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GREGÓRIO DE MATOS GUERRA'S POETIC CORPUS AS AN ANALOGY FOR THE DUALITY OF COLONIAL BRAZIL

Viviane Ferreira de Faria

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**GREGÓRIO DE MATOS GUERRA'S POETIC CORPUS AS AN ANALOGY
FOR THE DUALITY OF COLONIAL BRAZIL**

by

Viviane Ferreira de Faria

THESIS

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of

**Master of Arts in Portuguese
Master of Arts in Spanish**

The University of New Mexico
Albuquerque, New Mexico
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Dedication

In memory of my father Carlos Pereira de Faria, from whom I inherited an immense
love for learning.

To my wonderful illiterate grandmother, Geralda Laura, whose inspiring wisdom goes
beyond the walls of Academia.

To my marvelous mother, Ana Rosa Ferreira, for her unconditional love and support.

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ABSTRACT

In this thesis I propose a model of analysis for Gregório de Matos Guerra's poetry based on the scholarly understanding of his Satirical poetry as a representation of Colonial Brazil as a body in decay. The comparison between the Colony and Matos Guerra's poetry allows for the dramatization of the tension in the Colony's life: on one hand, the new land is seen as a virtuous paradise; and, on the other, as a place where its people and resources are exploited and corrupted.

The first view of the Colony is depicted by Matos Guerra Lyrical poetry, thus, in the first chapter I argue that a comparison can be drawn between Matos Guerra's amorous lyricism and the Ufanist views of Colonial Brazil by analyzing the following poems: "Discreta e formosíssima Maria", "A uma dama dormindo junto a uma fonte", "Ao Rio Caípe recorre o queixoso poeta de que sua senhora admite por esposo outro sujeito" and "Desenganos da vida humana, metaforicamente". In these poems, the author presents the idea of *Carpe Diem* as celebratory of the richness and abundance of the New World, combined with the concept of the feminine Muse in perfect harmony with Nature.

The other view of the new land is analogous to the author's Erotic poetry in the sense that the sexual drive present in these poems is comparable to the corruption within the higher levels of Colonial society. Matos Guerra's choice for vulgar expressions infers a critique of the moral decadence of the clergy and the immoral behavior of the white aristocracy, especially men. These elements will be seen in the poems I analyze in chapter two: "Pica-Flor", "Necessidades forçosas da natureza humana" and "Minha Rica Mulatinha".

In my conclusion I argue that Gregório de Matos Guerra's Lyrical and Erotic poetry create an analogical construction of Colonial Brazil. This construction demonstrates the tensions between Brazil as a paradise and Brazil as a corrupt and decadent body. It is most likely that the same model of Brazil as body could be applied to Matos Guerra's Religious poetry, thus confirming the contribution made by this thesis.

Table of Contents

<i>Introduction</i>	1
<i>Gregório de Matos Guerra's Biography</i>	4
<i>The Baroque - A Literary Heritage</i>	6
<i>Gregório de Matos Guerra's Bahia</i>	12
<i>The Critics and Gregório de Matos</i>	14
<i>Methodology</i>	20
<i>Chapters Outline</i>	21
<i>Chapter 1 Gregório de Matos Guerra's Lyric poetry as a parallel to the Ufanist hopes for Colonial Brazil</i>	24
<i>Chapter 2 Gregório de Matos Guerra's Erotic poetry as a parallel to the colony's exploitative potential</i>	60
<i>Conclusion</i>	80
<i>Bibliography</i>	91

GREGÓRIO DE MATOS GUERRA'S POETIC CORPUS AS AN ANALOGY FOR THE DUALITY OF A COLONY

Introduction

Gregório de Matos Guerra (1636-1696?) has always been known as one of the fathers of Brazilian Literature. His vast body of work has been repeatedly published and extensively reviewed by renowned critics in Brazil and beyond. It has been common practice among Gregório de Matos Guerra's critics to catalogue his work into four main types of poetry: Lyrical, Erotic, Satirical and Religious. The reason for such consensus in categorization resides in the fact that Matos Guerra was able to transit freely and comfortably between these diverse genres. In this sense, Gregório de Matos Guerra showed how well he fit the profile of a man of his time, a typical writer of the Baroque Era.

His poetic versatility earned him fame and prestige among renowned literary critics like Segismundo Spina, Haroldo de Campos and many others. Nevertheless, more often than not, the recognition of Matos Guerra's wit is limited almost exclusively to his satirical writings. The social criticism, constantly present in his satire, has been widely examined by scholars such as Lúcia Helena Costigan, who posits that Matos Guerra's satirical poetry provides a critical depiction of the creole¹ society that was taking shape in seventeenth-century Bahia (89). This focus in the criticism has its roots in the fact that Matos Guerra did not refrain from harshly criticizing various segments of the *Bahiano*

¹ I define my use of the term 'creole' below.

Colonial society including aristocrats, members of the clergy, new nobles, mestizos and slaves.

In his Satirical poetry, Gregório de Matos Guerra reveals himself as the relentless critic in a permanent state of revolt, while in his Lyrical, Religious and Erotic poetry he presents the moralist, the man of religious sensibility, concerned with the disappointments of human life, death and the transience of things. In fact, Gregório de Matos Guerra is much more than a satirist: he puts *Bahiano* society on trial. The poet assumes the role of an omniscient judge of the mistakes and problems of Colonial Bahia; his satire is the condemning sword that brings righteous vengeance upon the sinful Portuguese colony. His work offers a varied and detailed portrait of life in Colonial Brazil that is taking shape before his eyes.

Matos Guerra's perspective on Colonial society is a result of his aristocratic social status as he was born in the New World from Portuguese parents. Moreover, Matos Guerra also acquired a refined critical sense through the education he received in Portugal, where he lived for most of his adult life. Gregório de Matos Guerra had a very privileged upbringing by birth, which made him part of the highbrow *seigniorial* group that had influence in the *Bahiano* society of his time. Thus, his insightful criticism was nurtured with the entitlement of the Portuguese elite, his Portuguese heritage and his physical distancing from Colonial Brazil. Matos Guerra saw the colony through the eyes of the dominant Portuguese class and he reacted to the vital ongoing changes of the country. According to Costigan, Matos Guerra embraces "the dominant ideology of the Portuguese state society, condemning the lack of authenticity of the seigniorial condition of the common individuals or *pobretes de Cristo* who, in XVII Century Brazil, were

active in commerce and rose socially through rapidly accumulated profits” (90). In this passage, Costigan demonstrates Gregório de Matos Guerra’s attitude toward those who, not coming from an aristocratic background like his, were moving upward in that society through the acquisition of titles in exchange for money and favors. In Matos Guerra’s view, nobility and aristocratic heritage were not negotiable commodities and those who treated them as such deserved to be punished through his Satirical poetry. Thus, the poet used his spiteful and vindictive satire as a weapon to defend his seigniorial position.

By defending his elite status, Gregório de Matos Guerra’s work depicted the socio-economic changes that were taking place in Colonial Brazil during that time. Not only because he was a poet born in the New World, but also because his writings depicted in detail the diversity and variety that miscegenation of races and cultures generated in Portuguese America, which became a constant in the colonies. The literature that arose in this “*mestizo*” context expresses significant aspects of these Colonial societies and we find literary similarities across the continent. For instance, Costigan identifies many common features in Gregório de Matos Guerra’s satire when she compares him to the Peruvian writer Juan del Valle y Caviedes. Costigan affirms that, “both exhibit a multifaceted talent, having produced religious, lyrical and satiric poetry in the last decades of the seventeenth century. Both experienced the life of creole intellectuals, marginalized within the Colonial system, and demonstrate the contradictions of the Baroque times in their satirical compositions” (88).

The term “creole” is widely applied in studies of Colonial Hispanic American Literature and theories of creolization as described by Bauer and Mazzotti (2009) will be applied to this work. Firstly, it is important to mention that the term creole frequently

came to refer not only to a person born in the New World, but also to those who were transplanted across the Atlantic. The term also referred to the New World's cultural beginnings due to the peculiar natural influences of *mestizaje*, which is also analyzed as transculturation (6). In modern social sciences, the terms *creole*, *creolization* and *creolism* have been used mainly to identify peoples and cultures transplanted from the Old World (mainly Africa and Europe), often thereby emphasizing cultural *changes* in the New World in opposition to Old World cultural *retention* (53).

In the current study, I set out to investigate how Gregório de Matos Guerra's work creates a holistic, yet peculiar, depiction of Brazilian Colonial society by examining how the Colonial condition is represented, not in his Satirical poetry, but in his Lyrical and Erotic poetry, which has not been largely ignored by scholars.

Gregório de Matos Guerra's Biography

Gregório de Matos Guerra was born in Salvador da Bahia, Brazil (1636), to an aristocratic family, who owned sugar cane plantations and had great influence in the administration of the colony. His father was originally from Portugal and his mother belonged to the Brazilian elite of the time. Gregório de Matos completed his first years of education at the best Jesuit school in the colony. As Brazil did not have institutions of higher education, the Matos Guerra family sent their fifteen-year-old son, Gregório, to complete his studies in Portugal (*Academia Brasileira de Letras*—website).

In the chronology provided by bibliographic sources (Perrone, 2008; Castro-Klarén, 2008 and *Instituto Memória Viva*—website), Gregório de Matos Guerra earned a degree in Law from the University of Coimbra in 1661 and was married for the first time

in the same year to Dona Michaela de Andrade. Because of his *Bahiano* heritage, Matos Guerra was nominated for a public job as representative of Bahia before the Portuguese Court in 1668. His successful career in the court led him to become a judge in Lisbon in 1671.

Some years after his first wife's death in 1678, the author returned to Brazil where he took on a short canonical career in the Catholic Church of Bahia. The Archbishop Don Gaspar Barata appointed Matos Guerra for the positions of General Vicar and head accountant; however, his deposition was inevitable since he refused to complete the ecclesiastic ordinations due to his intentions to propose matrimony to Maria de Povos.

His explosive character, vitriolic tongue and socially irreverent critical satires led to his removal from government office in 1683. Due to his bitterness about losing his governmental position, he openly criticized the General Governor of Bahia, Antonio Luiz Gonçalves da Câmara Coutinho. Their falling-out reached such proportions that the governor had Gregório de Matos exiled to Angola. In 1695, thanks to friends' favors, he obtained permission to return to Brazil, settling in Pernambuco where he is believed to have died in 1696.

Gregório de Matos Guerra's infamous personality and controversial work have earned him the title of *Boca do Inferno*, literally Hell's Mouth. Most of his contemporaries—writers, politicians, clerical figures, noblemen, influential businessmen, respectable women and sugar barons—feared his tongue as much as his pen. Gregório de Matos Guerra did not hesitate to publicly smear whoever crossed him. Taking pride in being the faithful and relentless chronicler of shame, addictions and deceptions of *Bahiano* society, Gregório de Matos Guerra was determined to unveil the embarrassing

truths about his community. His work remained unpublished for two centuries following his death. As a result, early scholars questioned the authorship of some of his poetry. Several of Matos Guerra's poems, particularly the lyrical and religious ones, are considered to be mere translations or imitations of Spanish poets, especially Francisco de Quevedo (*Academia Brasileira de Letras*—website).

The Baroque - A Literary Heritage

The period between 1600-1750 sumptuously combined the advanced techniques of the Renaissance with the intense and dramatic emotion of Mannerism. This combination gave birth to one of the most extravagant and ornate styles in the history arts: the Baroque.² The art of this period was only given this name after the fact, in the eighteenth century. The word “Baroque,” or *barroco* in Portuguese, is a derivation of the Italian utterance *baroco* that was, according to some historians, originally used to define a pearl of irregular shape. In the Middle Ages, this word referred to an obstacle in scholastic logic; the word came to circulate as a metaphorical expression for any “curled” twisted and intricate idea that was part of a process of thought (*Encyclopedia Britannica*—website).

