 'Rail and Air Slow as Roads Speed', *The Times*, 3 May 1976.

³ Regina Perez, *Inventário das Locomotivas a Vapor no Brasil: Memória Ferroviária* (Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 2006), p.12, pp. 67-71 and pp. 280-287.

media analysed in this study there is a relative lack of academic interpretation of these specific pieces. For this reason it is acknowledged that the readings offered in this chapter are only one possible way in which to understand these works. Overall, the view is taken that the struggle for meaning displayed in these paintings reveals political disquiet and sometimes uncertainty about the effects of rapid urbanisation.

Artists in Brazil have long found it hard to make a living from their work, and so many have secured paid employment typically in government departments which in some cases have tended to influence their creative output.⁴ This relationship between art and the establishment has created a tendency for art to be broadly an elite form of cultural production for consumption, in many cases, by fellow artists and wealthy patrons.⁵ The paintings discussed here were all produced from the founding of the Brazilian Modernist movement onwards. Before the 1920s Brazilian painting of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries can be categorized in general terms as classical landscape, with a tendency towards pastoral scenes, or heroic tableaux invoking some key meeting, encounter, declaration or battle.⁶ In 1922 that would change as the Brazilian Modernist movement began its rise to ascendancy. Some of the names associated with this group of artists and writers have already been mentioned in passing in previous chapters: the poetry and novels of Mário de Andrade and the verse of Oswald de Andrade are two examples. Both appeared to display serious doubts about the railway. Modernism (*Modernismo*) in Brazil was a literary as well as musical, dramatic and visual art movement, and this study has reserved this present chapter for a consideration of how the railway directly influenced the work of one Modernist in particular. It was in the field of visual art where the idea of the train came to be used to dramatic effect.

⁴ Daryle Williams, *Culture Wars in Brazil: The First Vargas Regime, 1930-1945* (Durham, NC, 2001), pp. 34-35.

⁵ Williams, *Culture Wars in Brazil*, p. 42.

⁶ Valerie Fraser, 'Art and Architecture in Latin America', in John King (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Modern Latin American Culture* (Cambridge, 2004), pp. 209-210; Jon S. Vincent, *Culture and Customs of Brazil* (Westport, CT, 2003), pp. 171-172.

Nelson Werneck Sodré divides Brazil's cultural development into three distinct phases, and the period in the 1920s for him is the beginning of a third and final stage, the 'national' phase as he calls it.⁷ This periodisation is consistent with that of Roberto Schwarz who regards the Modernists of the 1920s as being strong advocates of Brazil, demonstrating a critical pride in their country.⁸ Sodré describes the first two of his periods as 'colonial', when the Europeans saw nothing present in Brazil that could be described by them as 'cultural', and 'transitional' when they transplanted their own.⁹ The 'national' phase, at the end of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries 'showed a contrast between the two faces of Brazil, the two Brazils: a cosmopolitan Brazil along the coast that looked abroad and was receptive to [foreign] influences, and a Brazil of the interior where the old roots would preserve the original pureness'.¹⁰ It was the railway, with its tracks laid to aid the export of extractive industries, that was the transport link between the coast and the backlands of the interior.

Before the emergence of the Modernists in the 1920s this duality between a 'modern' littoral culture and an 'authentic' culture of the interior was embodied in *Os Sertões*, the seminal work by Euclides da Cunha, first published in 1902, which provided an evocative description of the Brazilian landscape.¹¹ For Celso Lemos de Oliveira *Os Sertões* is a book 'which takes in a great sweep of geography and anthropology as well as military expedition', and anticipated the literary style that would emerge in Brazil's northeast later in the twentieth century with the likes of Jorge Amado.¹² Da Cunha's reportage of actual events acknowledges that Brazil's coastal culture has been formed out of modern European influences, but that the backlands are still, according to him, three

⁷ Nelson Werneck Sodré, *Síntese de História da Cultura Brasileira* (Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 2003).

⁸ Roberto Schwarz, *Misplaced Ideas: Essays on Brazilian Culture*, ed. John Gledson (London, 1992), p. 111.

⁹ Sodré, *Síntese de História da Cultura Brasileira*, pp. 10-11.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 61-62.

¹¹ Euclides da Cunha, *Os Sertões/Rebellion in the Backlands*, trans. Samuel Putnam (London, 1995).

¹² Celso Lemos de Oliveira, 'Brazilian Literature and Art: From Colonial to Modern', *Hispania*, 75 (1992), p. 995.

hundred years behind the times.¹³ This could be read as implying that da Cunha, a journalist based in São Paulo, was suggesting that modernity in Brazil is an urban experience and that the essential Brazilian character is formed deep within the landscape of the interior. Such sentiments have, as already suggested, a long and continuing history. Milton Nascimento in 1980 wrote the music and lyrics to a ballet called ‘Ultimo Trem’ (Last Train) which recalled memories of journeys across the north-eastern countryside of Brazil, and for many Brazilian writers it is the landscape, the rural environment, that remains their cultural anchor.¹⁴ His ballet score represented the last days of a rural railway before its closure by the authorities. It evoked transitions from the interior to the coastal beaches of the state of Bahia, and the end of what was once a modern form of transport. Yet elsewhere the concept of the railway-in-city remained a strong visual motif for Brazilian artists throughout the twentieth century, even if its iconic status as a thing of modernity was contested from time to time, as this chapter will explain.

2. Painting the railway

Works of art that include the railway as an image on the canvas are presenting some form of visual response to that technology. The railway is rarely presented in ideologically neutral terms. This is a point made by Jill Murdoch in her analysis of British railway art, and requires the examination of those responses to the technology within the historical and social contexts of a particular society.¹⁵ Just as ‘culture’ can take two forms, as a product and a process as discussed in chapter 2, so too can ‘landscape’ be understood on the one hand as the surrounding environment both natural and built and the way in which it is viewed, and on the other as the act of ‘landscaping’ or the manner in which the world is inhabited.¹⁶ John Wylie argues that landscape can be thought of as a series of tensions, ‘between distance and proximity, observing and inhabiting,

¹³ Da Cunha, *Os Sertões/Rebellion in the Backlands*, p. 231.

¹⁴ Milton Nascimento, *Ultimo Trem*, Far Out Recordings, FARO 083CD (London, 2004 [1980])

¹⁵ Jill Murdoch, ‘From Elephant to Penge West: The Railway in the Artist’s Landscape’ (unpublished PhD thesis, University of York, Institute of Railway Studies, 2003), pp. 286-287.

¹⁶ John Wylie, *Landscape* (London, 2007), pp. 6-9.

eye and land, culture and nature'.¹⁷ Thus the railway landscape can be read as both a way of seeing the technology by the artist and as a statement about the manner in which the world has become inhabited and shaped by this ensemble. The artwork can thus have two levels of meaning: as a visual representation of a landscape which itself has had a meaning projected onto it by the railway.¹⁸

Modernism in the realm of art is seen as a break from the nineteenth century, although the word itself 'is a term that masks conflict and upheaval and any number of contradictory positions'.¹⁹ Jacqueline Barnitz, in her survey of Latin American art, observes that 'the Brazilian avant-garde was officially inaugurated at the Municipal Theatre [in São Paulo] in February 1922 with the *Semana de Arte Moderna* (Modern Art Week)'.²⁰ In Brazil these artists revealed how they were inspired directly by the technological changes they were witnessing in the urban environment around them. Tarsila do Amaral in particular used the railway in at least four major works in oil, demonstrating how Modernist forms of expression could be linked to a questioning of this technology and could expose the tensions between its industrial modernity and the enduring traditions of Brazilian society.

Elements of this interrogation of the railway ensemble have been noted in other countries. Julie Wosk identifies an age of trauma in railway art between the 1830s and the 1870s: 'It was European caricaturists, much more than American artists, who rejected a sanguine view of steam transportation', but she also notes that as the twentieth century approached the sublime view of technology began to hold sway.²¹ This is highlighted by David Nye who argues that in the United States of America in the mid to late nineteenth century it was the new technologies of railways, bridges and skyscrapers that supplanted Nature as the

¹⁷ *Ibid*, pp. 216-7.

¹⁸ *Ibid*, p. 91.

¹⁹ Vassiliki Kolocotroni, Jane Goodman and Olga Taxidou, 'Introduction', in Vassiliki Kolocotroni, Jane Goodman and Olga Taxidou (eds.), *Modernism: An Anthology of Sources and Documents* (Edinburgh, 1998), p. xvii.

²⁰ Jacqueline Barnitz, *Twentieth Century Art of Latin America* (Austin, TX, 2001), p. 57.

²¹ Julie Wosk, *Breaking Frame: Technology and the Visual Arts in the Nineteenth Century* (New Brunswick, NJ, 1992), p. 36 and pp. 211-213.

icons of the sublime.²² Jill Murdoch draws these ideas together and applies them specifically to British railway art between 1815 and 1871 to examine how the railway ‘may have... [changed] ideas of the landscape’ because ‘it fell to the artist to mediate the conflicting messages contained in and implicitly (or, sometimes, explicitly) required of any representation of landscape’.²³ In the case of England she argues that ‘the arrival of the railway revealed profound tensions between ideologies of landscape and ideologies of progress’.²⁴ Ian Carter, in his examination of railway painting from the mid nineteenth century until the mid twentieth, finds a change of message over time from the early tension of depictions of the drama of modernity as a mixture of ‘celebration with alarm’, to the development of the idea of the railway nestled in a picturesque rural idyll in the run-up to the Second World War.²⁵ Ian Carter goes on to observe that, in the case of British art inspired by the railway, the ‘technological sublime [has] all but evaporated today’.²⁶

However in Brazil the specific historical context was different. In São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro in particular the urban growth experienced in the late nineteenth century came about not through European-style capitalist development but through ‘the commercial expansion resulting from Brazil’s increasing integration into the world market and the resulting increase in exports’.²⁷ The railway, a key piece of technology in the exportation of agriculture, also emerged at this time but Emilia Viotti da Costa points out that the “modernization” of the country was little more than a facade, confined mostly to the large cities and to the privileged groups of Brazilian society, whether rural or urban’.²⁸ Hence,

²² Nye, *American Technological Sublime*, pp. 77-78.

²³ Murdoch, ‘From Elephant to Penge West’, p. 20

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 20

²⁵ Ian Carter, *Railways and Culture in Britain: The Epitome of Modernity* (Manchester, 2001), pp. 263-264.

²⁶ Carter, *Railways and Culture*, p. 283.

²⁷ Emilia Viotti da Costa, *Brazilian Empire: Myths & Histories* (2nd edn., Chapel Hill, NC, 2000), p. 194.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 161 and 198.

The technological and scientific revolution that was associated with industrialisation and urbanisation in other parts of the world did not take place in Brazil, mostly because of its dependent position in the international market, the fragility of the internal market, the availability of cheap labor, and the importation of technology.²⁹

The suggestion arising from this is that the production and the reception of railway art in Brazil were, as a result of these economic and development criteria, set in a different context to Europe. As will be noted later in this chapter a duality emerged in Brazilian railway art which led to the sustained questioning of railway technology's presence and meaning over much of the twentieth century. What does remain, however, is an understanding that the development of the railway in Brazil was closely linked to the economic and social changes underway from the mid 1800s to the late twentieth century and beyond: it was a symbol of progress and development from rural economy to industrial metropolis.³⁰ Michael Freeman makes a similar point in his study of 'the railway as cultural metaphor' in Victorian Britain.³¹ However Brazil was not Britain and this chapter now sets out some of the specific contexts before discussing the individual works of art featuring the railway.

3. Brazil in the early twentieth century

Valerie Fraser says: 'Until about 1920 much of Latin America remained locked into the traditions of academic figure and landscape painting'.³² The Brazilian art historian Ivo Mesquita identifies an exhibition in São Paulo in 1917 of works by the artist Anita Malfatti as the defining moment when Modernism was 'unleashed'.³³ John King uses the phrase 'shock of the new' to encapsulate both the 1922 Modernist movement and the image of the railway which was

²⁹ Ibid, p. 200.

³⁰ Odilon Nogueira de Matos, *Café e Ferrovias: A Evolução Ferroviária de São Paulo e o Desenvolvimento da Cultura Cafeeira* (4th edn., Campinas, SP, 1990), p. 143.

³¹ Michael Freeman, *Railways and the Victorian Imagination* (London, 1999), p. 19.

³² Valerie Fraser, 'Art and Architecture in Latin America', p. 211.

³³ Ivo Mesquita, 'Brazil', in Edward J. Sullivan (ed.), *Latin American Art in the Twentieth Century* (London, 1996), p. 203.

employed to embody the idea of modernity.³⁴ São Paulo had between 1890 and 1920 grown rapidly, its population increasing by a factor of eight, as European immigrants arrived, industries and transport developed in the city itself, and the coffee plantations expanded.³⁵ Jorge Larrain, who takes an overview of Latin America as a whole, says

modernity is ... associated with an experience of mobility and social change, with a sense of dynamism; it expresses an overwhelming sense of ephemerality, fragmentation, contingency and chaotic change.³⁶

He goes on to identify five stages on the route to Latin American modernity: oligarchic modernity (from independence to 1900), the crisis of oligarchic modernity and populist modernisation (1900 to 1950), industrial expansion (post WW2 to 1970), dictatorships (1970 to 1990), and neoliberal modernization (1990 onwards).³⁷ These time frames are generalised, and each Latin American country followed this route at its own pace, but broadly speaking the periodisation applies to the case of Brazil, and Modern Art Week in 1922 could be regarded as a reaction to the old order by a group of young artists influenced by the Modernist movements in Europe after World War One. He also makes the important distinction that ‘unlike Hispanic American modernism, Brazilian modernism linked its will to modernity with the construction of a Brazilian national identity’.³⁸ Although this would not become fully apparent until the 1930s when some members of the *modernismo* movement, in particular Mário de Andrade, took paid work from the State.³⁹

For Celso Lemos de Oliveira the 1920s were a time ‘when composers and painters of consequence began to emerge’, and even today ‘São Paulo, especially, is a place where contemporary painting flourishes’.⁴⁰ Initially the

³⁴ John King, ‘Introduction’, in King (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Modern Latin American Culture*, p. 1.

³⁵ Arquivo do Estado de São Paulo, *Memória Urbana: A Grande São Paulo até 1940* (3 vols, São Paulo, SP, 2001), vol. 1, p. 20.

³⁶ Jorge Larrain, *Identity and Modernity in Latin America* (Cambridge, 2000), p. 16.

³⁷ Larrain, *Identity and Modernity*, pp. 22-23.

³⁸ Larrain, *Identity and Modernity*, p. 94.

³⁹ Williams, *Culture Wars in Brazil*, p. 42.

⁴⁰ Oliveira, ‘Brazilian Literature and Art: From Colonial to Modern’, p. 998.

Modernists received no official institutional support: 'The Modern Art Week was funded through the private initiative of wealthy patrons, and private monies funded other regional subcurrents of modernism, if they were funded at all.'⁴¹ This would change after 1930 and the right-wing Vargas era of cultural management which witnessed the increased involvement of government agencies.⁴² Even so, the importance of the 1922 Modern Art Week was, for Ivo Mesquita, vital: it 'represented a decision to leave academic art behind and deepened the Brazilian resolve to renew all areas of human activity: in art, politics, 'street' aesthetics, advertising, furniture and fashion'.⁴³ Jacqueline Barnitz says painters, writers, musicians and dance performers staged a series of events that 'symbolized the Semana's independence from past artistic conventions'.⁴⁴ Ivo Mesquita concludes that the 1922 group of artists were 'never defined as having relevance to Brazilian society as a whole'.⁴⁵ They were, rather, pioneers who begun the work on an aesthetic that others were later to take to a wider public audience.

At Easter time in 1924 a number of the key artists in the new movement, including Oswald de Andrade, Tarsila do Amaral and Mário de Andrade, toured the historic areas of colonial Minas Gerais by train and 'this so-called *caravana modernista* (modernist caravan) became a foundational moment in the Brazilian avant-garde, where the young artists found the grammar, if not the precise syntax, of Brazilian modernism'.⁴⁶ The railway and Modernist art were from this time onwards enmeshed in the same ensemble.⁴⁷

The audiences for their work tended to be from the middle and upper sections of Brazilian society. Daryle Williams has analysed what scant records still exist of visitors in the Rio de Janeiro area to three federal museums of

⁴¹ Williams, *Culture Wars in Brazil*, p. 42.

⁴² Mesquita, 'Brazil', p. 206.

⁴³ Mesquita, 'Brazil', p. 206.

⁴⁴ Barnitz, *Twentieth Century Art of Latin America*, p. 57.

⁴⁵ Mesquita, 'Brazil', p. 211.

⁴⁶ Williams, *Culture Wars in Brazil*, pp. 44-45.

⁴⁷ Aracy A. Amaral, *Tarsila: Sua Obra e Seu Tempo* (3rd edn., São Paulo, SP, 2003), pp. 148-154.

history and fine art between 1929 and 1954.⁴⁸ He concludes that there was no popular audience for these museums and their displays, even though the total number of visitors increased during the period as more museums were opened. What did not materialise though was any noticeable number of members of the public from the poorer areas of Rio de Janeiro. In part that was also down to the strict dress and behaviour codes set down by these museums that prevented the mass of the poor from entering the doors of these museums.⁴⁹ The enjoyment of art in galleries was to remain a pleasure for the elites. In a similar fashion those who produced these works of art were likely to be under the patronage of the rich and powerful in Brazilian social circles; a system of support and clientism that had pervaded politics and society since colonial times.⁵⁰ Hence the paintings analysed here were likely to be produced by individuals who by association were members of the elite (even if they regarded themselves at the time as iconoclasts), and still today their work hangs in art galleries that tend to be visited and patronised by the upper social classes in Brazil.

4. The railway and the landscape in Brazil

Euclides da Cunha, in an essay published in 1909, shortly before his death, described plans then being discussed for a possible trans-Latin-American railway.⁵¹ He provided an evocative description of the continent, almost as if it was a canvas to lay rails upon, and he observed that the railway network already built in Brazil has become a 'corollary to the general evolution of Brazil'.⁵² By doing so, Euclides da Cunha returned to his theme of the landscape being the creator of Brazil and in his 1909 essay argues that the railway would become an essential embedded feature of the Brazilian landscape. Other writers have likened the process of building railways to the act of artistic creation. Pedro Telles, the author of a history of engineering in Brazil, quotes the French writer

⁴⁸ Williams, *Culture Wars in Brazil*, pp. 182-191.

⁴⁹ *Ibid*, pp. 188-189.

⁵⁰ Costa, *The Brazilian Empire*, p. 190.

⁵¹ Euclides da Cunha, 'Viação Sul-Americana' in Euclides da Cunha, *À Margem da História* (São Paulo, SP, 1999 [1909]), pp. 85-102.

⁵² Da Cunha, 'Viação Sul-Americana', p. 86.

Pierre Denis who published his book, *Le Brésil aux XXème Siecle*, in Paris in 1909:

in Brazil is done [sic] the inverse of what is usual in Europe, where the design is drafted on maps. Here the design is done in unknown terrain and, generally, the surveys made for the line are the first to exist.⁵³

The implication here is that the act of building railways in the Brazilian landscape was less of a mechanistic process which followed existing knowledge and more of a creative one: a blank canvas where intuition led over practical exact measurement. Pedro Telles notes that North American engineers with their experience of opening up their continent were better suited to working in this way than were British ones.⁵⁴

The image of this modern technology which crisscrossed the Brazilian landscape was not without its problems. For José de Souza Martins, a retired sociologist at the University of São Paulo, the railway brought to the São Paulo region modernity, but at a price: ‘man was no longer the leader of the mule train, instead he became led by the railway’.⁵⁵ He sees the construction of English railway architecture such as the main *São Paulo Railway* station at Luz in the centre of São Paulo and the building of a company village at Paranapiacaba at the upper section of the rope-hauled way as evidence of authoritarian control over the workforce. He says the railway station had a secret internal telephone system installed and he argues that the company village was laid out as a panopticon to make supervision more effective.⁵⁶ He suggests that such changes to working life highlighted the transformation ‘from rural to urban, from agricultural to industrial and from old to new’.⁵⁷ These tensions and feelings of unease are identified in the following readings of railway art by three artists from 1924 to 1977.

⁵³ Pedro Carlos da Silva Telles, *A History of Brazilian Railways: Part 1 – The First Railways*, trans. Paul E. Waters (Bromley, Kent, 1987), p. 35.

⁵⁴ Telles, *A History of Brazilian Railways*, p. 35.

⁵⁵ José de Souza Martins, ‘A Ferrovia e a Modernidade em São Paulo: A Geração do Ser Dividido’, *Revista USP*, 63 (2004), p.8.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

Each of the pieces considered here is painted in oil on canvas and they have been selected to form a coherent group for the purpose of analysis, ignoring for example lithographs and photographs. These latter forms, as Jill Murdoch notes in her critique of research carried out by Julie Wosk, serve differing social functions in terms of their production, display, consumption and audiences.⁵⁸ In Brazil artists such as G. Costa and C. Linde produced lithographs in the 1850s and 1860s of the *E. F. Central do Brasil* consciously inserting the railway and the locomotive into pastoral views.⁵⁹ The work of photographers such as Militão de Azevedo, who produced an album of comparative photographs of São Paulo between 1862 and 1887 which showed, amongst other things, the arrival of the *São Paulo Railway*,⁶⁰ and Dana Merrill, a North American contracted in 1909 to record the construction of the *Madeira-Mamoré Railway* in the Amazon jungle,⁶¹ also merit detailed future investigation.

5. Tarsila do Amaral: the Modernist railway ensemble

Tarsila do Amaral is perhaps Brazil's best known Modernist painter.⁶² Jon S. Vincent calls her 'the most representative Brazilian painter of early Modernism'.⁶³ She was born in Capivari, a town in the interior of São Paulo state, in 1886 and died in the state capital in 1973.⁶⁴ She studied art in Paris, and returned in 1924 after the 1922 Modern Art Week to become involved in the new

⁵⁸ Murdoch, J., 'From Elephant to Penge West', p. 47; Wosk, *Breaking Frame*.

⁵⁹ PRESERVE/RFFSA, *Centro de Preservação da História Ferroviária do Rio de Janeiro/Engenho de Dentro*, museum catalogue (Rio de Janeiro, 1983), p. 37 and p. 41.

⁶⁰ Eudes Campos, 'A Cidade de São Paulo e a Era dos Melhoramentos Materiaes. Obras Públicas e Arquitetura Vistas por Meio de Fotografias de Autoria de Militão Augusto de Azevedo, Datadas do Período 1862-1863', *Anais do Museu Paulista: História e Cultural Material*, Nova Série, Vol 15, No. 1 (2007), 11-114.

⁶¹ Vânia Carneiro de Carvalho and Solange Ferraz de Lima (eds.), *Trilhos e Sonhos: Ferrovia Madeira-Mamoré*, Museu Paulista-USP, exhibition catalogue (São Paulo, SP, 2000); Francisco Foot Hardman, 'Os Negativos da História: A Ferrovia-Fantasma e o Fotógrafo-Cronista', *Resgate: Revista de Cultura*, No. 5 (1993), 9-21.

⁶² Katia Canton, *O Trem da História: Uma Viagem pelo Mundo da Arte* (São Paulo, SP, 2003), p. 53.

⁶³ Vincent, *Culture and Customs of Brazil*, pp. 173-174.

⁶⁴ Rosemary O'Neill, 'Biographies', in Dawn Ades, *Art in Latin America: The Modern Era, 1820-1980* (New Haven, CT, 1989), p. 338.

movement.⁶⁵ She was married for a time to the writer Oswald de Andrade, one of the driving forces behind the Brazilian Modernist movement.⁶⁶ It was he who in 1928 published his 'Anthropophagist Manifesto' suggesting that Brazilian culture should be created from a cannibalised form of European sources and influences.⁶⁷ He was advocating the appropriation and manipulation of European art forms to suit the Brazilian case: exactly what the notion of the process of transculturation embodies.⁶⁸ The idea was that these external influences could be devoured, digested and transformed, 'creating its own meaning and vision'.⁶⁹ For Ivo Mesquita 'the modernist artists sought to create a genuine Brazilian form of expression that would embody the country's cultural diversity'.⁷⁰

Evidence suggests that between 1924 and 1925 Tarsila was deeply influenced by the railway ensemble, producing at least five known works. *Barra do Pirai*, which today is reported missing, was an oil painting of the railway in this town in the state of Rio de Janeiro that was created after her journey with Oswald, Mário and others by train through the south-eastern states of Brazil in 1924.⁷¹ A year later she produced illustrations for Oswald's collection of poems, 'Pau-brasil', including one picture called *Locomotiva*.⁷² Also from 1925 an oil painting titled by her in French *A Gare* (The Station) included a locomotive pulling two connected coaches across an industrial landscape with a tall brick chimney.⁷³ This work is in the private Rubens Schahin collection in São Paulo and will not be dealt with in this present study which examines only works on permanent public display. Also from this period and in the same style are *EFCB* (*Estrada de Ferro Central do Brasil*) and *São Paulo*, both produced in 1924.⁷⁴

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Ades, *Art in Latin America*, pp. 132-134; Canton, *O Trem da História*, p. 53.

⁶⁷ King, Introduction', in King (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Modern Latin American Culture*, p. 2; Fraser, 'Art and Architecture in Latin America', p. 202.

⁶⁸ Alberto Moreiras, *The Exhaustion of Difference: The Politics of Latin American Cultural Studies* (Durham, NC, 2001), pp. 185-191.

⁶⁹ Mesquita, 'Brazil', p. 202.

⁷⁰ Ibid, 'Brazil', p. 205.

⁷¹ Amaral, *Tarsila: Sua Obra e Seu Tempo*, p. 148.

⁷² Ibid, p. 203.

⁷³ Amaral, *Tarsila: Sua Obra e Seu Tempo*, p. 244.

⁷⁴ The painting 'EFCB' has been subtitled by some art critics as 'Estação Central do Brasil'. This study follows the naming used by the curators of the Museu de Arte Contemporânea da

The majority of critics and art historians have concentrated on Tarsila's figurative works; exhibition curators also appear reluctant to draw out what might be termed her 'railway' phase as exemplified in these five pieces since each one of them is housed in separate collections in Brazil. In the 1920s they formed a unified view: in 1924 *São Paulo*, *Barra do Pirai*, and *A Gare*, were three of the seventeen canvases at Tarsila's exhibition in Paris.⁷⁵ The same three railway pieces in 1929 formed part of her first solo exhibition in Brazil, at a hotel in Rio de Janeiro, which featured thirty-five of her artworks.⁷⁶ This study suggests that during the 1924-25 period the railway, for Tarsila, was an urgent subject for her artwork as she interrogated the conflict between urban and rural and between modernity and tradition.

Tarsila's style, clearly in the modernist vein in these paintings, is typified by the colours she uses to reflect the natural colours of the rural interior of São Paulo state of her childhood, the 'blues, yellows and pinks' of the landscape around her.⁷⁷ There is a lack of perspective, minor detail, and light and shade, but the colours remain those of the countryside in these pictures.⁷⁸ For Lisbeth Rebello Gonçalves, Tarsila was one of 'the constructors of Brazilian Modernism.'⁷⁹ This painting, *EFCB*, (fig 22) is the most well known of Tarsila's work from her 1924-5 period. It is reproduced in most works of Latin American art history published in Europe, North America and Latin America, and has become one of the iconic symbols of this period in art history. Amongst those who have critiqued this piece is John King who uses it as the image on the cover of his edited volume on Modern Latin American culture. He says this canvas is a 'homage...to Brazilian modernity'.⁸⁰ This study now presents an alternative reading of Tarsila's railway phase.

Universidade de São Paulo, where the picture is on public display, and is named as "'EFCB" (Estrada de Ferro Central do Brasil)'.
⁷⁵ Ibid, pp. 237-8.

⁷⁶ Ibid, p. 308.

⁷⁷ Canton, K, *O Trem da História*, p. 53.

⁷⁸ Ibid, p. 54.

⁷⁹ Lisbeth Rebello Gonçalves, 'Modernism and its Developments', in Lisbeth Rebello Gonçalves (ed.), *Arte Brasileira: 50 Anos de História no Acervo MAC USP 1920-1970*, exhibition catalogue (São Paulo, SP, 1996), p. 25

⁸⁰ King, 'Introduction', p. 1.



Fig. 22 *'EFCB' (Estrada de Ferro Central do Brasil)*, Tarsila do Amaral (1924, oil on canvas, 142 x 126.8 cm.)
Museu de Arte Contemporânea da Universidade de São Paulo

For Valerie Fraser the work of Tarsila created a 'Brazilian' style by 'internalizing aspects of European modern movements such as Fauvism and cubism, but transforming them into paintings that are Brazilian in form, colour, content and intention'.⁸¹ Jaqueline Barnitz says Tarsila developed her cubist style

⁸¹ Fraser, 'Art and Architecture in Latin America', p. 214.

after returning from her studies in Paris.⁸² She says Tarsila painted this piece, *EFCB*, whilst in São Paulo and it certainly sits as a pair with the next picture, that of a São Paulo railway landscape itself.

The *E. F. Central do Brasil* was the company which operated throughout much of the state of Rio de Janeiro, into Minas Gerais, and ran the passenger and freight services between Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo.⁸³ It is likely that she and her fellow Modernists would have used the company's trains at some stage during their tour at Easter 1924. In the first two decades of the twentieth century passenger demand for its suburban services in the rapidly growing city of Rio de Janeiro meant that its rolling stock and carriages were being put under increasing pressure. The rising cost of imported coal from Britain and the United States made the *E. F. Central* vulnerable and increasingly its locomotives were fired with wood from local forests.⁸⁴ Passenger overcrowding became common, and services ran late or not at all. This was a situation that was to persist for several decades, having an impact on a wider popular culture. In 1941 the hit of that year's Rio de Janeiro carnival was a samba sung by Roberto Paiva called *O Trem Atrasou* (The Train is Late) in which the hero pleads with his boss not to sack him and even produces a certificate from the train company to prove the late running service.⁸⁵

Tarsila's train does not appear to have a locomotive in frame. There is, to the left, a carriage with tiny windows and to the right what appears to be a locomotive tender or wagon. The resources for creating movement are present, but not the technology and as Dawn Ades says, this work 'suggests a kind of industrial primitivism'.⁸⁶ The minute opaque windows in the carriage suggest that for the passengers inside there really was nothing worth looking out at on a journey through the burgeoning urban landscape of Rio de Janeiro. The railway company, owned by the Federal authorities since the late nineteenth century, had

⁸² Barnitz, *Twentieth Century Art of Latin America*, p. 57.

