



**CAMOC**

**ICLM**



# CAMOC Conference Programme

RIO DE JANEIRO, 12-17 AUGUST 2013

## CITIES IN LITERATURE

(A selection of texts alphabetically ordered by city)



## Athens, Greece, proposed by Eleftherios Skiadas

- Name of the author – George Seferis
- Title of the work (book, essay, poem, etc) - Six Nights on the Acropolis
- Name of the city described – Athens
- Translated by: Susan Matthias, The Modern Greek Literature Library (2007, p. 26-27)

### The excerpt

«He handed the paper to Stratis, as one might proffer a rose. Stratis took it and they all read.

TICKET  
Good for One visit to the Acropolis  
Night of the Full Moon  
Ten (10) Drachmas

“The place is the Acropolis on the night of the full moon, according to this ticket from the Ministry of Archaeology,” Nicholas continued. “But I didn’t find the ticket of my own accord. The hand of fate brought it to me. That’s why I haven’t been able to stop thinking about it. It occurred to me that the Acropolis is the place (I mean for people who have neither the mobility nor the means to go to the quarries at Penteli) with the greatest concentration of marble.

“This marble will be for moonbeams what Archimedes’s glass was for the rays of the sun. It will force the moonbeams to fall on you, you rivers sealed up in little bottles, with the greatest possible intensity.”

Nicholas emptied his glass. Salome refilled it.

“There’s something else that makes me believe that fate is pointing us in the right direction”, Nicholas continued. “At the Acropolis, on the night of the full moon, we’ll encounter a force that will compel our separated waters to converge. But we also might encounter yet another power that would be likely to help our cause: the legacy of our immortal ancestors”.

“I had no idea that oratory was one of Nicholas’s talents,” Lala said.

Salome tried to hush her up. Nicholas noticed this and smiled. “Even though Madame Sphinx hails from Lamia and studied in Central Europe”, he said, “Kallikles hails from Delphi and studied in Athens, Stratis hails from the Ionian city of Klazomenai and studied in the glorious city of Paris. Even through the rest of you hail from other locales and have graced other educational institutions, there is no doubt that the Sacred Rock is a symbol, an idea. One that our parents, the Greeks state, the Nation, when it existed, spent great fortunes to imprint on our tender childhood sensibilities.” Sphinx seemed ready to bolt out of the room.

“I know it. I know it,” Nicholas said, “My last argument is stirring up negative reactions. Emotional issues are always complicated and usually impossible to resolve. That’s why I’m not insisting on this particular point.

“In any case, I for one don’t see any other solution to our problem. If any of you has a better idea, I’m all ears. Then again, if you’ll do me the honor of accepting my proposal, then today, you need to decide that each month, on the night of the full moon, we’ll be going to the Acropolis together. For a total of six nights at least.”

## Budapest, Hungary, proposed by Krisztina Aczel Eszter

- Name of the author – Dezső Kosztolányi (1885-1936)
- Title of the work (book, essay, poem, etc) – 1. Oh, how I love the sad people of Pest...  
2. Trees of The Üllői Road
- Name of the city described – Budapest (Hungary)
- Translated by: Mulzet, Otilie

### The excerpt (poems)

#### Oh, how I love the sad people of Pest...

Oh, how I love the sad people of Pest,  
who stroll on the outskirts of József-town  
in their rent garments, on a Sunday afternoon  
and lingering, they listen, as from below  
hums the mirrored coffee-houses' drone  
and they gaze at the movie posters, indolent.

I have felt it nearly a sin so many times,  
in peacefulness I dwell, from you avert my eyes:  
rippling on the ethereal flounce of dreams.

So then at such times, on a forlorn Sunday,  
winter's mire thick on the twisted byways,  
I come to your streets in penance.

Here they live on the pavement, the dear ones,  
boot-heels worn, trampled down, orphans,  
hidden behind the coffee-stalls, silent.

Their starving girl children, held in love's embrace,  
threadbare orphans, sickly tired saints,  
they stand darkly beneath the gas flames.

Who has seen what is concealed in their rooms' shadows?  
Who has looked to see if upon their beds there is a pillow?  
Who has seen what they are, the sad people of Pest?

I have seen the worker, in his fever lain,  
his face pallid from smoking bad cigars,  
I have seen the earth's heart with blood stained.

For wherever I would go, it is to here I would return,  
wherever my path leads, it is your care  
accursed, poor souls, that my mouth would scream.  
for your streets are laid with worry-stones,  
your eyes sorrow's infinite stream,  
and alas, for this land, this sad land is my home.  
(Mulzet, Otilie)

#### Trees of The Üllői Road

May the heavens be with you,  
trees of the Üllői Road.  
May they cover your leaf-crowned heads  
scented, flowery tempest.

one thousand blooms white.  
You gave me pleasure, mettle,  
in you youth was embodied,  
trees of the Üllöi Road.