In this fashion, XVIIIth-Century French author and art critic Denis Diderot (1751) defined Baroque as an adjective that possesses a bizarre nuance.³ This definition helps establish the ground for the metaphorical association between the imperfect “pearl” and

² According to René Wellek “In the XVIII century the term [Mannerism] emerges with the meaning of ‘extravagant’ . . .” (95).

³ The *Encyclopédie Méthodique*, edited by Diderot and published in France in 1751, brings the following definition of Baroque: “baroque, adjectif en architecture, est une nuance du bizarre. Il en est, si on veut, le raffinement, où s’il était possible de le dire, l’abus... il en est le superlatif. L’idée du baroque entraîne avec soi celle du ridicule poussée à l’excès.” (210)

the literary movement of the seventeenth century. Thus, the imperfect “pearl” compares to “thing” in the sense that the text is etymologically imperfect for an author as an irregular pearl is for jewelers. And, because the Baroque is considered one of the most complex artistic styles, Diderot coins the term “bizarre pearl” to refer to Baroque art. Due to its imperfections, this bizarre pearl is grotesque but, at the same time, bears an inexplicable beauty.

This inexplicable beauty expresses a philosophical inquietude that disturbed the man of the seventeenth century. This philosophical uneasiness had its roots in the dualism between the awareness of sin versus the concern for the soul’s salvation. The intricate flowery language and excessive use of figures of speech, in reverse order, resulted in a sort of black art cloaked in inner conflicts.⁴ Wellek affirms: “the precious and rare style of the Baroque artists is an expression of aggression, a sublime form of independence, of the conflict between the individual and the insecure world” (105). Thus, in accordance with Wellek, this art was the representation of the duel between the theocentric medieval times and the anthropocentric Renaissance. That is so because, during the XVII century, Western society developed an increasing appreciation for the achievements of humanity including the development of big cities and the advances in navigation. The new vision of man as the center of the universe was supported by certain rationalism, in which all needed to be proven by reason and not by faith. Therefore, mankind was experiencing a constant state of tension and dualism; divided between following the precepts of faith or embracing the opportunities of independence brought about by the Renaissance.

⁴ Wellek states that conflicts are pertinent throughout the history of literature: “Conflicts between the ego and the world, conflicts within the individual combined with a tortuous or precious style can found all over the history of literature from Iceland to Arabia and India.” (105)

As a consequence of such tense duality, the Baroque man lived in excruciating existential doubt. In his presentation of Walmir Ayala's *Antologia Poética de Gregório de Matos*, Leodegário A. de Azevedo Filho explains that Baroque arts expressed the constant humanistic conflict that comprised binaries such as forgiveness versus sin, soul versus body, virtue versus pleasure, spirit versus flesh, heaven versus earth (8). This all led the poet to exploit the use of antitheses, paradoxes, hyperboles, hyperbatons and metaphors (11). The brevity and transience of life represented by the concept of *Carpe Diem* pushed the Baroque poet towards his limits so he could live in the fullness of the moment.⁵ Thus, marked by contradictory impulses, the artistic output of the Baroque has as its fundamental feature the worship of contrast, conflict and contradiction.

By 1580, the Baroque culture started to have a significant influence on Portuguese arts, once Portugal was under the rule of Spain and the Iberian peninsula was unified. With the disappearance of the King of Portugal, Don Sebastião, in the battle of Alcazarquivir in 1578, the Portuguese throne was subject to the nearest legal successor because there were no heirs to ascend. Thus, Don Felipe II, king of Spain, promoted the union of the Iberian crowns (Haberly 56). The Baroque movement found Portugal in its darkest period (the Age of Darkness), without political autonomy and blindly believing the return of Don Sebastião would make Portugal regain its status as a world power by defying its crown's subjugation to Spain: this was known as the Sebastianist Myth.

While the rest of Europe basked in the sunlight of scientific breakthrough, the Iberian peninsula was covered with fear, uncertainty and contradiction. Moreover, with

⁵ The term as found in the Britannica Online Encyclopedia is defined as follows: *Carpe Diem*, (Latin: "pluck the day") phrase used by the Roman poet Horace to express the idea that one should enjoy life while one can. The sentiment has been expressed in many literatures, especially in 16th- and 17th-century English poetry. (*Encyclopedia Britannica*—website)

the death of the great Portuguese poet Camões, Portuguese language writers started to look up to the Spanish writers and their form of expression as source for inspiration. The most influential writers of the Baroque period were the Spaniards Francisco de Quevedo and Luis de Góngora, whose styles and themes influenced Gregório de Matos Guerra to the point he was accused of plagiarizing the latter. Haberly affirms that, “there is something forced and artificial about these verses, many of which borrow heavily from Camões, Calderón, Quevedo and Góngora” (56).

However, according to Ana Paula Silva, Matos Guerra did not simply follow the conventions of his time and Baroque stylistics—mastering the art of imitation—he also added his own flavor to the poem structure established by the Spanish writers (14-15). As stated by Costigan, during the Colonial period, the Europeans who came to the New World, despite their interests of mercantile capitalism, aspired to aristocratic status (89). Gregório de Matos, who descended from noblemen and was the son of owners of a sugar plantation, defended an aristocratic-feudal point of view. His Baroque lyrical voice rises against the emerging classes of European immigrants and of the mestizos, criticizing their false nobility (90). Costigan concludes that due to specific historical conditions, the poetry produced in Brazil in the seventeenth century resulted in “a Baroque code that was counterhegemonical, indeed distinct from the official European code”, as a result of the incorporation of ‘*carnavalesque*’ elements into Gregório de Matos’ work, breaking with the formal conventions of metropolitan discourse and giving to the poetry a “truly American flavor” (95-96).

According to Alfredo Bosi, within the European baroque, there were two main trends. The first trend was referred to as the “Iberian or Jesuit Baroque”, and was

prevalent in Spain, Italy and Portugal. It was this trend that had a deep impact on the artistic production of Ibero-America. This trend was mainly characterized by the portrayal of the religious crisis that took over European Catholic countries in that century. The second trend was the “Reformist Lutheran Baroque,” which developed in Germany, Netherlands and England; this trend had a more domestic and lay character, and did not embrace the liturgical purposes often seen in the Catholic oriented writings. As a consequence of this divide, the Baroque as an artistic manifestation that derived from the conflict between the Protestant Reform and the Catholic Counter-Reform was quite intense. (*História concisa da literatura brasileira*, 33-39)

The Jesuit Baroque had two literary veins: Cultism and Conceptism. Cultism or Gongorism refers to the way the poetry is constructed around word play, placing greater emphasis on Latinizing vocabulary, classical allusions, syntactical complexity, and complicated imagery. The term derives from the obsession with culture and erudition. Gongorism alludes to the Spanish author Luis de Góngora, who was one of the greatest exponents of this literary tradition. Among his followers in Colonial Brazil, we will find Gregório de Matos Guerra. Conceptism or Quevedism, presented a logical interplay of ideas, focusing on complex word play and brilliant metaphor or concept. The subtle argumentation and the dialectic rhetoric operate through unexpected associations as posed by Francisco de Quevedo. It is basically grounded on metaphors and elements of formal logic such as syllogism, sophistry and paradox. In Colonial Brazil, apart from Gregório de Matos Guerra, the intellectual who will incorporate Conceptist elements into his sermons is Padre Antônio Vieira. Both Gregório de Matos Guerra and Padre Antônio Vieira will be representative of the Baroque literature produced in the transatlantic

Portuguese colony; and their work will be used to exemplify the use of Conceptism and Cultism applied to a tropical scenario.

Cultists believed that cognitive perception of things should be enhanced by sensorial aspects (light, color, shape, contour, etc.) and the result of such mixture was a chromatic frenzy.⁶ Meanwhile, Conceptists investigated the intimate essence that would unveil the hidden face of things, which was only accessible to thought by means of exuberance and exaggeration.

Nevertheless, Cultism and Conceptism are two aspects of the Baroque period that cannot be separated; they are the two sides of the same coin. Moreover, contrarily to the separation of these two aspects of Baroque literature imposed by earlier critics, contemporary scholars such as Mary Gaylord posit the idea that Cultism and Conceptism are two intermingling trends in the Baroque literature. Gaylord affirms:

While early twentieth-century critics maintained that no two poetic schools could be more distinct from one another, recent scholars have concluded that *conceptismo* and *culteranismo* differ more in theory, and in rhetorical posturing, than in practice. . . . Although traditionalists and innovators might differ on the relative value of native and imported goods, all coincided in prizing poetic language as cultural treasure. . . . The Baroque poet no longer needed to see himself as the hero's servant: he could combine the roles of author and actor in the drama of his discourse.

⁶ Welck reports this holistic appeal to the senses that was typical of the Baroque arts: "The prevalence of synesthesia in the Renaissance apparently occurs only under such traditional figures as the music of the spheres, but during the Baroque boldly hear colors and sees sounds, is another indication of this belief in a multiple web of interrelations, correspondences in the universe." (105-106)

. . . hurling himself fearlessly into unknown seas and bringing back rich spoils of cultural conquest. (225)

Hence, Gaylord's view of Baroque literature is in congruence with René Wellek's conceptualization of Baroque art since the intertwining of Conceptism and Cultism is a reflection of the Baroque duality per se. Wellek posits that Baroque art was established as turbulent, tense and tragic; and at the same time it had tasteless metaphors, violent contrasts, paradoxes and antitheses (98). Additionally, the Baroque assumed a burlesque feature and was filled with binaries such as the tension between sensuality and religion (100).

Thus, his literary work and his conduct before his return to the colony made Gregório de Matos Guerra an example of the duality that was a constant in the kind of poetry he produced namely Baroque. Leading a life divided between the lines of social Colonial classicism, Matos Guerra's biographic dichotomies reflected the Baroque and the Colonial condition: purity *versus* sin; aristocratic *versus* low-level life; the elite white woman *versus* the *mulata*. As Gregório de Matos Guerra's body of work comprised all the elements of the Baroque style of writing (hyperboles, the grotesque, violent contrasts, etc.), thus it is necessary to understand this intricate art style.

Gregório de Matos Guerra's Bahia

In Brazil the Baroque had its timid origins in Bento Teixeira's *Prosopopéia*, published in 1601. However, one of the two most prominent Brazilian representatives of this impressive style was Gregório de Matos Guerra. His poetry frequently takes on the politics of Colonial Brazil and his main concern was the way Bahia was governed by the

administration that represented Portugal in the colony. Gregório de Matos Guerra felt personally outraged by the society he encountered when he returned to Brazil after spending thirty-two years in Portugal. The author was confronted with a Bahia he never expected to see. Through the streets of Salvador, Matos Guerra could see the effect of the ascension of a new social and economic caste. According to Haberly “at the heart of his complaints is a profound crisis of faith shared by many other Brazilians in the last years of the seventeenth century: life in the colony simply had not worked out as promised in the *Ufanistas*’ fantasies of tropical feudalism” (58).

As promised by the first settlers, those who would choose to face the seas and colonize Brazil would be granted privileges by the Crown. However, the people who settled in Brazil had started to acquire some habits that disturbed the “natural” aristocratic order established by lineage of nobility. Many merchants, farmers and men of a mixed background were working their way up to the top of the *Bahiano* social-economical ladder. The “new nobles” of Brazil had gained spending power, which threatened the aristocracy that Matos Guerra represented.