⁸³ Schoppa, *150 Anos do Trem*, pp. 79-86.

⁸⁴ Schoppa, *150 Anos do Trem*, p. 85.

⁸⁵ José Alvaro Moisés and Verena Martinez-Alier, 'Urban Transport and Popular Violence: The Case of Brazil', *Past and Present*, 86 (1980), 174-192.

⁸⁶ Ades, *Art in Latin America*, p. 134.

talked of electrifying and modernising the suburban network in Rio de Janeiro but only in 1920 was such a plan authorised by the issuing of a legislative decree.⁸⁷ In the event electrification did not arrive until 1937 and passenger chaos and misery continued until then and thereafter as well. It is plausible to suggest that Tarsila's painting captures this love/hate duality towards the railway technology. The train has been uncoupled and derailed: there are no identifiable tracks in this landscape free of rails where the closest image is that of the latticework of the bridge and signal gantries. The carriage and the tender are cut off by two sinuous routes and what were once rail tracks are now transformed into flowing rivers; the bridge which crosses them leads nowhere. Tarsila seems to be suggesting that the metal of the track and the hewn wood of the sleepers is merely a transitory phase in history which eventually will be returned back to the natural element of water, a primordial form of transport.

All of the five semaphore signals are in the horizontal, 'danger', position and whilst their colours may not be accurate the message is clear: the railway is not moving, and therefore has little purpose or meaning as a method of transport. The technology has become paralysed. The *E. F. Central*, since the inauguration of its first service in 1858, had grown to dominate the landscape of Rio de Janeiro and the Paraíba Valley.⁸⁸ The ironwork of the signalling system and the telegraph poles have in this canvas inserted themselves into the landscape, all but hiding the view of the trees and houses. Technology appears to be obscuring the traditional ways of life, the rural environment and the villages with their whitewashed churches. For Tarsila this technology needed to be foregrounded because it could not just be ignored, but even if the railway was now a firm part of the Brazilian landscape her message suggests that it has become uncoupled and paralysed. She implies that, even if it has dominated the gaze in recent times, in the background life continues as normal with the neat and orderly houses, the calming sight of the church, and the rounded shapes of the trees still visible behind the metal structures. The struggle between Nature and technology are clearly represented in this painting but the important element that is missing is

⁸⁷ Schoppa, *150 Anos do Trem*, pp. 85-86.

⁸⁸ Schoppa, *150 Anos do Trem*, pp. 79-80.

humanity. Well, almost. Tarsila includes at the far top left, atop a telegraph pole, a small white torso identifiable as a human figure (or perhaps a bird, or even an angel?). It has no gender, and no evidence that it is either looking at or away from the viewer, but it acts as a reminder that this contest between technology and the traditional landscape is one that humankind can only sit and observe from a distance. If it is indeed an angel dressed in white Tarsila has rendered it powerless in the face of the technology spread before it.

From the 1900s onwards São Paulo's urban areas were being radically transformed 'with urbanization, foreign immigration, and industrialization' and as a result 'a younger generation of intellectuals found it hard to resist the impulse to take part in the changing cultural and political landscape'.⁸⁹ Tarsila was one of those, and if her painting of the *E. F. Central do Brasil* shows the duality of technology and tradition then her landscape *São Paulo* (fig. 23), painted in the same year, shows a consistency in both theme and message. The railways had changed the landscape of the city, particularly since 1901 when the *São Paulo Railway* opened its new city centre building, the grandiose Estação da Luz (fig. 7, p. 18) which was 'practically a piece of London carved into the centre of the capital of São Paulo State'.⁹⁰ The city was becoming internationalised, a process that would continue over the decades to come. Of *São Paulo* Katia Canton says,

Here the artist portrays the contrast between the arrival of modernity and the train, one of the greatest symbols of industrial development, with the colours of the rural countryside, also emblematic of Brazil.⁹¹

She adds that '*São Paulo* is more schematic than *EFCB*, with the houses and buildings at the back, and the trees and the station at the front.'⁹² Here Canton is reading the four-square brick building as signifying the Estação da Luz.

⁸⁹ Williams, *Culture Wars in Brazil*, p.36.

⁹⁰ Tânia Gerbi Veiga, 'Trem, Terra e Trabalho: A São Paulo Railway' (unpublished MA dissertation, Pontifícia Universidade Católica São Paulo [PUC-SP], 1991), p. 149.

⁹¹ Canton, *O Trem da História*, p. 77.

⁹² *Ibid*, p. 77.



Fig. 23 *São Paulo*, Tarsila do Amaral
(1924, oil on canvas, 120 x 140 cm. approx)
Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo, São Paulo, SP

An alternative interpretation of this building, suggested by this present study, is not as a Victorian gothic station, but as being reminiscent of one of the large grain warehouses or flourmills in the nearby bairro of Mooca;⁹³ thus giving a more utilitarian meaning to this part of the painting by removing the gothic splendour and replacing it with functional industrial architecture. Jaqueline Barnitz says, in 1924 ‘Tarsila painted urban themes celebrating the city of São Paulo, its house facades, railroad stations and crossings. All of her scenes had a quality of studied naïveté’.⁹⁴ Tarsila’s use of metropolitan scenes as inspiration for her art declined after the mid-1920s as she moved from a cubist to a surrealist style.⁹⁵ However in *São Paulo* Tarsila is at her industrial peak, with a landscape

⁹³ Dimas A. Künsch, *Casa de Taipa: O Bairro Paulistano da Mooca em Livro-Reportagem* (São Paulo, SP, 2006).

⁹⁴ Barnitz, *Twentieth Century Art of Latin America*, p. 58.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 59-60.

of the city dominated by lush greenery and the concrete and brick skyline partially hidden by the railway ensemble.

The language of this painting appears to be confused: is the carriage on the right a train or a tram? Does the number on the left, 135831, have any significance? One suggestion is that the numbers were her comment on the quantity of advertising billboards on the city's streets.⁹⁶ Is the bridge across the middle made of glass and metal, and if so why is the palm tree obscured? Why is the skyline cut by a trapezium that contains the city buildings? What is the significance of the human (or are they animal) forms in the foreground? John Wylie says landscape can be regarded as 'a representation or symbolisation of particular subjectivities, of particular cultural attitudes and values'.⁹⁷ Here in this picture Tarsila depicts technology, the railway, urban space, rural greenery and humanity as equally confusing within the context of the city where she lives. If her work *Estrada de Ferro Central do Brasil* represents a clear struggle and eventual paralysis of the railway technology, this *São Paulo* piece reveals the process of negotiation itself. The train carriage/tramcar is metamorphosing into the bridge as the horizontal lines continue from right to left and the blue of the carriage interior is transferred to the side of the bridge. The implication is that the transport technology is melding itself into the city so that urban life becomes the train and the train itself is representative of the city. The problem identified by the palm tree is that the urban landscape itself is split, with the grand building on the left giving way to a diminishing size of building on the right beyond the tree. The palm tree itself appears to sprout out of nowhere; it has no identifiable roots yet at the same time it splits the city skyline in two.

The bridge is supported on two curving ironwork supports, distinct in their form from the rectangular buildings, suggesting a transition from the rigid conformity of the city down across the green open space, over the river and into the foreground with the two stylised figures. These can perhaps be viewed as representing the Anhangabaú district of the city. Here the railway has been left

⁹⁶ 'Tarsila Viajante', Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo, exhibition leaflet (January 2008).

⁹⁷ Wylie, *Landscape*, p. 96.

behind and the viewer enters a naïve world of spherical trees and simplistic human forms. Even here the message has been mixed up: a masculine figure in a shirt (with a tail, perhaps suggesting some simian or demonic form, or even evoking the shape of a petrol pump and the competition from automotive transport) stands next to the tree signifying feminine Nature. To the right the female form, bent slightly forward in obedience and wearing a full-length blue dress, stands under the carriage as if submitting herself to the masculine technology. On the other hand she could be an electric street light, as suggested by the curator of a recent retrospective exhibition in São Paulo.⁹⁸ Preconceptions about gender, form and function are being raised here without in anyway being resolved.

This is a painting of two halves, with the rigid geometry of the city giving way to a foreground of smooth natural curves. For the viewer it is the city landscape at the eye line that first engages, but as the gaze travels down the conflict and questions arise; never fully answered, leaving the viewer puzzled not least by this downward trajectory which appears to run down the bridge supports in a counter-intuitive manner. Travel by train in urban São Paulo appears for Tarsila to have become as chaotic as in Rio de Janeiro. Street protests and riots in both cities, sparked by either rising ticket prices, overcrowding or poor service, occurred at sporadic intervals over the course of the twentieth century.⁹⁹ Strikes by transport workers, such as the 1906 action taken by telegraph operators with the *Companhia Paulista* railway which shut down services, only added to the misery of passengers.¹⁰⁰ From the mid-1970s until the end of the century a persistent problem was of young men hanging on to the outside of overcrowded electric commuter trains in an effort either to show off or to evade

⁹⁸ 'Tarsila Viajante', Pinacoteca Exhibition leaflet. The temporary exhibition was curated by Regina Teixeira de Barros.

⁹⁹ Moisés and Martinez-Alier, 'Urban Transport and Popular Violence'; Teresa Meade, "'Living Worse and Costing More": Resistance and Riot in Rio de Janeiro, 1890-1917', *Journal of Latin American Studies*, 21 (1989), 241-266.

¹⁰⁰ Boris Fausto, *Trabalho Urbano e Conflito Social (1890-1920)* (5th edn., Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 2000), pp. 135-146.

paying.¹⁰¹ They were known as pingentes ('hangers on'), and the rising death rate was only addressed in the early 2000s when the Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo urban railway networks both introduced air-conditioned trains with windows that could not be opened and automatic doors that could not be forced open by hand. In the 1920s Tarsila's audience for her artwork would have been her fellow Modernists and those select few of the elites who attended art galleries and exhibitions. In her work *São Paulo* she is reflecting back to them the confusion of a rapidly expanding metropolis. They may have been fortunate to have only travelled on the long distance trains and have avoided the urban transport crush, but her work was perhaps appearing to strike a chord with those who were forced to use the metropolitan networks on a daily basis.

6. Bustamante Sá: reclaiming the city

Bustamante Sá was born in the city of Rio de Janeiro, then the capital of Brazil, in 1907 and died in the same city in 1988.¹⁰² Between 1950 and 1952 he spent two years on an art scholarship to Paris, returning to paint this *Vista de Santa Teresa* in 1954 (fig. 24). This was the year that Getúlio Vargas, during his second spell as president, committed suicide and ensured that, 'From a tragic failure he was immediately transformed into a patriotic martyr.'¹⁰³ Brazil was soon to face a decade of optimism stoked by economic growth and the creation of a new national capital, Brasília, in the heart of the undeveloped interior.¹⁰⁴ Bustamante Sá's painting was created in the months of uncertainty surrounding Vargas' sudden death.

This oil painting is included here because it tells a story of the *absence* of technology in the city landscape. The subject of this piece is the Santa Teresa

¹⁰¹ José Arthur Rios, 'On the Waves: A New Kind of Surf in Rio de Janeiro', *Crime, Law and Social Change*, 20 (1993), 161-175; Cândido Procópio Ferreira de Camargo and others, *São Paulo, Growth and Poverty* (London, 1978), pp. 35-39.

¹⁰² 'Bustamante Sá 1907-1988', <http://www.pitoresco.com/brasil/bustamante/bustamante.htm> (20 June 2008); 'Bustamante Sá, Rubens Fortes', http://www.bolsadearte.com/biografias/bustamante_sa.htm (20 June 2008).

¹⁰³ Ronald M. Schneider, *Brazil: Culture and Politics in a New Industrial Powerhouse* (Boulder, CO, 1996), p. 73.

¹⁰⁴ Boris Fausto, *A Concise History of Brazil*, trans. Arthur Brakel (Cambridge, 1999), p. 253.

Tramway (*Companhia Ferro-Carril de Santa Teresa*), opened in 1895, an electric open-car tramway which still runs today as a tourist attraction in the heart of the artistic quarter of Rio de Janeiro.¹⁰⁵ The tramway is just across town from the *Trem do Corcovado*, the four kilometre electric rack railway that takes tourists up to the statue of Christ the Redeemer overlooking Rio de Janeiro. What Bustamante Sá offers to the viewer is an urban landscape that has had its harsh brick and concrete lines softened by the use of pastel shades. The bairro of Santa Teresa nestles on the hillside above the old centre of the city and retains its artistic, bohemian feel.



Fig. 24 *Vista de Santa Teresa*, Rubens Fortes Bustamante Sá (1954, oil on canvas, 91 x 72 cm.)
Museu de Arte do Rio Grande do Sul Ado Malagoli,
Porto Alegre, RS

¹⁰⁵ Helio Suêvo Rodriguez, *A Formação das Estradas de Ferro no Rio de Janeiro: O Resgate da sua Memória* (Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 2004), pp. 154-156.

One possible reading of this painting is to regard the residents out walking the streets as being unconcerned by the electric technology of the tramway which splits and then conceals the road. Humanity is observed in the spaces of the carriageways, with the figure of a woman in red standing in the middle of the road, and a father and child surveying the scene from the side of the tramway as it climbs the hill in front of the viewer. On the high-rising cutting to the left of the tram tracks what appear to be a mother and daughter look back at the father. It can be read as if a family has been split in two by the tramlines yet is still able to see each other. Whilst the route of the tram tracks cut across the foreground, the technology does not intrude. Bustamante Sá has made the tracks indistinct, and the overhead wires appear to be unconnected. Yet the viewer understands that this is a working transport system; movement itself is implied by the figures of the pedestrians walking along the pavement, dressed in smart clothes as if for a church meeting. That there is no tram car, in fact no mechanical means of transport whatsoever, suggests that Bustamante Sá was depicting his view of a city that had refused to give in to advancing technology. His world is populated by human life, moving about at a walking pace. This then becomes a pastoral scene in all its pastel-shade innocence. The artist is making a reactionary statement about the pace of change to urban life in 1950s Rio de Janeiro. Technology has been stripped out to leave the bare bones of the cityscape ready for reclaiming by the population. The route of the tramway will no longer separate the family. The manner in which they perhaps look longingly at one another suggests that soon they will be reunited.

But the artist sounds a warning note that this vision is in fact more like a dream by painting a subtle cross in pastel hues of oil paint right across the landscape. This crossing out of the entire image is not immediately apparent to the viewer, but slowly reveals itself after the rest of the landscape has been taken in. Bustamante Sá's intent now becomes clear at last: This anti-technology scene is in fact a myth, Rio de Janeiro never has been like this, and the frantic pace of urban life continues outside the confines of this peaceful dream-like canvas. This has all been a mirage, and technology in the shape of trams, locomotives and

automobiles will regrettably but inevitably be a part of our reality from now onwards, the artist appears to be saying.

7. Glauco Pinto de Moraes: technology revealed

Glauco Pinto de Moraes was born in Passo Fundo in Rio Grande do Sul in 1928 and died in the city of São Paulo in 1990.¹⁰⁶ Railway technology is a recurring theme for Glauco de Moraes who in 1974 used the study of a right hand front piston from a Mallet steam locomotive to fill the canvas of a piece he called *Locomotiva* (which took the full title of ‘Locomotiva N.W.R. Mallet, 2-8+8-2, No. 2,174 Pistão Dianteiro Direto’).¹⁰⁷ *Locomotiva* hangs in the leading public art gallery of his home state, Rio Grande do Sul, and complements his other work under discussion here (fig. 25) which is housed in a gallery in the city of São Paulo. These two railway pieces, both with a photographic-obsessive attention to technological detail, demonstrate an artist working in a hyper-realist vein. Jon S. Vincent remarks that

The military takeover in 1964 is in some senses comparable to the Cultural Revolution in Communist China. Persons thought “deviant” (meaning leftist) were imprisoned or exiled, and the effect on the arts was profound.¹⁰⁸

One solution was ‘to criticise the government without seeming to do so’ and Pop Art provided one means.¹⁰⁹ Glauco de Moraes’ work, with its realist tendency, is entering this critical frame. Ivo Mesquita says of the years of military rule from 1964 to the mid-1980s,

¹⁰⁶ Jacob Klintowitz, *Versus: 10 Anos de Crítica de Arte* (São Paulo, SP, 1978), p. 72; ‘Moraes, Glauco Pinto de’, *Enciclopédia Itaú Cultural de Artes Visuais* (10 May 2006) ‘http://www.itaucultural.org.br/aplicExternas/enciclopedia_IC/index.cfm?fuseaction=artistas_obras&cd_verbeta=1947&cd_idioma=28555’ (23 June 2008).

¹⁰⁷ ‘Glauco Pinto de Moraes: Pistão Dianteiro Direto’, ‘http://www.margs.rs.gov.br/acervo_selecaoobras.php#m’ (23 June 2008).

¹⁰⁸ Vincent, *Culture and Customs of Brazil*, p. 177.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid*; Roberto Pontual, ‘Brazilian Modern Art from the Gilberto Chateaubriand Collection’, in *Portraits of a Country: Brazilian Modern Art from the Gilberto Chateaubriand Collection*, Exhibition Catalogue, Barbican Art Gallery (London, 1984), p. 67.

Brazilian Pop Art, unlike American, sought to define its identity, in opposition to the international trends, by focusing on the country's urban and political realities and an awareness of suburban and displaced popular culture.¹¹⁰

In many cases artists during these years had to make veiled and elliptical critiques of the ruling authorities or risk detention, exile or torture. Certainly censorship from the end of 1968 made artistic production very difficult.¹¹¹



Fig. 25 *Locomotiva, engaste frontal – FEPASA*, Glauco Pinto de Moraes (1977, oil on canvas, 151 x 201 cm.)
Museu de Arte Brasileira (MAB-FAAP), São Paulo, SP

Glauco de Moraes painted *Locomotiva, engaste frontal – FEPASA* in 1977. The viewer is struck first by bleakness and almost monochrome nature of this large canvas. It depicts, again in photographic-style detail, two diesel electric

¹¹⁰ Mesquita, 'Brazil', p. 218.

¹¹¹ Ibid, p. 222.

locomotives coupled together. It can be read as an unconventional view of railway technology, one that a passenger would rarely see but would be common to locomotive drivers and railway staff. It decapitates the locomotive and demonstrates just the detail of the body part and in this sense has an almost obsessive attention to the minute observation of the railway technology, with the coupling perhaps taking on a secondary, sensual, meaning. But the intertwining of the engaged and greased metal work is framed within an uncomfortable setting. This is a painting that unsettles the viewer because of the bold colours and the tension they present between technology's sublime beauty and its filthiness.

FEPASA, Ferrovias Paulista S.A. was the State of São Paulo's holding company which came into existence in 1971 to assume ownership of five of the railways in the state, the *Companhia Paulista de Estrada de Ferro*, the *Estrada de Ferro Araraquara*, the *Companhia Mogiana de Estrada de Ferro*, the *Estrada de Ferro São Paulo e Minas*, and the *Estrada de Ferro Sorocabana* (but not the *Estrada de Ferro Santos à Jundiaí*).¹¹² *FEPASA* had been almost twenty years in the planning, but legislation unifying the Paulista railways proved difficult to get through the State Legislative Assembly.¹¹³ Renê Schoppa notes that *FEPASA* was a smaller version of the *RFFSA* (the Federally-owned national railway company) but even so with 5,252 kilometres of lines of its own, and employing 36,642 people, suffered from serious State underinvestment and persistent financial deficits.¹¹⁴ In 1998 *FEPASA* was incorporated into the *RFFSA* and immediately formed part of the nationwide rail privatisation processes.¹¹⁵

Glauco de Moraes has all but removed the natural landscape from *Locomotiva, engaste frontal – FEPASA*, with one small broad-leaved weed growing out of the ballast near to the track at the back of the picture and the suggestion of two other green-leaved plants struggling nearby. The dominant colour themes are the black and blue hues of the shade and the bright whiteness

¹¹² Schoppa, *150 Anos do Trem no Brasil*, pp. 167-170.

¹¹³ *Ibid*, p. 168.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid*, pp. 168-170.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid*, p. 170.

of the sunlit metalwork. This is a persistent theme in his work, as noted by the art critic Jacob Klintowitz.¹¹⁶ With the strong Paulista sunlight there is very little subtlety in the baked ground and the bleached machinery. To add to this, the artist has left the depiction of the ground vague and the viewer is left wondering whether it is ballast stones or cracked soil turned from typical Paulista red to white in the sunlight. The metalwork of the technology is painted with his obsessive photographic detail, yet the stones or soil on the ground are depicted in a more impressionistic vein. It is as if Glauco de Moraes is saying ‘machines are real, the natural world is imaginary’, and by doing so he is foregrounding the technology and demoting Nature to the background.

At the same time it is an industrial wasteland. The distinctive yellow stripes of the *FEPASA* logo on the locomotives are already scratched and fading, a testimony to the State-run company’s problems as perceived by the artist. He demonstrates in his work that he has a close emotional relationship with the technology, but the practical operation by the politicians leaves a lot to be desired. One possible reading of this painting is as a critique of *FEPASA*’s operations. He even removes signs which indicate the railway as a system of transport: there are no wheels in this piece, and only the merest hint of railway track at the rear of the painting and part of a single rail below at the front. It is as if the politicians and the administrators have removed the functionality of the railway, and have dimmed its landscape greenery. All that is left is the bleak, sun-stained coupling between two static locomotives. This is ‘the cultural, political, economic and environmental relations enacted through and within landscapes’, displayed in this picture.¹¹⁷ In Marxist terms, this portrayal of material culture represents the decaying capitalist economy; the means of production have come to a standstill.¹¹⁸ In the 1980s Glauco de Moraes was to become a member of a cross-party human rights commission,¹¹⁹ and was known

¹¹⁶ Klintowitz, *Versus: 10 Anos de Crítica de Arte*, p. 72.

¹¹⁷ Wylie, *Landscape*, p. 97.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 63.

¹¹⁹ Paulo Sergio Pinheiro, ‘Brazil and the International Human Rights System’, University of Oxford Centre for Brazilian Studies, Working Paper no. CBS-15-00 (P) (2000), p. 17. <http://www.brazil.ox.ac.uk/workingpapers/pinheiro15.pdf> (20 June 2008).

to have long been a critic of the military regime.¹²⁰ In this painting he appears to be saying that even the process of industrial development under the leadership of the military authorities has stopped progressing.

Yet at the same time the tension remains in this painting. The coupling represents both the feminine sensuality through its curves and the masculine force of the arrangement of the metal to be able to link and haul huge loads. Glauco de Moraes gives his audience who work on the railways a knowing glance at the double meanings available to the locomotive driver. To the passenger he appears to be lifting the skirts of the technology to reveal something which is bleak – ugly even – at first glance, but which offers a fascinating attraction that draws the viewer compulsively into the landscape.

Glauco's piece was painted during the early years of gradual liberation, known as *abertura* ('opening'), when political openness was slowly beginning to allow freedom of expression again. In 1977 the metalworkers' union in São Bernardo in the state of São Paulo, led by one Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, began a campaign to increase wages and over the following two years organised massive general strikes involving millions of workers.¹²¹ It is into this space, where political dissent was once again being allowed, that Glauco cautiously appears to be placing his criticisms.

8. Concluding remarks

Technology started, for Tarsila do Amaral in the early 1920s, as something in conflict with nature, tradition and humanity. The old order in the form of the rural was fast disappearing as the cities of Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo were urbanising rapidly. São Paulo's industrialisation between the 1890s and 1920s was also a period of social change; some of it chaotic as the city grew and

¹²⁰ 'Mostras Abrem no MARGS', Rio Grande do Sul, Secretaria de Estado da Cultura, 29 September 2006, '<http://www.cultura.rs.gov.br/internas.php?inc=assessoria&cod=1159189189>' (20 June 2008).

¹²¹ Fausto, *A Concise History of Brazil*, p. 303

expanded.¹²² This chapter has offered a series of possible readings of these paintings and has observed how the image of the railway has, through the output of three Brazilian artists, been closely connected to the urban landscape. This has led to a dualism and a tension between the rural and the urban, the old and the new, and between Nature and technology.

The technology of the train, for Tarsila, quickly became uncoupled and paralysed in a state of chaos. This left her notion of tradition and the rural idyll in a state of confusion and under threat. Tarsila do Amaral was in her series of railway pictures playing out the drama of the conflict between technology and tradition, with just a hint towards an optimistic outcome: that for her at least the old traditional rural ways would survive the upheavals of the early twentieth century in Brazil. If the railway was for Brazil, as John King suggests, the ‘shock of the new’ then Tarsila do Amaral typifies this urban/rural tension in her *Estrada de Ferro Central do Brasil* piece with her use of colour, the dislocation of the train carriages, and the absence of a locomotive to drive the ensemble.¹²³ However this chapter reads in this piece not so much a ‘shock’ as an enduring contest: a negotiation of the meaning of modernity through the artist’s palette. Tarsila has removed the technology of transportation and movement and revealed the love/hate relationship she has with the train. She admits that modern technology is important, but she still insists that the traditional way of life and associated values must, and can, survive. For Tarsila this is a struggle between Nature and technology. Meanwhile for her Humankind is just a spectator in this process of negotiation. This struggle continues for Tarsila in her piece *São Paulo* (1924). Here the train as part of the urban landscape is a symbol of the new in opposition to the old, as represented by the trees and the grass. Again, for Tarsila humanity has been turned into a stylised form removing human characteristics and lending more than a hint of animal – suggesting the negotiation over the dualities is a long complex process.

¹²² Fausto, *A Concise History of Brazil*, pp. 178-182; Fausto, *Trabalho Urbano e Conflito Social*, pp. 133-153; Arquivo do Estado de São Paulo, *Memória Urbana: A Grande São Paulo até 1940*, (3 vols, São Paulo, SP, 2001), vol. 1, pp. 18-23.

¹²³ King, ‘Introduction’, in King (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Modern Latin American Culture*, p. 1.

Indeed, for these artists the conflict continues as a dialogue over several decades. Bustamante Sá presents a similar struggle, but in his painting of the hillsides of an artistic quarter of Rio de Janeiro he depicts the phase of the conflict where humanity is in the process of recapturing the space recently taken over by technology. It is a nice thought for the artist, this idea of an *absence* of technology, but he admits it is just a dream by crossing out his entire canvas. For him technology never can be removed; human beings never can be dominant any more. Such an image is just a wishful desire. The hope is that the family can finally be reunited, and the desire is left hanging there on the canvas. The viewer is left feeling deceived, having gazed upon the dualities presented in his canvas for some time before realising it has all been worthless.

In the 1970s Glauco de Moraes reveals the next phase of this conflict and negotiation in the transculturation process. The tension between the sublimity of technology and its inherent machine-ugliness still remains, but Nature has been vanquished. She has been all-but removed from the frame. The result is that machines have become the reality of the modern age of the late twentieth century in Brazil and Nature has become an imaginary space. Even so, during this process of negotiation the railway has become something rather bleak yet strangely attractive in an almost illicit way.

These paintings were produced by individuals with the time and money available to them, often from private sponsors, to be able to buy materials and create their works. If the creators were of the elite classes, so too was the audience. These paintings today hang in public galleries funded by universities, local authorities and private foundations. However the dualities presented by these three painters are taken to represent an aspect of the wider negotiation underway in Brazilian society during the twentieth century over the place and the idea of the railway ensemble in society. Gradually at least one of these images (Tarsila's *Estrada de Ferro Central do Brasil*) has become diffused to a wider audience through its re-publication as book covers, postcards, and other forms.

The railway in Brazil has become a site where modernity is questioned, and is not necessarily always regarded as a sublime piece of technology.

So far this study has examined several forms of representation of the railway. As an ensemble the findings of chapters 3 to 7 help to provide a contextualised understanding of Brazilian railway culture from the mid nineteenth century to the present day. The writing of railway history is found to have been nationalistic in tendency, favouring Brazilian characters over the foreign engineers, whilst autobiographies of railway workers have been used by the writers often in an attempt to insert themselves into history. Both have entered into the transculturation process by refusing to fully accept the foreign railway technology at face value, preferring instead to retell its history from a Brazilian standpoint. Brazilian fiction was found to negotiate the meaning of the railway using the dualities of masculine and feminine, urban and rural, tradition and modernity, and between civilisation and barbarity. In poetry and song two tensions were identified: on the one hand expressed as a tendency to romanticise the train as a bringer of change and spiritual renewal, and on the other to actually question whether the modernity it brought from foreign countries was of any value, and whether the Brazilian authorities had proper control over the management and operation of the technology. Cinema found the railway to be both a symbol of the loneliness of the urban experience, and a challenge to the rural traditions. Television, using the locomotive as a visual metaphor for the movement of millions of European immigrants to a growing state of São Paulo, regarded this technology as a mark of the progress and development of Brazil's agri-export industries. This present chapter has found in works of art a comparatively more pointed questioning of the railway technology. There is at times profound doubt displayed by these artists which leaves the viewer with an uncertainty over the benefits that the importation of rail transport may have given to Brazil. The cultural forms so far discussed have been published between 1865 and 2003 and this study observes that no conclusion has so far been reached in the process of transculturation for these examples and media forms. The negotiation of meaning appears to be continuing to the present day, particularly in the field of recent cinema and television productions as discussed

in chapter 6. On the other hand the representation of the railway past as museum heritage in the twenty-first century provides an alternative reading of the railway ensemble in Brazil, as explained in the next two chapters.