To others thus too open,  
trees of the Üllöi Road.  
Let them breathe the sweet perfume,  
the sleep-inducing balsam swoon  
across the evening hours.  
Let them not see the sad cypress,  
believing youth forever lasts,  
trees of the Üllöi Road.

The yelllowed confines are dying,  
trees of the Üllöi Road,  
The day of my pleasure is at rest,  
the breeze murmurs its sad distress,  
whilst every seedling slaying.  
Whither is Youth flying?  
Answer me, o gloom-leaved trees,  
trees of the Üllöi Road.  
(Mulzet, Ottilie)

## Copenhagen, Denmark, proposed by Jette Sandahl

- **Name of the author – Philosopher Søren Kierkegaard, Copenhagen, 1813-1855**
- **Title of the work (book, essay, poem, etc) - From the exhibition Søren Kierkegaard. Objects of Love, Works of Love, Museum of Copenhagen.**
- **Name of the city described – Copenhagen**

**Note:** On Infatuation, First Love, and Love beyond the Break-up. From the exhibition Søren Kierkegaard. Objects of Love, Works of Love, Museum of Copenhagen.

### The excerpt

Now I am not ashamed to mention again the words: the first love. For the happy individuals, the first love is also the second, the third, the last; here the first love has the qualification of eternity. (EO 2, 41)

The nature of all love is a unity of freedom and necessity. The individual feels himself free in this necessity, feels his own individual energy in it, feels precisely in this the possession of everything he is. That is why it is unmistakably observable in every person whether he has truly been in love. There is a transfiguration, an apotheosis in it that endures throughout his whole life. There is a unison in him of everything that otherwise is dispersed; at one and the same moment, he is younger and older than usual; he is an adult and yet a youth, in fact, almost a child; he is strong and yet so weak; he is a harmony, as we said, that resonates in his whole life. We shall celebrate this first love as one of the most beautiful things in the world. (EO 2, 43)

You, <Regina>, Sovereign Mistress of my heart, hidden in the deepest privacy of my breast, in the most fulsome of my thoughts on life, there, where it is just as far to heaven as to hell. Oh, can I really believe the poets' tales that when one sees the beloved for the first time one believes one has seen her long before; that all love, like all knowledge, is recollection; that love too has its prophecies, its types, its myths, in the single individual. Everywhere, in every girl's face, I see

a trace of your beauty, but it seems to me that I would have to have all girls in order to extract your beauty from all of theirs; that I would have to circumnavigate the earth to find that continent I lack, and that the deepest secrecy of my entire I nevertheless points to it as its pole;—and in the next moment you are so near to me, so present, so powerfully making my spirit whole, that I am transfigured in my own eyes and feel that here is a good place to be. Shall I find what I am seeking here in this world, shall I experience the conclusion of all my life's eccentric premises, shall I enclose you in my arms—or: Have you gone ahead, you, my longing, do you summon me, transfigured, from another world? Oh, I would cast everything aside to become light enough to follow you. (KJN 2, 5)

Above all, forget the one who writes this; forgive a man who, even if he was capable of something, was nevertheless incapable of making a girl happy. (SLW, 329-330)

When I was living on Norregade, on the second floor, I had a cabinet made of Brazilian rosewood. It was made according my own design, and this in turn was occasioned by words from her, the lovable, in her agony. She said that she would thank me her whole life long if she were permitted to remain with me, even if she had to live in a little cabinet. Taking this into account, it was built without shelves. – In it, carefully preserved, is found everything that reminds me of her and that might remind her of me. There are also copies for her of [the writings by] the pseudonyms; there were always only two vellum copies printed, one for her and one for me. (KJN 3, 438)

## Dublin, Ireland, proposed by Daisy Butterworth

- Name of the author – Louis MacNeice
- Name of the city described – Dublin

### The excerpt

Grey brick upon brick,  
Declamatory bronze  
On sombre pedestals -  
O'Connell, Grattan, Moore -  
And the brewery tugs and the swans  
On the balustraded stream  
And the bare bones of a fanlight  
Over a hungry door  
And the air soft on the cheek  
And porter running from the taps  
With a head of yellow cream  
And Nelson on his pillar  
Watching his world collapse.

This never was my town,  
I was not born or bred  
Nor schooled here and she will not  
Have me alive or dead  
But yet she holds my mind  
With her seedy elegance,  
With her gentle veils of rain  
And all her ghosts that walk  
And all that hide behind  
Her Georgian facades -  
The catcalls and the pain,  
The glamour of her squalor,  
The bravado of her talk.