Gregório de Matos Guerra perceived these fake aristocrats as being illiterate and contributing to the perversion of the colony. For Matos Guerra, this perversion of noble values had permeated the *Bahiano* society like a viral infection, through miscegenation, corruption and a bad administration of the colony. Thus, Matos Guerra includes criticism of *Bahiano* society in his writing as a personal crusade to cleanse Brazil.

The Critics and Gregório de Matos

The drama, excesses and extravagances inscribed in Gregório de Matos Guerra's impressive verse have elicited a variety of divergent opinions from the critics. Firstly, it is important to point out that critics debate the authorship and quality of the poems attributed to Matos Guerra. Nevertheless, those critics consulted for this thesis recognize the importance of his poetry as a whole to the construction of a Brazilian literary tradition. In addition, these critics consider that Matos Guerra is a sort of spokesperson for Colonial Brazil since his poetry presents features that help design a portrait of the colony with all its color and vitality. Among these compositional elements, most of the critics cited here highlight Matos Guerra's detailed descriptions of Bahia's social structure, his references to the geography, fauna and flora of the colony along with his elaborate lexical choices. These elements are quite helpful to understanding the uniqueness of his poetry.

Moreover, the acknowledgment of the value of his whole work reinforces his status as a true Baroque writer, who incorporated sharply divergent aspects of human life into his poetry. When Araripe Junior published *Teoria, crítica e história literaria* in 1894, he acknowledged the importance of Gregório de Matos Guerra's poetry as foundational to Brazilian national identity, which was a key concern after the establishment of Brazil as an independent republic in 1889. In his preface to this edition, Araripe Junior affirms that "Gregório de Matos became a nativist without realizing that he was doing so, but the poet found all the formulas of nativism that are quite in fashion nowadays" (280).

According to Araripe Junior, Gregório de Matos was the blossoming offspring of the most hybrid society that existed in the world (actually, New World). Because of that hybridity, Matos Guerra, absorbed all that XVII-century Colonial Brazil possessed. His poetry is original and provocative, expressing a wide variety of themes. With that in mind, Araripe Junior implies that Gregório de Matos bore values comparable to those of an aristocratic “nationalism” if one considers the attachment the author had to Colonial Brazil.⁷ These values formed the marrow of his work and of his defense of his elite aristocratic position. Araripe Junior thus affirms that whoever reads Gregório de Matos’ work will understand that the poet had the courage to be a “nationalist” (280).

Almost one hundred years after the publication of Araripe Junior’s preface, Alfredo Bosi also acknowledges the importance of Matos Guerra and his poetry. In the critic’s own words:

Poesia muito mais rica, a do baiano Gregório de Matos Guerra... que interessa não somente como documento da vida social dos Seiscentos, mas também pelo nível artístico que atingiu. (*História concisa da literatura brasileira* 42)

In Alfredo Bosi’s view, the poetry Matos Guerra produced is invaluable because it has reached a level of artistic mastery that goes beyond its task of documenting Colonial social life. Bosi affirms that Matos Guerra’s literary production has always been analyzed in terms of contrasts, which reflects the poet’s condition as a product of a hybrid society. Bosi highlights aspects that translate this hybridism in Matos Guerra’s,

⁷ Once the concept of national state only solidified in the XVIII century with the advent of the French Revolution, the concept of nationalism as understood in contemporary societies does not fully apply here. That is so, because Colonial Brazil was considered an extension of Portugal and did not carry the status of an independent territory. Thus, the reader must understand Gregório de Matos’ *nationalism* as a passionate display of concerns the author had for the land where he was born.

explaining that the use of Tupi (a native indigenous language) and, less frequently, of African terms adds a *je ne sais quoi* of “tropical” novelty to his poetry, produced in Colonial Brazil (*História concisa da literatura brasileira* 33-43).

Alfredo Bosi also suggests that Gregório de Matos Guerra’s work has a latent element of denunciation. In a quite recent interview, the critic indicates that the author’s sensibility to the social problems of the colony was based on a biased perception:

Ele tinha essa sensibilidade, mas colecionava preconceitos contra negros, índios, homossexuais, judeus. Ele tem todos os preconceitos. Não é um libertário. Que nenhum baiano me ouça. Ou seja: os três nomes fundamentais⁸ para se entender a Colônia só podem ser ligados através de uma conexão com a história, com as lutas coloniais, com o problema indígena ou do negro. (*Interview with Alfredo Bosi 2*)

Segismundo Spina draws a reflection on the quality of Gregório de Matos Guerra’s work that aligns with Bosi’s, and focuses on his Satirical poetry. In his chapter about Matos Guerra published in Afrânio Coutinho’s *A Literatura No Brasil* (1986), Spina affirms that the poet composes the kind of satire that is engendered with a caustic spirit, bordering on farce, and filled with all types of prejudice. It is at the same time imbued with a hint of a chronicle quality that allows the depiction of a diverse Colonial society:

Gregório fez da sátira o seu breviário: é ele no Brasil que inicia o filão da farsa e do espírito destrutivo, com prejuízo de todos do preconceito, do amor-próprio e da própria família, ao contrário do que se deu com Vieira,

⁸ Castro Alves, Gonçalves Dias and José de Alencar are the three great names of Brazilian Colonial literature that have a very strong sociopolitical element in their poetry. (*Interview with Alfredo Bosi 3*)

que antepôs à sátira ‘as audezas poéticas e a diplomacia.’ É por intermédio deles e dos cronistas da época que poderemos reconstruir com grande fidelidade o retrato da sociedade brasileira do século XVII. (qtd. In Coutinho 117-118)

Segismundo Spina also sees Gregório de Matos Guerra’s work as descriptive and visual. In his view “the poet’s vision/visuality” is manifested in his descriptive poetry: from his luxurious painting of the passion fruit flower, which is eminently plastic; to Christ’s metamorphic stigmata; to his detailed descriptions of Itaparica Island and Recife Villa, two savory panels of tropical Baroque; to his latent promiscuous portrait in the Ash Wednesday procession in Pernambuco. Spina suggests that aspects of the colony’s natural landscape, social life and its linguistic reality are quite influential on Gregório de Matos Guerra’s poetic creation. He posits that these elements penetrate the poet’s work and mingle with his Cultist heritage, giving birth to what Spina defines as “tropical Baroque” (*A poesia de Gregório de Matos* 31).

The Brazilian critic Haroldo de Campos agrees with Segismundo Spina regarding the importance of Gregório de Matos Guerra to Brazil’s literary legacy (qtd. In *A poesia de Gregório de Matos* 9-11). In his introduction to Spina’s most recent anthology of Gregório de Matos Guerra’s poetry, Campos hails the revival or revalidation of Baroque poets by great twentieth-century writers. Campos declares that the Baroque period had been neglected in literary history; however, great writers such as García Lorca, Dámaso Alonso, T.S. Eliot and Ungaretti looked back to the seventeenth-century Baroque in order to scrutinize the poetry that has in its core the art of drawing ambiguity through contrasts.

In that sense, Haroldo de Campos discusses the importance of a revitalization of Gregório de Matos Guerra's work through the lens of a new contemporary criticism that still sees relevance in the aesthetics of the Baroque (72-76). Campos invokes a combination of critical elements in order to read Gregório de Matos Guerra. Among these, he examines against the background of Matos Guerra's biography, his poetic style, his intertextuality, his alleged plagiarism, his use of mannerisms and the linguistic features of his poetry. The last three elements are also among those that Spina analyzes in his study of Matos Guerra's poetry.

Among the contemporary literary critics that have taken up the task of revisiting Gregório de Matos Guerra's work, we find Fátima Regina Nogueira and Lúcia Helena Costigan. In her study of the poet's work, Nogueira points out the existence of tensions that permeate the relation between the Baroque, the city and satire.⁹ According to Nogueira, the crisis that give birth to Baroque culture bonds to satire through its role of social denunciation: this is where Matos Guerra exploits satirical ambivalence to describe the urban environment of the colony and to desacralize both history and literature (2).

Since Gregório de Matos Guerra's Colonial Bahia is immersed in degradation and corruption, Fátima Nogueira uses the analogy of the biblical Babylon to describe baroque tension between soul and matter. Nogueira analyses the representation of Bahia in Matos Guerra's work taking into consideration its inhabitants' Christian nature (or the lack thereof) and their capability to truly be converted into the holy faith. Nogueira indicates that, in Gregório de Matos' poetry, the salvation of Bahia's body depends on the faith of its inhabitants and also on their repentance for their misdeeds.

⁹ Nogueira uses the concept of Baroque as proposed by Maravall: social and historical transformations that humanity faced in the XVII century, which originated a crisis and the creation of means to control it by the Crown and the Church. (2) my translation

By using the concept of the body, Nogueira develops her analysis of Matos Guerra's metaphors of Colonial Bahia as part of the mystical body of the Portuguese empire. Nogueira goes beyond the metaphorical body and reads an analogy of Bahia's inhabitants as being an integral part of the state organism (5). Gregório de Matos' poetry is characterized by the expression of this analogy. Nogueira discusses the analogy with which Matos Guerra's work shows the crisis that corrupts the body of the Crown as follows:

A cidade como instituição se modela no corpo do rei com o poder e a vontade que dele emanam, numa união do corpo individual e coletivo, inscrevendo entre os dois corpos uma relação tão íntima, que a disfunção de um dos órgãos ataca todo o organismo. (6)

According to Fátima Nogueira, Gregório de Matos Guerra's work addresses all levels of the Colonial society through the breadth of his lexical choices. The poet's transgressing voice dialogues with both conservatives and liberals, demonstrating once more the conflicting character of the Baroque soul. For Nogueira there is a diversity of voices in Matos Guerra's poetry; and these voices co-exist in a consciously denunciatory and celebratory manner: "em movimento, em celebração que se opõe à mobilidade da letra e que entre a denúncia e a transgressão formal, propõe com sua face humorística o riso da confraternização carnavalesca" (10). Thus, Nogueira sees the sinful and imperfect dichotomy of the human condition as a manifestation of a "*carnavalesque*" fraternization in Gregório de Matos Guerra's satire, which results in his representation of the colony. Not only that, but Nogueira indicates that this dichotomy extends to his Religious, Lyric and Erotic poetry as well.

Methodology

While critics such as Lúcia Helena Costigan consider Gregório de Matos' Satirical poetry as a source of political criticism of the creole society that was established in seventeenth-century Bahia, my research aims to find evidence of the representation of the Colonial creole society's duality in his Lyric and Erotic poetry. In my view, these two types of poetry complement his satirical work in constructing an analogical microcosm of Brazilian Colonial society. Here I am working with Octavio Paz's consideration that analogy is the key to unveil the universe since: "it is a system of correspondences that tie, bind, or relate to each other in terms of their differences" (10).

In order to show how social criticism permeates Matos Guerra's body of poetry, I use Angus Fletcher's model of allegory. According to Fletcher, allegory provides an overt and direct statement that implies something "other" that "destroys the normal expectations we have about language, that our words 'mean what they say'" (2). Thus, while Matos Guerra's Lyric and Erotic poetry overtly express Baroque themes and conventions; covertly or allegorically they express the poet's interpretation of Brazilian colonial-imperial society in the making. His Lyrical poetry represents the Ufanist and chaste enthusiasm for Brazil; the Erotic poetry communicates the eminent threat of immorality; the Satirical poetry depicts the degradation and corruption; and, the Religious poetry epitomizes the search for redemption of the colony. For the purpose of this thesis, I address only the Lyric and Erotic poetry: the analysis of the Religious poetry falls outside the scope of the current project.