Part 2

The Past into the Present

'Official' railway museums



Fig. 26

Cover of RFFSA Statistical Report, *E. F. Santos à Jundiaí*, (March 1971). Biblioteca, RFFSA, Rio de Janeiro, RJ

1. Introduction

This study now turns to the period between the late 1970s and the present day, and a further point of encounter between the railway ensemble and Brazilian society: the museum. This section comprises two chapters, each reflecting contrasting modes of display and public engagement with the railway past. This present chapter argues that the 'official' railway heritage comprising documents, collections of technological artefacts, and landscapes which have been curated by the machinery of the state, has been largely ignored by the public at large. It presents evidence to suggest reasons for this abandonment which include a lack of federal government commitment and a public mistrust of state cultural management. In the second chapter in this section, chapter 9, an examination is carried out into the way in which an 'unofficial' archive, consisting of a significant number of live steam sites, has been developed across Brazil by volunteer and community based groups. It is this latter form of railway heritage that the public is actively reclaiming, engaging with and enjoying. It will be shown how the railway heritage has been split between these 'official' and 'unofficial' forms, and how this distinction has affected society's engagement with the histories of the railways.

The late 1970s, when railway museums began to emerge in Brazil, saw a gradual opening up (known as the *abertura*) of the repressive political strictures that had been placed on society since the military forces took control in 1964.¹ The slow, and at times uneven, process of political liberalisation followed a period of media censorship, torture and repression which marked out one of Brazil's 'most murky political periods'.² The historian Boris Fausto, writing about the military era, observed that it was not a personal dictatorship dominated by one single figurehead but instead it was a form of partnership where 'the military high command, the bureaus of information and repression, and the state

¹ Boris Fausto, *A Concise History of Brazil*, trans. Arthur Brakel (Cambridge, 1999), pp. 280-321.

² *Ibid*, p. 291.

technocrats ran the show'.³ A example comes in an 1985 article written for a commemorative study of the railway in the state of Paraná where the president of the federal railway company, the *RFFSA*, signs himself as 'Coronel-Engenheiro do Exército (Colonel, Army Engineer) Carlos Aloysio Weber', emphasising a long involvement of military engineers in railway management in Brazil.⁴ The preoccupation of the state rail company during much of this period in the 1970s and 1980s was how to stem the deterioration of the network in the face of insufficient investment and the sustained dominance of air and road transport industries.⁵ Faced with such challenges the preservation and care of rolling stock no longer suitable for daily use, and the organisation of documents which had been put into storage boxes in back offices, did not appear to have been priorities.

The previous chapters have identified the dualities involved in the transculturation of the railway ensemble. It has been an active and on-going negotiation that has been played out through representations and interpretations of the railway in novels, cinema and TV, and in popular music, poetry and painting. Once parts of the railway ensemble have finished their useful life as an operating passenger and freight transport system decisions have to be taken about what to do with the branch lines, the locomotives, the railway stations and the carriages, as well as the documents that have formed part of the day to day running of the railway and are now no longer required by managers. Up until the late 1970s there was no evidence in the *RFFSA* structure that it made considerations as to whether or not to preserve items: references to 'patrimony' (i.e. heritage) were made in terms of how fixed assets were to be disposed of – either by sale or for scrap.⁶

³ Ibid, p. 311.

⁴ Adélia Maria Woellner and Greta Mendry Ferreira (eds.), *Ferrovias Paranaguá-Curitiba: 1885 – 2 de Fevereiro – 1985: Uma Viagem de 100 Anos* (Curitiba, PR, 1985), pp. 375-377.

⁵ Ronald M. Schneider, *Brazil: Culture and Politics in a New Industrial Powerhouse* (Boulder, CO 1996), pp. 141-142 and pp. 150-151; Pedro Cipollari, *O Problema Ferroviário no Brasil* (São Paulo, SP, 1968).

⁶ For example see: RFFSA – Regional Centro-Sul, *Relatório Anual 1974* (São Paulo, SP, 1975); RFFSA – Superintendencia Regional São Paulo-SR4, *Relatório Anual 1978* (São Paulo, SP, 1979). The first mention of steam preservation activity in this region is in RFFSA – Superintendencia Regional São Paulo-SR4, *Relatório Anual 1982* (São Paulo, SP, 1983), p. 9.

One small cultural initiative was undertaken in 1974 when the Ministry of Transport, the federal government department with overall responsibility for the *RFFSA*, published a small number of slim volumes on selected areas of transport and literature. However it appears that the books were aimed more at an internal audience rather than celebrating the railway heritage to a wider public. Laís Costa Velho edited an anthology of thirty-seven poems, short magazine articles, and small extracts from novels written in Brazil about the railway.⁷ It was intended to be a compilation and a celebration of 'the railway in Brazilian literature'. Costa Velho worked as a public relations officer for the *RFFSA* based at its headquarters in Rio de Janeiro and the eighty-eighty page paperback, with a picture on the back cover of an apprentice being shown how to operate a machine lathe, was clearly intended to be given to new young recruits to the *RFFSA* in order to broaden their education. In the same year the ministry published Fausto Cunha's 'Caminhos Reais, Viagens Imaginárias' (Real Paths, Imaginary Journeys), which as the author admits in his introduction was less of a critical analysis of the works of Machado de Assis and more of a technical footnote to the means of transport mentioned by the nineteenth century author in nine of his major works.⁸

The *RFFSA* did in the 1980s attempt to create a series of railway museums across the country but these remained largely unvisited spaces. This is read as being the point when the negotiations involved in the transculturation process broke down. The public decided to reject the messages and histories presented in these state-run museums, unlike the case of the other media forms previously discussed in this study where active dualities have been observed. The museums created by the *RFFSA* presented a gaze upon the railway ensemble that was different from that which has been considered in the previous chapters. There the artists, musicians and writers were recreating a view mostly from the perspective of the passenger. The *RFFSA* corporate railway museums were constructed by a federal state organisation and by rail managers who were

⁷ Laís Costa Velho, *Pequena Antologia do Trem: A Ferrovia na Literatura Brasileira* (Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 1974).

⁸ Fausto Cunha, *Caminhos Reais, Viagens Imaginárias: Estudo sobre os Meios de Transporte na Ficção Brasileira* (Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 1974), pp. 8-10.

creating displays that reflected their own points of view as operators of the system and only secondly as passengers. An attempt by the state apparatus to create museums of railway history and to define for the public what the railway represented led to a conflict between state control and individual freedom. It left static museums devoid of visitors and a limited attempt by the state to operate steam heritage rides, for example at Paranapiacaba, São Paulo, which apparently failed due to a lack of rail management commitment by the *RFFSA*.

This study regards the breakdown of the transculturation process as a preparatory step before the present-day hybridization of the railway ensemble in Brazil. A hybrid state, as was discussed in chapter 2, is regarded here as one which gives the railway ensemble a settled meaning at a moment in time; one which arrives with the emergence of the voluntary preservation movement and is examined in detail in the next chapter. So this present chapter establishes an account of the state machinery's involvement in the museumification of the railway ensemble, and why it failed to engage with the public imagination. This chapter includes a case study of one of the fourteen 'official' railway museums: the one in Rio de Janeiro. This is used as an example to highlight the federal government's involvement in railway heritage and reflects observations about, on the one hand, the state's management of the museums sector in general and, on the other, its attempt from the late 1950s to create a single nationalised rail company. These two strands of government activity came together in a nationwide railway heritage project undertaken in the 1980s and 1990s by the *RFFSA* and help to explain its eventual failure at the turn of the century. This chapter then moves from considering the state-run museums and their collections of artefacts to a discussion of the collection, organising and public access to the written railway archives. Finally note is made of federal state policy towards museums in the early twenty-first century, observing that railway museums and heritage steam sites have so far been largely ignored. Throughout, the aim is to demonstrate that state control of railway museums failed both through lack of commitment by the managers of the railway industry and through a rejection by the public of the displays on offer.

2. Museums and state management

The manner in which the railway museum in Rio de Janeiro was created by the federal railway authority echoes the way in which the Brazilian state has, since the 1930s, managed museums that display national history. The link between state, politics, national identity, and museums in Brazil has had an enduring permanence. Indeed, the state in Brazil has long had an involvement in opening and organising museums. The first, the *Museu Real* (Royal Museum), was set up when the Portuguese court-in-exile arrived in Rio de Janeiro in 1808 and as its name suggested it was a display of the splendour of the royal collection.⁹ For a number of commentators the relationship between state and museums reached a significant stage in 1922 with the opening in Rio de Janeiro of the *Museu Histórico Nacional* as part of the centenary celebrations of Brazil's independence.¹⁰ As Daryle Williams observes, 'thereafter, the national memory could be collected, managed, and displayed within a public museum dedicated exclusively to the "national" past'.¹¹ Myrian Santos says 'the nationalistic history of the Museum was an uncritical history'.¹² This policy was refined during the first regime of President Getúlio Vargas between 1930 and 1945 which realised that 'managing culture could be a powerful weapon in managing Brazilianness'.¹³ Here were created institutions that '...were exemplars of the sometimes paternalistic, typically authoritarian, and invariably nationalistic process of state and nation building that characterizes modern Brazilian political history'.¹⁴

From this period onwards cultural management spread to include involvement in the promotion of radio, cinema (and later television) production as well as federally-run bodies such as the Serviço do Patrimônio Histórico e

⁹ Luiz Gonzaga Godoi Trigo, *Viagem na Memória: Guia Histórico das Viagens e do Turismo no Brasil* (São Paulo, SP, 2000), p. 56; Daryle Williams, *Culture Wars in Brazil: The First Vargas Regime, 1930-1945*, (Durham, NC, 2001), p. 27.

¹⁰ Myrian Sepúlveda dos Santos, *A Escrita do Passado em Museus Históricos* (Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 2006), pp. 26-35; Williams, *Culture Wars in Brazil*, pp. 36-39.

¹¹ Williams, *Culture Wars in Brazil*, p. 135.

¹² Santos, *A Escrita do Passado em Museus Históricos*, p. 44.

¹³ Williams, *Culture Wars in Brazil*, p. 52; Schneider, *Brazil: Culture and Politics*, pp. 58-68.

¹⁴ Williams, *Culture Wars in Brazil*, p. 52.

Artístico Nacional (*SPHAN*) and later the Instituto do Patrimônio Histórico e Artístico Nacional (*IPHAN*) to inscribe historical sites as national heritage, a tendency that persisted through the years of military rule and censorship between 1964 and the mid-1970s until the present day.¹⁵ As Mark Dinneen puts it,

A major policy of the military government was to promote and sponsor the expansion of the mass culture industry, particularly cinema and television, as a means of controlling information and uniting the population behind its drive for rapid economic growth and modernization.¹⁶

What the state was creating, this elusive sense of Brazilianness, was defined consistently through the orbit of a small number of individuals who made up society's elite and Daryle Williams refers to the processes undertaken as 'culture wars', although he remains cautious at making comparisons to the 'culture wars' described by analysts of the United States of America in the 1980s and 1990s.¹⁷ Even so, the social inequalities within Brazil meant that the majority of the public had little say in the development of a 'national' heritage. Myrian Santos observes that,

One of the key points to be taken into account here is the fact that museums were created in a hierarchical society, in which people hardly believed in the ethos of public service for everyone. In short, museums were not created and do not operate under the shared belief in the equality of access and rights.¹⁸

This has created a lack of active interest in museum visiting which, she argues in a separate essay, has been a result of until recently a relatively high illiteracy rate that led to a lack of critical awareness to be able to engage with exhibition displays.¹⁹ She adds that economic conditions have long led to museums being far down the list of priorities when it comes to public funding, but more than

¹⁵ Williams, *Culture Wars in Brazil*, pp. 52-53.

¹⁶ Mark. A. Dinneen, 'Print Media and Broadcasting' in Jon S. Vincent, *Culture and Customs of Brazil* (Westport, CT, 2003), p. 108.

¹⁷ Williams, *Culture Wars in Brazil*, p. 24.

¹⁸ Myrian Sepúlveda dos Santos, 'The New Dynamic of Blockbuster Exhibitions: The Case of Brazilian Museums', *Bulletin of Latin American Research*, 20 (2001), p. 33.

¹⁹ Myrian Sepúlveda dos Santos, 'Brazilian Museums, Public Policy and the Missing Public', *Journal of Latin American Cultural Studies*, 10 (2001), 67-81.

anything 'a museum visit does not figure typically amongst Brazilian cultural habits'.²⁰

Many museums in Brazil suffer from low visitor numbers, but this study does not seek to suggest that the museum sector is a cultural desert. Some national museums do get substantial visitors, especially for blockbuster and international exhibitions, and there has been a growth since the early 1960s of community museums some of which appear to be reflecting the needs of local audiences.²¹ One example, to be discussed in further detail in the next chapter, is the volunteer-run railway museums which have been successful in attracting audiences particularly in the centre and south of Brazil. In the case of the federal railway museums, and in particular the site at Rio de Janeiro, what has happened is that the public disengagement with the railway past as presented by the *RFFSA* curators has been almost complete. It is suggested that the public has stayed away for three reasons, first because the habit of museum visiting is not strong, secondly because the displays show the railway as a static technology which does not match the everyday experience of transport and movement, and thirdly because the artefacts on display are elite and foreign: they present a perspective of the ensemble that privileges the engineer, locomotive driver, the railway manager and the head of state. The displays give no hint of the daily travel experience or any feelings and memories which can build to a sense of cohesiveness and belonging.

As will be discussed shortly, in Rio de Janeiro the meaning put forward by the *RFFSA*, chiefly through displays of static rolling stock, was of a railway that was an elite symbol of national pride. It became apparent over the space of two decades that this message had been rejected by the public who had largely failed to turn up to visit this museum. Indeed, the corporate and nationalistic message at the Rio de Janeiro museum was one that some sought to undermine. One rail preservation enthusiast once asked me in conversation whether I had

²⁰ Santos, 'Brazilian Museums, Public Policy and the Missing Public', p. 67.

²¹ Santos, 'The New Dynamic of Blockbuster Exhibitions', pp. 38-42; Santos, 'Brazilian Museums, Public Policy and the Missing Public', pp. 69-73.

heard a rumour that the first locomotive in Brazil, the *Baroneza* (fig. 30), had in fact been a second-hand machine that had been shipped over to Brazil.²² I said I did not know, and I thought to myself about the significance of such a doubt about the provenance of what should be an icon of technology in Brazil. No matter whether such an allegation was true or false, by its very mention it questioned the reason for the Rio de Janeiro museum. To suggest that the locomotive was not brand new when it arrived in Brazil, that it was some used piece of machinery, a hand-me-down from England was, I thought, a subversive suggestion undermining both the curating style of the museum – which presented the locomotive uncritically as a national icon – and the honesty of former British railway engineering companies. By vocalising this unsubstantiated claim the very existence of the railway museum at Engenho de Dentro and the quality of its exhibits had been called into question.²³

3. Federal involvement in railway management from the 1950s.

The federal rail company, the *RFPSA*, was not intended when it was created to be the guardian of railway's past; it was organised to run the existing system, yet within its lifetime it had to come to terms with the fact that an interest in railway heritage was emerging. How it reacted to this pressure can be gauged to some extent from an understanding of the way in which it was set up and managed.

After the end of World War Two Brazil's railways were facing increasing competition from a growing road transport sector. The war had left the railway companies, both state and private, without access to spare parts and replacement equipment from Europe and North America.²⁴ The system was in a run-down condition. In 1952 Brazil and the United States of America created a joint

²² Personal interview, rail preservationist, São Paulo, SP, August 2007

²³ The provenance of the *Baroneza* remains as speculation: R. A. Hayward, 'Fairbairn's of Manchester: The History of a Nineteenth Century Engineering Works' (unpublished MSc thesis, UMIST, Manchester, 1971), p. 3.36, reproduces a notice from the *London Gazette* of the 24 March 1899, in which it states that the papers of the company 'shall be destroyed by burning or otherwise' upon its winding up. No independent verification that this order was carried out is known to exist.

²⁴ Francisco Ferreira Neto, *150 Anos de Transportes no Brasil* (Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 1974) p. 123.

commission to investigate future options and investment opportunities.²⁵

Francisco Ferreira Neto says the commission was more interested in 'making improvements to the existing network than expanding it'.²⁶ It put forward twenty four projects including the closure of loss-making branch lines, the phasing out of steam in favour of diesel-electric, and the 'adaptation of systems to modern concepts of the use of railways for mass-transport'.²⁷ It also paved the way for the creation in 1957 of the federal holding company, the *Rede Ferroviária Federal S/A (RFFSA)*.²⁸ Its task was to administer the railways now owned by the federal government, but the former names of the individual rail companies did not disappear until 1969 when the RFFSA was re-organised into regional divisions. The major exclusion was five lines in the state of Sao Paulo. They were finally taken into the ownership of the State of São Paulo in 1971 under the holding organisation known as *FEPASA (Ferrovia Paulista S/A)*.²⁹ A small number of other lines remained under separate ownership, including the *Estrada de Ferro Vitória a Minas* owned by the mining conglomerate *CVRD* (now known as Vale), and some factory-owned internal railways.³⁰

Francisco Ferreira Neto suggests that in the early 1960s, immediately before the military regime came to power, the *RFFSA* was overly bureaucratic and that by 1972 it had become more business-focussed, had achieved financial equilibrium and was 'more representative of its intrinsic importance within the general context of transport in Brazil'.³¹ However, during the 1960s and 1970s a lack of investment, continuing deficits and resulting line closures marked out the *RFFSA*'s operations.³² Freight and suburban passenger services drifted into separate operations, and long-distance passenger services began to be phased out

²⁵ René Fernandes Schoppa, *150 Anos do Trem no Brasil* (Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 2004), pp. 155-166.

²⁶ Ferreira Neto, *150 Anos de Transportes*, p. 124; Eduardo G. David, *127 Anos de Ferrovia* (Juiz de Fora, MG, 1985), p. 72.

²⁷ Ferreira Neto, *150 Anos de Transportes*, p. 124.

²⁸ Schoppa, *150 Anos do Trem*, p. 164; Ferreira Neto, *150 Anos de Transportes*, p. 124.

²⁹ Ferreira Neto, *150 Anos de Transportes*, p. 128; Schoppa, *150 Anos do Trem*, pp. 167-170.

³⁰ Schoppa, *150 Anos do Trem*, p. 156.

³¹ Ferreira Neto, *150 Anos de Transportes*, p. 130.

³² Pedro Cipollari, *O Problema Ferroviário no Brasil*; General João Baptista Peixoto (ed.), *Os Transportes no Atual Desenvolvimento do Brasil* (Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 1977), pp. 29-31 and pp. 124-145.

during the 1980s as coach companies competed both on price and travel time, and federal government transport policy became focussed on improving the road network.³³ At its height in 1955, mostly clustered along the Atlantic coast and centred mainly in the highly populated commercial and political axes of Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, Curitiba and Belo Horizonte, Brazil had just over 37,000 kilometres of railway.³⁴ At the beginning of the twenty-first century it has 28,300 route kilometres used mostly for container freight and mining products.³⁵ A further 1,300 km. of lines are used for suburban passenger services and tourist lines.³⁶ Most of the line closures occurred between 1966 and 1971 after wide-ranging cost cutting exercises.³⁷

4. Federal preservation: *PRESERVE*

The Ministry of Transport formally launched its preservation programme in February 1983, a year before the Rio de Janeiro museum was opened, with the creation of an organisation called *PRESERVE (Programa de Preservação do Patrimônio Histórico do Ministério dos Transportes)* under the presidency of the ministry's secretary-general José Carlos Dias de Freitas.³⁸ It was to be responsible for the preservation of artefacts, documents and photographs relating to transport, and if possible to keep these materials in preserved transport buildings, for which the programme was also to be responsible.³⁹ In addition it was charged with two other responsibilities: firstly to plan and organise cultural and educational events which marked significant dates in the history of railways and secondly to publish technical studies and historical research which would

³³ Schoppa, *150 Anos do Trem*, pp. 173-181.

³⁴ *Revista Ferroviária*, Suplemento: Estradas de Ferro do Brasil (Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 1957), p. 19; Schoppa, *150 Anos do Trem*, p. 53.

³⁵ Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística, *Brasil em Números/Brazil in Figures*, Vol. 9 (Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 2001), p. 253; Agência Nacional de Transportes Terrestres [ANTT], *Evolução Recente do Transporte Ferroviário* (Brasília, DF, 2007), p. 2.

³⁶ ANTT, *Evolução Recente do Transporte Ferroviário*, p. 2.

³⁷ Schoppa, *150 Anos do Trem*, pp. 177-181.

³⁸ PRESERVE/RFFSA, *Centro de Preservação da História Ferroviária do Rio de Janeiro/Engenho de Dentro* (Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 1983), p. 5 and p. 2.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

help the development of the preservation and restoration of the *RFFSA*'s railway heritage.⁴⁰

The idea for such a group had been forming for some time, according to its executive secretary Maria Elisa Carrazzoni, who credited the original idea to a previous transport minister Eliseu Rezende.⁴¹ What she did not admit to, but had become evident by this time, was that the volunteer rail preservation movement which had started in the state of São Paulo six years previously in 1977 (see chapter 9) had established itself as a legitimate organisation that was successfully negotiating with the *RFFSA* for the transfer of ownership of disused rolling stock, spare track and associated equipment. By 1984 the volunteers had already begun to operate their own tourist steam excursions on a disused branch line just outside Campinas in São Paulo state.⁴² Regional managers of the *RFFSA* were also showing their enthusiasm and helping volunteers run one-off trips on the main network. Jorge Avelino Boeri, the superintendent for the São Paulo-SR4 region noted in his annual report to his superiors that a tourist train was organised on 18 July 1982 with the steam locomotive 'Pacific 353 which for many years worked the line between Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo'.⁴³ He said the trip between the Estação da Luz in central São Paulo out to the village of Paranapiacaba, the point where the route then drops down the Serra do Mar mountains on a rack railway, 'recalled the times of the "maria fumaça"⁴⁴ with the participation of hundreds of people and representatives of this department who collaborated in the excursion.'⁴⁵ This was the first official mention of heritage railway activity in the São Paulo-SR4 region of the *RFFSA*, and according to the following year's report was repeated twice in 1983 with similar success.⁴⁶

⁴⁰ RFFSA, *Preserfe leaflet* (Rio de Janeiro-RJ, c1993).

⁴¹ PRESERVE/RFFSA, *Centro de Preservação da História Ferroviária do Rio de Janeiro/Engenho de Dentro*, p. 5.

⁴² Suzana Barretto Ribeiro, *Na Linha da Preservação: O Leito Férreo Campinas-Jaguariúna* (Campinas, SP, 2007), p. 35.

⁴³ RFFSA, Superintendência Regional São Paulo-SR4, *Relatório Anual 1982* (São Paulo, SP, 1983), p. 9.

⁴⁴ The literal translation here is *Smoking Mary*, but this is not wholly rendered in the English phrase *Puffin' Billy* partly because of the associated gender-imagery.

⁴⁵ RFFSA, Superintendência Regional São Paulo-SR4, *Relatório Anual 1982*, p. 9.

⁴⁶ RFFSA, Superintendência Regional São Paulo-SR4, *Relatório Anual 1983* (São Paulo, 1984), p. 4.

However, it is significant that the excursions were prompted by enthusiasm from volunteers and not from within the *RFFSA* itself.



Fig. 27 Five Baldwin locomotives displayed in the restored roundhouse at São João Del Rei, MG, 2001

In the neighbouring state of Minas Gerais a museum was opened at São João Del Rei in 1981 at the town's railway station.⁴⁷ The narrow gauge (76cm.) line between São João Del Rei and Tiradentes was restored by *RFFSA* engineers seconded to the project and tourist rides on the 13 kilometre route pulled by oil-fired Baldwin locomotives (fig. 27) started to run at weekends in 1984 under the management of the newly-created *PRESERVE*. This site, part of the former *Estrada de Ferro Oeste de Minas*, was later to become the jewel in the crown of *PRESERVE*'s work. When the restoration of the roundhouse was completed it was soon receiving more visits from the general public than the museum in Rio

⁴⁷ Paul E. Waters, *West of Minas Narrow Gauge* (Bromley, Kent, 2001), p. 18; *RFFSA, Preserfe leaflet*.

de Janeiro.⁴⁸ The narrow-gauge complex, more representative of a picturesque rural train service than the daily urban commuter experience, was given national heritage status in 1987.⁴⁹ After privatisation the tourist operation came under the ownership of the regional freight operator, the *Ferrovias Centro-Atlântica*, a subsidiary of the mining conglomerate *Vale* (formerly known as CVRD), which gained the concession for a period of thirty years in 1996.⁵⁰ It has since become one of the country's better-known heritage steam operations outside Brazil.⁵¹

At the Ministry of Transport in Brasília in early 1983 *PRESERVE* was formed, made up of a co-ordinating committee of eight: a president and executive secretary, two representatives from the Ministry, one from the federal railway body the *RFFSA*, and one each representing government agencies overseeing roads, urban transport (bus operators) and the port authorities.⁵² Four years later the commission had expanded to ten members, with representatives from a federal transport planning group and from the merchant navy board being co-opted.⁵³ From the outset even though *PRESERVE* was intended to cover all aspects of transport under the Ministry's responsibility it quickly devoted most of its energies to preserving railway history in key locations throughout Brazil. Other transport forms within the ministry's remit: shipping, docks and buses never received visible support from this group of commissioners and as a result its name was quietly changed a few years later.⁵⁴ A leaflet produced in 1993 uses the acronym 'PRESERFE', denoting the 'Programa de Preservação do Patrimônio Histórico Ferroviário'.⁵⁵ For the sake of consistency this present study will continue to use the acronym *PRESERVE*.

⁴⁸ RFFSA, Diretoria de Patrimônio, *Relatório* (Rio de Janeiro, RJ, February 1984), p. 8; RFFSA, Diretoria de Patrimônio, *Relatório* (Rio de Janeiro, RJ, August 1984), p. 1 and p. 8.

⁴⁹ Waters, *West of Minas Narrow Gauge*, p. 18.

⁵⁰ José Emílio de Castro Horta Buzelin and João Bosco Setti, *Ferrovias Centro-Atlântica: Uma Ferrovia e suas Raízes* (Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 2001), p. 39 and pp. 155-6. Also see: 'São João Del-Rei – Tiradentes', *Ferrovias Centro-Atlântica* (2005) 'http://www.fcasa.com.br/fca_06_novo.htm' (21 June 2008).

⁵¹ Waters, *West of Minas Narrow Gauge*, p.18.

⁵² *PRESERVE/RFFSA, Centro de Preservação da História Ferroviária do Rio de Janeiro/Engenho de Dentro*, p. 2.

⁵³ *PRESERVE/RFFSA, Centro de Preservação da História da Ferrovia no Rio Grande do Sul* (Porto Alegre, RS, 1987), p. 2.

⁵⁴ Buzelin and Setti, *Ferrovias Centro-Atlântica*, p. 156.

⁵⁵ RFFSA, *Preserfe leaflet*.

The 1980s and 90s were a time of instability at the top of the *RFFSA*. Carlos Aloysio Weber spent four and a half years as president from 1979 to 1985 during which time *PRESERVE* was created, but after 1985 the *RFFSA* had twelve presidents in the fourteen years before it was privatised.⁵⁶ In the leaflet published around 1993 it said it had created fourteen sites across the railway network of the country.⁵⁷ But *PRESERVE* soon lost the support of senior management of the *RFFSA*: funding was gradually reduced; staff reassigned, and after the privatisation of the late 1990s a number of its museums that had not been taken over by local authorities or private firms had closed to the public.⁵⁸

One museum and heritage expert who had been involved throughout was Sergio Morais. He had worked for *PRESERVE* on the visual layout and the labelling of exhibits at the museums in Rio de Janeiro and at São Leopoldo in Rio Grande do Sul in the early 1980s.⁵⁹ By 2001, with the *RFFSA* in receivership, he was employed as the coordinator responsible for the disposal of railway heritage artefacts and the document archives, either to the newly privatised companies, local authorities or the national archives for safe keeping. He admitted that the privatisation process had effectively put a halt to recent development of the museum in Rio de Janeiro, pointing to structural repairs needed to the fabric of the building as well as an on-going problem of local vandalism. He added that an educational programme in the museum which included monitored visits and group activities for school pupils had been cancelled some years ago, and a special project aimed at teenagers to prevent future vandalism of railway property and rolling stock in greater Rio de Janeiro had also been closed in the 1990s. *PRESERVE* itself, he said, was effectively left without a long-term vision when the privatisation process started.⁶⁰

⁵⁶ Schoppa, *150 Anos do Trem*, p. 167.

⁵⁷ RFFSA, *Preserve leaflet*.

⁵⁸ Sergio Morais, personal interview (Rio de Janeiro, RJ, October 2001); *Memória do Trem, Bibliotecas e Museus Ferroviários*, (29 March 2008) '<http://www.trem.org.br/guiabmf.htm>' (21 June 2008).

⁵⁹ Sergio Morais, personal interview, October 2001.

⁶⁰ *Ibid*; ANTT, *Evolução Recente do Transporte Ferroviário*, 2007, p. 2.

In the early 1990s the idea of privatising public utilities in Brazil was being discussed. After being included in Federal privatisation proposals in 1992, the first railway concessions were sold in 1996 and in 1998 *FEPASA* was merged with the *RFFSA* and immediately privatised.⁶¹ The federal authorities retained nominal ownership of the track and rolling stock which was leased to the concessionaries. In 1999 the *RFFSA* was put into administration, but it refused to fade away entirely. It took eleven years, from the first privatisation sale in 1996 to the final law abolishing it in 2007, and a series of complex legal compensation cases, to finally wind up the *RFFSA*.⁶² As the second biggest landowner in the country, and a major employer, one of the outstanding issues was the question of the continuity of pension payments to former *RFFSA* employees.⁶³

In 2007, as the final part of the winding up process, the legal responsibility for the railway heritage formally passed to *IPHAN*, the federal government department responsible for heritage management.⁶⁴ In some cases the day-to-day management has been handed to third parties. Sergio Morais noted that museums and archives in the Paulista towns of Bauru, Sorocaba and Jundiaí, together with a similar site at São Leopoldo in Rio Grande do Sul had been ceded to the municipal authorities.⁶⁵ Museums at São João del Rei in Minas Gerais, Recife in Pernambuco, and Curitiba in Paraná were under the responsibility of private companies – the first two being rail freight operators and the latter a themed shopping centre with a small museum run by *ABPF* volunteers in a quiet corner of the converted railway building.⁶⁶ Since the inception of the privatisation process and the winding up of the *RFFSA*, Sr. Morais worked almost on his own and with a lack of support from his superiors. He said that the historical artefacts and documents had not been a business priority: 'We need people who know how to deal with fantastic documents, we

⁶¹ ANTT, *Evolução Recente do Transporte Ferroviário*, pp. 2-3.