The lights jig in the river  
With a concertina movement  
And the sun comes up in the morning  
Like barley-sugar on the water  
And the mist on the Wicklow hills  
Is close, as close  
As the peasantry were to the landlord,  
As the Irish to the Anglo-Irish,  
As the killer is close one moment  
To the man he kills,  
Or as the moment itself  
Is close to the next moment.

She is not an Irish town  
And she is not English,  
Historic with guns and vermin  
And the cold renown  
Of a fragment of Church Latin,  
Of an oratorical phrase.  
But oh the days are soft,  
Soft enough to forget  
The lesson better learnt,  
The bullet on the wet  
Streets, the crooked deal,  
The steel behind the laugh,  
The Four Courts burnt.

Fort of the Dane,  
Garrison of the Saxon,  
Augustan capital  
Of a Gaelic nation,  
Appropriating all  
The alien brought,  
You give me time for thought  
And by a juggler's trick  
You poise the toppling hour -  
O greyness run to flower,  
Grey stone, grey water,  
And brick upon grey brick.

## **Kaunas, Lithuania, proposed by Reda Žekienė**

- **Name of the author – KESTUTIS NAVAKAS.**
- **Title of the work (book, essay, poem, etc) – A Meeting with Kaunas**
- **Name of the city described – Kaunas**
- **Translated by: Rasa Drazdauskienė**

### **The excerpts**

What we call the Kaunas castle is only a fragment of the old castle – like Lithuania of today is only a fragment of former Lithuania. To survive in a fragment. We have managed this, and so has the castle. And so has the city in which only foundations and traces of former boundaries are left from the times of plenty.

The castle was built exclusively for defence, there was not even a whiff of representation – the city then cared about being, not about looking good. Eventually the House of Thunder (Perkūnas) capable both of being and looking good – will be built, but until then the castle, marked by the same sign of Thunder, will have to spent many years measured in crude spear ends.

It is impossible to get that time back as it impossible to rebuild that castle. Or, rather, it is impossible to rebuild the real castle. Still, nobody minds if you come here every day and reconstruct it in your imagination. There is everything you need – the place, the ruins of walls and towers, spaces, and both rivers. The entire Kaunas could be rebuilt in imagination, but the important thing is to start with the castle. This castle – as opposed to the Tower of Babel – is not in love with imagination, which yet needs it as a symbol and justification.

The castle has its own ghosts, which make it a real castle. It does not need the living anymore – it is now defended by ghosts. Besides, the appearance of ghosts signifies the beginning of its imaginary reconstruction.

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In a sense, every writer's home is a museum of literature. There, on the windowsills, under the tables and beds, there are tones of amazing literary material written by the writer himself and by his colleagues. The greater the writer, the more valuable his personal museum is.

Maironis was great. If his greatness is obscured by the passage of time, it will always remain visible in his own house. A big, beautiful house – no snow is able to conceal it.

Yet their greatness lies inside. It is neither Maironis' furniture nor the whole interior – though these are worth mentioning too – but the shelves full of writers living in their manuscripts. This house is a huge spiritual columbarium of Lithuanian writers; its inmates regularly leave their urns and go for a stroll. Contrary to an Indian, a good writer is not a dead writer.

People, who participate in the readings of contemporary literature here, run a risk to be compared to their great predecessors. And the contemporaries do not always win.

During the rebellion of 1863 the cellars of the house were used as a prison. Sometimes you wish they were still thus used – for the incarceration of criminally bad poets.

## Ljubljana, Slovenia, proposed by Jelena Batič

- **Name of the author – Sebastjan Pregelj & Gašper Troha**
- **Title of the work (book, essay, poem, etc) – Ljubljana Literary Trail**
- **Name of the city described – Ljubljana**

### The excerpt

Welcome traveller! Glad you are here. Allow me to be your guide on a literary trail around Ljubljana. As you have probably already gathered, there is plenty to see and experience in town. There is no shortage of stories; every road, every side street and every house whispers them. They rustle in the leaves of willow, plane and chestnut trees. Sparrows chirp and pigeons coo them. Monuments and statues tell them out loud. All you need to do is stop and listen. You don't even need silence to hear them. The hustle and bustle of the city does not drown them out, nor does the blaring of wedding horns on Saturdays or the ringing of church bells on Sundays.

Before we set off I must tell you that this wander around the streets of Ljubljana will stay in your memory for a long time. Together we shall leave the world of today for a world that once was and a

world that is yet to come. Not only shall we meet people visible to everyone else but those long gone as well, and even those who never were but still appear right here among us. Don't worry! This is not a ghost trail, but a path for the soul. Should you feel you are not up to it, now is the time to speak. There is still time.

There are two points in this town where people like you meet up with guides like me: under the clock at the main railway station or in Prešeren Square. We start our trail at the latter, a square named after the Slovene national poet France Prešeren.