Chapters Outline

Chapter 1: Gregório de Matos Guerra's Lyric poetry as a parallel to the Ufanist hopes for Colonial Brazil

In this chapter I analyze the author's lyrical or love poetry in order to draw a comparison between Matos Guerra's amorous lyricism and the Ufanist views of Colonial Brazil. When the Portuguese first arrived to the New World, they were mesmerized and fell in love with the land as we can see in David Haberly's *Colonial Brazilian Literature* (2008). This infatuation with the enchantments of the new land is well documented by Pero Vaz de Caminha in his letter to the Portuguese King, where he portrays the Native Brazilians and the land as idyllic. His euphoric vision of paradise (untouched nature and innocent souls of the indigenous people) made the Crown turn a great deal of attention to Brazil, known then as Terra de Vera Cruz. The Crown's reporter was very rational in strategically informing the King what plunder there was to be taken and enjoyed by the crown in the newly found "paradise".

A relationship between the Crown and Brazil that nurtured love and care commenced in 1500 and the newly discovered colony became the apple of the Portuguese Crown's eyes. As it was the promise of fortune and glory (for both God and the Crown), there was a wave of optimism regarding the unexploited and virgin colony. Thus, as Haberly defines it, the early years of Brazilian colonization were filled with the Ufanist vision of the New World: a mysterious American Eden (48).

I argue that through an allegorical depiction of the bountiful land, embodied in the beautiful women of his lyrical poetry, Gregório de Matos' expresses the same power of idyllic innocence and overwhelming attraction as was used in the early 1500s to describe

Brazil. Thus, his lyrical sonnets promise the glory that only love can bring about, filled with mystery, innocence and optimism. Matos Guerra's Lyric poetry also seems to reflect the poet's disquiet regarding the direction in which the Portuguese Colonial project was swerving. In some of his lyrical poems, the edenic *ufanist* euphoria is withdrawn to give room to a certain sobriety and apprehension. This change in tone seems to anticipate the economic and social crisis provoked by both the decline of sugar trade and the miscegenation of the colony's population. This crisis is revealed to the reader through the tensions of the Baroque expressed overtly by the image of a beautiful woman and the promise of love that is threatened by time and death in the lyrical poetry and, covertly, by images of a beautiful paradise that is subject to the destruction brought about by mankind. What is a subtle tension in the lyrical poetry between bounty and its potentially destructive exploitation becomes more pronounced in the Erotic poetry, which I analyze in chapter 2, and which depicts the beginning of a Colonial crisis.

Chapter 2: Gregório de Matos Guerra's Erotic poetry as a parallel to the colony's exploitative potential

In chapter two, I argue that Gregório de Matos Guerra's Erotic poetry contains elements that correlate to Colonial Brazil's exploitative potential, drawing comparisons that might depict the economic cycles that determined the path Portugal took towards the exploitation of its trans-Atlantic territory.

Gregório de Matos presents in his work a kind of erotic love that can be read analogically as corresponding to cycles¹⁰ of economic exploitation: it is an eroticism that

10 The first cycle of exploitation revolved around the discovery and economic exploitation of brazilwood or pau brasil. Brazilwood was a commodity in high demand in the courts of Europe because the extraction

leads to the corruption of paradise. In his Erotic poetry, Matos Guerra depicts love as a feeling that is uncontrollable and full of conflict, contradiction, sensuality and sexuality. These qualities are related to immoral behavior of the clergy and the white elite as well as the uncontrollable greed with which Portugal was exhausting the resources provided by the colony. The more the love for the colony led the Portuguese to discover the richness it would bring to the Crown, the greedier the Crown grew, letting the lust of economic profit overwhelm its senses. As for Gregório de Matos, this erotic play in the life of the colony could put the future of the land in jeopardy.

of its heartwood sap provided the raw material used to make red dye, which was rare in the European Courts. In addition, the wood extracted from the tree was excellent for furniture manufacturing. The Portuguese saw an opportunity and seized it quite eagerly, taking advantage of the vast abundance of brazilwood and its ease of handling. Because it was a tree native to the coast, which required very little attention and care, the Portuguese easily harvested the brazilwood and, sadly, that was done almost to the point of its extinction. When the native brazilwood tree was depleted to the point that cultivation would take too long to turn a profit or provide revenues, the Portuguese turned to another economic resource that was within easy reach in the new land.

Thus, sugar cane culture became the “bola da vez” (the star player) in the Portuguese colonization game. Introduced by Martim Afonso de Souza, in the captaincy of São Vicente, sugar cane culture was easy and fast in terms of turnover. Once more, the Portuguese settlers would not need to expend great effort to successfully cultivate the lands on the northeastern coast of Colonial Brazil: they had prior experience from the Atlantic Islands; the soil was extremely receptive to that kind of plantation; slave labor was abundant and there was an increase in demand for sugar on the European market. Those who controlled the Portuguese monopoly of the sugar cane had very low cost investments. Nevertheless, their plantation realm was threatened by the arrival of the Dutch by the second half of the seventeenth century. The sugar empire was about to collapse in crisis.

Chapter 1 *Gregório de Matos Guerra's Lyric poetry as a parallel to the Ufanist hopes for Colonial Brazil*

In the Baroque period, artists and writers interpreted the universe and expressed emotion by drawing contrastive metaphors between common opposites such as day and night; sacred and profane; secular and mundane; beauty and the grotesque. By doing so, these artists engaged the dichotomous concept of the irregular pearl—both beautiful and bizarre—which thus symbolized the constant tensions of the Baroque period. The baroque was Gregório de Matos Guerra's literary heritage and he reflected this heritage in his work. His poetry embedded the tensions of the Baroque in such a way that he was able to write poems that ranged from the most innocent lyric to the most outrageous satire. In this chapter, I focus on his lyrical poetry in which he celebrated the beauty of his Muse. I read in this poetry the expression of an analogy between the feminine beauty of Gregório de Matos Guerra's Muse and the bountiful beauty of Colonial Brazil.

Colonial Brazil was a vast land whose potential was documented in the first text produced within its territory: A Carta de Pero Vaz de Caminha (*Carta a El Rey D. Manuel de Portugal*, 1 Maio, 1500). In this letter, Caminha addressed the King of Portugal—Dom Manuel I—in order to report the events of the maritime explorations of Pedro Álvares Cabral to find the Indies. When Cabral's fleet took the wrong route, it was sent on a course to the New World and, in 1500, discovered the land that Cabral named Terra de Vera Cruz. Caminha's letter also had the purpose of informing the Portuguese king of potential resources to be exploited in the new land. Thus, Caminha describes the richness and wealth of this pre-Colonial Brazil as we can see in the following excerpt of the letter:

Entre todos estes que hoje vieram não veio mais que uma mulher, moça, a qual esteve sempre à missa, à qual deram um pano com que se cobrisse; e puseram-lho em volta dela. Todavia, ao sentar-se, não se lembrava de o estender muito para se cobrir. Assim, Senhor, a inocência desta gente é tal que a de Adão não seria maior — com respeito ao pudor. . . . De ponta a ponta é toda praia . . . muito chã e muito formosa. Pelo sertão nos pareceu, vista do mar, muito grande; porque a estender olhos, não podíamos ver senão terra e arvoredos — terra que nos parecia muito extensa. . . . Águas são muitas; infinitas. Em tal maneira é graciosa que, querendo-a aproveitar, dar-se-á nela tudo; por causa das águas que tem! Contudo, o melhor fruto que dela se pode tirar parece-me que será salvar esta gente.

(8-9)

The description provided by Caminha depicts a land that embodies the notion of an earthly paradise filled with the promise of infinite human and natural resources to be exploited. Moreover, the paradisiacal view of this land is reinforced by the fact that it is inhabited by people of such innocence as to be compared to Adam and Eve. The beauty and exuberance of nature is a recurrent theme among writers in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The edenic vision of the new land is even reflected in the reports of travelers who visited Brazil in the years following the arrival of the Portuguese Court to the colony in 1808. As mentioned by Laurentino Gomes, in his book *1808*:

Researcher Rubens Borba de Moraes catalogued a total of 266 travelers who had written about the people, geography, and riches of Brazil as of 1949. The vast majority visited the country in the decades immediately

following the opening of the ports. These travelers recorded their impressions in letters, official reports, and books, making this one of the best-documented periods in Brazilian history. Their work includes descriptions of cities, landscapes, people, customs, and scientific discoveries. Their reports register astonishment, all of them surprised by the beauties of an idyllic, untouched land. (184)

Laurentino Gomes emphasizes the vision of the Brazilian land as paradise and embraces Haberly's definition of the New World as a mysterious American Eden as I discussed in the introduction above. *Ufanism*, as defined by Haberly in *Colonial Brazilian Literature* comprised "...the glorification of the land and all it contains..." (51). If nature inspires the glorification of the New World territory, a glorification documented by both Gomes and Haberly; then it can be proposed that this inspirational force is always present in the female Muse of Lyric poetry, an entity that symbolizes love and purity; and that enlightens and guides poets in their composition.

Since the beginning of literature, poets have tried to find an element that might bring them the necessary enlightenment so they could produce their texts and make beautiful art: that is, a source of inspiration. This inspiring element has been known in the world of the arts as the Muse and, most of the time, it has an association with a woman's presence. This tradition originates in Greek Mythology; where we can find the term Muse as a reference to the nine Muses, who were entities responsible for the glorification of all arts. According to René Ménéard, the nine Muses are Calliope, whose purview is epic poetry and eloquence; Clio, the Muse of history, and responsible for celebrations; Euterpe, the Muse of bliss and music; Melpomeni, that of tragedy and

happiness, and who has a great influence on the theater; Terpsichore, the Muse of dance; Thalia, who inspires comedy—her name means festivities; Ourania, the Muse of astronomy and astrology; Erato, Muse of love and romantic poetry; and Polymnia, the Muse of lyric poetry—her name means several—poly—songs and her expression is usually portrayed as contemplative (55-64).

One can see a parallel between the inspiration brought by the Muse to the poet and the inspiration wrought by the New World's overwhelming natural beauty. Just as the land in the early 1500s, Gregório de Matos' Lyric poetry has the power to reveal its source of inspiration through its idyllic and innocent features. His lyric poems provide grounds to draw comparisons between his poetry and Colonial Brazil's untouched natural beauty and richness: the vast land, the diversity of fauna and flora, the resources. Since the main themes in his lyrical work revolve around love and its innocence; we can say that there is an edenic, ufanist tone in most of the poems. In the eyes of the poet, love's purity is to be preserved and venerated just as all elements of nature—the mankind, the fauna, the flora, the sky and the oceans—should be.

Gregório de Matos Guerra draws on the Baroque tradition established in the Iberian peninsula to compose his Lyric poetry by combining the forms of literary expression that characterize the Baroque aesthetics of the XVII. The forms of literary expression of the lyric include:

A verse or a poem that can, or supposedly can, be sung to accompaniment of a musical instrument (in ancient times, usually a lyre) or that expresses intense personal emotion in a manner suggestive of a song. Lyric poetry expresses the thoughts and feelings of the poet and is sometimes

contrasted with narrative poetry and verse drama, which relate events in the form of a story. Elegies, odes, and sonnets are important types of lyric poetry. In medieval Europe the lyric can be found in the songs of troubadours, in Christian hymns, and in various ballads. In the Renaissance the most finished form of lyric, the sonnet, was brilliantly developed by Petrarch, William Shakespeare, Edmund Spenser, and John Milton. (*Merriam Webster Encyclopedia of Literature* 704)

The poetic Muse also forms part of this lyrical form: the correlation between the Muse and the image of a beloved woman transfers to the literary traditions that unfold in the Latin countries formed after the fall of the Roman Empire. It is possible to see the importance of this relationship (Muse-woman) in the early days of the Trovadorist literary expression. Spina documents the strength of the woman's presence in the European courts of the XII and XIII centuries:

which led to the cult of the woman especially in the south of France where literary trends were more sentimental, courteous, elegant and refined. These features are responsible for the transformation of the woman into a sanctuary of inspiration. (*A lírica trovadoresca* 22)

From then on, this tradition establishes the woman as a Muse for other literary movements that emerge in Europe and it has a strong influence on the Baroque lyric.