⁶² *Ibid*; Federal Law no. 11,483, (Brasília, DF, 31 May 2007)

'https://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil_03/_ato2007-2010/2007/lei/111483.htm' (21 June 2008).

⁶³ Irany Tereza, 'A agonia sem fim da rede ferroviária', *O Estado de S. Paulo*, 28 May 2006, p. B18.

⁶⁴ Federal Law no. 11,483, Article 9.

⁶⁵ Sergio Morais, personal interview, October 2001.

⁶⁶ *Ibid*.

need historians and archivists. In Europe, for example, you see museums which have various activities and are part of the community. That could happen here if people had the resources and the will to make it happen. That's the problem.⁶⁷ A railway museum in Belo Horizonte, the state capital of Minas Gerais was opened by *PRESERVE* in 1989 but was closed only seven years later in 1996.⁶⁸ The museum at Paranapiacaba, at the upper winding station of the old *São Paulo Railway*, was by 2001 left in an abandoned condition and later taken over by the volunteer preservation group, the *ABPF*, who in 2007 were caring for the static exhibits and running weekend steam excursions with the implicit approval of both the private rail freight operator, *MRS Logística*, and the local authority which was using the events as part of its campaign to stimulate the local economy through tourism.⁶⁹



Fig. 28 Baldwin locomotive, 1884, at São Leopoldo, Rio Grande do Sul. To the left is the *TRENURB* railway station, to the right the restored wooden station and museum. There is no direct pedestrian access between the two. (2001).

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Buzelin and Setti, *Ferrovias Centro-Atlântica*, p. 156.

⁶⁹ Personal observations, October 2001, March 2003, and August 2007.

In one instance the vacuum created by the *RFFSA*'s lack of commitment meant a local authority had no option but to step in to prevent the loss of what it regarded as an important regional museum (fig. 28). The town of São Leopoldo in the state of Rio Grande do Sul is linked to the state capital, Porto Alegre, by a modern passenger rail link. The operator, *TRENSURB*, has since the late 1990s had minimal involvement in the rail museum, which today is run by the Prefeitura Municipal (town council) – having taken responsibility for the whole archive from *RFFSA*. The idea for a railway museum started in 1976 when the mayor (prefeito) of São Leopoldo signed an agreement between the local authority and the *RFFSA*.⁷⁰ Between 1983 and 1985 *PRESERVE* took over the running of the museum and carried out restoration to the buildings within the museum complex. But in 1990 the *RFFSA*, under financial pressure, planned to close the museum.⁷¹ After negotiations the local authority resumed control of the museum in that year, on behalf of the *RFFSA*, which retained ownership of the artefacts and document archive. The site was fully opened to the public in 2000. The museum and archives are now under the full control of the local authority. The challenge it faces is how to pay for the running of this site and to justify its continuing use as an educational resource for local schools and the public.

5. Centro de Preservação da História Ferroviária do Rio de Janeiro.

What now follows is a case study of one of the museums created under the *PRESERVE* project. Much about Rio de Janeiro could suggest itself as the focal point for both domestic and foreign tourists: the beaches, the nightlife and the culture. Perhaps then the 'Centre for the Preservation of Railway History of Rio de Janeiro', as it has been called, would sound as if it could be a candidate for the title of Brazil's national railway museum. Location is important and the city itself was the national capital until Brasília, designed in part by the architect Oscar Niemeyer, was officially inaugurated in 1960.⁷² The region around Rio de

⁷⁰ Departamento de Cultura, *Centro de Preservação da História da Ferrovia no Rio Grande do Sul – Museu do Trem: Resumo Histórico*, Prefeitura Municipal de São Leopoldo (São Leopoldo, RS, c2001).

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Fausto, *A Concise History of Brazil*, p. 257.

Janeiro is significant in terms of its railway history: the first line in Brazil, the *Estrada de Ferro de Petrópolis*, was opened in 1854 to connect the bay of Guanabara with the court of Petrópolis.⁷³ Arguably the most iconic of railway companies was the *Estrada de Ferro Dom Pedro II*, later renamed the *E.F. Central do Brasil*, taken over by the national government early in its life and still remembered today as the name of the main railway station in Rio de Janeiro, a giant art deco edifice that symbolises the heart and 'centre' of Brazil and is the inspiration, as noted in chapter 6, for a road movie which examines part of the Brazilian condition.⁷⁴ Rio de Janeiro also hosts the country's major museums of art and history – although *paulistanos* would argue strongly that São Paulo should take this cultural accolade. In practice this Rio de Janeiro railway museum has not achieved national status either through the mechanisms of state museum policy or through visitor numbers, despite housing a nationally significant collection of artefacts.

The *E.F. Dom Pedro II* was built by British engineers and opened in 1858.⁷⁵ Since it took its name from the Emperor it became the *E.F. Central* one week after the republic was declared in 1889.⁷⁶ What was to become the museum started life as one of the buildings at the company's major rail workshops at Engenho de Dentro just outside Rio de Janeiro in 1869 when the land was bought and building work started. Repairs to rolling stock started in 1871, with space in the works for 700 locos and 5,000 carriages and wagons. As well as repairs it built carriages, wagons and locomotives from parts shipped from Europe and the United States of America and by 1881 it was considered the most important works in Latin America.⁷⁷

⁷³ Schoppa, *150 Anos do Trem*, pp. 25-30.

⁷⁴ Stephanie Dennison and Lisa Shaw, *Popular Cinema in Brazil, 1930-2001* (Manchester, 2004), p. 212; John King, 'Introduction', in John King (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Modern Latin American Culture* (Cambridge, 2004), p. 1.

⁷⁵ Helio Suêvo Rodriguez, *A Formação das Estradas de Ferro na Rio de Janeiro: O Resgate da sua Memória* (Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 2004), p. 20.

⁷⁶ *Ibid*, p. 22.

⁷⁷ *Ibid*, p. 24.



Fig. 29 Entrance to the Rio de Janeiro Railway Museum at Engenho de Dentro (2001)

The area around Engenho de Dentro quickly became a railway suburb as houses were built for the workers and an elementary school was opened for their children in 1882, followed in 1897 by a school for rail apprentices and a technical college in 1906.⁷⁸ In the 1960s the *E.F. Central* became part of *RFFSA-SR3* (region 3) and as well carrying out freight rolling stock repairs the workshops were used by the passenger divisions, the *Companhia Brasileira de Trens Urbanos (CBTU)* and later by *Flumitrens*. Engenho de Dentro was closed as the main repair shop, some 130 years after it first opened, in the late 1990s.⁷⁹

This site that held significance in terms of railway history was officially opened as the *Museu Ferroviário* by the then minister of transport Cloraldino Soares Severo and the president of the *RFFSA* Carlos Aloysio Weber in

⁷⁸ Rodriguez, *A Formação das Estradas de Ferro na Rio de Janeiro*, p. 25.

⁷⁹ *Ibid*, p. 24.

February 1984.⁸⁰ Within twenty years it would become an empty space largely devoid of visitors and the object of vandalism. To reach it a visitor in central Rio de Janeiro needs to catch a suburban train from the *Central do Brasil* station, travel past the stop for the Maracanã football stadium, and on to the station at Engenho de Dentro: a rail journey of just over twenty minutes. This is the heartland of the northern suburbs of Rio de Janeiro, a region rarely visited by foreign tourists or even middle-class Brazilian museum visitors. The passenger station at Engenho de Dentro comprises five platforms covered by an imposing single arched metal roof, first constructed in 1873 and rebuilt in 1924 and again in 1937.⁸¹

Today this northern suburb of Rio de Janeiro is decaying, with a heavy atmosphere of latent violence, substance abuse and crime evident as the visitor steps out of the train at the Engenho de Dentro station, walks out into the street and crosses over to the railway museum (fig. 29).⁸² Inside the restored workshop building the visitor notices that the existing rail tracks that connected it to the network outside have been cut, leaving the few items of rolling stock inside marooned. In the centre of the hall sits the first locomotive in Brazil (fig. 30), a 2-2-2 built by William Fairbairn and Sons of Manchester, England, in 1852 and first put into service in 1854, displayed with Brazilian flags attached to the front.⁸³ Elsewhere stand three imperial and presidential carriages, and on the walls numerous locomotive plates. There are also five models of steam locomotives and framed maps on the walls, including one of the Brazilian railway network in 1993. When visited in 2001 the labels, maps and pictures were fading and covered in dust. Devoid of members of the public, the museum felt to be an unwelcoming place with just thirty people signing the visitors' book for the previous Saturday.⁸⁴ Outside behind the main building was a tree-lined

⁸⁰ As with many museums and public buildings in Brazil, metal plaques marking official openings are permanently attached to a wall close to the main entrance.

⁸¹ Rodriguez, *A Formação das Estradas de Ferro na Rio de Janeiro*, p. 25.

⁸² Location and ease of visitor access is a common issue with railway museums in a number of countries including Britain, USA and France. See: Colin Divall and Andrew Scott, *Making Histories in Transport Museums* (London, 2001), pp. 13-23.

⁸³ Regina Perez, *Inventário das Locomotivas a Vapor no Brasil: Memória Ferroviária* (Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 2006), pp. 33-34 and p. 197.

⁸⁴ Personal observation, 30 October 2001.

area in which sat steam locomotives and carriages from the *Central* and the *Leopoldina* railways in what appeared to be a state of abandonment.⁸⁵ It could be interpreted as if the museum had been left without any maintenance once it was originally laid out and opened.



Fig. 30 The *Baroneza*, the first locomotive in Brazil. The two carriages behind are unlabelled by the museum (2001).

The message inside this museum was one of the grandeur of the railway past: the state carriages exuded opulence whilst the everyday experience of rail travel for commuters from the northern suburbs of Rio de Janeiro was ignored. There was no attempt to visually contextualise the history of railway travel in Brazil, but cut-away pictures of diesel-electric trains attempted to promote recent technological advances in locomotive power whilst a series of large explanatory panels, each with up to one thousand words of text, gave histories of the major railway companies which ran services into and out of Rio de Janeiro.

⁸⁵ Perez, *Inventário das Locomotivas*, pp. 195-197.

There were three other large exhibits: a presidential carriage belonging to Getúlio Vargas and built at the works in 1917; an administration car, also built at the Engenho de Dentro workshops in 1908, used for visiting dignitaries including the King of Belgium in the early 1920s; and a carriage, built on English bogies with a chassis by Dyle and Bacalan of Paris in 1886, which was identified by the museum label as being the state carriage of Dom Pedro II, the Emperor of Brazil. The effect on the visitor was a view of railway travel in Brazil that included only heads of state and royalty; the daily journey, or the weekend trip to visit parents and uncles in the countryside were not recorded here.

The nationalistic message was clear from the outset. To coincide with the opening of the museum in 1984 the *RFFSA* published a book which was both a guide to the collection at Rio de Janeiro and a brief history of the world-wide evolution of railway technology (which concentrated on developments in Brazil).⁸⁶ In the introduction the minister of transport Cloraldino Severo wrote that displaying railway history in a museum environment was important because 'it offers each generation a unique opportunity to understand the objects, equipment and machines that were testaments to a decisive phase in the creation of our nation'.⁸⁷ The executive secretary of *PRESERVE*, the department of the national railway company responsible for creating this museum, Maria Elisa Carrazzoni, explained that

...the narrative chosen in presenting the collection at Engenho de Dentro starts with the origins of the tracks, embraces the history of the first railways, and highlights the major importance of engineering and administration for Brazilian railways.⁸⁸

In other words it was not only a nationalistic message but also one that enriched the institution of the *RFFSA*. She went on to state that her research was based

⁸⁶ *PRESERVE/RFFSA, Centro de Preservação da História Ferroviária do Rio de Janeiro/Engenho de Dentro.*

⁸⁷ *Ibid*, p. 3.

⁸⁸ *Ibid*, p. 6.

largely on a personal collection of material made by a former chief engineer of the workshops, rather than any centrally coordinated project by the *RFFSA*, evidence that individual workers as well as writing histories as described in chapter 3 were also involved in collecting artefacts and documents.⁸⁹ Maria Carrazzoni said that creating 'these museum centres in the workshops and places of work had taken the elitist character from these [museum] institutions'.⁹⁰ This sits awkwardly with the museum's decision to display only the elite travel experience, and the location of the building in the city's poorer northern suburbs which has effectively excluded the middle-class museum visiting public.

This site in Rio de Janeiro can thus be read as a museum created by the state system to evoke a sense of nationhood and corporate institutional pride. The limited records that do exist suggest that a mass audience did not materialise from the general public: figures published in internal monthly reports show, after an initial surge of interest, average visitor numbers were of the order of nine hundred per month in 1984 – its first year of opening.⁹¹ These visitor figures identify a significant number of 'official' visitors and group tours during this period, including schools and rail staff from elsewhere in the country, and would suggest that the museum was used as a promotional device for the *RFFSA*.⁹² What was on display was likely to be of little interest to either the railway-travelling public or the curious railway worker with time on his or her hands to make the journey to this region of northern Rio de Janeiro. Apart from the two internal reports identified here no officially published visitor figures have existed, but during an interview with a *RFFSA* staff member in 2001 I was informed that the museum had an average of eight hundred visitors per month, including students, school trips and members of the general public.⁹³ Using these figures to reach a provisional estimate of a steady average of thirty-six visitors

⁸⁹ PRESERVE/RFFSA, *Centro de Preservação da História Ferroviária do Rio de Janeiro/Engenho de Dentro*, p. 6.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

⁹¹ RFFSA, Diretoria de Patrimônio, *Relatório* (February 1984), p. 8; RFFSA, Diretoria de Patrimônio, *Relatório* (August 1984), p. 8.

⁹² *Idem.*

⁹³ Sergio Moraes, personal interview, October 2001.

each day over a seventeen year period does not suggest a popular museum or one that has established and grown in audience size.

There is a single-minded purpose to the exhibition: one of the triumph of Brazilian engineering and railway management as manifested through the state coaches, the perfectly preserved locomotive and the technical drawings framed on the walls. The dualities that had existed in literature, painting, cinema and music are not in evidence here. The problem with creating this imagined community, to use Benedict Anderson's term, is that hardly anyone appears to be interested in engaging with it. The central argument presented by Anderson is that a sense of nationality is created through a complex series of cultural manoeuvres, some by conscious design others not, which may include the language of newspapers, political announcements, education systems, administrative organisations and museums of national history, which result in a body of people sharing a common understanding of what it means to belong to that national group.⁹⁴ Daryle Williams recognises this as a tendency in twentieth century Brazil to mount

...a campaign to control the subjective "imagination" of a national community, where the claim to national pedigree trumps any extranational claim to universal genius or enlightened viewership.⁹⁵

Yet this Brazilian excellence is only superficial in this railway museum. The public have rejected the museum, in part, because the large objects on display do not have this 'national pedigree': they are pieces of technology from England, France, and the United States of America dressed up with Brazilian flags.

By 2005 political decisions had overtaken the museum and it closed its doors for a time to the public.⁹⁶ The reason given was that there were temporarily not enough security guards available to allow the building to be left open. The

⁹⁴ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (2nd edn., London, 1991), pp. 5-7.

⁹⁵ Williams, *Culture Wars in Brazil*, p. 21.

⁹⁶ 'Museu do Trem Fecha as Portas', *O Globo*, Rio de Janeiro, 2 June 2005, p. 20.

decision to privatise the railway industry, first taken in 1992,⁹⁷ had cast a question mark over who would be responsible for the industry's heritage. With no firm commitment on immediate funding for the day-to-day running of the museum in Rio de Janeiro from the federal department of heritage *IPHAN*, which appeared to have been presented with a *fait accompli* for the care of the rail relics, its temporary closure was inevitable.⁹⁸

6. The written archives

So far this chapter has concentrated on the material archive and the displays mounted in museum spaces organised and curated by staff of the *RFFSA*. It, together with the *FEPASA* in the state of São Paulo, became the custodians until 2007 of the documents created by most of the nation's railway companies since the early 1850s. The assumption was that in some form the state railway archives would be taken under the care of the federal heritage agency, *IPHAN*, however questions were raised about this department's ability to take on extra responsibility.⁹⁹ That there was never created a single, national, railway document archive in Brazil follows the logic of the creation and development of the railway industry since the 1850s which has never been a unified nationwide operation. Material was split across the country reflecting both the legacy of the old railway companies and the reorganisation in the 1950s.

Mike Featherstone, in a general review of the development of archives and predictions for their futures worldwide, remarks that they – along with libraries and museums – can be regarded as having 'developed in conjunction with the state'.¹⁰⁰ Power can then be exerted through the collecting, selecting, cataloguing and public access policies to this national memory, and in Brazil the management of archives has usually rested with agencies of government. In addition in the late 1970s, with the gradual relaxation of military control, there

⁹⁷ ANTT, *Evolução Recente do Transporte Ferroviário*, p. 2.

⁹⁸ 'Museu do Trem Fecha as Portas', *O Globo*.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁰ Mike Featherstone, 'Archiving Cultures', *British Journal of Sociology*, 51 (2000), p. 166.

emerged a number of non-profit foundations set up to care for the personal archives of former members of the business and political elites.¹⁰¹

The *RFFSA* headquarters building next to the *Central do Brasil* railway station in Rio de Janeiro housed the federal state company's library which contained annual reports, statistical bulletins, journals, and books relating to the operation of the *RFFSA* at national level, as well as reports and documents relating to the operation of the railways in the Rio de Janeiro region since the mid-1800s. Today, with the *RFFSA* in liquidation and now legally extinct, it is closed to public access. In Brasília, Brazil's capital, the Ministry of Transport allows public access to its library which contains a selection of railway company annual reports from the 1850s onwards. In São Paulo state, the region of major railway expansion historically in Brazil, there is as yet no archive and document centre in the city of São Paulo itself which was once the headquarters of the *São Paulo Railway*. The documents of this company, and of *FEPASA*, are at present in storage whilst plans are drawn up for a public archive centre; a project which in 2007 saw supporters lobbying to secure a permanent site and submitting bids to ensure permanent funding.¹⁰² Other railway archives in São Paulo state remain in the towns and cities which were the respective headquarters of the various railway companies before *FEPASA* was formed in 1971, for example in Sorocaba, the headquarters of the *Sorocabana Railway*, and at Bauru the centre of operations of the *Noroeste do Brasil*. In Jundiaí there is a substantial library, opened in 1979, based on the documents from the old *Cia. Paulista*. It is now managed by the town's local authority (Prefeitura) with a full-time librarian and an assistant who recognise the value of the material they hold:

The historical archive of the museum library consists of company reports, railway legislation (acts, decrees, laws and concessions), journals and periodicals, a very rich photographic archive, and drawing plans of locomotives, carriages and wagons.¹⁰³

¹⁰¹ Williams, *Culture Wars in Brazil*, pp. 18-19.

¹⁰² Personal observation, August 2007; 'Processo de Tombamento do Acervo Documental, Resolução no. 12/CONPRESP/2007', *Diário Oficial da Cidade de São Paulo*, 5 July 2007, p. 18; Sérgio Duran, 'Estado compra briga pelo patrimônio em SP', *O Estado de S. Paulo*, 26 August 2007, Metrôpole, p. 1.

¹⁰³ Museu Companhia Paulista, *Museum Leaflet* (Jundiaí, SP, c2001).

Public access is encouraged, but the documents and books remain uncatalogued.¹⁰⁴

Similarly, in São Leopoldo in the southern state of Rio Grande do Sul the local authority now looks after the archives of what in 1874 was *The Porto Alegre and New Hamburg Brazilian Railway* and just before privatisation had become *RFFSA-SR6* (Region 6).¹⁰⁵ The document archive contains the personnel records, internal memos and correspondence generated by the region's railway companies, carriage and locomotive plans, sales catalogues from the Baldwin and Schwarzkopf locomotive works in the USA and Germany respectively. The documents are stored in a former railway workshop behind the museum, which itself is a restored passenger station-building pre-fabricated in Britain in the 1870s. Elsewhere there are concerns expressed about the manner in which railway documents have been cared for over the years. Antonio Anunziata, a historian in Campinas, São Paulo, says many documents relating to the *Cia. Mogiana* have been lost, destroyed, or even used by butchers to wrap meat in over the past thirty-five years.¹⁰⁶ In the north of Brazil at Porto Velho, Rondônia, the rail archives of the *E.F. Madeira-Mamoré* have been subsumed into the general documents of the State archive, which was created in 1981.¹⁰⁷ They are available for public consultation, however there are unproven allegations that some of these documents have, during the 1990s, disappeared into private collections.¹⁰⁸ Previously in the 1970s a significant number of items were destroyed by the 5° BEC regiment, army engineers, which was running the railway during its final stage of operation.¹⁰⁹ In the space of eighteen years the archives of the *E.F. Madeira-Mamoré* had moved location several times, there

¹⁰⁴ Personal observation, August 2004.

¹⁰⁵ Departamento de Cultura, *Centro de Preservação da História da Ferrovia no Rio Grande do Sul – Museu do Trem: Resumo Histórico*; PRESERVE/RFFSA, *Centro de Preservação da História da Ferrovia no Rio Grande do Sul*, p. 24 and p. 103.

¹⁰⁶ Antonio Anunziata, 'Interview', in Ribeiro, *Na Linha da Preservação*, p. 95.

¹⁰⁷ Evandro da Rocha Lopes, *Guia Preliminar de Acervo: Centro de Documentação Histórico de Rondônia* (Porto Velho, RO, 1999), p. 7.

¹⁰⁸ Personal interviews, November 2001 and August 2004.

¹⁰⁹ Francisco Foot Hardman, *Trem Fantasma: A Ferrovia Madeira-Mamoré e a Modernidade na Selva* (2nd edn., São Paulo, SP, 2005), p. 210.

was a lack of climate protection and no adequate indexing.¹¹⁰ All of these collections of documents are being cared for by either town or state authorities. In the case of Tubarão, Santa Catarina, the archives of the *Estrada de Ferro Dona Teresa Cristina* are now being looked after by the local branch of the voluntary rail preservation group the *ABPF* who have built a museum and document centre on a new site in the town.¹¹¹ This is the only case of volunteers managing a document archive since, as Chapter 9 explains, the focus of *ABPF* groups across Brazil has been the operation of heritage steam routes.

The varying levels of access and care of the railway archive have not gone unnoticed by researchers and academics. William Summerhill devoted much of an eighteen-page appendix in his book to a description of his struggles to find data from the dispersed and un-catalogued archives: 'Assembling the series of railroad financial and operating data used in this study proved challenging, even by the standards of fieldwork on historical statistics in Latin America,' he complained.¹¹² Such comments do not only apply to Brazilian railway archives. Daryle Williams noted that records of the department of heritage *SPHAN* during the 1970s had decomposed to such an extent that 'they nearly damned the history of that management to oblivion'.¹¹³ Frustrating for academic researchers as this is, new accounts are being written about the railway in Brazil, in particular in the fields of social and oral history. In 1991 in Bauru, São Paulo, a public outcry in the local press highlighted how the *RFFSA* records of the *Estrada de Ferro Noroeste do Brasil (NOB)* were 'in awful conditions... covered in dust... and what the organisation itself admitted was a "dead archive"'.¹¹⁴ A group of academics formed a partnership between the *RFFSA* and the Universidade Estadual de Sao Paulo (Unesp) to preserve the documents and to provide public access. One result was Lidia Possas' research into the lives of

¹¹⁰ Evandro Lopes, personal interview (Porto Velho, RO, October 1998).

¹¹¹ Martin Cooper, 'Steam Railways in Brazil: Their Cultural Context and Preservation' (unpublished MA thesis, University of York, 2002), p. 106

¹¹² William R. Summerhill, *Order Against Progress: Government, Foreign Investment and Railroads in Brazil 1854-1913* (Stanford, CA, 2003), p. 223.

¹¹³ Williams, *Culture Wars in Brazil*, p. 17.

¹¹⁴ Lidia Maria Vianna Possas, *Mulheres, Trens e Trilhos: Modernidade no Sertão Paulista* (Bauru, SP, 2001), pp. 24-25.

women who worked for the *NOB* in the 1930s and 40s, and the tensions between a modern technology and the role of women within such a male-dominated industry. Elsewhere, in Rio Claro, also in the state of São Paulo, Álvaro Tenca carried out thirty oral history interviews with former students who had attended the *Cia Paulista's* railway training centres in the 1930s and 1940s.¹¹⁵ His book presented an investigation into how this wholly Brazilian-owned company developed professional training courses for potential middle managers. He revealed a railway company that imposed rigid discipline, low pay and long hours yet was revered by staff as 'being a big family', 'without equal', and 'organised and punctual'.¹¹⁶

7. Concluding remarks

In the first decade of the twenty-first century the Brazilian government, under President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, identified 'culture' as an important policy area and Gilberto Gil, who as a singer-songwriter in the Tropicalia movement was imprisoned and exiled by the military regime of the 1960s, was appointed Minister of Culture and launched his national museums policy in 2003.¹¹⁷ The aims included the creation of a national museum network, the development of staff training, and the refinancing of the museum sector.¹¹⁸ However, the problems were significant: the policy remained centred on the larger museums – and even the Ministry of Culture recognised that the networking which occurred had mostly been concentrated around forty of the centrally-funded or university-based museums located in the major population centres of São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Belo Horizonte and Salvador.¹¹⁹ In the absence of audited statistics, a 2001 estimate concluded that there were between 1,100 and 1,300 museums in

¹¹⁵ Álvaro Tenca, *Senhores dos Trilhos: Racionalização, Trabalho e Tempo Livre nas Narrativas de Ex-alunos do Curso de Ferrovários da Antiga Paulista* (São Paulo, SP, 2006).

¹¹⁶ Tenca, *Senhores dos Trilhos*, p. 92, and pp. 320-321.

¹¹⁷ Ministério da Cultura, *Política Nacional de Museus: Memória e Cidadania* (Brasília, DF, 2003). Gilberto Gil announced in July 2008 his decision to leave government to concentrate on his music career.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁹ Ministério da Cultura, *Política Nacional de Museus: Relatório de Gestão 2003-2004* (Brasília, DF, 2005), p 10.

Brazil.¹²⁰ This suggested that an elite was still being maintained and that the smaller local museums away from the metropolitan centres remained out of the development loop; something that José do Nascimento Júnior, the Director of the Department of Museums and Cultural Centres at *IPHAN*, a department of the Ministry of Culture, recognised as a major problem. Indeed he talked of the need to open up the field of museum management and to 'overcome the inertia and break the famine...' of intellectual debate about museums theory and policy in Brazil.¹²¹ None of the railway museums, either federal, state, municipal, private or volunteer were actively involved in these policy developments.

This was perhaps more accidental than intentional. Átila Tolentino, who has worked for *IPHAN*, in his comparative study of the Brazilian, Spanish and Portuguese national museum policies, suggested that the creation of the Brazilian Museum Network did open up the possibility of the participation of non-governmental organisations – although he gave no examples.¹²² Maria Fonseca in her book about the history of the federal state's involvement in preservation (published in its second edition by *IPHAN* itself) pointed out that public debate had more recently been carried out in the press, by lobby groups and in some cases through the courts.¹²³ Such discussion was available, broadly speaking, to those who were in a position to be actively engaged with the political system and machinery of influence. For the railway ensemble the public had, quite simply, voted with their feet and created alternative sites of railway memory – thereby rejecting the state apparatus or any constructive discussion of its displays. For their part railway museums are presently waiting to be 'recognised' by the federal cultural management apparatus in order to receive financial and

¹²⁰ Santos, 'Brazilian Museums, Public Policy and the Missing Public', pp. 67-81. Even in 2003 the Ministry of Culture admitted that it did not know the exact figure: see *Política Nacional de Museus: Relatório de Gestão*, p. 47. By 2007 it said 1,167 institutions had joined its national museums register: *Boletim Eletrônico Demu/Ipphan*, Vol. 4, No. 143 (22 March 2007).

¹²¹ José do Nascimento Júnior, 'Apresentação – MUSAS: Museologia no Plural', *MUSAS, Revista Brasileira de Museus e Museologia*, 1 (Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 2004), p. 8.

¹²² Átila Tolentino, 'O Sistema Brasileira do Museus e Outros Sistemas: Uma Análise Comparativa', *MUSAS, Revista Brasileira de Museus e Museologia*, 2 (2006), p. 114.

¹²³ Maria Cecília Londres Fonseca, *O Patrimônio em Processo: Trajetória da Política Federal de Preservação no Brasil* (2nd edn., Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 2005), p. 26.

managerial support. What is clear is that railway heritage has not so far been included in any national museums policy.

Federal state-run railway museums, like other museums in Brazil, suffered from a lack of audiences, and were effectively further marginalised during the privatisation process when their long term future was called into doubt. The subsequent national museum policy appeared to be only for the privileged few and did not encompass museums of railway history. However, there was an untapped audience that wanted to share its personal memories – most specifically in a live steam environment.

Museums of railway history are a recent development in Brazil compared to the United Kingdom where the tradition of preservation, display and enjoyment of rail transport heritage has long been popular.¹²⁴ At present there are estimated to be over a dozen museums with static displays and twenty-six which have licences to operate short heritage and tourist rides.¹²⁵ The volunteer-led museums have fared much better in terms of visitor figures. The reason, suggested in the next chapter, is that they include live steam and represent a new departure for museums in Brazil where usually, as Brazilian museologists have sadly noted, 'you often hear the use of the term "museum" synonymously with the past, with stagnation.'¹²⁶ In the case of the federal railway museums the transculturation process appears, because of the lack of any significant numbers of visitors to enter these spaces and take part in a negotiation of meaning, to have effectively stalled. The few who did venture into these museums were presented with static displays that promoted the government-run railway and which allowed no room for personal memories of travel to be developed. No duality of meaning had been created, as was the case with cinema, television, music and literature, because the visiting public had apparently not engaged with these

¹²⁴ Richard Sykes and others, 'Steam Attraction: Railways in Britain's National Heritage', *The Journal of Transport History*, Third Series, 18 (1997), pp. 158-159; Ian Carter, *British Railway Enthusiasm* (Manchester, 2008).