## Lisbon, Portugal, proposed by Joana Monteiro

- **Name of the author - Fernando Pessoa (Bernardo Soares)**
- **Title of the work (book, essay, poem, etc) - The Book of Disquiet Name of the city described - Lisbon**
- **Translated by Richard Zenith, Pinging Classics, 2002**

### The excerpts

The Book of Disquiet  
Fernando Pessoa (Portuguese)  
Edited and Translated by Richard Zenith  
Pinging Classics, 2002

The Brazilian researcher Davi Fazzolari, São Paulo University, 2006, wrote:

"The city of Lisbon depicted in the pages of the Book of Disquiet: composed by Bernardo Soares, keep-book assistant in the city of Lisbon, written by Fernando Pessoa, is confirmed as an artistic creation and it is transformed into a literary city, by the eyes of Fernando Pessoa to his "semiheteronym" Bernardo Soares." (Abstract of Fazzolari's dissertation Views of Lisbon: 'Livro do desassossego' e 'O que o turista deve ver')

The train slows down, we're at Cais do Sodré. I've arrived at Lisbon, but not at a conclusion. (p. 132)

(But) I love the Tagus because of the big city along its shore. I delight in the sky because I see it from the fourth floor on a downtown street. Nothing nature or the country can give me compares with the jagged majesty of the tranquil, moonlit city as seen from Graça or São Pedro de Alcântara. There are no flowers for me like the variegated colouring of Lisbon on a sunny day. (p.216)

The Tagus in the background is a blue lake, and the hills of the far shore are a flattened Switzerland. (p.284)

It really takes very little to satisfy me: the rain having stopped, there being a bright sun in this happy South, bananas that are yellower for having black splotches, the voices of the people who sell them, the pavement of the Rua da Prata, the Tagus at the end of it, blue with a green-gold tint, this entire familiar corner of the universe. (p. 536)

The awakening of a city, with or without fog, moves me far more than the breaking of dawn in the country. It's much more of a rebirth, there's much more to look forward to, when the sun – instead of just gilding the grasses, the shrubs' silhouettes and the trees' countless green hands with its murky, then moist, and finally luminously gold light – multiplies its possible effects on windows (in myriad reflections), walls (painting them different colours) and rooftops (shading each one uniquely) to make a glorious morning absolutely distinct from so many other distinctive realities. A dawning in the country does me good; a dawning in the city good and bad, and so it does me more than just good. Yes, because the greater hope it stirs in me has, like all hopes, that slightly bitter, nostalgic taste of not being reality. The country morning exists; the city morning promises. The former makes one live;



the latter makes one think. And I'm doomed always to feel, like the world's great damned men, that it's better to think than to live. (p.619-20)

Ah, what transcendental sensuousness when at night, walking along the city streets and staring from within my soul at the building façades, all the structural differences, the architectural details, the lit windows, the potted plants that make each balcony unique – yes, looking at all this, what instinctive joy I felt when to the lips of my consciousness came this shout of redemption. (p.685)

My consciousness of the city is, at its core, my consciousness of myself. (p.1101)

## Rome, Italy, proposed by Layla Betti

- Name of the author – Pier Paolo Pasolini
- Title of the work (book, essay, poem, etc) – Roma Malandrina / Roguish Rome, 1957
- Name of the city described – Rome

### The excerpt

I always tell everyone, when I have the chance, that Rome is the most beautiful city in the world. Of all the cities I know, it's the one where I'd rather live; in fact, I can't imagine living anywhere else. In my worst nightmares, I dream that I am forced to leave Rome and return to Northern Italy. Its beauty is a natural mystery. We can attribute it to the baroque, the atmosphere, the composition of the terrain, with its elevations and depressions, a landscape that continually offers new perspective, to the Tiber that plows through it, opening glorious airy spaces in its heart, and most of all to the stratification of styles which at every angle offers up a new, surprising cross section. The excessive beauty produced by this superposition of styles is a veritable shock to the system. But would Rome be the most beautiful city in the world if it were not, at the same time, the ugliest?

Naturally, beauty and ugliness go hand in hand. The latter renders the former touching and human. The former allows us to forget the latter.

There are few spots in the city that are exclusively beautiful or exclusively ugly. There is something archaeological about beauty when it is isolated, in the best of cases. Usually, it is the expression of a non- democratic history, in which the people exist only to add "color", as in a print by Pinelli.

On the other hand, ugliness, when it is isolated and approaches the level of hideousness, is never completely depressing or repulsive. It contains within it an allegory of hunger and pain, its history is our history, the history of Fascism, of the war, and of the post-war period. It is tragic, but immediate, and for this reason, full of life.