From these traditions, Gregório de Matos Guerra incorporates the structure of the Petrarchan sonnet as a convention, which demonstrates his command of the literary techniques inherited from Spanish poets Góngora and Quevedo. He also uses elements from nature and the image of a woman (the Muse) to talk about love, beauty and

perfection. He attempts to express feelings of love towards his lyrical Muse who, by analogous association, represents a blooming Colonial Brazil. When comparing the Muse to the land, using analogies and metaphors to describe the beauty of the woman, the author expands on the tradition of considering the woman's body as the land, both subject to the colonization project, both territories to be taken, to be ruled and controlled. This association between the feminine body and the land has been, more often than not, found in literary movements throughout history.

The woman's body as well as the land are key elements for the composition processes since they serve as inspirational matter to the poet, as Simone de Beauvoir points out in her work:

we have seen woman as flesh: the flesh of the male is produced in the mother's body and re-created in the embraces of the woman in love. Thus woman is related to nature, she incarnates it: vale of blood, open rose, siren, the curve of a hill, she represents to man the fertile soil, the sap, the material beauty and the soul of the world. She can hold the keys to poetry; she can be *mediatrix* between this world and the beyond: grace or oracle, star or sorceress, she opens the door to the supernatural, the surreal. (278-80)

By applying Beauvoir's views of the relationship between the literary representations of a woman's body and the land of Colonial Brazil to Gregório de Matos Guerra's work, one infers that the transcendent inspirational entity, incarnated in a feminine body whose beauty reflects the stunning beauty of nature, establishes a three dimensional prism in his poetry: Muse-woman-land. Hence, I propose that in his

depiction of his female Muse there are references to the fertile land (The Colony) that was once untouched, full of beauty, purity, love and potential, such as a virgin body that overwhelms the poet with such inspiring beauty.

Let us next address Gregório de Matos Guerra's articulation of the reference to the Muse and use of literary conventions in his poetic composition as he conveys the essential Baroque elements of appeal to the physical senses, particularly through contrast. In "Discreta e formosíssima Maria", the author portrays the discreet, yet astounding, natural beauty of a woman in the early years of her youth. The lyrical voice is taken aback by the "belle", whose purity and elegance are surprisingly enchanting and exciting, in such a way that surrendering to love is an undeniable urgency.

"Discreta e formosíssima Maria"

Discreta e formosíssima Maria,
Enquanto estamos vendo claramente
Na vossa ardente vista o sol ardente,
E na rosada face a aurora fria:

Enquanto pois produz, enquanto cria
Essa esfera gentil, mina excelente,
No cabelo o metal mais reluzente,
E na boca a mais fina pedraria:

Gozai, gozai da flor da formosura,
Antes que o frio da madura idade
Tronco deixe despido, o que é verdura.

Que passado o zenit da mocidade,
Sem a noite encontrar da sepultura,
É cada dia ocaso da beldade.

Gregório de Matos composes the poem above by drawing from both the Renaissance and the Baroque traditions, which is a constant in his lyrical work. From the former, the author uses the Petrarchan sonnet format (fourteen verses, distributed into four stanzas with a common rhyme scheme of ABBA ABBA CDC DCD). Matos Guerra also draws on themes often present as central elements in the Baroque sonnet. The poem touches two readily apparent themes—in the first and second stanzas magnificent beauty and in the third and four stanzas the need to enjoy life—which are contrasted to indicate the ephemeral quality of life. This traditional reading of the poem clearly indicates the poet expressing himself in the Baroque tradition of imitation: the same themes and structure appear in Góngora’s “Mientras por competir con tu cabello”:

“Mientras por competir con tu cabello”

Mientras por competir con tu cabello
Oro bruñido al sol relumbra en vano,

Mientras con menosprecio en medio el llano

Mira tu blanca frente al lilio bello;

Mientras a cada labio, por cogello,

Siguen más ojos que al clavel temprano,

Y mientras triunfa con desdén lozano

Del luciente cristal tu gentil cuello,

Goza cuello, cabello, labio y frente,

Antes que lo que fue en tu edad dorada

Oro, lilio, clavel, cristal luciente,

No sólo en plata o viola troncada

Se vuelva, más tú y ello juntamente

En tierra, en humo, en polvo, en sombra, en nada.

As we compare the two poems, we see how Matos Guerra reproduces Góngora's organization, engaging in the convention of the Baroque sonnet that comprises one octave and one sextet. Moreover, Gregório de Matos Guerra reiterates the Gongoran themes¹¹ by using similar lexical components in his text to gradually depict the idealized image of the Muse. For instance, both poets use vocabulary related to nature to compare the Muse's body to nature's beauty.

¹¹ The themes often approached by Góngora had previously appeared in Garcilaso de la Vega's "Soneto XXIII." And they will also appear in the Latin American Baroque in Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz's "Este que ves, engaño colorido – A su retrato."

At first glance, in both poems this woman's splendor is comparable to the sun's grandeur. As we can see in the first stanza of "Discreta e formosíssima Maria", Gregório de Matos Guerra compares his Muse's eyes to the warmth of the sun while the Muse's face is compared to the freshness of a cool morning ("Na vossa ardente vista o sol ardente, / E na rosada face a aurora fria"). In the first stanza of "Mientras por competir con tu cabello", Góngora compares the elements of nature through the allusion to the Muse's hair as being more beautiful than gold, shining in the sun, and through the description of her face's texture as being softer than that of a white lily ("Mientras por competir con tu cabello / Oro bruñado al sol relumbra en vano, / Mientras con menosprecio en medio el llano / Mira tu blanca frente al lilio bello").

Matos Guerra's construction of his Muse's image also appeals to the reader's senses as the poet reinforces the comparison with nature by contrasting sensorial elements such as temperature. In the first stanza, the poet puts cold and warmth in opposition (*sol ardente* and *aurora fria*), which creates contrast through antithesis, a common convention of the time. In the same fashion, later on in the third stanza, Matos Guerra repeats the sensorial idea of coldness by referring to the cold that is brought about by old age (*Antes que o frio da madura idade / Tronco deixe despido, o que é verdura*). These contrasting images repeat the contrast seen also in the title of the poem since they help to create a tension between the innocent love for a "discreet" (*discreta*) woman and the lustful desires that her "perfect" (*formosíssima*) young body provokes in the lyrical voice. Thus, this tension leads to a feeling of urgency to seize the day and youth before time devastates all: *Carpe Diem*.

The aforementioned sensorial coldness introduces another Baroque theme that both Gregório de Matos Guerra and Luis de Góngora approach in their poems: the unforgiving passage of time. Both poets engage the *Carpe Diem* theme so often utilized in Baroque artistic expression. As they both develop the image of their Muses, they give the lyrical voice the function of a timekeeper of their beauty, which is most likely to fade with age. Indication of such lies in the fact that both authors choose to use the imperative form of the Latin verb *gozar* (enjoy) to advise their Muses to appreciate their youth. While Góngora uses the eschatological “return to dust” metaphor (“No sólo en plata o viola troncada / Se vuelva, más tú y ello juntamente / En tierra, en humo, en polvo, en sombra, en nada”) to encourage the appreciation of this youthful moment in time; Gregório de Matos Guerra conveys the irrevocability of death by using the metaphor of a full day passing where the morning is represented by the daybreak (aurora); midday is represented by the zenith or climax of maturity (*zenit*) and night is represented by the grave (*sepultura*). Moreover, this eschatological perspective helps construct the image of a mortal Muse who is not immune to the deterioration of youth.

With the above analysis, it is clear that Gregório de Matos Guerra masters the art of European imitation (or recuperation) of the Baroque standards. Such literary standards establish the formal parameters that Matos Guerra utilizes in his whole body of work. Nevertheless, the themes approached by some of his poetry acquire a tropical adornment if one understands that Matos Guerra was a product of a rising transatlantic Colonial society. As a consequence, we can interpret the themes of “Discreta e formosíssima Maria” and other of Matos Guerra’s lyrical sonnets through a different lens.

Taking into account the fact that Gregório de Matos Guerra was a Brazilian-born and Iberian Portuguese raised Colonial subject, it is important to highlight that his perspectives in relation to the space that surrounded him are different than those of Góngora. Being native to the New World, Gregório de Matos Guerra transposes the thematic specificities of the Baroque across the Atlantic and applies its standards to create a depiction of the colony's exquisite exuberance. Therefore, the traditional reading of "Discreta e formosíssima Maria" might be transferred, from the description of a woman's beauty and the urgency of its enjoyment, to the description of the beauty of a new land and the enjoyment of its promised potential.

I propose that Gregório de Matos Guerra's poetry encompasses elements that depict the Colonial condition of Brazil, which we can read from an allegorical perspective. In this reading, "Discreta e formosíssima Maria" can be seen as an allegory for Brazil in its glorious Colonial beginnings. One possible explicit reference to support this interpretation is found in the second stanza of the poem: "Enquanto pois produz, enquanto cria / Essa esfera gentil, mina excelente, / No cabelo o metal mais reluzente, / E na boca a mais fina pedraria". On one hand, a first interpretation leads to the understanding of this stanza as a celebration of the Muse's beauty as she is compared to the most fertile land, precious metals and gems stones. On the other hand, the same stanza may communicate an analogical movement towards the celebration of the new land: the colony of Brazil. This stanza gives the reader elements to understand a reference to the *ufanista* perception of Brazil. That is so because the imagery can be related to a country full of beauty, with endless resources, as the verses "Enquanto pois

produz, enquanto cria / Essa esfera gentil, mina excelente” may be interpreted as the fertile soil of the land and its potential for any type of agricultural production.

The interesting aspect to this approach is the fact that these images offer a possible representation of the fertility of the newly found land of Brazil, whose potential is being uncovered and exploited by the colonizers. These images also suggest that Colonial Brazil held an important economic position since it played the role of generator of wealth that was crucial for the maintenance of Portugal’s status quo in Europe. As a Portuguese colony, Brazil supplied all resources necessary to prevent the Portuguese Empire from collapsing after the war that finally freed Portugal from the reckless rule of the Spanish Crown during the sixty years of the Iberian peninsula’s political unification (1580-1640). As the largest territory dominated by Portugal, even bigger than Portugal itself, the colony of Brazil was the economic salvation to overcome a crisis that would have put Portugal in horrible debt with the sponsors of its great navigational enterprise—Great Britain. Without Brazil’s riches, the *Luso* nation would have been put in an inferior position among the crowns of Europe.

The path of economic salvation for Portugal was to intensify the exploitation of the land by exhausting the agricultural options and exploiting other natural resources. Thus, it is possible to infer from Matos Guerra’s “Discreta e formosíssima Maria” references to the wealth and richness of this new colony. Evidence to such is found on Matos Guerra’s usage of language that relates to agriculture and mining. In the first stanza, for instance, when the lyrical voice mentions the “burning sun” (*sol ardente*) in comparison to the eyes of this beautiful woman (“enquanto estamos vendo claramente / na vossa ardente vista o sol ardente”), one can infer that it is a reference to the hot climate

of the tropics, where the sun is always shining, providing conditions for the development of the bountiful, in opposition to the severe and long winters in the European continent. As the sun is the life-source for all plants to develop and reproduce, this land bears a privileged status as a wealth provider, once the combination of a fertile soil and optimum weather conditions make it easier to develop its agricultural potential. Moreover, in the second stanza, the author mentions other sources of richness in the Colony—the mines, the brightest metal, fine stones (*mina, metal mais reluzente, fina pedraria*), comparing the Muse’s hair to gold and her mouth to a piece of jewelry. The explicit use of the terms for mineral riches—*metal* and *pedraria*—and those of resource exploitation—*produz* and *mina* seem too clear to be coincidental and solely metaphorical references to feminine beauty. All the richness and abundance seen in “Discreta e formosíssima Maria” translate a celebratory attitude towards the new colony, thus reflecting a *ufanist* view of the New World.