¹²⁵ Cooper, 'Steam Railways in Brazil', pp. 57-60; ANTT, *Evolução Recente do Transporte Ferroviário*, pp. 9-10.

¹²⁶ Lucia Hussak van Velthem and others, 'A Coleção Etnográfica do Museu Goeldi: Memória e Conservação', *MUSAS – Revista Brasileira de Museus e Museologia*, 1 (2004), p. 123.

museum spaces. The state was left with museums that were largely unvisited, unloved and in some cases vandalised. *PRESERVE* followed the spirit and the example of the management of museums of national history run by federal agencies since the 1930s, but in so doing alienated potential audiences. The federal state's involvement in railway heritage since the early 1980s was not, in short, a success. The resolution of this failure in the transculturation process comes in the next chapter where a hybrid meaning of the railway ensemble is arrived at.

Volunteer railway museums

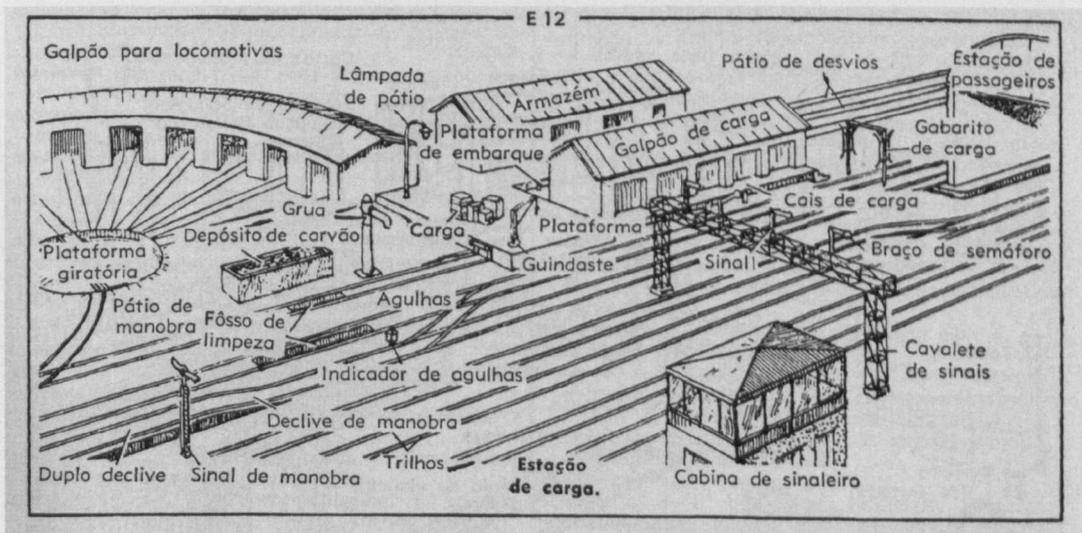


Fig. 31 'Estação de Carga', *Novo Michaelis Dicionário Ilustrado* (2 vols, São Paulo, SP, 1962), vol 2, p. 541.

1. Introduction

The previous chapter identified and analysed apparent failings in the way the federal government had, during the 1980s and 1990s, displayed the railway heritage. It concluded that the resulting lack of engagement by a museum-visiting public was because the displays represented only the elite's ideal of what constituted railway travel and that the state did not give permanent support to its railway museum network. In the case of Rio de Janeiro the public had – and has – apparently no burning desire to travel to a potentially dangerous suburb to look at displays of imperial and presidential coaches. Instead, with help from European influences, a non-governmental museum project based around a community of railway enthusiasts began to grow at about the same time. This study agrees with Suzana Ribeiro's suggestion, that it was in part a reaction to the 'darkest years' of Brazil's military dictatorship in the 1970s that led to the subversion of the railway heritage from a government-organised project to a people-led movement.¹ This chapter charts the creation and development of the volunteer railway preservation movement and presents the findings of research carried out amongst visitors at one museum site in São Paulo.

By 1977, when the volunteer rail preservation movement started, Brazil was beginning to make its first steps towards greater political freedom: a long process that was to last until the late 1980s and beyond, and whilst the road to democracy did not cause widespread unrest it '...had the disadvantage of not dealing directly with problems that went far beyond granting political rights for the population'.² So corruption, poor governance, and social inequality persisted. The rail volunteer association was faced with negotiating directly with federal agencies that for many years had been used to dealings based on patronage and nepotism.³ At the same time, in the urban centres such as São Paulo and Rio de

¹ Suzana Barretto Ribeiro, *Na Linha da Preservação: O Leito Férreo Campinas-Jaguariúna* (Campinas, SP, 2007), p. 88.

² Boris Fausto, *A Concise History of Brazil*, trans. Arthur Brakel (Cambridge, 1999), p. 317.

³ In the case of the *E.F. Noroeste do Brasil*, owned by the federal government since 1918, Lidia Possas provides evidence that in the 1920s and 1930s some employees were taken on through paternalistic and political favour rather than on merit. Lidia Maria Vianna Possas, *Mulheres, Trens e Trilhos: Modernidade no Sertão Paulista* (Bauru, SP, 2001), pp. 247-249.

Janeiro, public transport chaos for much of the second half of the twentieth century led to riots by angry passengers who, according to Roberto DaMatta were venting their unhappiness at both the transport systems and those in power:

By resorting to violence and showing that it can have an aim, the undifferentiated masses acquire specific attributes and get considerate answers from the highest authorities of the nation.⁴

Riots may have been a sign of the deep-seated unhappiness of rail and bus passengers, but in reality led to few, if any, changes in reliability and punctuality during this period. Cutting directly against this embedded violence and system of political patronage was the French-influenced approach of the newly-formed rail preservation association which appeared to be asking remarkable favours from the federal railway company such as the donation of redundant rolling stock for use on a disused branch line by volunteers who would receive little or no payment for their efforts.

Myrian Santos presents data which suggests that over eighty percent of museums in Brazil were created between 1960 and 2000, mostly in the south and south-east of the country.⁵ She is however cautious about giving a single definitive reason for this increase, citing instances where local authorities, for example, have opened museums which have not received any visitors.⁶ A similar case was that of the *PRESERVE* museum network, run by the federal railway company, the *RFFSA*, as examined in the previous chapter. However the museums created and managed by the *ABPF*, the *Associação Brasileira de Preservação Ferroviária* (Brazilian Rail Preservation Association), with their narratives which ignored the presence of a national authoritarian state and instead concentrated on a personal transport experience, demonstrated that there was a public desire to engage with the railway ensemble in its heritage form. The *ABPF* became the largest and most successful of a handful of railway

⁴ Roberto DaMatta, *Carnivals, Rogues, and Heroes: An Interpretation of the Brazilian Dilemma*, trans. John Drury (Notre Dame, IN, 1991), p. 193.

⁵ Myrian Sepúlveda dos Santos, 'Brazilian Museums, Public Policy and the Missing Public', *Journal of Latin American Cultural Studies*, 10 (2001), p. 71.

⁶ *Ibid*, p. 73.

preservation groups in Brazil, based on the number of sites it was active in, and the only one to achieve national status from the outset.⁷

A linkage between state politics and rail preservation has been made by Colin Divall and Andrew Scott who consider volunteer movements in Europe and the USA, but not Latin America, and note their importance in the preservation of railway heritage.⁸ They argue that ‘enthusiasts’ influence was weaker in those nations where state involvement has been stronger...’⁹ They suggest that preservationists have been more successful in countries where central government has not had tight control of transport policy during their phases of industrialisation and nation-building. In the case of Brazil this would be the broad period from the 1930s onwards, with the railway network being taken into federal ownership in the late 1950s, apart from a number of lines in São Paulo which eventually came under State control in the early 1970s. Before then Brazil’s railway companies were characterised by a mixture of private, foreign, state and federal ownership that fluctuated according to each railway’s circumstances. The rise of Brazil’s preservation movement would appear to go against the trend observed by Divall and Scott, where steam heritage rides have over the past three decades flourished in spite of what would appear on paper at least to be a strong late-period involvement by the state. The reality of the situation may be that, faced with a federal railway company, the *RFFSA*, that was in perpetual deficit and a national government policy of favouring road investment over the railways during the 1960s and 1970s, state control of the railway industry had always been at best tentative – leaving room for the involvement of enthusiasts to reclaim the heritage for themselves.

Lynne Kirby, in her examination of the railways in silent movies from Europe and the United States of America at the beginning of the twentieth century says the railway can be seen at first as a turbulent bringer of modernity,

⁷ ‘Entidades de Preservação Ferroviárias’, *Memória do Trem*, 29 March 2008

‘<http://www.trem.org.br/guiaent.htm>’ (21 June 2008).

⁸ Colin Divall and Andrew Scott, *Making Histories in Transport Museums* (London, 2001), pp. 11-12.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

in that it created ruptures to the established order of life and society.¹⁰ Today, she says, it has become, in its heritage form, a quiet thing of nostalgia.¹¹ Previous chapters in this study have demonstrated how in Brazil the dualities of the railway have been played out in a number of cultural forms. The ruptures, as Lynne Kirby calls them, are certainly evident in the portrayal and performance of the railway in art, music, film and literature in Brazil, and on the other hand the preservation of the railway history has created a more stable identity for the railway. Francisco Foot Hardman, in his analysis of the *E.F. Madeira-Mamoré*, casts the old railway as a ‘ghost train’:

The landscape of the rail tracks becomes, therefore, *remote*, each double meaning of the sum of the ruptures working simultaneously in the relations with time and with space, there it can configure also with the forgotten place of lost time. The chronological order is broken: the time of the locomotive – which has already been celebrated as a goddess of progress – is forever stationary.¹²

The observations carried out during the course of research for this present study bear out one aspect of Foot Hardman’s comment in that the heritage rides organised by volunteer teams show no struggle between tradition and modernity; the railway has broken free from the relentless drive of time.

However this study would not go so far as to support the view that the train had become ‘remote’ (Foot Hardman does not specify from whom) since substantial numbers of visitors are now actively engaged with the transport experience of steam travel along short tourist lines at sites across the country. Take, for instance, the *E. F. Madeira-Mamoré* in Brazil’s Amazon region, closed by the military in 1972, of which an eight kilometre stretch ran as a weekend tourist steam excursion between 1982 and 2000.¹³ A local preservation group in Porto Velho, which has only informal links to the *ABPF*, has since been

¹⁰ Lynne Kirby, *Parallel Tracks: The Railroad and Silent Cinema* (Exeter, Devon, 1997), pp. 250-251.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² Francisco Foot Hardman, *Trem-Fantasma: A Ferrovia Madeira-Mamoré e a Modernidade na Selva* (2nd edn., São Paulo, SP, 2005), p. 51. Emphasis in original.

¹³ Manoel Rodrigues Ferreira, *A Ferrovia do Diabo* (3rd edn., São Paulo, SP, 2005), pp. 394-395.

campaigning for political support to re-open the heritage line.¹⁴ In 2005 the *TV Globo* miniseries, *Mad Maria*, was shown on national television, and later that same year part of the line was given national heritage status by the federal government's heritage agency *IPHAN*.¹⁵ In the case of the work of the *ABPF* at other sites in Brazil what has been created is far from stationary, and indeed is described by the Association as a 'dynamic museum' to reflect that the collection is not a static display but rather a working branchline.

What this chapter, in part, will conclude is that Brazil is not, as a popular saying goes, 'a country without a memory'. Ana Luiza da Rocha and Cornelia Eckert regard this as a national myth that has, in part, emerged from the writings of Claude Lévi-Strauss who carried out research in Brazil in the 1930s.¹⁶ The French anthropologist wrote in his memoirs of a landscape on the state borders of São Paulo and Paraná that was being 'opened up' by railway builders and European settlers effectively bringing to an end the indigenous ways of life.¹⁷ Susan Sontag summed up his pessimistic view by observing that for Lévi-Strauss, 'The past, with its mysteriously harmonious structures, is broken and crumbling before our eyes. Hence the tropics are *tristes*.'¹⁸ However for Ana Luiza da Rocha and Cornelia Eckert the idea of a *Tristes Tropiques* is, for them, reductionist and Eurocentric in its concept of Brazil as a marginalised and underdeveloped society.¹⁹ For them this ignores the full depth of twentieth century Brazilian society. Their essay is just one of a series in a collected volume that seeks to debunk the myth and identify a number of Brazilian communities that have been seeking ways in which to preserve their own identities and

¹⁴ Luiz Leite de Oliveira, 'A Associação dos Amigos da Madeira-Mamoré e sua História', in Ferreira, *A Ferrovia do Diabo*, pp. 396-404.

¹⁵ *Ibid*, p. 404; IPHAN, 'Processo nº 1220-T-87',

'<http://www.in.gov.br/materias/xml/do/secao1/2790641.xml>' (28 March 2008).

¹⁶ Ana Luiza Carvalho da Rocha and Cornelia Eckert, 'A Retórica do Mito do Progresso: "Brasil, um país sem memória!"' in Annette Leibing and Sibylle Benninghoff-Lühl (eds.), *Devorando o Tempo: Brasil, o País sem Memória* (São Paulo, SP, 2001), pp. 34-47.

¹⁷ Claude Lévi-Strauss, *Tristes Tropiques*, trans. John and Doreen Weightman (London, 1973 [1955]), pp. 120-121.

¹⁸ Susan Sontag, 'The Anthropologist as Hero', in E. Nelson Hayes and Tanya Hayes (eds.), *Claude Lévi-Strauss: The Anthropologist as Hero* (Cambridge, MA, 1970), p. 188.

¹⁹ Da Rocha and Eckert, 'A Retórica do Mito do Progresso', p. 36.

memories.²⁰ What volunteers in Brazil have done is to subvert the state machinery and decide for themselves what exactly is deemed to be ‘railway heritage’ and thus of necessary significance to be memorialised. For them it is revealed as the experience of travel in an everyday coach, albeit lovingly restored, pulled by a locomotive in steam. This is in direct contradiction to the museum-image of the railway created by the *RFFSA* curators working for the *PRESERVE* project. The actions of these volunteers have ensured that memories are embodied in the physical act of travelling in the railway landscape.

This experience is otherwise almost impossible to achieve in modern Brazil, outside of the urban networks. Today long distance daily rail passenger travel is restricted to two diesel-hauled routes operated by the mining company, *Vale*, formerly CVRD, between Vitória, Espírito Santo, and Belo Horizonte, Minas Gerais, on the *E.F. Vitória-Minas* a distance of 664 kilometres (fig. 5), and on the *E.F. Carajás* between the Serra de Carajás in Pará and São Luís in Maranhão, a distance of 1,056 kilometres (fig. 1).²¹ A luxury connection between São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro was revived in 1994 when a hotel chain and a bus operator formed a partnership to run the *Santa Cruz* service which took nine hours to complete, and recalled memories of the rail link between the two cities known as the *Trem de Prata* (Silver Train) of the period between the 1950s and 1980s.²² It closed in 1998 after failing to develop a market for its services: travellers who preferred speed went on the one-hour plane ride; those who wanted comfort preferred holidays in leisure complexes and cruises.²³ Guilherme Lohmann Palhares, in a recent study of transport and tourism in Brazil, notes that with the privatization of the rail network most of the operators are now only interested in running the more profitable freight services.²⁴ Bus and coach travel, he observes, is now the major means of public transport for tourists in Brazil.²⁵

²⁰ Leibing and Benninghoff-Lühl, (eds.), *Devorando o Tempo*.

²¹ Guilherme Lohmann Palhares, *Transportes Turísticos* (2nd edn., São Paulo, SP, 2003), p. 341.

²² *Ibid.*

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 344.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 206-215.

There is at present no agreement on exactly how many tourist rail (and tram) lines are in operation in Brazil. They include the two operated by subsidiaries of *Vale* mentioned above, as well as a couple of scenic routes run by commercial operators such as the Corcovado and Santa Teresa tourist lines in the city of Rio de Janeiro, the journey by electric two-car unit to Campos do Jordão in São Paulo state (fig. 3), and the diesel-hauled excursion down the Serra do Mar from Curitiba to Morretes and Paranaguá in the state of Paraná (fig. 2). The rest are mostly the steam-hauled lines operated by *ABPF* volunteers. The Agência Nacional de Transportes Terrestres (*ANTT*), a recently-created federal government agency under the Ministry of Transport based in Brasília which since 2001 has licensed railway operators, lists twenty-six routes including daily, weekly and one-off commemorative trips.²⁶ Meanwhile the *ABPF* says Brazil has twenty-eight train and tram routes, eleven of which are operated by members of the preservation group, and two more are at the project stage at the time of writing.²⁷

This is an important niche business, as domestic tourism in Brazil has increased steadily since the 1960s both with the emergence of a middle class with available leisure time, and the improvement in the road network which has allowed them to travel for weekends away.²⁸ Studies suggest domestic tourism is motivated primarily by short-distance weekend leisure trips, longer-distance visits by internal migrants back to their parents' home, as well as religious pilgrimages and business conferences which have both been growing in numbers as the roads improve.²⁹

What has been created by the *ABPF* is a steam railway experience that took a Frenchman's approach to rail preservation and turned it into a hybrid

²⁶ Agência Nacional de Transportes Terrestres, *Evolução Recente do Transporte Ferroviário* (Brasília, DF, 2007), pp. 9-10.

²⁷ Geraldo Godoy, 'Trem Turístico: Uma Nova e Saudável Mania Nacional', *ABPF Boletim: Informativo Eletrônico da Associação Brasileira de Preservação Ferroviária* [ABPF e-Boletim], vol. 5, no. 54 (Campinas, SP, August 2007), p. 1.

²⁸ Antonio Carlos Diegues, 'Regional and Domestic Mass Tourism in Brazil: An Overview', in Krishna B. Ghimire, *The Native Tourist: Mass Tourism within Developing Countries* (London, 2001), p.58.

²⁹ *Ibid*, p. 66.

cultural performance. The initial vision and approach was transculturated to produce, what is at present, a stable hybrid. There are no dualities or conflicts in evidence at the *ABPF*'s museum sites. Silviano Santiago observes that 'the journey of the European has a predominantly pedagogical and modernizing function', and Brazil has long had links between French intellectual and cultural activity.³⁰ From the 1816 artistic mission of Félix Émily Taunay and Jean Baptiste Debret to Claude Lévi-Strauss's membership of a group of French academics between 1934 and 1936 who helped with the creation of the Universidade de São Paulo the interchange has endured.³¹ As founder of the *ABPF*, Patrick Dollinger's country of birth may be significant if one takes a long view of history's co-incidences, but what is more relevant in this instance is that an approach to railway museums that display the transport in motion was transculturated into a hybrid form for consumption by the Brazilian public: into a settled meaning that was being actively engaged with by the public. As discussed in chapter 2, transculturation is regarded as the process of negotiation between two cultures. Hybridity has in this study been defined as the temporary stabilisation of such a negotiation process and it is this position that it is suggested the steam rides organised by the *ABPF* have reached.

In the case of the volunteer museums it would appear from observations undertaken during research for this present study that little engagement has been made with formal museum theory by those responsible for curating them. The approach towards display could be characterised to date as being more instinctive than studied. Time and again senior members of the *ABPF* have referred to their sites as 'dynamic museums', and it was observed that most permanent static exhibitions of small artefacts were displayed without interpretation and with minimal labelling.³² Typically, collections of locomotive number plates and spare parts from workshops would be grouped according to size and colour rather than function. Instead the volunteer museums concentrate

³⁰ Silviano Santiago, *The Space In-Between: Essays on Latin American Culture*, ed. Ana Lúcia Gazzola (Durham, NC, 2001), pp. 17-18.

³¹ Fausto, *A Concise History of Brazil*, p. 67; Thomas E. Skidmore, 'Lévi-Strauss, Braudel and Brazil: A Case of Mutual Influence', *Bulletin of Latin American Research*, 22 (2003), 340-349.

³² Personal observations, July to August 2007.

on the performance of the heritage railway – the working locomotive, the travel experience. If, as has been noted, many of the first preservationists came from a model-railway background, then this desire to have the locomotive and carriages in motion through the landscape would be more likely to take priority over the development of static display interpretation.³³ The Brazilian rail volunteer has created his (and it is a field of practice that is predominantly, but not exclusively, gender biased) own definition of a railway museum experience: it must have live steam, volunteers dress up in uniform, and relatively few visitors are interested in the locomotive.³⁴ This latter point would appear to go against what David Nye refers to as the ‘technological sublime’ which in the case of the USA, he traces from the early 1800s, through the introduction of the railway into North America, and on to the modern day with the Apollo space missions and the architecture of Las Vegas.³⁵ This is understood to be as a gaze in wonderment by the viewer upon the technology. The point here is that in the case of Brazil it is not the ‘sublime technology’ of the steam engine that appears to be the main attraction, but instead for the visitor it is a desire to experience the physicality of travel in itself and its performance of transportation manifested through sights, sounds, smells and touch. As noted in the previous chapter, the state-run museums under the responsibility of *PRESERVE*, a department of the federal railway company, *RFFSA*, failed to attract audiences during the 1980s and 1990s. This fact did not go unnoticed by the volunteers of the *ABPF*, but at the same time was never directly referred to or criticised in name by them.³⁶ The preservationists were motivated by a desire to display the railway ensemble in its working form, not as a static homage to an elite institutional past.

Before presenting the findings of research amongst visitors to one museum site, an outline will be given of the creation and growth of the volunteer rail preservation movement in Brazil.

³³ Sergio Romano, ‘Interview’, in Ribeiro, *Na Linha da Preservação*, p. 124.

³⁴ Luiz Carlos Henkels, ‘Uma Viagem ao Trem das Termas’, *ABPF e-Boletim*, vol. 5, no. 60 (February 2008), pp. 4-7.

³⁵ David E. Nye, *American Technological Sublime* (Cambridge, MA, 1994).

³⁶ Sergio Romano, ‘Interview’, in Ribeiro, *Na Linha da Preservação*, p. 125; also see p. 88.

2. Campinas and the birth of the *Associação Brasileira de Preservação Ferroviária*

The city of Campinas has changed over the course of the last forty years. In 1962 Prince Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh and husband of the reigning queen of England, as noted in chapter 1, took a special train from the Estação da Luz in São Paulo to Campinas to visit the Dunlop factory and spend a private weekend at a nearby fazenda. Today Campinas, 98 kilometres northwest of São Paulo, is reportedly the third largest industrial centre in Brazil.³⁷ It is a hub of the automotive industry, has one of the best urban motorway networks in the south east of Brazil, but is no longer served by passenger trains. On the ring road in 2002 an out-of-town shopping centre was opened which was at the time said to be 'Latin America's largest fashion, culture and leisure center (sic)'.³⁸ A few kilometres further along the motorway is the turning for the village of Anhumas. Urban spread is rapidly reaching this area with office blocks, housing, hotels and more shopping centres being developed. Down the hillside from these new glass and concrete buildings lies a winding tree-lined country lane with a 1920s station building and a collection of steam locomotives. This landscape forms the heart of Brazil's volunteer railway preservation movement. It was, according to the Association's own accounts, the inspiration of a Frenchman in the mid-1970s.³⁹ In the previous chapter a passing reference was made to groups of amateurs who were organising private steam excursions with the help of some RFFSA staff in the São Paulo area during the early 1980s. What was emerging, mainly through a small band of railway model enthusiasts and a few RFFSA staff, was the potential for a volunteer preservation movement.⁴⁰

³⁷ Guia Quatro Rodas, *Brasil 2004* (São Paulo, SP, 2003), p. 272.

³⁸ 'Parque Dom Pedro, Latin America's largest fashion, culture and leisure center, opens tomorrow', Sonae Imobiliária (São Paulo, SP, 18 March 2002), http://www.sonaesierra.com/uploadfiles/pressreleases/0D8A7D51A6435B03606C5500F685D213_92200413399.PDF (21 June 2008).

³⁹ 'História da ABPF', *ABPF Regional São Paulo*, <http://www.abpfsp.com.br/historia.htm> (21 June 2008); 'Os Primórdios da ABPF', *Associação Brasileira de Preservação Ferroviária*, <http://www.abpf.org.br/historia.htm> (21 June 2008).

⁴⁰ Sergio Romano, 'Interview', in Ribeiro, *Na Linha da Preservação*, pp. 124.



Fig. 32 Visitors wait for the first steam excursion of the day, *ABPF*, Anhumas Station, Campinas, SP (2007)

The catalyst was Patrick Dollinger who Brazilians recognized brought a new way of thinking about railway heritage and about how to deal with those in authority. Indeed his enthusiasm, energy, and contacts within the industry is remarked on by Sergio Romano, one of the co-founders of the *ABPF*, who says when Dollinger was once visiting Rio de Janeiro he witnessed some locomotives being cut up by blow-torch at the Barra Mansa works and immediately petitioned the president of the *RFFSA*, Col. Carlos Weber, at the Rio de Janeiro headquarters to get the scrapping stopped.⁴¹ It was Colonel Weber who, as explained in the previous chapter, during his term as president between 1979 and 1985 had instituted the *PRESERVE* project.

The centre of Brazil's rail preservation movement, the village of Anhumas on the outskirts of Campinas in the state of São Paulo, is an example of what the voluntary sector can achieve. Using track from the former

⁴¹ Ribeiro, *Na Linha da Preservação*, p. 124.

Companhia Mogiana de Estradas de Ferro, the group has invented its own name, *Viação Férrea Campinas-Jaguariúna* and has built up a substantial locomotive, carriage and wagon collection.⁴² The *ABPF* has itself become an object of historical study. To mark the thirtieth anniversary in 2007 of the association Suzana Ribeiro compiled an account of the branch line at Anhumas, the development of the *ABPF*, and carried out fifteen interviews with those involved in the project at Anhumas; ‘an exclusively male universe’, she adds.⁴³ She describes the founders of the *ABPF* as ‘a small group of idealists’ and goes on to say, ‘The commitment of these Brazilian railway preservation pioneers highlighted a desire not to yield to fashions in the way history is told.’ It was ‘...an interpretation of the past which differed from the dark periods that have often affected our national history’.⁴⁴ For the volunteers then, this can be seen as an anti-political statement from the manner in which they have taken control of the railway history, removed politics, and operated a branch line outside the conventions of state patronage.

In some degree, such values probably derived from Patrick Dollinger, born in France in 1940, who had worked for a Brazilian company since 1961 and ‘travelled a lot on the original railways...’ in São Paulo state.⁴⁵ He was, according to Antonio Anunziata, a historian in Campinas, a man with a ‘European mentality... very linked to preservation’ who became upset at the pace of line closures on the railways he used to carry out his business trips.⁴⁶ There appears to be common consent that it was this transculturation of ideas from France to Brazil that proved to be the catalyst for the beginnings of the volunteer railway movement. Dollinger paid for a classified advertisement to be printed in one of the leading regional daily newspapers (fig. 33).⁴⁷ The initial response was one of caution. Juarez Spaletta, one of co-founders of *ABPF*,

⁴² Regina Perez, *Inventário das Locomotivas a Vapor no Brasil: Memória Ferroviária* (Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 2006), pp. 51-52.

⁴³ Ribeiro, *Na Linha da Preservação*, p. 88.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.* p. 12. See also p. 88.

⁴⁵ ‘História da ABPF’, *ABPF Regional São Paulo*, ‘<http://www.abpfsp.com.br/historia.htm>’ (21 June 2008); Antonio Anunziata, ‘Interview’, in Ribeiro, *Na Linha da Preservação*, p. 94.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷ ‘Os Primórdios da ABPF’, *Associação Brasileira de Preservação Ferroviária*, ‘<http://www.abpf.org.br/historia.htm>’ (21 June 2008).

remembered telling a friend about the advertisement and saying it was ‘about “some madman who would be willing to found and create a rail preservation association”’.⁴⁸ Sergio Romano, the third of the founder members along with Juarez Spaletta, agreed: ‘In the beginning we [were] a little sceptical and we thought to ourselves: “he is a Frenchman, [he] does not know how Brazil works”, but any way for the enthusiasm, we decide[d] to keep over the idea (sic)’.⁴⁹

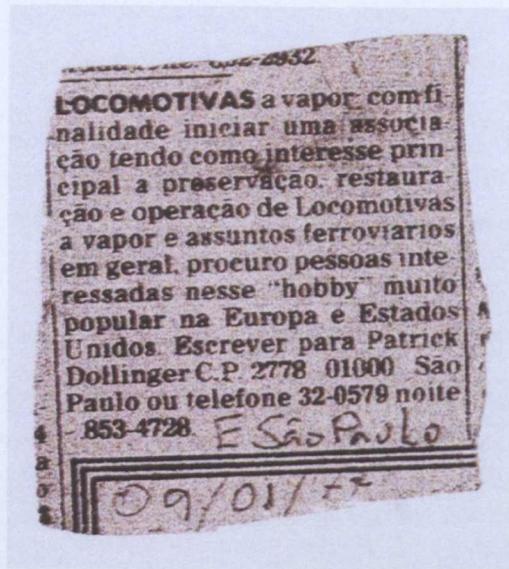


Fig. 33 ‘STEAM TRAINS: With the objective of starting an association which has its principle interest in the preservation, restoration and operation of steam locomotives and railway matters in general, I am seeking people who are interested in this “hobby” which is very popular in Europe and the USA. Write to Patrick Dollinger, P.O. Box No... or telephone day... or evening...’⁵⁰

Eight months later, in September 1977, the *ABPF* was formally created.⁵¹ Almost immediately, under the leadership of Patrick Dollinger, the group was negotiating for redundant locomotives and carriages.⁵² Sergio Romano said he thought, on reflection, the *ABPF* only got the line and the equipment because

⁴⁸ Juarez Spaletta, ‘Interview’, in Ribeiro, *Na Linha da Preservação*, p. 117.