[...] The suburban areas are the result of Fascist demolitions; the first stratum of the population here comes from the center of Rome, from Borgo Pio for example. But on top of that one, three thousand other strata have been added: refugees, "urbanized peasants", people who moved here from Cassino at the end of the war, and more recently, people from the rest of Italy, but with a traditional prevalence of people from the south. In this belt of suburbs, from Tufello to Pietralata, from Tiburtino to Quarticciolo, from Quadraro to Tor Marancio, live hundred of thousand of the disinherited masses, unskilled workers and unemployed.

Their situation is so rootless, so full of expectation, that what dominates their pagan morality – as modern southerners or regressive Romans – is confusion. It is revealed in every act. In fact, I would go further: it is a neurosis. Not to speak of the shantytowns, lost under piles of mud, piled against the walls of ruins. There, we are beyond all definitions: there we find incurable cruelty and angelic goodness, often contained in the same soul.

Rotosei, Rome, April 12, 1957.

## Višegrad, Republic of Srpska, Bosnia and Herzegovina proposed by Jelena Savic

- Name of the author - Ivo Andrić
- Title of the work (book, essay, poem, etc) - Na Drini ćuprija (The Bridge on the Drina)
- Name of the city described - Višegrad, Republic of Srpska, Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Translated by: the translation taken from the edition of the novel published by Dereta, Belgrade, 2011; translated by Lovett F. Edwards.

**Note:** There are only two world heritage sites in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and one of them is the Mehmed pasha Sokolovic Bridge, situated in the small town of Višegrad. For the reading, I would like to propose a page from the Ivo Andrić's Nobel prize awarded novel, The Bridge on the Drina, about the town and its most prominent feature, the Bridge. This is also considered a most striking description of appearance and experience of Bridge, its significance and influence to the development of everyday living in Višegrad through history.

### The excerpt

Here, where the Drina flows with the whole force of its green and foaming waters from the apparently closed mass of the dark steep mountains, stands a great clean-cut stone bridge with eleven wide sweeping arches. From this bridge spreads fanlike the whole rolling valley with the little oriental town of Višegrad and all its surroundings, with hamlets nestling in the folds of the hills, covered with meadows, pastures and plum-orchards, and criss-crossed with walls and fences and dotted with shaws and occasional clumps of evergreens. Looked at from a distance through the broad arches of the white bridge it seems as if one can see not only the green Drina, but all that fertile and cultivated countryside and the southern sky above.

On the right bank of the river, starting from the bridge itself, lay the centre of the town, with the market-place, partly on the level, and partly on the hillside. On the other side of the bridge, along the left bank, stretched the Maluhino Polje, with a few scattered houses along the road which led to Sarajevo. Thus the bridge, uniting the two parts of the Sarajevo road, linked the town with surrounding villages.

Actually, to say `linked` was just as true as to say that the sun rises in the morning so that men may see around them and finish their daily tasks, and sets in the evening that they may be able to sleep and rest from the labours of the day. For this great stone bridge, a rare structure of unique beauty, such as many richer and busier towns do not possess (There are only two others such as this in the whole Empire, they used to say in older times) was the one real and permanent crossing in the whole middle and upper course of the Drina and an indispensable link on the road between Bosnia and Serbia and further, beyond Serbia, with other parts of the Turkish Empire, all the way to Stambul. The town and its outskirts were only the settlements which always and inevitably grow up around an important centre of communications and on either side of great and important bridges.

Here also in time the houses crowded together and the settlements multiplied at both ends of the bridge. The town owed its existence to the bridge and grew out of it as if from an imperishable root.

... On the bridge and its kapija, about it or in connection with it, flowed and developed, as we shall see, the life of the townsmen. In all tales about personal, family or public events the word `on the bridge` could always be heard.

## Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, texts selected by Instituto Moreira Salles

**NARRADOR:** DIZ O REFRÃO POPULAR QUE

DEUS CRIOU O MUNDO EM 7 DIAS  
MAS DESTES 7,  
SÓ NO RIO  
CONSUMIU 2\*

DEUS NÃO FEZ TANTO TRABALHO EM VÃO. AO LONGO DE SEUS QUASE 450 ANOS DE EXISTÊNCIA, A SEREM COMPLETADOS EM 2015, O RIO DE JANEIRO VEM SENDO LARGAMENTE HOMENAGEADO POR POETAS E PROSADORES. MANUEL BANDEIRA, PERNAMBUCANO DE ORIGEM QUE AQUI VIVEU E AMOU MUITO ESTA CIDADE, DESEJAVA MORRER SOB SEUS “CÉUS SERENOS”, COMO ESCREVEU NA “LOUVAÇÃO DO RIO DE JANEIRO”:

**LEITOR:** LOUVAÇÃO DO RIO DE JANEIRO

LOUVO O PADRE, LOUVO O FILHO  
E LOUVO O ESPÍRITO SANTO.  
LOUVADO DEUS, LOUVO O SANTO  
DE QUEM ESTE RIO É FILHO.  
LOUVE O SANTO PADROEIRO  
- BRAVO SÃO SEBASTIÃO-  
QUE NUM DIA DE JANEIRO  
LHE DEU SANTA DEFENSÃO.