Following the above rationale, the poem “A uma dama dormindo junto a uma fonte” also presents this *ufanist* vision of the land using the image of the Muse/woman in perfect harmony with nature:

“A uma dama dormindo junto a uma fonte”

À margem de uma fonte, que corria

Lira doce dos pássaros cantores

A bela ocasião das minhas dores

Dormindo estava ao despertar do dia.

Mas como dorme Sílvia, não vestia
O céu seus horizontes de mil cores;
Dominava o silêncio entre as flores,
Calava o mar, e rio não se ouvia,

Não dão o parabém à nova Aurora
Flores canoras, pássaros fragrantes,
Nem seu âmbar respira a rica Flora.

Porém abrindo Sílvia os dois diamantes,
Tudo a Sílvia festeja, tudo adora
Aves cheirosas, flores ressonantes.

This poem is about a woman, the poet's Muse Sílvia, who was asleep at dawn by a water source, amid the birds and flowers. The creatures—birds and flowers—and elements of Nature—the sky, the river, the sea—keep a respectful silence, waiting for the awakening of the Muse. Her eyes are compared to diamonds, which once opened, set everything into motion. Thus, as all beings respond to the awakening of Sílvia, one can say that Sílvia incorporates an empowered role that resembles the role of a young lady or a land whose vitality, beauty and abundance nurture and satisfy the needs of her beloved. This respectful reverence to this woman is affirmed by the rejoicing celebration of her awakening.

Similarly to “Discreta e formosíssima Maria”, the author composes “A uma dama dormindo junto a uma fonte” in the Petrarchan format, that is, one octave and one sextet following the rhyme scheme of ABBA ABBA CDC DCD. However, the landscape described in the poem might be contextualized in a Colonial Brazil setting as supported by Francisco Topa’s (1999) critical edition of Gregório de Matos’ poetic work. According to Topa, the poet wrote the sonnet “A uma dama dormindo junto a uma fonte” while he was in the countryside of Marapé, Brazil, enjoying the first days of his engagement with Maria de Povos, who fell asleep by the fountainhead. Once Gregório de Matos had to give up his work as a canon in the Catholic church of Bahia so as to pursue his intentions to marry Maria de Povos, he also changed her name to *Sílvia* in the poem, in order to protect her identity and her honor. (296).

The choice of the name *Sílvia* not only serves the purpose of protecting the identity of Matos Guerra’s love Maria de Povos, it also evokes a figure from Roman mythology, derived from the god of the forest *Silvanus*. *Sílvia* is the goddess of the forest and the moon, which perfectly fits the idyllic view of love and nature, following the Baroque tendency to seek in Greek and Roman mythology as sources of inspiration. The fact that Flora and Aurora are capitalized in the third stanza conveys a personification of elements of nature correlated to the human Muse: *Sílvia*.

Moreover, Gregorio de Matos uses a series of hyperbatons—a figure of speech that requires a syntactic inversion of elements within a phrase or sentence—to validate this personification. This we see in the second and third stanzas:

Dominava o silêncio entre as flores,
Calava o mar, e rio não se ouvia,

Não dão o parabém à nova Aurora
Flores canoras, pássaros fragrantés,
Nem seu âmbar respira a rica Flora.

The silence prevailed among the flowers,
Silent the sea, and the river not heard,
They do not praise the new Dawn
These harmonious flowers, scented birds
Nor does the rich Flora breathe in her fragrance. (my translation)

In the natural order of sentence structure in Portuguese, these verses should have been written as follows:

O silêncio dominava entre as flores,
O mar calava, e não se ouvia o rio,
Flores canoras e pássaros fragrantés
Não dão o parabém à nova Aurora
Nem a rica Flora respira seu âmbar.

Given the personification of Flora (the Roman goddess of flowers) and Aurora (the Roman goddess of the dawn), one might infer that they are as important as Sílvia. However, as all creatures wait for Sílvia's awakening, it is implied that she incorporates all that is part of nature, including Flora and Aurora. Thus, without Sílvia's presence, nature loses its capacity to overwhelm and inspire life to follow its course.

Another important structural element in the poem is the use of synesthetic images, which provoke as an intrinsic value unexpected awe. Synesthetic components of poetry

stimulate sensations and impressions that are not automatically related to the original meaning of the words they describe: they require the attribution of dissonant characteristics to images. Together with hyperbatons, the synesthetic elements compose semantic inversions as the ones we find in the third and fourth stanzas of the poem. For instance, the second line in the third stanza reads “Flores canoras, pássaros fragrantés” and the last verse of the fourth stanza “Aves cheirosas, flores ressonantes” bring similar synesthetic images, where ‘birds’ acquire the attribute of flowers to exhale perfume since “pássaros fragrantés” and “aves cheirosas” can be translated as “scented birds”. In the same fashion, “flowers” acquire the natural skill of echoing sounds that birds possess: “flores canoras” and “flores ressonantes” respectively correspond to “harmonious flowers” and “resounding flowers”. Hence, the poem recasts auditory and olfactory senses to bring the reader near to the physical settings surrounding the Muse—*Sílvia*. This nearness occurs due to the unusual synesthetic elements in the poem, which intrigue and engage the reader.

This unexpected awe that the poem evokes can be read as a response to the beauty of Brazil’s land. The final verse of “A uma dama dormindo junto a uma fonte” offers a set of images that echoes a joyous ufanist celebratory tone. For instance, the idea of *Sílvia*’s awakening celebration is embedded in the images of birds and flowers that recover their energy and color with the illumination provoked by the Muse’s eyes: “Porém abrindo *Sílvia* os dois diamantes, / Tudo a *Sílvia* festeja, tudo adora / Aves cheirosas, flores ressonantes”. Here, Gregório de Matos engages in the recreation of the tropical Brazilian universe by combining recurrent figures of speech that appeal to the senses in a fashion that resembles the chaotic attribute of untouched nature.

The natural elements from the Fauna and Flora are waiting for the Muse's awakening: nature and woman are seen as a unified body; they are interconnected and mutually dependent. The Muse is part of Nature and Nature is, interchangeably, seen as the Muse, sharing its exuberance and beauty. The poem is built around the image of a lady sleeping by the source of a river; the poetic voice states that this woman's beauty is the moving force that sets all life into motion with her awakening from sleep. This overwhelming beauty, reflected in this lady's paradisiacal surroundings and her nude innocence, has the overpowering strength to silence rivers and seas; and all life around this woman, Sílvia, responds to her wonder by respecting her sleep.

In this context, it is possible to affirm that the poem depicts a Colonial landscape and, at the same time, maintains the formal conventions preferred by Gregório de Matos Guerra. The choice of words reflects the flora and fauna of Colonial Brazil as the poet's depiction emphasizes the abundance of colors, smells and sounds of the tropical environment, appealing to all senses. For instance, in the second stanza the poet attributes a thousand colors to the sky ("O céu seus horizontes de mil cores") and brings together the sea and the river ("Dominava o silêncio entre as flores, / Calava o mar, e rio não se ouvia"). By placing all these elements of nature into a single location—the fountain head where Sílvia peacefully sleeps—Gregório de Matos Guerra recreates a scenery typical of the Brazilian coast, where rivers and seas are so close together that one does not quite apprehend their individuality as independent tropical ecosystems. The same happens with the synesthetic recreation of flowers and birds, which are mingled in the landscape, due to its vivid colors, exquisite fragrances and harmonious sounds.

Sílvia can be seen as a representation of Colonial Brazil itself, newly wedded (recently found) by an avid spouse, Portugal, here represented by the poetic voice. When the poetic voice declares that all creatures are subject to Sílvias awakening from her serene sleep, one might interpret that such expectations reflect the high hopes the Portuguese Empire has towards Colonial Brazil since its wealth and abundant resources are a promise of progress and economic development, as well as a fresh new beginning for the Old World. This is so because the opening of Sílvias eyes, which are compared to diamonds, brings about the imagery of illumination through the beginning of a new day. This argument is clarified by the analysis of the fourth stanza of the sonnet: “Porém abrindo Sílvia os dois diamantes, / Tudo a Sílvia festeja, tudo adora / Aves cheirosas, flores ressonantes”. Here, triggered by two precious gems (Sílvias eyes), everything goes into motion and a new era is about to start which might be comparable to the exploitation of the new land resources, among them the precious stones and minerals.

The mention of another precious stone—“*crystal*” (crystal)—is found in another poem by Matos Guerra: “Ao Rio Caípe recorre o queixoso poeta de que sua senhora admite por esposo outro sujeito”. In “Ao Rio Caípe...”, the author repeats the images of bountiful nature (precious stones and abundant water) and sensorial references (sound, sight and eyes) are also present:

“Ao Rio Caípe recorre o queixoso poeta de que sua senhora admite por
esposo outro sujeito”

Suspende o curso, ó Rio, retorcido,

Tu, que vens a morrer, adonde eu morro,
Enquanto contra amor me dá socorro
Algum divertimento, algum olvido.

Não corras lisonjeiro, e divertido.
Quando em fogo de amor a ti recorro
E quando o mesmo incêndio, em que me torro,
Teu vizinho cristal tem já vertido.

Pois já meu pranto inunda teus escolhos,
Não corras, não te alegres, não te rias,
Nem prateies verdores, cinge abrolhos.

Que não é bem, que tuas águas frias,
Sendo o pranto chorado dos meus olhos,
Tenham que rir em minhas agonias.

Gregório de Matos Guerra's poetic voice acquires a mournful and somber tone in this poem, which seems to translate as a protest against the River. The poetic voice is suffering since his beloved is about to marry another man, and the River—personified—is insensitive to his torment, following its course, flattering and playful.

Consistently, once more, the author uses the conventions of the Baroque literary tradition. The use of the Petrarchan sonnet format and rhyming scheme (ABBA ABBA

CDC DCD) are combined with the resourceful use of figures of speech such as alliteration and personification. For instance, the poem presents the repetition of the guttural sound “r, rr” throughout (“*curso*”, “*retorcido*”, “*morrer*”, “*amor*”, “*socorro*”, “*torro*”) and this alliteration suggests the idea of rhythmic laughter. The constant repetition of “r, rr” seems to impose the rupture of a certain harmony that the lyrical voice enjoyed prior to receiving the news of his beloved’s engagement.