⁴⁹ Sergio Romano, ‘Interview’, in Ribeiro, *Na Linha da Preservação*, p. 124.

⁵⁰ Classified advertisement, *Estado de São Paulo*, 9 January 1977, reproduced from Ribeiro, *Na Linha da Preservação*, p. 124.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 124.

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 125.

Dollinger was French. ‘If a Brazilian made the same request, certainly the reply would be negative...’⁵³ This suggests that in the transculturation of the idea of the railway-as-heritage an active negotiation was taking place with what Brazilians have come to identify in this particular case as ‘French’ concepts gaining acceptance. Railway history, as revealed through its material culture of locomotives and carriages, was being reworked: it was no longer the imperial coaches and the elite transport on display, but a history of the everyday experience. Sergio Romano suggests, without actually naming names that, for the *RFFSA* and its museum displays organised under the auspices of the *PRESERVE* group, heritage value was only assigned to imperial carriages, and not to rolling stock used every day by fellow workers and passengers.⁵⁴ Ivo Arias, another of the founders of the *ABPF*, recalls how before the creation of the *RFFSA* in the 1950s and *FEPASA* in the early 1970s each railway company had its own private museum, but ‘with the intervention of politicians and the closure of railways these museums disappeared’.⁵⁵ He too acknowledges the influence of Dollinger as a foreigner who motivated local preservationists.⁵⁶

Antonio Anunziata remarks that ‘...many of the youngsters who participated in the *ABPF* project [in the 1970s and 1980s] had fathers and grandfathers who had been railmen’.⁵⁷ The effect was that the passengers, railway modellers and railway engineers were making history for themselves, against the tendency of the *PRESERVE* group at the *RFFSA*. It took seven years from the founding of the *ABPF* to the first public train running out of Anhumas station in July 1984.⁵⁸ Patrick Dollinger was directing operations closely and as one volunteer recalled, ‘he told us... we had to learn not just to run a locomotive but a railway as well’.⁵⁹ Two years later in 1986 Patrick Dollinger was involved

⁵³ Ibid, p. 126.

⁵⁴ Ibid, p. 125.

⁵⁵ Ivo Arias, personal interview (Anhumas, Campinas, SP, September 2007).

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Antonio Anunziata, ‘Interview’, in Ribeiro, *Na Linha da Preservação*, p. 94.

⁵⁸ Edson Laurindo dos Santos, ‘Os 20 Anos da VFCJ’, in *ABPF e-Boletim*, vol. 2, no. 17 (July 2004), pp. 6-8.

⁵⁹ Ibid, p. 7.

in a car crash in the United States of America.⁶⁰ He returned to Brazil, but later died from an embolism.⁶¹ From the Association's newsletters and interviews with its founders it becomes apparent that Dollinger was regarded as vital to the creation of the national movement. 'Unfortunately', says an *ABPF* account, 'Patrick Dollinger did not live to see his dream completely realised'.⁶² Yet what had been created with his help and enthusiasm was a transculturated railway that had quickly lost any traces of dualities of meaning. There was no tension between foreign and Brazilian; indeed Antonio Anunziata says, 'The movement was so well accepted that from the mid-80s onwards many other similar institutions were created through the country.'⁶³ Observations for this study suggest there is likewise no duality between tradition and modernity or between urban and rural in the way the *ABPF* displays the railway heritage in motion. Today it has groups working in the states of Santa Catarina, Rio Grande do Sul, Espírito Santo, Minas Gerais, Paraná and Rio de Janeiro.⁶⁴ The national directorate continues to be based in Anhumas, and across Brazil it says it has more than two thousand members.⁶⁵ Some of its rail heritage sites today have the highest visitor figures of any attraction in the museum sector in Brazil.⁶⁶ There are no independently audited statistics, but Helio Gazetta, the financial director of the *ABPF*, estimated that the Anhumas site regularly received up to 40,000 visitors per year in 2001 and commented that,

during privatisation a lot of the passenger services closed and stations were shut down. But people are now seeing how important it is to preserve and look after these things. I think public opinion towards historical heritage is changing slowly.⁶⁷

⁶⁰ 'História da ABPF', *ABPF Regional São Paulo*, '<http://www.abpfsp.com.br/historia.htm>' (21 June 2008).

⁶¹ Geraldo Godoy, 'Interview', in Ribeiro, *Na Linha da Preservação*, p. 103.

⁶² 'Os Primórdios da ABPF', *Associação Brasileira de Preservação Ferroviária*, '<http://www.abpf.org.br/historia.htm>' (21 June 2008).

⁶³ Antonio Anunziata, 'Interview', in Ribeiro, *Na Linha da Preservação*, p. 95.

⁶⁴ *ABPF e-Boletim*, vol. 5, no. 51 (May 2007), pp. 1-4.

⁶⁵ *ABPF e-Boletim*, vol. 5, no. 50 (April 2007), p. 1.

⁶⁶ For a review of selected rail heritage sites and estimated visitor figures see: Martin Cooper, 'Steam Railways in Brazil: Their Cultural Context and Preservation' (unpublished MA thesis, University of York, 2002), pp. 103-116.

⁶⁷ Helio Gazetta, Personal Interview, Anhumas, Campinas, SP, October, 2001

By 2007 Vanderlei Alves da Silva, the lead visitor explainer and operations manager said Anhumas received 1,500 passengers each weekend on average, which represented over 70,000 visitors per year.⁶⁸

The railway is, under the care and curatorship of the *ABPF*, becoming less a historical construct of the state and more a place where in the movement of a steam train personal memories can be engaged with and where individuals can create their own histories outside the Brazilian state machinery. Suzana Ribeiro says, 'The *ABPF* maintains a link to bygone ages, even though it operates in the present.'⁶⁹ She also adds that the idea behind the *ABPF*'s preservation is '...the image of the train as an icon of modernity'.⁷⁰ Indeed, this study has found responses at another *ABPF* site, at the Memorial do Imigrante in central São Paulo, which do suggest that after a train ride some visitors connect the steam train directly to potential for Brazil to develop rail passenger travel as an economic and environmentally friendly alternative to road transport. What this suggests is that modernity is, in the form of the heritage railway, no longer regarded as in conflict with tradition: both are now linked together rather than being in opposition. This study finds this to be the present hybrid state of this part of the railway ensemble in twenty-first century Brazil. In a European context, where the means of traction are held by enthusiasts to be vital to the heritage experience, the disjuncture between steam and modern motive power would undermine the claim.⁷¹ But in Brazil it was observed that whilst the sights, sounds and smells of a steam locomotive were an integral part of the *ABPF* presentations, the visitor attends to the travel experience by rail irrespective of the actual means of traction. This is evidenced by the popularity of two commercially-run electric and diesel-hauled tourist rides elsewhere in the states of São Paulo and Paraná respectively.⁷² So it is plausible to suggest that an apparently archaic mode of transport, the steam train, can nevertheless conjure up visions of a modern alternative for sectors of the Brazilian public.

⁶⁸ Vanderlei Alves da Silva, 'Interview', in Ribeiro, *Na Linha da Preservação*, p. 134.

⁶⁹ Ribeiro, *Na Linha da Preservação*, p. 15.

⁷⁰ *Ibid*, p. 40.

⁷¹ Ian Carter, *British Railway Enthusiasm* (Manchester, 2008), pp. 109-125.

⁷² Palhares, *Transportes Turísticos*, pp. 341-344.

To reinforce this hybrid meaning of the ‘past-in-the-present’, which for the time being appears to be a settled one, the *ABPF* has created its own imaginary railway line at this particular site. The operation at Anhumas has twenty-four locomotives and fifty-eight carriages and wagons.⁷³



Fig. 34 TV Cultura record a feature aboard the *Viação Férrea Campinas-Jaguariúna*, Campinas, SP (2007)

Whilst the carriages retain their original markings and are painted in colours which match their former working liveries, some of the locomotives and tenders have been marked with the logos of the *ABPF* and the *VFCJ*, the *Viação Férrea Campinas-Jaguariúna*, an imaginary company representing a reinterpretation and break with the past.⁷⁴ What the visitor is presented with is a contemporary steam tourist ride that no longer struggles with the images of the former railway companies from the 1950s before they were incorporated into federal ownership.

⁷³ Ribeiro, *Na Linha da Preservação*, p. 41.

⁷⁴ *Ibid*, p. 41.

The *VFCJ* is old yet new, traditional and modern at the same time; it is a tourist steam line that has resolved its dualities of meanings and become a hybrid offspring as a result of a temporarily completed transculturation process. Suzana Ribeiro sums up this position by observing that, ‘In this battle it is crucial to rethink the cultural dimension and the role heritage railway has as a means of both maintaining the history and developing a tourist economy.’⁷⁵



Fig 35 *ABPF* volunteers stand alone close to locomotive whilst passengers gather in the distance near the carriages, Jaguariúna Station, SP (2007)

Robert Mattoon, in his examination of the development of railways in the state of São Paulo, says the companies set up from the mid-nineteenth century until the beginning of the twentieth ‘...lent their names to the subregions

⁷⁵ Ibid, p. 15. Creating new liveries also happened in the UK. For example the *Keighley and Worth Valley Railway*, which opened as a volunteer operation in 1968, was for a time known for its ‘ubiquitous ...house style’. See: Alan C. Butcher (ed.), *Railways Restored 2000* (Hersham, Surrey, 2000), p. 49.

serviced and in this way railroads defined São Paulo geographically'.⁷⁶ Examples would include company names which have now become identifiable regional descriptions such as Mogiana, Sorocabana, and Araraquara. By creating its own railway name the *ABPF* has both rejected the state's abandonment of the working passenger railway, and its mismanagement of the development of state-funded rail museums. It has also, in its creation of the *VFCJ* name, revived a tradition and tied itself to an older way of identifying geographies. The result has been a museum that has grown in popularity over the last three decades. The heritage trip includes docent interpretations of the coffee plantations and an explanation of the importance of the railway to the local economy. The fact this line was used in a major television soap opera in 1999 added to the feeling of glamour that has been produced by the curators. Geraldo Godoy of the *ABPF* says,

The use of the *VFCJ* as a scenario of the soap opera "*Terra Nostra*" surely was an important landmark. The release was massive, since the train appeared in the opening and closing in all chapters. From then on the *VFCJ* started to have an increasing public demand.⁷⁷

In fact almost thirty television productions have featured scenes recorded at the Anhumas museum. Geraldo Godoy says 'the *VFCJ* is a great dynamic museum...' and this, he argues, is its attraction – especially to television producers.⁷⁸

The *ABPF* has realised that it cannot depend on an 'authentic' historical experience to survive and has had to use its working artefacts as a means to generate income by hiring its services out to television companies.⁷⁹ It has also been required to negotiate with the political machinery at municipal, state and

⁷⁶ Robert H. Mattoon Jr, 'Railroads, Coffee, and the Growth of Big Business in São Paulo, Brazil', *The Hispanic American Historical Review*, 57 (1977), p. 285.

⁷⁷ Geraldo Godoy, 'Interview', in Ribeiro, *Na Linha da Preservação*, p. 103. For a discussion of the 'Terra Nostra' novela on TV Globo see chapter 6 of this present study.

⁷⁸ Geraldo Godoy, 'Interview', in Ribeiro, *Na Linha da Preservação*, p. 103.

⁷⁹ A similar situation has occurred in Britain, for example the filming of 'The Railway Children' in 1969 at the Keighley and Worth Valley Railway. See Robin Higgins, *The Keighley and Worth Valley Railway Experience (KWVR Guidebook)* (Keighley, W. Yorks, 1990), p. 34.

federal levels.⁸⁰ Ivo Arias was involved in negotiations with the federal government and the *RFFSA* as a founder member.⁸¹ Thirty years later Geraldo Godoy says as public relations officer for the *ABPF* part of his job has been to negotiate with the *ANTT* for the public safety licence, the *RFFSA* before it closed down for the donation of material, and the Ministry of Transport as the federal organ ultimately responsible for the entire railway industry.⁸²

Recognition by agencies of the state has been a slow but essential task for the *ABPF* directors. Suzana Ribeiro says, 'The group's determination, which sounded idealistic at the outset, gradually influenced and mobilized people, public institutions and private companies.'⁸³ In 2004 the Association gained legal status which enabled it to officially negotiate with government agencies and apply for tax exemption.⁸⁴ However the *ABPF* had been in dialogue with the *RFFSA* since the late 1970s, drawing up a series of agreements for the donation of rolling stock, the last of which was renewed for a five year term in 2003 for the 'preservation of materials ceded by the *RFFSA* to the *ABPF*'.⁸⁵ The preservationists have throughout known that as a group of volunteers they have had to struggle to be accepted by those in power. Patrick Dollinger remarked in the Association's half-yearly typewritten newsletter in 1978 that the restoration of their first locomotive 'will prove to anyone the capability of the *ABPF*'.⁸⁶ The point was made again in 2004 in the monthly members' electronic newsletter when remarking on work carried out on another locomotive, that 'this proves to the authorities, and the *RFFSA*, the real intentions of the *ABPF*'.⁸⁷ Geraldo Godoy says now the *ABPF* is in negotiations with *IPHAN*, the federal heritage body, which has taken responsibility for assets belonging to the Union (i.e. the Federal assets of the *RFFSA*). In July 2007 he says he had meetings with *IPHAN*

⁸⁰ Ribeiro, *Na Linha da Preservação*, p. 40.

⁸¹ *Ibid*, p. 89.

⁸² Geraldo Godoy, 'Interview', in Ribeiro, *Na Linha da Preservação*, p. 102.

⁸³ Ribeiro, *Na Linha da Preservação*, p. 14.

⁸⁴ Known as OSCIP, Organização Social Civil de Utilidade Pública was applied for in November 2003 and granted in December 2004. See: *ABPF e-Boletim*, vol. 1, no. 9 (November 2003), p. 1 and *ABPF e-Boletim*, vol 2, no. 23 (January 2005), p.1.

⁸⁵ *ABPF e-Boletim*, vol. 1, no. 3 (May 2003), p. 1.

⁸⁶ Patrick Dollinger, 'O Carro-Chefe' in *ABPF Boletim*, vol. 1, no. 4 (Jan-Feb 1978), p. 1.

⁸⁷ Edson Laurindo dos Santos and Hélio Gazetta Filho, 'A Locomotiva 980 da CMEF', in *ABPF e-Boletim*, vol. 2, no. 13 (March 2004), pp. 4-5.

in Brasília and that it ‘...is paying more attention to the *ABPF* and wants us to be their great partners’.⁸⁸

The *ABPF*'s operating railway line near Campinas was extended in 2006 with the opening of a bridge which took the tracks over a river and into the town of Jaguariúna. It was, according to the association, ‘the biggest railway preservation project in the state of São Paulo’, co-funded by the town council and the State of São Paulo.⁸⁹ The next phase of the expansion plan is to extend the line back towards Campinas and to reach the station at Taquaral in the city itself. This will improve its profile in the regional tourist industry by connecting it more directly to an infrastructure that comprises hotels, shopping and access to visitors arriving by coach at the city’s bus station as well as a more prominent place in the community.⁹⁰ Helio Gazetta, a member of the national board of directors, says in 2007 the *ABPF* has eight regional branches in Brazil. It has expansion plans not just in Campinas, SP, but also has projects drawn up for steam heritage operations at a number of new locations in other states in addition to those already functioning regularly each weekend across the country.⁹¹ This chapter will now turn its attention to two *ABPF* locations in the state of São Paulo, both on sections of the former *São Paulo Railway*, where the blueprint created by the Campinas operation has been put into operation.

3. Paranapiacaba

In the greater metropolitan area of the city of São Paulo itself the *ABPF* runs regular steam rides at two sites: one within a museum dedicated to telling the story of immigration in Brazil and the other just outside the city at the top of the Serra do Mar, where the railway arrives after its climb of over 760 metres in altitude from the sea.⁹² Whilst the Anhumas site is dedicated to retelling the

⁸⁸ Geraldo Godoy, ‘Interview’, in Ribeiro, *Na Linha da Preservação*, p. 104; *ABPF e-Boletim*, vol. 5, no. 52 (June 2007), p. 1; *ABPF e-Boletim*, vol. 5, no. 53 (July 2007), p. 1.

⁸⁹ *ABPF e-Boletim*, vol. 4, no. 46 (December 2006), p. 3.

⁹⁰ Ivo Arias, personal interview (Anhumas, Campinas, SP, September 2007).

⁹¹ Helio Gazetta Filho, ‘Interview’, in Ribeiro, *Na Linha da Preservação*, p. 108.

⁹² Moysés Lavander Jr and Paulo Augusto Mendes, *SPR: Memórias de uma Inglesa* (São Paulo, SP, 2005), p. 25; Paul Catchpole, *A Very British Railway* (St. Teath, Cornwall, 2003), p. 6.

movement of the railway through the rural landscape of the coffee farms of the early twentieth century, the two greater-São Paulo locations depict the arrival of the European settlers when they first arrived on Brazilian soil in the late nineteenth century. When it was opened in 1867 the *São Paulo Railway* station next to the upper winding house was known as Alto da Serra.⁹³ In 1907 the village changed its name to Paranapiacaba which in the indigenous Tupi-guarani language means ‘place where you can see the sea’.⁹⁴ The original village was a company town, built by the *São Paulo Railway* to house first the construction workers and then the railway staff who operated the rope-hauled inclines, the steam-powered winding engines and the switching yards where the carriages from São Paulo were uncoupled and attached to brake cars before descending down the one-in-ten inclines.⁹⁵



Fig. 36 *ABPF* explainer, Paranapiacaba, SP (2007)

⁹³ Lavander Jr. and Mendes, *SPR: Memórias de uma Inglesa*, p. 104.

⁹⁴ Prefeitura de Santo André, ‘Paranapiacaba’, tourist guide leaflet (Santo André, SP, c2007).

⁹⁵ Lavander Jr. and Mendes, *SPR: Memórias de uma Inglesa*, pp. 104-110.

Brazilian railway historians remark how the village has an ‘English’ style.⁹⁶ This could either be the rows of wooden terraced housing built for the railway workers or the clock tower known locally as ‘Big Ben’. It has also been remarked that ‘the climate is reminiscent of London in winter, with the traditional fog...’⁹⁷ This is not read as a duality between Brazilian and English landscapes where a foreign culture is imposing itself, but rather what is now a term of endearment borne out by the reworking of the popular name for the former *São Paulo Railway* as the ‘inglesa’. Observations during a number of visits to the village from 2001 to 2007 suggest that there is a strong sense of local pride amongst the residents of the community. The local authority and more recently the *ABPF* are working in informal partnership to develop the tourist industry in the village.

The village began to fall into decay when the first rope-hauled winding system was replaced with a rack railway along the same stretch of track in 1974.⁹⁸ The second rope-hauled line stayed in operation for a short time and now is disused.⁹⁹ In 2001 suburban trains ran only at weekends into Paranapiacaba, and the following year the *CPTM* stopped running them completely. In 2007 to get to the village a visitor has to take the train to Rio Grande da Serra along the route of the old *São Paulo Railway* and then a bus for the next three stops down the line.¹⁰⁰ In 2002 the local council of Santo André acquired the old English part of the village, which it said had been allowed to fall into disrepair by the federal government since the end of the British concession on the *São Paulo Railway* in 1946.¹⁰¹ It did not take possession of the railway museum which ‘continued to be abandoned’.¹⁰² The reason for this was that the railway property was still legally owned by the State railway company, *RFFSA*, in administration. The village has

⁹⁶ Ibid, p. 106; Ralph Mennucci Giesbrecht, ‘Paranapiacaba’, *Estações Ferroviárias do Brasil* (14 January 2007) ‘www.estacoesferroviarias.com.br/p/paranapiacaba.htm’ (21 June 2008).

⁹⁷ José Emílio de Castro H. Buzelin, Eduardo J.J. Coelho & João Bosco Setti, *MRS Logística: A Ferrovia de Minas, Rio e São Paulo* (Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 2002), p. 75.

⁹⁸ Charles S. Small, *Up Over the Hill, Rio de Janeiro – São Paulo (Brazilian Steam Album, Vol. II)* (Canton, OH, 1985), p. 72; Lavander Jr. and Mendes, *SPR: Memórias de uma Inglesa*, p. 280.

⁹⁹ Personal observation (August 2007).

¹⁰⁰ Ibid. In late 2008 an experimental direct express rail service at weekends was started between the Estação da Luz and Paranapiacaba.

¹⁰¹ Prefeitura de Santo André, ‘Paranapiacaba’, tourist guide leaflet (Santo André, SP, c2007).

¹⁰² Giesbrecht, ‘Paranapiacaba’.

twice been on the World Monuments Watch list of 100 most endangered sites, in 2000 and 2002.¹⁰³

Work was carried out to promote the village, with signage and the development of a bed-and-breakfast scheme whereby residents could let out their spare rooms to tourists on a tax-break basis.¹⁰⁴ The local authority marketed the village as a place to come for nature trails and walks in the Serra do Mar mountains, with the railway now included since the return of *ABPF* volunteers in 2006, as part of its promotional campaign.¹⁰⁵ The preservation group currently operates a one kilometre steam ride from the station platform to the top of the incline and is developing the static displays in the museum in the former steam winding house.¹⁰⁶ The short ride is accompanied by an explainer who gives information about the technology of the mountain railway, its construction and operation.¹⁰⁷ The locomotive has two flags flying, Brazilian and British, which is a conscious indication by the volunteer curators that there is no conflict remaining between the English technology and the Brazilian operation of the *inglesa*.¹⁰⁸ Visitors were observed after taking the steam train ride to have a greater understanding of the railway technology's place in Brazil, and also to think more about tourist and preserved train rides as a potential for future leisure time visits.¹⁰⁹

Alongside the steam heritage is the persistent noise of the modern railway in action; both appear to exist in harmony but commercial pressures mean that at present tourist trains do not run all the way down the mountain. There are two inclines going down the Serra do Mar: one is the disused rope-hauled system, but

¹⁰³ 'World Monuments Watch List of 100 Most Endangered Sites', *World Monuments Fund* (New York, NY), 2000 list at 'http://wmf.org/pdf/Watch_List_2000.pdf' and 2002 list at 'http://wmf.org/pdf/Watch_List_2002.pdf' (21 June 2008).

¹⁰⁴ Prefeitura Municipal de Santo André, 'Paranapiacaba', promotional leaflet (Santo André, SP, May 2002).

¹⁰⁵ Prefeitura de Santo André, 'Paranapiacaba', tourist guide leaflet (Santo André, SP, c2007); *ABPF e-Boletim*, vol. 4, no. 42 (August 2006), p. 1.

¹⁰⁶ 'Sintonia Fina na Cremalheira de Carga mais Inclinada do Mundo' *Revista Ferroviária* (Rio de Janeiro, Aug-Sept, 2007), p. 22.

¹⁰⁷ Personal observation (August 2007).

¹⁰⁸ Personal observation and volunteer interview (August 2007).

¹⁰⁹ Personal observation and visitor interviews, Paranapiacaba (August 2007).

with various plans for its restoration, and the other is the rack railway. In 2005, with a forecast for ten million tonnes of freight including iron ore and soya for the year end, a tender was put out to re-build and re-open the rope railway to haul the extra freight up the one-in-ten inclines, effectively doubling the route's current capacity.¹¹⁰ In 2007 a proposal to build an eighteen kilometre long conveyor belt to take raw minerals down to a smelting plant was unveiled by *MRS Logistica*, the current rail freight operator of the line, in an effort to free up capacity.¹¹¹ At present it says it runs a twenty-four-hour operation on the rack railway, with seventy trains per day taking down exports of iron ore, sugar and soya and bringing up the mountain imports such as wheat, salt and fertilizers.¹¹² The line also takes raw materials down to the steelworks and a paper factory in the industrial town of Cubatão at the foot of the Serra do Mar.¹¹³ Ever since it was built as the *São Paulo Railway* by the British it has been described as the 'throat' of Brazil's export economy in the São Paulo area and Paranapiacaba is the major switching yard where trains are split and prepared for the descent on the stretch of rack railway.¹¹⁴

4. Memorial do Imigrante

In the centre of the city of São Paulo is the third example of the *ABPF*'s presentation of railway history in motion. Two kilometres down the old *São Paulo Railway* line from the Estação da Luz is a building by the side of the track between Brás and Moóca stations. For a traveller just arriving in Brazil in the early twentieth century this would have represented their first official stop after disembarking from an ocean voyage and catching the train up the hill towards the city of São Paulo and a new life in the country. It is the Hospedaria de Imigrantes where between 1887 and 1978 almost three million immigrants from around seventy countries passed through its doors, representing half of the total

¹¹⁰ 'Antiga Ferrovia Vai Virar Esteira', *O Estado de São Paulo*, 12 June 2005.

¹¹¹ 'Sintonia Fina na Cremalheira', *Revista Ferroviária*, p. 23.

¹¹² *Ibid*, p. 16 and p. 18.

¹¹³ *Ibid*, p. 18.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid*, p. 19.

influx to Brazil during this period.¹¹⁵ They would have disembarked at the port of Santos on their boat journey from Europe and from there they would have been taken by train to be registered at what is Brazil's equivalent of the USA's Ellis Island. Today this has become a museum of immigration run by the Museums Department of São Paulo State and is visited regularly as a site of family nostalgia particularly for the descendents of the Italians, Germans and Japanese who arrived in Brazil from the end of the nineteenth century onwards and were transported to work in the expanding coffee plantations in the interior. It became a museum of immigration in 1993 under the ownership of the State of São Paulo.¹¹⁶ The rail platform, where the immigrants would have arrived, is functional in appearance and has the unprepossessing air of a goods yard; in contrast the street front of the Hospedaria, through which the new arrivals would have passed once registered, is a colonnaded colonial-style building of substantial proportions. Modern day visitors to the museum approach it from the road and their first sight is of this grandiose frontage.

The Memorial do Imigrante is actually two museums in one. Inside the main nineteenth century building is the museum of immigration, whilst on the arrivals platform at the side is the railway museum with its 800 metres of live steam (fig. 37). This latter is operated by the *ABPF*. The train ride at the Memorial do Imigrante is similar to that experienced at Paranapiacaba. Both are short, between one and two kilometres round trip, and are accompanied by an explainer who is a member of the *ABPF*, dressed in a railway guard's uniform. He or she talks during the ten minute outward trip about the history of the line (both are on stretches of the old *São Paulo Railway*), and a little about the technology of steam trains and the use of whistles, flags and staffs as communication devices between guards, drivers and signalmen.¹¹⁷ Mention is made of the route of entry for immigrants whose transatlantic ships berthed at Santos docks before being taken up the Serra do Mar on the *São Paulo Railway* for formal registration at the immigration hostel.

¹¹⁵ *Memorial do Imigrante*, Museum Guidebook (São Paulo, SP, 1999), p. 2 and 4.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid*, p. 4.

¹¹⁷ Personal observation (August 2007).



Fig. 37 The local photography club pays a visit, arrivals platform, Memorial do Imigrante, São Paulo, SP (2007)

Finally the presentation concludes with mention of the current work of the *ABPF* in restoring carriages and running the steam locomotive. For the visitor the emphasis is on human migration and the part the railway ensemble played in the creation of modern Brazil. From the carriage window of both trips the scenery is one of urban industry; even at Paranapiacaba which is at the top of the Serra do Mar what is immediately visible is the red-brick railway buildings, the old steam winding house for the rope-hauled rail line, and the switching yard of the modern diesel rack railway which is today used exclusively for freight. This contrasts with the docent interpretation given on the Campinas/Anhumas ride, which is much longer at twenty-four kilometres, travels mostly through rural landscapes, and concentrates on the operation of coffee farming, the collection and processing of the harvest and its shipment by rail down to the docks at Santos. What all three share, and the visitors enjoy judging from the responses gathered at the Memorial do Imigrante, is an encounter with the past in a living form complete with noises, smells and movement.

The excursion at the Memorial do Imigrante, which is an extra cost for the visitor having first paid to gain entry to the main museum complex, provides an interpretation of the story of one phase of immigration to Brazil and the development of the state of São Paulo during the height of its coffee plantation years from the second half of the nineteenth century until the late twentieth. The railway-in-motion is able to explain in physical form the idea of migration as movement, a point that was taken up by the executive director of the Memorial do Imigrante, Ana Maria da Costa Leitão Vieira, who described her museum's relationship with the volunteers of the *ABPF* as 'complementary' since the focus of the museum's static exhibits was about the journey and movement undertaken by people.¹¹⁸ In 2005 a joint agreement was signed between the museum and the *ABPF* to formalise their working arrangements.¹¹⁹ The *ABPF* runs regular steam rides on Saturdays, Sundays and bank holidays as well as pre-arranged school visits each Thursday, the latter being joined by a member of the museum's education staff but essentially presenting the same message.¹²⁰

5. Conversations with museum visitors

The observer is struck by the relatively high number of visitors and the visible excitement of those who take the short train ride at such locations as Anhumas, Paranapiacaba and at the Memorial do Imigrante. In order to examine the experiences of some of these visitors a series of fifty-eight interviews was completed at the Memorial do Imigrante during four consecutive weekends in July and August 2007.¹²¹ Each weekend about five hundred passengers were carried on the twenty minute steam rides at this site,¹²² with Sunday afternoon being the most popular period to visit. The interview technique used is known as 'personal meaning mapping' and has been designed to give an understanding of

¹¹⁸ Ana Maria da Costa Leitão Vieira, personal interview (São Paulo, SP, July 2007).

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*

¹²¹ The fieldwork consisted of a total of sixty interviews, two of which were not completed due to the respondents declining to take part in the second phase of questioning.