LOUVO A CIDADE NASCIDA  
NO MORRO CARA DE CÃO,  
LOGO DEPOIS TRANSFERIDA  
PARA O CASTELO, E DE ENTÃO  
DESCENDO AS FALDAS DO OUTEIRO,  
AVULTANDO EM ARREDORES,  
SUBINDO A MORROS MAIORES,  
- GRANDE RIO DE JANEIRO!

RIO DE JANEIRO, AGORA  
DE QUATROCENTOS JANEIROS...  
Ó RIO DE MEUS PRIMEIROS  
SONHOS! (A ÚLTIMA HORA  
DE MINHA VIDA OXALÁ  
VENHA SOB TEUS CÉUS SERENOS,  
PORQUE ASSIM SENTIREI MENOS  
O MEU DESPEJO DE CÁ.)

CIDADE DE SOL E BRUMA,  
SE NÃO ÉS MAIS CAPITAL  
DESTA NAÇÃO, NÃO FAZ MAL:  
JAMAIS CAPITAL NENHUMA,  
RIO, EMPANARÁ TEU BRILHO,  
IGUALARÁ TEU ENCANTO.  
LOUVO O PADRE, LOUVO O FILHO  
E LOUVO O ESPÍRITO SANTO.

**NARRADOR:** MAS NEM SÓ DE LOUVORES VIVE A CIDADE. O POETA E ESCRITOR PAULISTA MÁRIO DE ANDRADE, QUE TAMBÉM FOI ARREBATADO PELA VIDA BOÊMIA DA LAPA DA DÉCADA DE 1930, NÃO DEIXOU DE RESSALTAR O SOFRIMENTO QUE CAUSAM AS ALTAS TEMPERATURAS DO VERÃO DO RIO. FOI O QUE FEZ NA CRÔNICA “A MAIOR FESTA”:

\* Refrão popular (in Aparência do Rio de Janeiro, de Gastão Cruls).

**LEITOR: A MAIOR FESTA**

[...] DESTA JANELA, OS MEUS OLHOS VÃO ROÇANDO A FOLHAGEM VERTIGINOSAMENTE DENSA DA GLÓRIA E DA PRAÇA PARIS, BUSCAR NO PRIMEIRO HORIZONTE OS ARRANHA-CÉUS DO CASTELO. A SUPERFÍCIE DA FOLHAGEM É FEIA, DE UM VERDE ECONÔMICO, DESENGANADAMENTE AMARELADO. MAS EMBAIXO, DENTRO DESSA CROSTA ENSOLARADA, O VERDE SE ADENSA NEGRO, DONDE ESCORRE UMA SOMBRA CANDENTE, TODA MEDALHADA DE RAIOS DE SOL. PASSAM VULTOS, PASSAM BONDES, ÔNIBUS, MAS TUDO É POUCO NÍTIDO, COM A MESMA INCERTEZA LINEAR DOS ARRANHA-CÉUS NO LONGE, OU, MAIS LONGE AINDA, NO ÚLTIMO HORIZONTE, A SERRA DOS ÓRGÃOS. PORQUE A EXCESSIVA LUMINOSIDADE AMBIENTE DILUI HOMENS E COISAS NUMA INTERPENETRAÇÃO, NUM MESTIÇAMENTO QUE NÃO RESPEITA NEM O MAIS PURO ARIANO. OS CORPOS, OS VOLUMES, AS CONSCIÊNCIAS SE DISSOLVEM NUMA PROMISCUIDADE INTEGRAL, DESONESTA. E O SUOR, NUMA LUFA-LUFA DE LENÇOS INGÊNUOS, COLA, FUNDE TODAS AS PARCELAS DESINTEGRADAS DOS SERES NUMA ÚNICA VERDADE CAUSTICANTE: CALOR! (1939)

**NARRADOR: POIS SE MÁRIO DE ANDRADE SOFREU, O MINEIRO PAULO MENDES CAMPOS, QUE ADOTOU O RIO DE JANEIRO DESDE OS 23 ANOS DE IDADE, ACHOU, NO VERÃO, A ESSÊNCIA DE VIVER NO RIO. PARA ELE, O RIO NÃO É DE JANEIRO, E SIM “RIO DE FEVEREIRO”, TÍTULO QUE DEU A UMA DE SUAS CRÔNICAS, DA QUAL DESTACAMOS APENAS UM TRECHO:**