Furthermore, the alliteration of “r” bears a relation to the personification of the river Caípe since the letter “r” is capitalized in the title: “Ao **R**io Caípe recorre o queixoso poeta de que sua senhora admite por esposo outro sujeito”. Gregório de Matos Guerra engages in the task of personifying the Caípe River through literary strategies that go beyond the capitalization of the word river as we saw above. The author also uses linguistic functions that allow for the characterization of the river as human. According to Roman Jakobson’s *Linguistics and Poetics*, there are different linguistic functions that poets use to establish communication between their works and their readers. Among such, we will find the “conative” and the “phatic” functions described by Jakobson as follows:

Orientation toward the addressee, the CONATIVE function, finds its purest grammatical expression in the vocative and imperative, which syntactically, morphologically, and often even phonemically deviate from other nominal and verbal categories. . . . There are messages primarily serving to establish, to prolong, or to discontinue communication, to check whether the channel works (“Hello, do you hear me?”), to attract the attention of the interlocutor or to confirm his continued attention (“Are

you listening?” or in Shakespearean diction, “Lend me your ears!” — and on the other end of the wire “Um-hum!”). This set for contact, or in Malinowski’s terms PHATIC function, may be displayed by a profuse exchange of ritualized formulas, by entire dialogues with the mere purport of prolonging communication. . . . The endeavor to start and sustain communication is typical of talking birds; thus the phatic function of language is the only one they share with human beings. (354-56)

In “Ao Rio Caípe...”, we can identify these two functions quite clearly since the lyric voice establishes a dialogue with the personified river, which holds the reader’s attention from the very first verse to the last. Matos Guerra uses the vocative and the imperative grammatical expressions to substantiate this conversation and, according to Jakobson, these would be examples of the *conative* and *phatic* functions. For instance, in the first verse of the first stanza, the author uses the vocative *ó Rio* to initiate the dialogue that will be sustained throughout the poem by the use of imperatives such as “Não corras lisonjeiro, e divertido” (1st line, 2nd stanza) and “Não corras, não te alegres, não te rias” (2nd line, 3rd stanza). Furthermore, Matos Guerra achieves the complete personification of the river by reinforcing its human status through the use of the subject pronoun *Tu* (you), and its object *Ti* (your) and possessive form *Teu* (yours).

In Matos Guerra’s Lyric poetry personification is an important tool since the lyric voice is in constant dialogue with three inspirational entities (Muse-woman-land). In the sonnet “Ao Rio Caípe”, the author uses the state of Bahia’s natural environment as a source of inspiration to draw a comparison between the river Caípe and love. The image of a winding river to convey the inquietude of love. The lyrical voice in the poem suffers

unrequited love. It seeks comfort in the waters of Caípe, a river in the *Recôncavo Bahiano* and declares that the river dies where the lyrical voice dies as well.

From the poet's eyes tears are shed that join the waters of the river, which should be a companion and a friend to the suffering author, but instead the Caípe continues in its bed, noisy and indifferent to the lyrical voice's sadness. Hence, as the lyrical voice's feelings of sadness drown in the river, Caípe only "demonstrates" disdain and indifference. The lyrical voice is in a dialogue with the river, mingling with it in a way that they become part of the same natural environment since the lyrical voice's tears add to the body of water that is Caípe.

The convergence between lyrical voice and nature alludes to the personification of nature itself making it capable of displaying emotions of all sorts. Thus, the allusion of personification in Gregório de Matos Guerra's lyric makes it possible to identify different nuances of emotions that can be related to *ufanism* or, in this case, its loss. At times, in Matos Guerra's poetry, these feelings might be perceived as euphoric as we see in the sonnet "A uma dama dormindo junto a uma fonte"; at other times, these *ufanistic* emotions will be invested with a certain quality of melancholy; which might be deeply related to the context in which the poet is immersed. In this sense, the melancholy lies in the fact that innocent love only exists in an ideal world, which is most unlikely to be tangible in seventeenth-century Colonial Brazil. Thus, even though the sonnet "Ao Rio Caípe" reflects the rich natural environment surrounding the lyrical voice, there is a change in tone. Now, the optimism and prosperity suggested by "A uma dama dormindo junto a uma fonte" gives way to a certain sadness and melancholy in relation to the beautiful land of Brazil. Since the lyrical voice mourns the loss of his beloved in "Ao

Rio Caípe”, one can infer that there might be a loss of Brazil as well, or at least a loss of its natural riches.

While *Silvia*’s eyes are a source of happiness, life, prosperity and hope for a colony that is just waking up to the civilized world, the poetic voice’s eyes in the aforementioned poem are the origin of the waters that add to the volume of the river. As a way to ease the pain caused by the news that his Muse/beloved is engaged to be married to another man, the lyrical voice sheds tears that swell the Caípe with sadness as we can see in the first verse of the third stanza: “Pois já meu pranto inunda teus escolhos” (“as my tears inundate your reefs”). Beyond the comfort sought in Caípe, the lyrical voice seems to also seek relief in its waters to alleviate the lustful desires of the flesh as it is evident in the second verse of the second stanza: “Quando em fogo de amor a ti recorro” (“when in the fire of love to you I turn”). This movement of turning to the river to seek comfort and relief can be seen as a parallel to seeking a doctor’s advice or confessor’s word of exemption.

Once more the reference to the European conventions is clear in Matos Guerra’s work as the poet repeats Petrarchan themes. Francisco Topa (1999) suggests in his critical edition that Gregório de Matos seeks inspiration in Petrarch’s work in the sense that as the Italian author made the Sorga river famous through his verses, the *Bahiano* poet brought the Caípe river to the limelight: “Ao rio Caípe, memorável pelos versos do Poeta feitos a essa Dama, assim como o ficou sendo o Sorga pelos de Petrarca” (259).

Taking into account Topa’s subtitle for this sonnet, it is important to point out that Gregório de Matos Guerra establishes his literary background by “citing” Petrarch and the Sorga River. By taking a European scenario and transferring it into the landscape

found in the tropics, Matos Guerra reinforces his own position as a Colonial subject, who has ties with both the New and the Old Worlds.

Moreover, as seen in earlier poems, we might infer that the poet is warning the reader that all the beauty that this “Lady” (Brazilian land) possesses is corruptible by the hands of time and nature itself. Thus, it is necessary to seize the day while there is beauty still. Here we see the typical Baroque theme of *Carpe Diem*. The author seems to be urging the Crown to seize the opportunity for a new beginning that is presented by a rich land before it falls into the corrupt hands of bad administrators.

The author also shows these feelings of preoccupation and love for the colony in the poem “Desenganos da vida humana, metaforicamente”:

“Desenganos da vida humana, metaforicamente”

É a vaidade, Fábio, nesta vida,
Rosa, que da manhã lisonjeada,
Púrpuras mil, com ambição dourada,
Airosa rompe, arrasta presumida.

É planta, que de abril favorecida,
Por mares de soberba desatada,
Florida galeota empavesada,
Sulca ufana, navega destemida.

É nau enfim, que em breve ligeireza,
Com presunção de Fênix generosa,
Galhardias apresta, alentos preza:

Mas ser planta, ser rosa, nau vistosa
De que importa, se aguarda sem defesa
Penha a nau, ferro a planta, tarde a rosa?

As in “Ao Rio Caípe”, Gregório de Matos Guerra presents a melancholic poetic voice in “Desenganos da vida humana, metaforicamente”. This poetic voice engages in a dialogue with an interlocutor by the name of Fábio so as to discuss how the natural human condition is contradictory and how life is permeated by material vanity.¹² Starting with the title, the author presents a sense of disappointment and hopelessness: *Desenganos da vida humana, metaforicamente* (Human life’s disenchantments, metaphorically). After praising material aspects of life, the poet states the fatal destiny of all—death—in the final stanza. This sense of helplessness is a type of reinforcement for the Baroque conflict posed by the *Carpe Diem* ideal.

¹² By evaluating Francisco Topa’s Critical Edition of Gregório de Matos Guerra’s work (1999), we can see that the name Fábio appears in several of the poems. This is indication that Fábio is an interlocutor of great importance to Gregório de Matos since the poet needs to have an addressee for this poetry in order to communicate his concerns. It is interesting that Gregório de Matos Guerra chooses a name for his interlocutor that will both relate to nature and political power. As we can see in the etymology of the name Fábio provided by two different online sources:

“Fábio, in Portuguese, originates from Fabius in Latin. It refers to the Roman family name that derives from Latin *faba* ‘bean’. Moreover, it is also the name of one great Roman general: Quintus Fabius Maximus. Quintus Fabius has become famous for utilizing delaying tactics to prevent the invasion of Hannibal in the 3rd century BC.”

<http://www.behindthename.com/name/fabius>

<http://www.meaning-of-names.com/portuguese-names/fabio.asp>

In addition, the author invariably engages in the Baroque literary tradition in this poem through the use of the Petrarchan sonnet format, the rhyming scheme, the exaggeration and the figures of speech—metaphors, antithesis and, especially, hyperbatons—so often seen in Gregório de Matos Guerra’s work. Being the latter essential building blocks for the construction of another very typical Baroque characteristic: the Cultist word play.

The author demonstrates the mastery of Cultism through the elaborate use of hyperbatons throughout the poem. Here, this figure of speech is of extreme importance since it helps construct three essential metaphors that will serve as a tool to lecture and warn his interlocutor, Fábio, about the superficiality and consequences of a life full of vanity. Similarly to the technique used in “A uma dama dormindo junto a uma fonte”, Matos Guerra embeds syntactic inversions to validate the construction of metaphors related to life’s egotism and build a Conceptist argument that will converge with the motto of *Carpe Diem* at the same time as suggest that all things are finite.

Firstly, let us explore the metaphors created by Gregório Matos Guerra in the first three stanzas of the poem. In the first stanza, the metaphor for vanity is embedded in the image of a rose—“É a vaidade, Fábio, nesta vida, / Rosa, que da manhã lisonjeada, / Púrpuras mil, com ambição dourada, / Airoso rompe, arrasta presumida.” Here, the use of the sentence structure inversion—hyperbaton—creates a sense of oddness that will be repeated throughout the poem. As my translation suggests—“It is vanity, Fábio, in this life, / Rose, that from a flattered morning, / thousands of purples, with golden ambition, / airily shatters, drags conceitedly.” This sentence structure provokes some confusion in the reader and proves that the poet engages in the Cultist composition style as the use of

hyperbatons as rhetorical devices allows for a distancing from ordinary language structure. However, if we analyze the same stanza within the constraints of the natural syntactic structure of the Portuguese language, we do not perceive this peculiar oddness:

“Fábio, a vaidade nesta vida é Rosa que rompe airosa da lisonjeada manhã, e arrasta presumida com ambição dourada mil púrpuras.”

(“Fábio, vanity in this life is the Rose from a flattered morning and it conceitedly drags and airily shatters thousands of purples with golden ambition.”—my translation)

The lyrical voice describes a rose that seems to be so beautiful in the light of a morning that it naturally motivates ambition and conceit. This ambiguous description of the rose serves as a first symbolic warning to the interlocutor—Fábio—that the most beautiful things are temptations to which one could ambitiously succumb.

In the second stanza, the metaphor for vanity is represented by the image of a plant—“É planta, que de abril favorecida, / Por mares de soberba desatada, / Florida galeota empavesada, / sulca ufana, navega destemida.”¹³ These verses also show the hyperbaton as an odd emphatic tool for the poetic voice to show disapproval of the reckless attitude presented by the “plant”, whose intent seems to be unstoppable once it has the strength and bravery of a Phoenix, as we can see in the stanza that follows. In the third stanza, the word that references back to vanity is *Nau* (ship): “É nau enfim, que em breve ligeireza, / Com presunção de Fênix generosa, / Galhardias apresta, alentos

¹³ Hyperbaton:

“É planta, que de abril favorecida, / Por mares de soberba desatada, / Florida galeota empavesada, / sulca ufana, navega destemida.”

“It is plant that favored by April, / through seas of reckless haughtiness / Flowery little shielded galley, / vain ufane crease, navigates fearless”. (my translation)

Natural syntactic order in Portuguese language:

“É planta favorecida de abril que navega destemida por mares de desatada soberba como uma ufana sulca, uma florida e empavesada galeota.” (my interpretation)

“It is a plant favored by April that navigates fearless through seas of reckless haughtiness as a vain ufane crease; flowery little shielded galley”. (my translation)

preza.”¹⁴ In this stanza, the *nau* (ship) is perceived by the lyrical voice as arrogantly strong and brave, invested with such presumption of power that is comparable to an immortal Phoenix.