¹²² *ABPF e-Boletim*, vol. 6, no. 65 (July 2008), p. 3

what respondents learn during a museum visit.¹²³ It has been used in studies at the National Museum of Natural History, part of the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, DC, USA, the Powerhouse Museum in Sydney, Australia, and at the Pitt Rivers Museum in Oxford to assess the learning experiences of visitors.¹²⁴ Participants are interviewed before and afterwards and the results are compared and interpreted to produce qualitative responses which for the purposes of this present study were deemed to be more informative than quantitative data. Researchers who have used this method point out that it takes into account each visitor's prior experience and attitudes because it is the relative changes that are being compared pre- and post- visit and not any absolute differences.¹²⁵

A number of options were considered for collecting qualitative interviews before deciding on personal meaning mapping. Individual interviews would have provided rich information but would have required respondents to be able to articulate clearly their opinions and suggestions. The author, who has Portuguese as his second language, would be required to immediately understand a respondent's answer and be able to note this down accurately. Opinion groups, also known as focus groups, would have provided detailed results but the complexity and cost of organising such meetings was outside the scope of this present study. Individual interviews recorded in video or audio form was another option considered, but again this required interviewees to be articulate and required the use of recording equipment which can be intrusive. Individual observation by the researcher was a technique that was considered to give rich results, but on the negative side this can be another form of intrusion if the observer is felt to be invading the subject's space and hence enjoyment of the

¹²³ John H. Falk, Theano Moussouri, and Douglas Coulson, 'The Effect of Visitors' Agendas on Museum Learning' *Curator*, 41 (1998), p. 109.

¹²⁴ Ibid, p. 110; Geoffrey Caban and Jenny Wilson, 'Understanding Learning Styles: Implications for Design Education in External Settings' in *Proceedings of "Enhancing Curricula: Exploring Effective Curricula Practices in Art, Design and Communication"*, Royal Institute of Architects (London, 2002), pp. 128-143,

'http://www.arts.ac.uk/docs/cltd_2002caban.pdf' (21 June 2008); Alison James, *Pitt Rivers Museum: Summative Evaluation Report, DCF-funded Redisplays* (July 2002), 'http://www.alison-james.co.uk/prmreport_sum.doc' (21 June 2008).

¹²⁵ Falk, Moussouri, and Coulson, 'The Effect of Visitors' Agendas', p. 109.

museum experience. Finally written questionnaires and a suggestions box were considered, each of which forms of data collection can generate substantial amounts of information, but here again both require respondents to be literate and able to reply to specific questions posed which they may not have previously considered.

Personal meaning mapping involves giving a respondent a blank piece of paper and a coloured pen (red) in the booking hall area once they have purchased a ticket and before they have taken the ride on the steam train. The researcher writes (in black) a single word on the sheet and invites the visitor to write or draw any word, phrase or idea they associate with it. The researcher then records a brief audio interview with the subject seeking any clarifications in meaning and understanding. The visitor is then free to join the train excursion. Once they return to the ticket office area the visitor is then given back their original sheet and this time asked to make any changes or additions in a blue pen. A second audio interview is then recorded to ensure that the researcher has understanding of the meaning of these additions. Since the research was carried out by a non-native Portuguese speaker this methodology was judged to be a reliable method of checking and expanding meanings when necessary.

Such a technique produces rich data which can be open to a number of readings and it was decided to take an approach which assumed that for the most part the respondents were telling the truth and as accurately as possible expressing their opinions before and after the train ride. It was noted that one respondent wrote in English at the top of his sheet (fig. 40)¹²⁶ and when asked why said it was because the researcher was from England. This was the only case where an interviewee appeared to make a connection between the task in hand and the researcher's nationality. The word chosen by the researcher to write on the majority of the blank sheets of paper was 'trem' (train). Twice when 'estrada de ferro' (railway) was used the respondents referred to it as 'trem'; four respondents who were given the word 'locomotiva' (locomotive) replied with

¹²⁶ See Appendix 1.

ideas more closely associated to the technology of the transport system and less to do with their own opinions of the museum experience. Based on these observations it was decided to continue using the trigger-word 'trem'.

The respondents for the most part came from the greater São Paulo metropolitan area, with only two giving addresses in neighbouring states, Minas Gerais and Paraná. With just one exception all said they had ancestors who came to Brazil either from Europe or from Japan and had entered the country by this route, hence their visit. No unaccompanied visitors were noted; all came with friends or in family groups which were observed to fall into one of two general types: parents in their thirties with two children aged between five and ten years, and grandparents in their sixties with children in their late thirties and grandchildren aged between seven and twelve years old. Some ninety percent of respondents were from professional middle class backgrounds with a university degree. There were very few young adults (16-25 years), people from the lower social classes, or of afro-Brazilian descent observed. In the latter case this would be explained by the focus of the main museum's theme, which is about the immigration of European and Japanese families since the 1870s and not about the movement of the ancestors of afro-Brazilians who came to Brazil in earlier time periods and under different conditions of work and freedom.

Analysis of the data was carried out by noting the occurrence of repeated ideas and themes, in line with previous research carried out using personal meaning mapping, to approach an understanding of the depth and breadth of the museum experience.¹²⁷ The responses of those who took part in the interviews before and after the short steam train ride fell into four broad areas. For the majority of visitors their replies demonstrated that the trip had evoked personal emotions and memories, and acted as a contextualisation of the history of immigration in Brazil and the development of the state of São Paulo from the second half of the nineteenth century onwards (figs. 41 and 43).¹²⁸ After their train ride respondents were more likely to talk about their ancestors' particular

¹²⁷ Falk, Moussouri, and Coulson, 'The Effect of Visitors' Agendas', p. 111.

¹²⁸ Selected 'personal meaning mapping' responses appear in Appendix 1.

journey and settlement in Brazil (fig. 41). For some it evoked personal memories and a desire to preserve this form of transport (fig. 40) and for others it created a connection between the past and the present and provoked a recognition that travel by steam train was a more valuable 'cultural' experience than previously imagined (fig. 42).

Overall, a majority of visitors were observed, through their responses, to be tending to revive personal and family memories during the train ride. These were likely to be expressed as tales from the time of the arrival of their grandparents or as recollections of travels with parents and uncles by train. Around half of respondents identified a strong connection between the past and the present, something that had not been expressed before the train ride. In part this was concluded to be an effect of the explanatory commentary during the ride which talked about the preservation work carried out by *ABPF* volunteers. It was also noted that the physical movement of the steam train and restored carriage would add to this tendency to bring the past into the present. There was no conflict of meaning observed in the responses; in fact the train was understood as a technology that moved people coming to settle in Brazil and as a thing to be preserved for the future. Indeed some respondents observed that this form of transport had an economic and environmental viability in the Brazil of today where big cities such as São Paulo were regularly subject to road traffic congestion at peak times. No mention was made by any respondents of the tensions between urban and rural life, between modernity and tradition, or between British technology and Brazilian soil. A note of caution is required since this group of interviews was a small sample, with no opportunity for in-depth follow-up interviews. However, the tentative conclusion this study draws from these responses is that this is an example of a hybrid form of the railway in Brazil where there is no conflicting meaning present. A majority of those questioned expressed a certain level of interest in railways and regarded it to an extent as a 'lost' form of transport in Brazil.

The work of the *ABPF* at the Memorial do Imigrante has the effect of contextualising the static exhibitions curated by the professional staff of the

museum, which is owned and run by the State of São Paulo. Since migration is the movement of people it means that these volunteers who run weekend steam rides for the public and operate weekday trips for school groups are carrying out a performance of transport that widens the comprehension and interpretation of the history of immigration into Brazil and in particular the development of the state of São Paulo. The *ABPF*'s interpretation of the steam ride also informs the visiting public about the political history of the development of rail transport and the work being done to preserve the industrial and technological heritage of the greater São Paulo area. It was observed that visitors came away understanding more about the potential of tourist steam train rides and the involvement of the voluntary sector. The results of the personal meaning mapping interviews demonstrated that the phrase 'Brazil is a country without a memory' did not tend to apply to this group of respondents, in fact many of the responses demonstrated that those who visited the Memorial do Imigrante and the *ABPF* steam exhibit were actively making connections between the past and the present.

6. Concluding remarks

Mário Chagas, in an article published on an independent website for Brazilian museologists in 2005, reflects on two decades of academic discussion in Brazil about heritage.¹²⁹ He reminds his readers that 'memory and preservation are inseparable from the exercising of power'.¹³⁰ He recognises that 'national' heritage is problematic and that what is required is that 'new heritages' are constructed in Brazil, where museums are created in a dialogue 'with' communities rather than 'for' them by the benign state apparatus.¹³¹ What the *ABPF* has done in Anhumas near the city of Campinas is to effectively campaign against the federal machinery, as Mário Chagas suggests, on the 'battlefield' that is cultural heritage.¹³² Since the *RFFSA* evidently failed to create museums of railway history that engaged with the visiting public it was left to a group of

¹²⁹ Mário Chagas, 'Cultura, Patrimônio e Memória', *Revista Museu* on-line magazine (Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 2005) '<http://www.revistamuseu.com.br/18demaio/artigos.asp?id=5986>' (21 June 2008).

¹³⁰ Ibid.

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² Ibid.

railway enthusiasts to negotiate to take over a disused branch line and to take redundant rolling stock off the *RFFSA*'s hands. The result was live steam experiences, where *ABPF*'s restoration teams mixed period detail with modern technological necessities to create what they call a 'dynamic museum' at Anhumas where transport is displayed through its movement.¹³³ Their work also reflected the politics of the times in Brazil, where the *abertura* of the 1970s was allowing more freedom of expression against what some regarded as an overbearing state.

Suzana Ribeiro says, 'The fact that the line was only preserved and acquired its current characteristics is due to the dedication of ordinary people who noted the failure of the State as a trustee of historic heritage and for over thirty years believed in an apparently impossible story and made it real and worthy of being told.'¹³⁴ The important aspect of this development was, as observed in this study, that railway preservation was originally seen as a foreign culture and that through the influence of a French enthusiast it was transformed into a Brazilian hybrid. Suzana Ribeiro also says the work of the *ABPF* disproves the notion that Brazil is a 'country without a memory'. This present study provides further support for that view and that the *ABPF* has in effect worked to preserve 'the maintenance of the techniques and traditions linked to the railway sector'.¹³⁵

State-run railway museums suffered from a lack of audiences, lack of investment, lack of leadership and a lack of enduring policy. Chapter 8 highlighted how the federal railway company, the *RFFSA*, between 1983 and the late 1990s attempted to display an elitist, nationalistic and static view of the railway. It was also noted how, since 2003, the Ministry of Culture's museum's policy has ignored railway heritage as a subject for the development of museums and exhibitions. This present chapter has focussed on the work of a national not-for-profit non governmental organisation, the *ABPF*, which since 1977 has found

¹³³ *ABPF e-Boletim*, vol. 1, no. 4 (June 2003), p. 3.

¹³⁴ Ribeiro, *Na Linha da Preservação*, p. 88.

¹³⁵ Ribeiro, *Na Linha da Preservação*, p. 88.

itself engaging directly with an enthusiastic audience keen to experience the railway as a contextualised museum. It has been observed that the *ABPF*, in three railway landscapes in the state of São Paulo, has discovered that there exists an appetite amongst a section of the Brazilian public for stories and representations of transport history. At Anhumas/Campinas these relate to the work and lives of hundreds of thousands of southern European immigrants in the coffee plantations; memories which are revived by descendants who visit the heritage ride at weekends. In Paranapiacaba and the Memorial do Imigrante it is their first arrival on Brazilian soil that is depicted.

At the time of writing the *ABPF* in Anhumas is beginning talks at national level with the *IPHAN* in Brasília.¹³⁶ This could eventually herald a new phase of the presentation of railway histories to the visiting publics in Brazil. At Paranapiacaba, to the south of the city of São Paulo, the *ABPF* is working in partnership with the local authority to develop the village into a regional tourist attraction. It has taken day to day control of the artefacts in the village railway museum housed in a former steam winding station and runs weekend excursions along a short stretch of the old *São Paulo Railway* at the top of the Serra do Mar. In central São Paulo itself, the Memorial do Imigrante owned by the State has discovered that there exists an appetite amongst a section of the Brazilian public for stories and representations of transport history. To be able to harness this potential the museum has joined forces with the volunteers of the *ABPF* to give a contextualisation of the story of immigration via the port of Santos at the end of the nineteenth century. These are narratives bound into the paternalistic and familial nature of society and relate stories of immigration and settlement to the transportation by rail of millions of people from Europe to the coffee plantations of the interior of São Paulo. These then are the private memories that are borne out of a public technology in Brazil that has reached a particular hybrid meaning free of the dualities of modern/traditional or rural/urban. It is the performance of Brazil's railway culture – of its heritage in the present day.

¹³⁶ Geraldo Godoy, 'Interview', in Ribeiro, *Na Linha da Preservação*, p. 104.

Conclusions

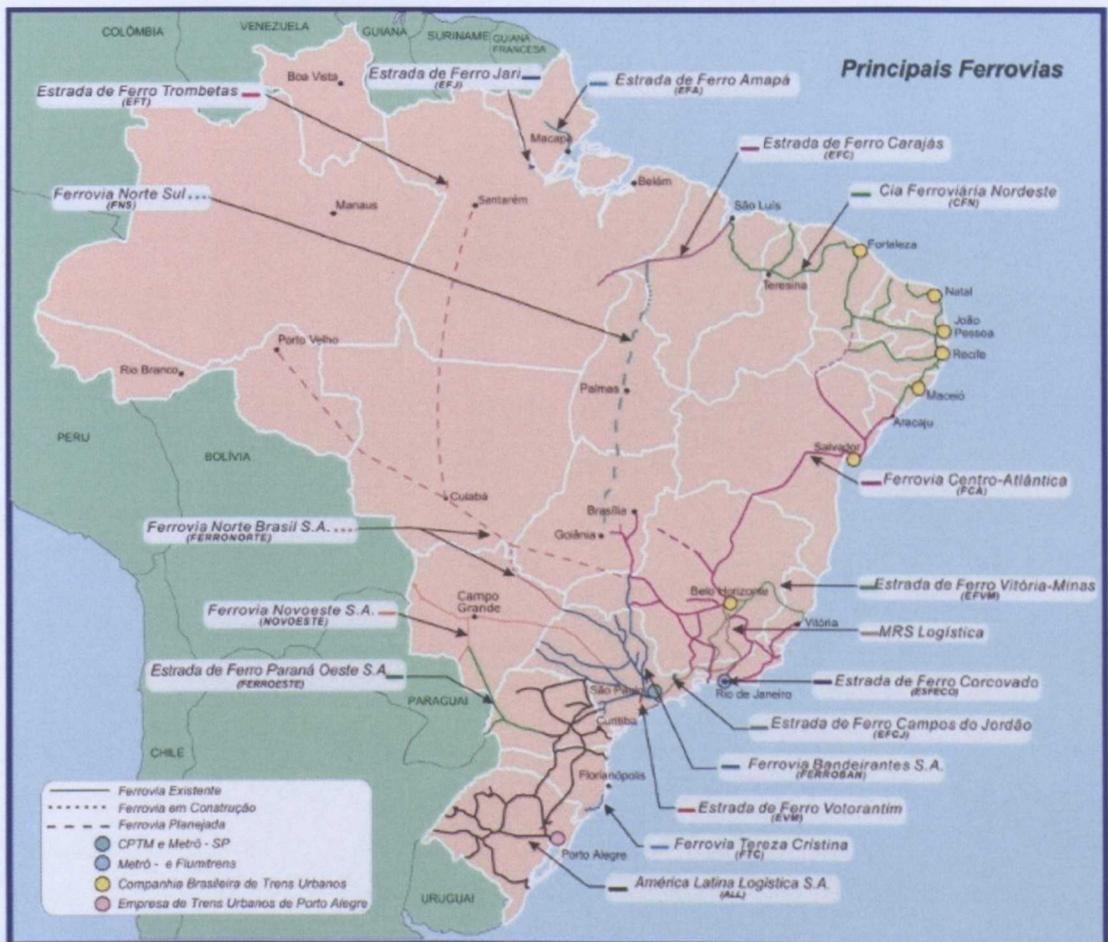


Fig. 38 'Principais Ferrovias', Railways in Brazil, 2008¹

¹ ANTT - Agência Nacional de Transportes Terrestres, 'Principais Ferrovias' http://www.antt.gov.br/mapas/imagens/mapa_ferrovuario.jpg (1 July 2008).

This study has considered the railway in Brazil and some of the cultural responses to this technology that was initially brought to the country from Britain. In 1928 Mário de Andrade noted that,

Paulistas ... are the only really useful people in the country (which is why they are nicknamed “Locomotives”, because of their powerful energy).²

Gilberto Freyre, writing in 1959, observed that

both the locomotive and the sewing machine brought new cultural avenues to Brazilian progress, each one in its own field of endeavour.³

Freyre went on to suggest that both rail travel and tailoring were brazilianised during the process of the transfer of technologies.⁴

This study has found support for such a view. The two quotations above also suggest that the *idea* of the railway, and in this instance the locomotive in particular, had taken on a meaning in Brazilian society that connected it with progress and hard work. This, however, has not been the only interpretation of the railway, as demonstrated by this present work’s examination of this transport system as thought of by writers, artists and other cultural workers. In order to analyse those responses the concept of the railway as a complex technological and cultural ensemble was introduced in chapter 2. Such an approach has allowed a multi-disciplinary meta-analysis drawing upon and selectively developing literary criticism, art history, film and television studies, and museum studies. These came together in the idea of the Large Technical Cultural System. In the context of this thesis ‘large’ reflected the physical size of the railways in Brazil (fig. 38) and for practical reasons this study has concentrated for the most part on railways in the state of São Paulo and the *São Paulo Railway* in particular (figs. 9 and 26). ‘Technical’ suggested several things: that the railway was the physical equipment which had been built by foreign engineers; the daily

² Mário de Andrade, *Macunaima*, trans. E. A. Goodland (London, 1984 [1928]), pp. 76-77.

³ Gilberto Freyre, *Ordem e Progresso* (6th edn., São Paulo, SP, 2004 [1959]), p. 360.

⁴ Ibid.

operation initially by British but later by Brazilian managers; and the artefacts themselves which may have ended up as museum exhibits and heritage rides after years of public service (fig. 30). 'Cultural' reflected that the railway stimulated the making of meaning through the combination of artistic practices such as making books, films and works of art, as well as the process itself of using the railway. In this latter respect the cultural process can be regarded as, for example, the manner of being a railway passenger, a preservationist working for the state or as a volunteer, or a visitor to a heritage steam excursion. Finally, 'system', recognised that these components exist only in relation to one another, making a meta-analysis such as has been carried out in this study not only a possibility but a necessity, given the complex nature of the railway itself.

The heuristic of the 'Large Technical Cultural System' acknowledged that there may well be resistances to the railway in Brazil. The technology, developed in Britain, was exported to other countries almost from the outset. In Brazil from the mid nineteenth century onwards London-registered companies and English-speaking engineers and managers came to work on a number of railway lines. Some of the sources discussed in this study have highlighted the nature of this informal railway empire. This has been one aspect of the process of transculturation, after Fernando Ortiz, which involves the 'acquiring [of] another culture', the 'uprooting of a previous culture' and 'the consequent creation of a new cultural phenomenon'.⁵ By thinking of the railway as a 'cultural' ensemble or system this study has analysed the complexity of the railway industry without however getting ensnared in explanations of the variety of ownership strategies which were employed by railway companies at different periods and in various parts of the country. These ranged from private Brazilian, to state and federal shareholdings, to foreign private operations and mixtures of all the foregoing. Such matters are the province of economic and political analysis.

Transculturation historically saw negotiations between myriad social groups being carried out on the meaning of the railway. On the one hand there

⁵ Fernando Ortiz, *Cuban Counterpoint: Tobacco and Sugar*, trans. Harriet de Onís (Durham, NC, 1995 [1940]), pp. 102-103.

was a notion that in some way it was bringing something new and different to Brazil. For example, initially, it was a means for landowners and exporters to speed up the transfer of agricultural products such as sugar in the northeast and coffee in the Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo areas, from the farms and plantations down to the nearest ocean port and thence to world markets in North America and Europe. This newness, the technology in the form of steel rails laid up mountains, across cleared forests and through growing suburbs prompted reactions such as that from the poet Castro Alves in 1870, who saw the train as the 'king of the winds'. The railway, between the 1850s and the 1950s, helped to redefine some of the geography of Brazil and in the state of São Paulo regions came to be known by the name of the railway company that ran through them. Meanwhile during this same one-hundred year period State regulators and foreign railway managers played a complex game, pitting profit motives against the control and promotion of the transport industry by those in political power. Passengers too were being called upon to adapt to new forms of behaviour on this form of transport.

Chapter 3 identified one of the first tendencies that appeared: a desire by contemporary historians to describe and classify the railway whose tracks were beginning to be laid on Brazilian soil from 1854 onwards, first in the Rio de Janeiro area connecting the Court to the city and the docks, then in the Northeast as the sugar plantations grew in size and export potential. In São Paulo state, and in the interior of Rio de Janeiro state, the coffee industry found railway freight to be a solution to the difficulty of sending exports to the Atlantic ports of Santos and Rio de Janeiro by mule train down the Serra do Mar. Chapter 3 noted the manner in which early written railway histories in Brazil followed a nationalistic narrative. Initial descriptive works from the 1880s, written in one case by Francisco Picanço, an engineer, and another by Adolpho Pinto, a government inspector of railways in São Paulo, were used and reused by successive historians for the next hundred years or more. Biographies written variously by the railway workers themselves and their families published from 1960 onwards had, as chapter 3 identified, tended to seek to highlight the particular person's value to the railway industry at the expense of a more balanced contextualisation.

With the availability of low-cost printing at the beginning of the twenty-first century an increase in the number of short volumes of memoirs has been noted. These, together with a widening of the research agenda of academics to include oral history techniques and the use of more critical approaches is today beginning to open up new versions of the narrow nationalistic historiography of the previous century.

Whilst factual historiography has not, until recently, allowed for much discussion of the meaning of the railway, fictional narrative, poetry and the visual arts have become the platforms where debate has been allowed to flourish. Chapter 4 identified four authors: Júlio Ribeiro, Machado de Assis, Jorge Amado and Márcio Souza who between 1888 and 1980 presented the railway in fictional settings and variously questioned whether it represented male rationality, urban modernity, rural tradition, or international political barbarity in the form of commercial imperialism.

The questioning of the railway ensemble continued in the works of poetry and popular music discussed in chapter 5, where two tendencies were identified in works published between 1865 and 1980. The first was embodied in pieces by Castro Alves and Raul Seixas, two artists separated by just over one hundred years, but united in their description of the train as a mystic and spiritual bringer of change and renewal. The second, more prevalent preoccupation with poets had been a doubt about the place of the railway in Brazilian society: was it bringing loneliness and separation or perhaps a sense of dislocation between the frantic rush of the city and the calm tradition of the countryside?

These themes also surfaced in Brazilian television and cinema productions (chapter 6) where on the one hand the steam locomotive was presented in one television *novela* as an icon of technology that led the colonisation and expansion of the state of São Paulo in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. On the other it has been depicted by movies variously as a de-humanising actor in the urban landscape and a threat to the quiet traditions of the poor country boy. In the latter case, Mazzaropi saves the

runaway train, refuses to be seduced by the big city and in the end gets wealth and the girl of his dreams. Chapter 7, which analysed works of art from 1924 to 1977, found three artists who continued to interrogate the railway ensemble in Brazil. Yet again the dualities emerged of rural versus urban, tradition versus modernity and nature versus technology. The tendency across the media forms of fictional narrative, poetry and song, cinema, television and art has been to consistently question the railway: was it really such a fantastic technological ensemble? Did the changes it brought both to the city and the countryside bring benefits as well? Had this foreign technology ultimately benefited Brazil? If so, how, and what did it mean? No single answer has been identified in this study, indeed the example of recent Brazilian cinema suggests the debate is still continuing.

However, in the world of railway heritage a different scenario prevails. In the 1980s the Ministry of Transport set up a network of railway museums across the country. With only a couple of exceptions these were static displays which failed to excite much interest in the small section of society that had the desire or ability to visit a museum. In a country where the population was long used to regarding museums as sites of cultural management by political leaders these railway locations, discussed in chapter 8, remained largely devoid of audiences. The messages within them, of self-promotion by the state-run railway company and of nationalistic excellence in the management of rail transport systems, were at odds with the daily experience for millions of passengers of late-running trains, the threat of assault on a platform, and overcrowded dirty carriages. Instead, as was discovered in chapter 9, the public chose to create museums of its own which would tell a particular railway history. Away from state control and in a new departure for Brazilian society, a volunteer network known as the *Associação Brasileira de Preservação Ferroviária (ABPF)* was formed in the late 1970s and eventually managed and operated a dozen or so short heritage steam railway rides at weekends in a number of states in Brazil. What their museums displayed was the travel experience itself, with the political influence of the state effectively removed. Apparently absent were any conflicting meanings between tradition and modernity, urban and rural, nature and

technology. Instead stories were created which emphasised the railway's involvement in bringing immigrant families from Europe to new lives in the plantations of the interior. The visits to these sites was observed in chapter 9, in the main, to be made by family groups and the meaning of the railway ensemble had at these places reflected a moment when the process of transculturation, the negotiation of meaning, had come to a settled hybrid form which focussed on the human rather than the technological. These visitors had come to be entertained, to revive memories of childhood railway journeys, and to discover how their ancestors had first arrived in this country. This study has read this development as a temporary phase in the cultural meaning of the railway in Brazil. After one hundred and fifty years of interrogation by artists and writers the museum-visiting public had decided that the railway in the opening decade of the twenty-first century would become a vehicle for engaging with family memories.

1. A cultural history of the railway in Brazil

It is possible to re-contextualise the various media examined in this thesis to provide a brief overview of a cultural history of the railway in Brazil. This would reflect on the long journey from 1865 to 2007 and one that over the years had formed what can be regarded as an extended dialogue amongst and between the artists and writers discussed in this present study. The idea of the railway as a potential form of transport in Brazil surfaced in 1835 and it was in 1854 when the first line was opened.⁶

By 1865 the state of São Paulo had its first line: the British built and owned *São Paulo Railway*. A debate and an exchange of views were from this point onwards already underway by writers and artists that would last for almost a century and a half. The derailment of the inaugural train on the *São Paulo Railway* prompted a satirical reaction likening the ensemble of the locomotive

⁶ Lucia Lamounier, 'The "Labour Question" in Nineteenth Century Brazil: Railways, Export Agriculture and Labour Scarcity', London School of Economics, Department of Economic History Working Paper no. 59/00 (2000), p. 26, note 89, '<http://www.lse.ac.uk/collections/economicHistory/pdf/wp5900.pdf>' (1 July 2008).

and coaches to a ‘bichino’; little more than an insect or mouse.⁷ In the final years of the Brazilian Empire the task of securing state control of the foreign railway technology through its classification and physical description was underway. In 1884 Francisco Picanço, the editor of ‘Revista de Engenharia’, published an alphabetical list of the states of Brazil and the railway lines in each state.⁸ His book of statistics also included lists of railway legislation for each company and was to form the basis of many railway histories to be published in the decades to come. The year slavery was abolished in Brazil, 1888, and one year before the end of the reign of emperor Dom Pedro II, Júlio Ribeiro published his controversial novel, *A Carne* (The Flesh), a work which drew heavily on the influence of France’s Émile Zola.⁹ Ribeiro presented for his readers a description of the *São Paulo Railway* and the descent of the Serra do Mar on the mountain section of the railway where train compositions were split into four carriages and taken down by brake cars and rope winding gear. For him the railway provided evidence for the rationality of technology which triumphed over Nature.

Writing two years later, in 1891 at the start of the first republic, Machado de Assis was able to share with his readers advice and tips on railway travel for the nouveau riche of Rio de Janeiro.¹⁰ For his characters on a chance meeting during an all-day journey on the *E.F. Central do Brasil* from Vassouras to Rio de Janeiro the railway carriage became a mobile space where Fate may change a person’s destiny for ever. It was, it appeared, a place to be wary of: seats had to be claimed, territory in the carriage marked out for the family, and dustcoats secured to protect the fine clothes beneath from flying cinders.

By the turn of the century the *São Paulo Railway* had become so successful and profitable that an extra line was built nearby to the original route

⁷ Pedro Taques de Almeida Alvim (atrib), ‘O Bichinho Vai Correndo...’ in Pedro Calmon, *História do Brasil na Poesia do Povo* (new edition, Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 1973), pp. 251-253. This, and subsequent footnotes, refer to sources all previously used in this study.

⁸ Francisco Picanço, *Viação Ferrea do Brasil: Descrição Technica e Estatistica de Todas as Nossas Estradas de Ferro* (Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 1884).

⁹ Júlio Ribeiro, *A Carne* (Cotia, SP, 2002 [1888]).

¹⁰ Machado de Assis, *Quincas Borba*, trans. Gregory Rabassa (Oxford, 1998 [Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 1891]).

on the mountain section of the railway to ease congestion. In 1901 the city centre station in its gothic Victorian splendour was opened at Luz (fig. 7) whilst Adolpho Pinto set about writing his descriptive history of transport in the state of São Paulo.¹¹ In doing so he recast the history of the *São Paulo Railway*, removing many references to the British owners and Brazilianizing the name of the company in the process. Like Picanço twenty years previously his work would be taken up by future historians and reused without questioning the facts and opinions contained in it. Meanwhile British railway investment had since 1853 been dominant in the north-eastern states of Brazil as well.¹² *The Great Western of Brazil Railway* was the subject of satire for the popular poet Leandro Gomes de Barros in 1916 who complained that the company was employing more ticket inspectors in an effort to stop fare-dodgers.¹³

The 1920s brought Brazilian Modernism into the realm of art and poetry and for Mário de Andrade the railway was to provide contrasting subject matter. In 'Paisagem n. 4' (Landscape 4), part of his collection titled *Hallucinated City*, he found the *São Paulo Railway* to be an imperial project of the British that was treated with shocking indifference by the Brazilian authorities.¹⁴ Five years later, in his novel *Amar, Verbo Intransitivo* he included a railway scene that poked fun at the behaviour of middle class Brazilian families and their precocious children.¹⁵ The gentle humour he displayed suggested a mellowing of his previous antagonism to this foreign technology. Not so for his fellow Modernist, the artist Tarsila do Amaral who painted at least four landscapes in oil on canvas featuring the railway as a central theme.¹⁶ Her use of colour, and her dislocation of the ensemble of the railway train and associated technology, suggested a deep-seated uneasiness about this modern technology. In her piece 'EFCB' (*Estrada*

¹¹ Adolpho Augusto Pinto, *Historia da Viação Publica de São Paulo (Brasil)* (São Paulo, SP, 1903).