**LEITOR: ORA, QUEM NÃO MORA NO RIO DEVE APRENDER O SEGUINTE: O RIO É PRATICAMENTE O MÊS DE FEVEREIRO; QUEM VIVE AQUI OS DIAS QUENTES DE FEVEREIRO VIVEU TUDO (OU QUASE TUDO) DA GRAÇA, DA EUFORIA CARIOCA. É DESAMARRAR A GRAVATA, METER O CALÇÃO E SAIR POR AÍ; TUDO ACONTECE. É EMBEBER-SE DE FEVEREIRO, POIS O MÊS VAI TERMINAR DE REPENTE, COMO O CHÃO QUE FALTA, E É PRECISO VIVER INTENSAMENTE QUANDO NOS SENTIMOS EMARANHADOS NA ARMADILHA DO EFÊMERO. FEVEREIRO É UM RESUMO DA EXISTÊNCIA CARIOCA: CURTO, AGITADO, SENSUAL, ENCALORADO, COLORIDO, DOURADO, IRREAL, FEVEREIRO TEM TODOS OS ADJETIVOS DA FANTASIA.**

**NARRADOR: RIO DE JANEIRO, OU RIO DE FEVEREIRO, COMO QUIS PAULO MENDES CAMPOS? NÃO IMPORTA. PARA CARLOS DRUMMOND DE ANDRADE, OUTRO MINEIRO CONVERTIDO A CARIOCA, O RIO É “DENGOSO, ERÓTICO, FRATERNO, ABERTO AO MUNDO”, COMO NO SEU POEMA “RETRATO DE UMA CIDADE”, DO QUAL CITAMOS TRECHOS:**

**LEITOR: AQUI**  
AMANHECE COMO EM QUALQUER PARTE DO MUNDO  
MAS VIBRA O SENTIMENTO  
DE QUE AS COISAS SE AMARAM DURANTE A NOITE.

AS COISAS SE AMARAM. E DESPERTAM  
MAIS JOVENS, COM APETITE DE VIVER  
OS JOGOS DE LUZ NA ESPUMA  
O TOPÁZIO DO SOL NA FOLHAGEM,  
A IRISAÇÃO DA HORA  
NA AREIA DESDOBRADA ATÉ O LIMITE DO OLHAR.  
[...]

ESTE RIO PERALTA!  
RIO DENGOSO, ERÓTICO, FRATERNO,  
ABERTO AO MUNDO, LARANJA  
DE CINQUENTA SABORES DIFERENTES  
(ALGUNS AMARGOS, POR QUE NÃO?),  
LARANJA TODA EM CHAMA, SUMARENTA  
DE AMOR.

REPARA, REPARA NAS NUVENS; VÃO DESATANDO  
BANDEIRAS DE PÚRPURA E VIOLETA  
SOBRE OS MONTES E O MAR.  
ANOITECE NO RIO. A NOITE É LUZ SONHANDO.

**NARRADOR: O CARIOCA, QUE PRECISA DE CORAGEM E PACIÊNCIA PARA ENFRENTAR OS MESES DE VERÃO, É RECOMPENSADO COM O FRIO AMENO DO OUTONO E, ATÉ MESMO, DO INVERNO. QUEM LEMBRA ISSO É A CRONISTA ELSIE LESSA, NA CRÔNICA “DELÍCIA DE MAR NO INVERNO”:**

**LEITOR: DELÍCIA DE MAR NO INVERNO**

NÃO, NÃO ME CONVIDEM NO MOMENTO PARA LUGAR NENHUM, QUE NÃO VOU. FICO NO RIO. TENHO QUE DEGUSTAR, SABOREAR, CONTEMPLAR, DESFRUTAR, DE CRONÔMETRO NA MÃO (QUE AI, ELE DURA POUCO!) ESTE DELICIOSO INVERNO CARIOCA. AH, MINHAS PRAIAS DE INVERNO, O SOL FROUXO E LOURO, AS AREIAS LIMPAS E QUASE DESERTAS, QUE SÓ OS INICIADOS SABEM DAS SUAS DELÍCIAS, NESTA ESTAÇÃO.

O SOL ACARICIA, NÃO QUEIMA, A ÁGUA É QUASE SEMPRE MAIS QUENTE DO QUE O AR, AS ONDAS SÃO MANSAS. NÃO É PRECISO LEVAR BARRACA. CAMINHAR PELAS AREIAS SEM NINGUÉM É UM PRAZER QUE SÓ A POUCOS É DADO USUFRUIR. É A MINHA PRAIA, É O MEU RIO, SEM O SOL INSULTUOSO DO VERÃO, A UMIDADE QUENTE E DEPRESSIVA DO AR. TODOS OS PROGRAMAS SÃO PROGRAMAS, POIS TUDO É BOM: FICAR EM CASA, IR À PRAIA, ANDAR A PÉ OU DE BICICLETA, FAZER COMPRAS, IR À CIDADE, DESCOBRIR VELHOS BAIROS. É COMO SE A CIDADE DERRIBASSE OS SEUS MUROS, A CADEIA INVISÍVEL, MAS ATORMENTADORA DO CALOR, QUE ME INUTILIZA, SEM VONTADE DE COISA NENHUMA A NÃO SER TRANCAR-SE NUM QUARTO DE VENEZIANAS E CORTINAS CERRADAS, COM AR CONDICIONADO LIGADO.

REDESCUBRO O RIO, A CADA NOVO INVERNO: OS CREPÚSCULOS LILASES QUE DE REPENTE INUNDAM AS MINHAS JANELAS EMBACIADAS DE UMIDADE, AS MANHÃS QUE TÊM FRESCURA MESMO DE MANHÃS, AS MEIGAS NOITES, ENVOLTAS NA NÉVOA DELICADA DA NEBLINA.

AH, DURA TÃO POUCO ESTE ESTADO DE GRAÇA DA NATUREZA, NESTA CIDADE LINDA, QUE É PRECISO NÃO PERDER NENHUM MINUTO, HORA NENHUMA DO SEU ESPLENDOR. DURMO COM PENA DE ESTAR PERDENDO NA INCONSCIÊNCIA DO SONO ESSE PRECÁRIO E DIONISÍACO MOMENTO DO CHAMADO INVERNO CARIOCA. OLHO INQUIETA AS LETRAS VERMELHAS DO NÉON NO JORNAL LUMINOSO DE O GLOBO: “TEMPERATURA EM...” EM QUÊ, MEU DEUS? NÃO VÁ DIZER QUE É EM ELEVAÇÃO. MAS “AS VEZES AS LETRAS ALEGRES ANUNCIAM: “TEMPERATURA EM DECLÍNIO”. TENHO VONTADE DE BATER PALMAS, DE JOGAR BEIJOS PARA AS PALAVRAS QUE SE VÃO FORMANDO: “TEMPERATURA EM DECLÍNIO: MASSA FRIA VINDA DO SUL FARÁ BAIXAR A TEMPERATURA” BOM DEMAIS PARA SER VERDADE? O QUE É QUE EU FIZ DE BOM PARA MERECEER TÃO GRANDE MERCÊ?

**NARRADOR: MAS ALÉM DA PERCEPÇÃO DE TEMPERATURA, DA EXALTAÇÃO DOS BAIROS CARIOCAS FEITA POR GRANDES COMPOSITORES E ESCRITORES, HÁ A APREENSÃO SUBJETIVA DE UM INSTANTE, DE UM OLHAR NA CIDADE, E QUEM FEZ ISSO COM SUPERIOR TALENTO FOI CLARICE LISPECTOR EM “O MAR DE MANHÃ”:**

**LEITOR: O MAR. TENHO DEIXADO DE IR AO MAR POR INDOLÊNCIA. E TAMBÉM POR IMPACIÊNCIA COM O RITUAL NECESÁRIO: BARRACA, AREIA COLADA POR TODA A PELE. E MESMO NÃO SEI IR AO MAR SEM MOLHAR OS CABELOS. E, CHEGANDO EM CASA, TEM-SE QUE TIRAR O SAL.**

MAS UM DIA VOU FALAR DO MAR DE UM MODO MELHOR. ALIÁS, ACHO QUE VOU COMEÇAR UM POUQUINHO AGORA. VOU FALAR DO CHEIRO DO MAR QUE ÀS VEZES ME DEIXA TONTA.

TENHO UMA CONHECIDA QUE MORA NA ZONA NORTE, O QUE NÃO JUSTIFICA NUNCA TER

ENTRADO NO MAR. FIQUEI PASMA QUANDO ME CONTOU. E PROMETI QUE ELA VIRIA EM CASA PARA ENTRARMOS NO MAR ÀS SEIS HORAS DA MANHÃ. POR QUÊ? PORQUE É A HORA DA GRANDE SOLIDÃO DO MAR. COMO EXPLICAR QUE O MAR É O NOSSO BERÇO MATERNO MAS QUE SEU CHEIRO SEJA TODO MASCULINO; NO ENTANTO BERÇO MATERNO? TALVEZ SE TRATE DA FUSÃO PERFEITA DO MASCULINO COM O FEMININO. ÀS SEIS HORAS DA MANHÃ AS ESPUMAS SÃO MAIS BRANCAS.