¹² René Fernandes Schoppa, *150 Anos do Trem no Brasil* (Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 2004), p. 66.

¹³ Leandro Gomes de Barros, 'Os Coletores da Great Western', in Laís Costa Velho, *Pequena Antologia do Trem: A Ferrovia na Literatura Brasileira* (Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 1974), pp. 64-66.

¹⁴ Mário de Andrade, *Hallucinated City: Paulicea Desvairada*, trans. Jack E. Tomlins (Nashville, TN, 1968 [1922]), p. 75.

¹⁵ Mário de Andrade, *Amar, Verbo Intransitivo* (17th edn., Belo Horizonte, MG, 2002 [1927]), pp. 123-130.

¹⁶ Tarsila do Amaral, *Estrada de Ferro Central do Brasil* (1924); *São Paulo* (1924); *Barra do Pirai* (1924); *A Gare* (1925).

de Ferro Central do Brasil) (fig. 22) she demonstrated how the railway had actually stopped functioning and traditional life was quietly continuing in the background of Brazilian society. A contrasting view of the railway was provided in 1925 by Max Vasconcellos who published over the next twenty-two years six editions of his gazetteer of railway towns along the *E. F. Central*. His popular books also included a guide to the layout of the railway carriage and a history of the line.¹⁷ His work appeared to capture the public's desire for railway travel in the decades before the automobile and later air travel became more widely available.

The 'Estado Novo' (New State) of president Getúlio Vargas between 1930 and 1945 introduced a systematic management of cultural production by national governmental organisations and it was during and just after this period when many of the foreign-owned railway companies were taken under state control. The *São Paulo Railway* reverted to federal government ownership in 1946.¹⁸ The poet Manuel Bandeira published *Trem de Ferro* in 1936 in which he drew attention to the threat on the one hand that the modern railway technology posed to the lives of simple people in the countryside and on the other the danger that by not catching the rushing train the rural person would be left behind in the advance of progress.¹⁹ His edited collection of poets whom he dubbed the *poetas bissextos* (leap year poets) published in 1946 had a significant proportion of works that featured the railway. Two of the three writers discussed in chapter 5 demonstrated uneasiness towards the railway which they saw as bringing either loneliness or dangerous technological forces along its tracks. The overriding view was not a favourable one of the railway in this period. However in Recife, Pernambuco, in Brazil's northeast Gilberto Freyre indulged in some nostalgia as he scanned regional and national newspaper advertisements from the nineteenth century in search of the 'English in Brazil'.²⁰

¹⁷ Max Vasconcellos, *Vias Brasileiras de Comunicação: A Estrada de Ferro Central do Brasil – Linha do Centro e Ramaes* (6 edns., Rio de Janeiro, RJ, c1925-1947).

¹⁸ Schoppa, *150 Anos do Trem no Brasil*, p. 97.

¹⁹ Manuel Bandeira, 'Trem de Ferro', in *Estrêla da Vida Inteira* (2nd edn., Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 1970), pp. 145-146.

²⁰ Gilberto Freyre, *Ingleses no Brasil: Aspectos da Influência Britânica sobre a Vida, a Paisagem e a Cultura do Brasil* (3rd edn., Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 2000 [1948]).

The suicide of Vargas in 1954 ended his second period as president and created an outpouring of nationalistic fervour.²¹ Ademar Benévolo had published his history of the railways of Brazil in the previous year, making again a direct connection between state control and the railway ensemble.²² His chapter headings were the clauses of the railway concession, the *Estrada de Ferro Recife ao São Francisco*, Decree no. 1,030 of 7 August 1852. It took the reader into the territory of the British owned *Great Western of Brazil Railway* which in 1950 was taken over by the Brazilian authorities.²³ In Rio de Janeiro the artist Bustamante Sá decided that the urban landscape would look better if the technology on the rails was removed.²⁴ His *Vista de Santa Teresa* (fig. 24) featured the city's historic tramway without trams and with a pastel-hued cross that stretched from either corner of the canvas negating the whole idea of the technology in the landscape. From now onwards the railway was either to become an object of vague nostalgia or technology that had passed its best; the golden age of the railway in Brazil (if it had ever existed) was now ending.

Jorge Americano, a lawyer and politician in São Paulo, wrote in 1957 of his memories of turn-of-the-century city smells such as the coal and wood burnt by the locomotives of the *São Paulo Railway* and the *E. F. Sorocabana*.²⁵ In North-eastern Brazil Jorge Amado was in 1958 portraying the English employed on the railways as drinking themselves slowly into oblivion, whilst Joaquim Moreira Júnior was wondering why the Englishmen never seemed to enjoy the company of women.²⁶ In 1957, after five years of study and planning including a survey by a joint Brazilian-USA consultancy team, the railway companies were

²¹ Boris Fausto, *A Concise History of Brasil*, trans. Arthur Brakel (Cambridge, 1999), pp. 250-251.

²² Ademar Benévolo, *Introdução à História Ferroviária do Brasil: Estudo Social, Político e Histórico* (Recife, PE, 1953).

²³ Schoppa, *150 Anos do Trem no Brasil*, p. 66 and p. 73.

²⁴ Rubens Fortes Bustamante Sá, *Vista de Santa Teresa* (1954).

²⁵ Jorge Americano, *São Paulo Naquele Tempo: 1895-1915* (2nd. edn., São Paulo, SP, 2004), pp. 169-171.

²⁶ Jorge Amado, *Gabriela, Clove and Cinnamon*, trans. James. L. Taylor & William Grossman (New York, NY, 1988 [*Gabriela, Cravo e Canela*, São Paulo, SP, 1958]), pp. 259-260; Joaquim Moreira Júnior, *Estações da Minha Vida* (Belo Horizonte, MG, 2002), pp. 44-45 and pp. 92-94.

grouped together under federal ownership and the *RFFSA* was formed.²⁷ A number of lines in the state of São Paulo, not including the former *São Paulo Railway* (now known at this stage as the *E. F. Santos à Jundiaí*), remained outside the *RFFSA* and it was not until 1971 when they came under a São Paulo State holding company, *FEPASA*.²⁸ In 1958 Amácio Mazzaropi was saving the railway and gaining victory over the metropolis in his movie ‘Chico Fumaça’, yet the decline in levels of investment and passenger services continued.²⁹

From 1964 Brazil was ruled by a succession of military governments who systematically closed down opportunities for free expression, sought to promote economic growth and continued to regard the railways as inefficient, loss-making operations.³⁰ In 1965 Adoniran Barbosa had a carnival hit in Rio de Janeiro with a samba tune about a chancer trying to use the imminent departure of the last train at night to get away from his girlfriend.³¹ Even if the railways were in decline here was a *malandro* who knew he could use the example of his ability to afford to be able to buy a train ticket to show off his relative wealth. In the 1970s, as censorship and the forced exile of a number of popular artists occurred, Raul Seixas a pop singer who followed spiritist and New Age religions invoked the image of the train in a number of his songs including *O Trem das Sete*.³² Here the first train of the day was the bringer of a bright new future. For the artist Glauco Moraes in 1977 the technology of the locomotive was more of an ideological challenge.³³ He saw the railway ensemble as a gaudy metal arrangement that was obliterating the natural greenness of nature and the landscape (fig. 25). For him the process of industrial advancement in Brazil, as represented by the image of *FEPASA* diesel locomotives, had stalled. Meanwhile elsewhere in the state of São Paulo a group of railway enthusiasts under the guidance of a Frenchman were building a volunteer organisation, the *ABPF*, to

²⁷ Schoppa, *150 Anos do Trem no Brasil*, pp. 157-167.

²⁸ Schoppa, *150 Anos do Trem no Brasil*, p. 168.

²⁹ *Chico Fumaça*, dir. Victor Lima, Dynafilmes (São Paulo, SP, 1958).

³⁰ Fausto, *Concise History of Brazil*, pp. 280-296.

³¹ Adoniran Barbosa, ‘Trem das Onze’, in Bruno Gomes, *Adoniran: Um Sambista Diferente* (Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 1987), p. 64

³² Raul Seixas, ‘O Trem das Sete’, in Sylvio Passos and Toninho Buda, *Raul Seixas: Uma Antologia* (9th edn., São Paulo, SP, c1994), p. 168.

³³ Glauco Pinto de Moraes, *Locomotiva, engaste frontal – FEPASA* (1977).

make what would become an alternative expression of the railway in Brazil: one that was created by communities away from the direct influence of politicians.³⁴

In the mid-1970s numerous riots took place in the cities of Rio de Janeiro and in São Paulo as passengers were becoming deeply unhappy at the continuing poor levels of service on the railways.³⁵ Rolling stock and stations were destroyed yet little improvement was seen by the end of the decade.³⁶ In 1980, with the federal military authorities continuing to relax their grip on political and cultural expression, the singers Kleiton & Kleidir from the southern state of Rio Grande do Sul regarded Carlos Aloysio Weber, the president of the *RFFSA* at that time and a political appointee, to be the man to blame for the slow-running trains.³⁷ Coincidentally he was the man who presided over attempts by the *RFFSA* to display its rail heritage to the public. The writer Márcio Souza in 1980 used his historical novel, 'Mad Maria', to launch a critique of the political corruption of Brazil's political leaders and the self-serving interests of foreign businessmen.³⁸ Also in the same year, the singer and songwriter Milton Nascimento composed a ballet score lamenting the closure by federal politicians of rural railway lines in the state of Bahia.³⁹ This chorus of disapproval was thus emerging at the same time as the volunteer rail preservation movement was being formed. The reaction from the authorities was to create an 'official' railway history organised by the Ministry of Transport in Brasília and launched as *PRESERVE* in 1983.⁴⁰ Over the following ten years it opened fourteen museums across the country, but their static displays appear to have failed to attract substantial audiences and today many are unvisited and in some cases closed to public access.

³⁴ Suzana Barretto Ribeiro, *Na Linha da Preservação: O Leito Férreo Campinas-Jaguariúna* (Campinas, SP, 2007), p. 88.

³⁵ José Alvaro Moisés and Verena Martinez-Alier, 'Urban Transport and Popular Violence: The Case of Brazil', *Past and Present*, 86 (1980), 174-192.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 192.

³⁷ Kleiton & Kleidir, 'Maria Fumaça', *Discografia*, Kleiton & Kleidir, 1980, '<http://kleitonekledir.uol.com.br/discografia/5indice.htm>' (14 June 2008).

³⁸ Márcio Souza, *Mad Maria*, trans. Thomas Colchie (New York, NY, 1985 [Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 1980]).

³⁹ Milton Nascimento, *Ultimo Trem*, Far Out Recordings, FARO 083CD (London, 2004 [1980]).

⁴⁰ *PRESERVE/RFFSA, Centro de Preservação da História Ferroviária do Rio de Janeiro/Engenho de Dentro* (Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 1983), p. 5.

By the end of the 1990s, with long-distance daily rail travel confined to just two services, between Vitória, Espírito Santo, and Belo Horizonte, Minas Gerais, and between Serra de Carajás, Pará, and São Luís, Maranhão, the railway experience for millions of Brazilians had become confined to travelling in the urban environment. The Walter Salles film, 'Central do Brasil' (Central Station), in 1998 became a representation of the chaos and inhumanity of metropolitan centres such as Rio de Janeiro.⁴¹ Five years later the movie 'De Passagem' (Passing By) revealed the urban rail network of greater São Paulo to be a lonely, disorientating and de-humanising travel experience.⁴²

Meanwhile on television the TV Globo *novela* 'Terra Nostra' was in 1999 using the image of a locomotive steaming through the São Paulo countryside taking Italian immigrants to new life and new opportunities in early twentieth century.⁴³ The persistent use of the train in the opening credits, four times per night across six evenings of prime-time mass-market television served to consolidate the railway ensemble into the history of the development of Brazil as a modern nation. That the actual locomotive used to film the title sequence of 'Terra Nostra' was one of those operated by the *ABPF* at Campinas in the state of São Paulo cemented the hybrid meaning of the railway in Brazilian culture: a vehicle for personal and family memories away from the daily politics of Brazil in the twenty-first century.

2. Concluding remarks

This thesis has taken as its central argument the view that 'the railway' can never stand apart from its cultural meanings. The manner in which a technology and means of transport originally imported from Britain was implemented in Brazil has been a matter for constant negotiation by cultural producers in Brazil. The complexity of 'the railway' has meant that reducing any account of the period

⁴¹ *Central do Brasil*, dir. Walter Salles, Europa Filmes, (Barueri, SP, 1998).

⁴² *De Passagem*, dir. Ricardo Elias, Raiz Produções (São Paulo, SP, 2003).

⁴³ *Terra Nostra*, dir. Jayme Monjardim, script by Benedito Ruy Barbosa, TV Globo (1999-2000).

between the 1850s and the present day to economic or political analysis does not reflect the myriad of responses manifested towards the technology.

Evidence of the negotiation process, identified in this study as transculturation, has been found in a number of media and it has manifested itself as a series of dualities: between urban and rural, tradition and modernity. The emergence in the late twentieth century of a rail preservation movement has provided visitors to its heritage sites with opportunities to engage on a personal level with the railway's past, and the argument has been put forward that the responses observed here suggested that the railway's 'past-in-the-present' no longer offered a major conflict of meaning. Instead it was regarded by some visitors not as archaic but as a plausible alternative mode of transport.

By taking a selective approach to cultural media and by examining each form in turn this study has built up an analysis of railway culture in Brazil. It has, however, been only a first step on a longer research path. This thesis has identified three areas for further study. Firstly, in chapter 3 it was noted that worker unrest and the influence of trade unions in the Brazilian railway industry is in need of investigation. Secondly chapter 7 identified the possibility of a reading of railway photographs and lithographs from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as a further media form. Lastly, missing so far have been detailed first-hand descriptions of the non-elite travel experience. As has been previously noted, writers of narrative fiction and historical accounts have tended to come from the literate upper sections of Brazilian society. Future research, by reading across such accounts, could be carried out in order to give voice to the travel and transport experiences – both in the city and the rural environments – of the working classes during the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Oral history techniques, already being used by some railway historians in Brazil, would add further insight into this field with recollections from the late twentieth century, in particular the period just before many of the long-distance routes were shut down in the late 1960s and early 1970s. In addition, such analytical approaches could be employed in an examination of present-day urban transport in Brazil's major cities such as Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, Curitiba and

Recife. Such research would add to the further understanding of the everyday experience of railway travel in Brazil.

Appendix 1

Memorial do Imigrante, São Paulo, SP

Selected 'personal meaning mapping' responses, July-August 2007.

A total of fifty eight interviews were carried out over four consecutive weekends with museum visitors who took a ride on the short two-kilometre steam train excursion run by volunteers and staff of the *ABPF*, Associação Brasileira de Preservação Ferroviária (Brazilian Rail Preservation Association), along a stretch of line adjacent to the old *São Paulo Railway*, which today forms part of the city centre's rail passenger network. Interviewees were asked to draw or write with a red pen on a blank sheet of paper, with the word 'trem' (train) given as a prompt, before taking a rail excursion, and with a blue pen after their trip. See chapter 9 for discussion of these results and their research context.



Fig. 39 Passengers listen to an *ABPF* volunteer guard and fireman explaining steam locomotive technology, Memorial do Imigrante, São Paulo, SP (2007)

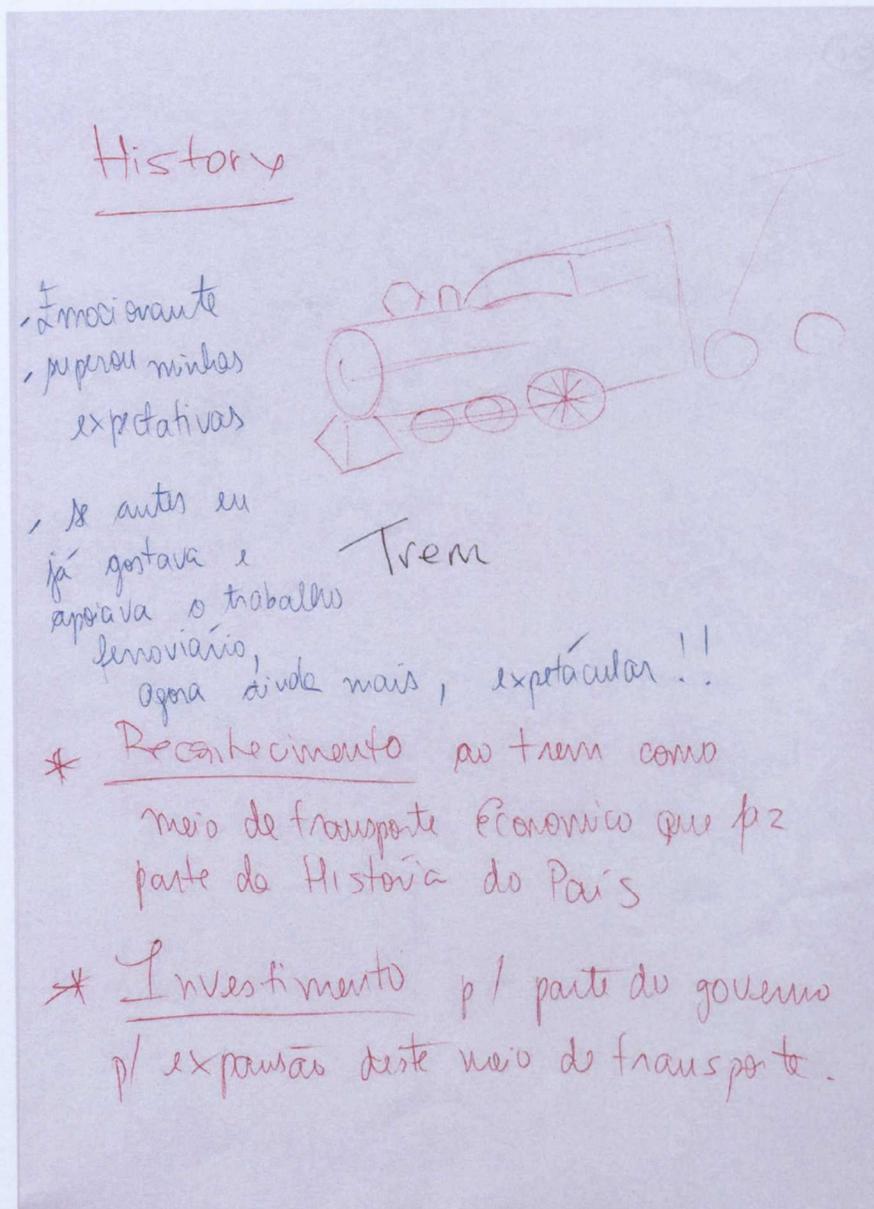


Fig. 40

Case no. 021 Male, São Paulo-SP

Before (red):

History [in English]

* Recognition of the train as an economic means of transport which is part of the country's history

* Investment on the part of the government for the expansion of this form of transport

Afterwards (blue):

-Emotional

-exceeded my expectations

-if before I already liked and supported the work of the railways, now I do even more, spectacular!

O passeio nos traz de volta às
nossas origens, tentando reviver
nossos antepassados.

Trem

Faz parte da nossa história

Passeio
Meio de locomoção antigo
Lembrança



Fig. 41

Case no. 016 Male, São Paulo-SP

Before (red):

It is part of our history

Trip

Old fashioned form of travel

Memory

Afterwards (blue):

The trip brings us back to our origins, trying to revive our ancestors

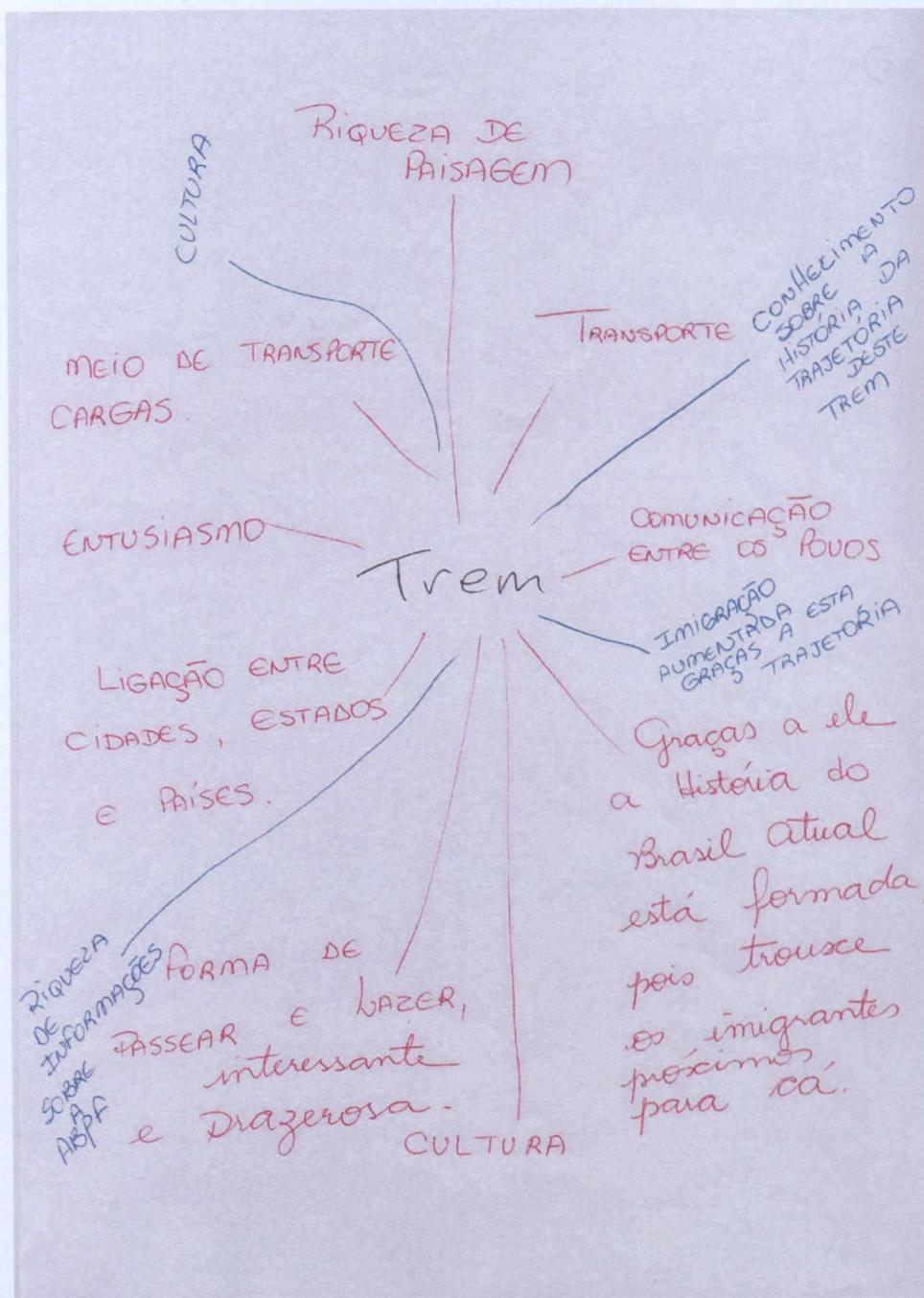


Fig. 42

Case no. 035

Female, São Paulo-SP

Before (red):

Beauty of the scenery Transport Communication between people
 Thanks to it [the train] the actual history of Brazil is formed, thus it brought the
 immigrants close, from there.

Culture A form of outing and leisure, interesting and enjoyable

Link between cities, states and countries

Enthusiasm Means of transporting freight

Afterwards (blue):

Culture Understanding about the history and route of this train

Immigration increased thanks to this route Lots of information about the ABPF

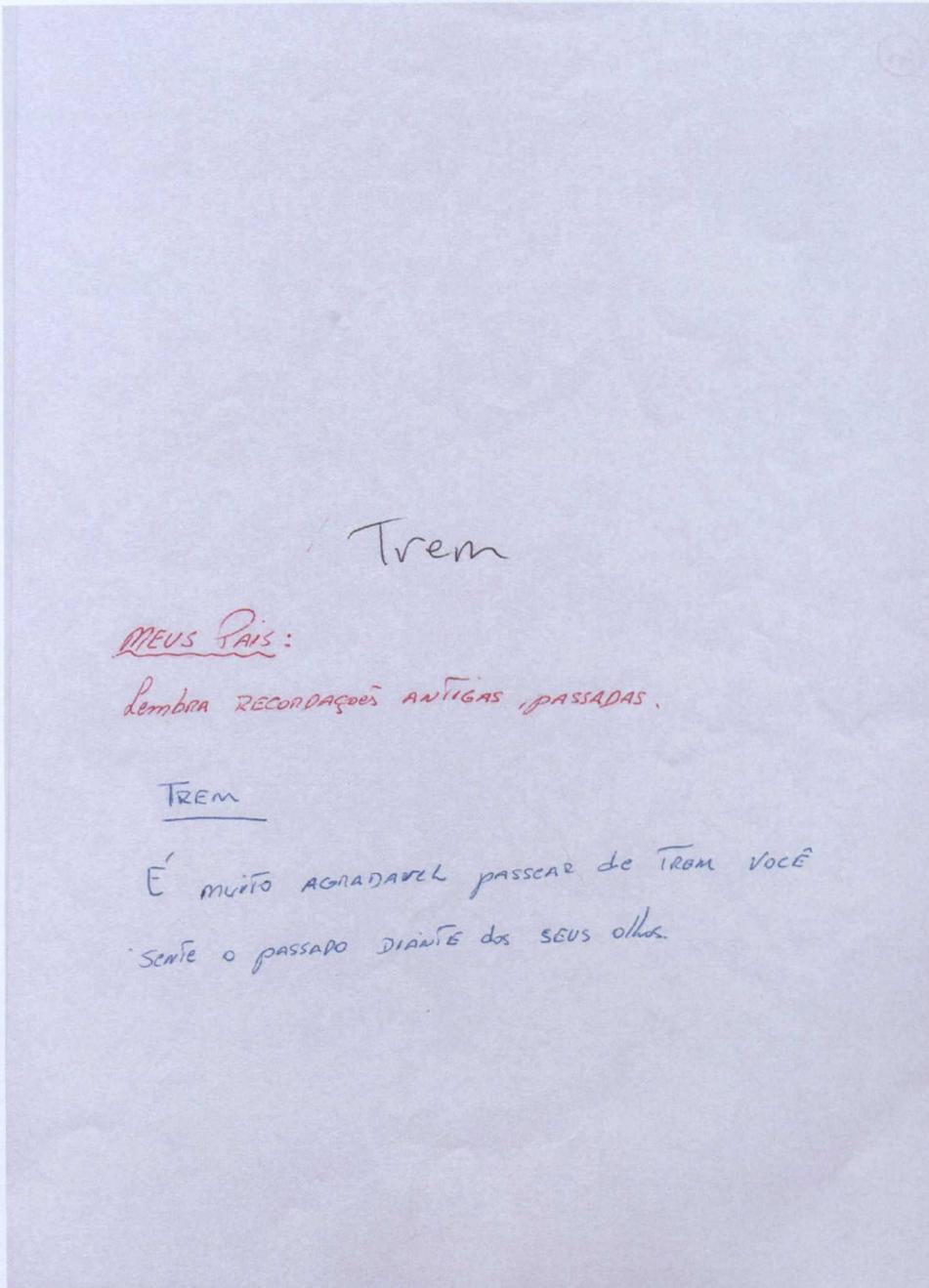


Fig. 43

Case no. 041

Female, São Paulo-SP

Before (red):

My Parents

I remember old memories, from the past

Afterwards (blue):

Train

It is very enjoyable to ride on the train. You feel the past in front of your eyes

Glossary

ABPF	Associação Brasileira de Preservação Ferroviária (Brazilian Rail Preservation Association)
ABPF e-Boletim	‘ABPF Boletim: Informativo Eletrônico da Associação Brasileira de Preservação Ferroviária’
AECB	Associação de Engenheiros da E.F. Central do Brasil
AEEFSJ	Associação dos Engenheiros da Estrada de Ferro Santos à Jundiaí (Association of EFS-J Engineers)
ANTT	Agência Nacional de Transportes Terrestres (National Terrestrial Transport Agency)
CBTU	Companhia Brasileira de Trens Urbanos
CMEF	Companhia Mogiana de Estradas de Ferro
CPTM	Companhia Paulista de Trens Metropolitanos
CVRD	Companhia Vale do Rio Doce, now known as Vale
DNEF	Departamento Nacional de Estradas de Ferro (National Department of Railways)
E. F.	estrada de ferro (railway)
EFS-J	Estrada de Ferro Santos à Jundiaí (formerly the SPR)
GWBR	Great Western of Brazil Railway Company Limited

FEPASA	Ferrovias Paulista S.A.
IBGE	Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística (Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics)
IPHAN	Instituto do Patrimônio Histórico e Artístico Nacional
LTCS	Large Technical Cultural System
LTS	Large Technical System
NOB	E. F. Noroeste do Brasil
PRESERVE	Programa de Preservação do Patrimônio Histórico do Ministério dos Transportes
RFFSA	Rede Ferroviária Federal SA
RFFSA/SPR Archive	Documents relating to the <i>São Paulo Railway</i> and the <i>EFS-J</i> between c1865 and c2000 housed, at the time of writing, in secure storage with restricted access close to the Estação da Luz, São Paulo, SP
SPHAN	Serviço do Patrimônio Histórico e Artístico Nacional
SPR	São Paulo Railway
TNA	The National Archive, London
VFCJ	Viação Férrea Campinas-Jaguariúna

Brazilian states mentioned in the text and illustrations:

AL	Alagoas
BA	Bahia
CE	Ceará
ES	Espírito Santo
GO	Goiás
MA	Maranhão
MG	Minas Gerais
MS	Mato Grosso do Sul
PB	Paraíba
PE	Pernambuco
PI	Piauí
PR	Paraná
RO	Rondônia
RJ	Rio de Janeiro
RN	Rio Grande do Norte
RS	Rio Grande do Sul
SP	São Paulo
SC	Santa Catarina
SE	Sergipe
TO	Tocantins

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