The way that the metaphors described above are presented in the poem creates a certain *crescendo* that culminates in the inevitable somber end that all life has: the fall into the darkness of death. The evidence for this conclusion can be found in the last stanza of the poem, where the author explicitly shows that for each of the aforementioned metaphorical images, vanity encounters a deadly nemesis—“Mas ser planta, ser rosa, nau vistosa / De que importa, se aguarda sem defesa / Penha a nau, ferro a planta, tarde a rosa?” (But being plant, being rose, stately ship / What does it matter if defenseless awaits / The ship for the rock, the plant for the iron, and the rose for the sundown?).

Thus, from the imagery constructed throughout the poem we can see that Gregório de Matos Guerra builds on the idea of ascension and fall, which is often related to the idea of Empire. Hence, similarly to other poems in Matos Guerra’s body of work, we can say that “Desenganos da vida humana, metaforicamente” is engraved with underlying references to author’s views of the Portuguese empire and its New World colony, Brazil.

Firstly, the sonnet presents references to an astounding natural environment as seen in the images of the rose, the plant, a privileged morning and the ruthless seas. Once

¹⁴ Hyperbaton:

“É nau enfim, que em breve ligeireza, / Com presunção de Fênix generosa, / Galhardias apresta, alentos preza.”

“It is ship finally, which in brief quickness / With the presumption of a generous Phoenix, / Braveries endeavors, strength praises.” (my translation)

Natural syntactic order in Portuguese language:

“Enfim, é nau que, em breve ligeireza, preza alentos e apresta gallhardias com a presunção de uma generosa Fênix.” (my interpretation)

“Finally, it is a ship, which in brief quickness, praises strength and endeavors all bravery with the presumption of a generous Phoenix”. (my translation)

again, Matos Guerra's work recaptures the grandeur of nature as discussed early in this chapter; however, "Desenganos da vida humana, metaforicamente" presents a broader imagery of nature since it refers to a ruthless sea (second stanza) and an April spring.¹⁵

This extended image of nature can be connected to the idea of an extended metaphor for empire since the author mentions a merciless sea being defied by a brave ship and a privileged morning. We can notice a reference to the Portuguese navigation since galley, ship and acts of bravery are always related in the history of Portugal's maritime accomplishments. Thus we can conclude that Gregório de Matos Guerra's use of nautical language, as mentioned above, refers to Portugal's great navigations, which included when the Portuguese armada reached *Terra Brasilis*, in 1500.

The poem might also imply that the Portuguese empire has been blessed in a flattering morning of April since the first sightings of the colony's land have been officially dated in the Crown's records as 22nd April, 1500. Besides, the image of an exuberant rose seems to be a clear reference to the *ufanista* prospects reported by Pero Vaz de Caminha in his letter to the Portuguese King.¹⁶

Nevertheless, all the euphoria surrounding a promising future for the colony and the Empire might be subject to the implacable consequences of vanity, as the final stanza suggests in its dénouement. Once more, Gregório de Matos Guerra shows the mastery of the Baroque arts since he builds an argument throughout the poem so as to teach his interlocutor—*Fábio*—a lesson.

¹⁵ Since the seasons of the year are the opposite in the North and South Hemispheres, spring might be a reference to the season of the year in Portugal not in the Colony, where we have autumn in April. However, one might consider the use of April spring as a reference to the prosperity related to the season of blooming and all new life that comes with it; in this case, the birth of a new Portuguese Colony.

¹⁶ See pages 24 to 26 in this chapter.

The counseling tone present in “Desenganos da vida humana, metaforicamente” may be understood as an attempt by the poetic voice to establish a dialogue with the Crown itself since *Fábio* could be interpreted as the Portuguese ruler. The lyrical voice undertakes the responsibility of the wise adviser, who sees all that happens in the Colony and needs to warn the Crown of possible dangers. This omniscience is only possible because of the author’s upbringing and personal and professional status, which give him a certain entitlement and a certain arrogant perspective in analyzing the deeds and transgressions of both the colony and the Crown; and that entitlement reflects on the attitude of the poetic voice. Thus, as someone who possesses a unique understanding of both the New and the Old worlds, the author fulfills the role of a judge who is able to see and foresee the rise and fall of the Portuguese Empire due to its own vanity and ambition.

As the “Desenganos da vida humana, metaforicamente” suggests, if not careful, the prosperity of the Portuguese nation can (and will) succumb to the temptations of easy fortune offered by the marvelous rose that is the Colony. Moreover, the ambition shown by the ones who boarded the ships that found safe anchorage on *Terra Brasilis* will be the cause of their own damnation because of their vain futility. Thus, as the final stanza suggests: “ships will meet the rock”.

Going even further, one can say this poem can be seen as a prelude to the crisis Brazil will go through with the decline of the sugar cycle as the last verse suggests that the “plant will meet the iron”. As a society built around the sugar cane culture, the profits of the colony—more specifically, Bahia—depended on the production of cane and its derivative products. The interpretation of “Desenganos da vida humana, metaforicamente” as the prelude of the Colony’s decay can also be supported by the way

the author establishes the Baroque tension through solemnity and sobriety, differently from “Discreta e formosíssima Maria”. The last stanza of “Desenganos da vida humana, metaforicamente” expresses the implacable destructive action of time over nature, but it also adds a new element of destruction: the iron made by men.

If we analyze the tone presented in Gregório de Matos Guerra lyrical poems in this chapter, we will encounter a duality that changes from celebration to admonition. While in “Discreta e formosíssima Maria” there are references to the beauty and abundance, as seen in the second stanza “Enquanto pois produz, enquanto cria / Essa esfera gentil, mina excelente, / No cabelo o metal mais reluzente, / E na boca a mais fina pedraria”; Matos Guerra’s use of contrastive images in this last stanza of “Desenganos da vida humana, metaforicamente” indicates a certain apprehension regarding the future of the colony since the glorification of the land is substituted by the worrisome attitude towards the consequences of enjoying the day without respect for the land. As mentioned above, Matos Guerra explores contrasting images to convey tensions help the poet advocate for *Carpe Diem* as well as advise his interlocutor about the risks of succumbing to mundane desires.

Considering the recurrence of the *Carpe Diem* theme, we can see that the distinction in tones is evidence of an analogy for the colony and the changes it is undergoing. For instance, the themes of innocent love contrasting with a suggested lustful desire we find in “Discreta e formosíssima Maria” and “A uma dama dormindo junto a uma fonte” are celebratory of the natural beauty of the land. As established in the analysis of the poems, the analogy with the Colony reflects a tone of innocent enjoyment of all nature that is personified by the lady Maria and Lady Sílvia. This festive tone is

reinforced by the incarnation of tropical exotic awe and abundance reflected in lady Sílvia's vivacious body vital force in "A uma dama dormindo junto a uma fonte". Conversely, "Ao Rio Caípe recorre o queixoso poeta de que sua senhora admite por esposo outro sujeito" and "Desenganos da vida humana, metaforicamente" establish concern and seriousness through the images of lament and death. For instance, in the ode to the river, the lyrical voice refers to tears, disdain and suffering as we can see in the last two stanzas "Pois já meu pranto inunda teus escolhos, / Não corras, não te alegres, não te rias, . . . /Sendo o pranto chorado dos meus olhos, / Tenham que rir em minhas agonias". Similarly, in the last stanza of "Desenganos da vida humana, metaforicamente" the lyrical voice refers to the eschatological end of things brought about by nature, time and manmade iron: "Mas ser planta, ser rosa, nau vistosa / De que importa, se aguarda sem defesa / Penha a nau, ferro a planta, tarde a rosa?"

Hence, taking to account the historical truth of the Colonial settlement of Brazil, the change in tone found in Gregório de Matos Guerra's Lyrical poetry signals the inevitable fate of a paradisiacal untouched land when it comes to contact with exploratory voracity of the Portuguese empire. Historically, the Portuguese Crown's purposes in its colonies were to settle, explore, convert, enslave and exploit. It could not be any different in the wealthy tropical colony in the New World. However, differently from the colonies in Africa and Asia, the territory was vaster with richness that seemed to be infinite, which made the virgin land of Brazil become the perfect body to be recklessly violated. The Muse-land, represented by the woman's body, is now in danger of desecration since the body is ready to be despoiled and consumed by the ruling elite.

Therefore, the concerns about the disappointments of human life, death and the transience of things we find in Matos Guerra's poetry show a convergence towards the Baroque conflicting condition. These disappointments acquire a different nuance when we analyze them as analogical to the colony where a creole society is undergoing vital changes that distance it from the *ufanist* paradise that was once venerated and idealized. Once again, we refer back to Haberly's interpretation of Gregório de Matos Guerra's work which reveals the poet's dissatisfaction with the direction in which life in the colony was moving, having "at the heart of his complaints . . . a profound crisis of faith shared by many other Brazilians in the last years of the seventeenth century: life in the colony simply had not worked out as promised in the *ufanistas'* fantasies of tropical feudalism" (58).

As we can see in this close reading of four of Matos Guerra's lyrical poems, the *desenganos* or disappointments presented are a reflection of the hybrid society in which Matos Guerra was immersed. These disappointments are in accordance with Spina's view of a "tropical baroque" where the "colony's natural landscape, social life and its linguistic reality . . . penetrated poet's work and mingled with his Cultist heritage" (*A poesia de Gregório de Matos* 31).

Henceforth, we can affirm that Gregório de Matos Guerra's poetry reflects aesthetically the historical truth of the violation of the virginal body of the Colonial lands, which is clearly seen in his satirical work and its interpretation according to Fátima Regina Nogueira and Lúcia Helena Costigan. Since Matos Guerra uses this imagery of the body as a representation of Bahia in his satire, it can also be applied to his lyrical work as we can see in this analysis. Hence, Gregório de Matos Guerra's Lyrical poetry

may offer the first elements for an additional analogical interpretation. The examination of these elements may serve fruitful in the composition of an analogous representation of the micro universe of the Colonial society that took shape in Brazil from the sixteenth through the seventeenth centuries. Even though Gregório de Matos Guerra's work is not chronologically associated to the complete time frame of the Colonial Empire, I argue that the two genres of poetry analyzed in this thesis speak to the tension between Brazil as an Edenic paradise and Brazil as a limitless land of resources to be exploited. This composition of a Gregorian Empire builds up in his work. Further evidence for such an interpretation can be found in Matos Guerra's Erotic poetry, which I address in the next chapter.

Chapter 2 Gregório de Matos Guerra's Erotic poetry as a parallel to the colony's exploitative potential

Literary eroticism has been present in poetry since the early times of verse creation. With the advent of modern technology in recent years, it has gained significant attention due to the easy access provided by new media. Currently, when one refers to erotic poems, most might make an immediate correlation to graphic sexual verses based on their impressions of images and representations widely disseminated and exploited by the present-day media. The way contemporary society understands eroticism has strong connections to concepts such as market demand, consumption, freedom of expression and sexual liberation among others. Still, the conceptualization of what is considered erotic or explicit obscene pornography in verse is complicated to apprehend. This grey area in the definition of what is one or what is the other often leads to the interpretation of erotic literature and poetry as a mere explicit representation of objectified sexual pleasure that is a result of one's intrinsic or extrinsic demands. According to *The Princeton*

Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics:

Erotic poetry deals with the sexual in more or less explicit detail. Erotic poetry is distinct on the one hand from love poetry which avoids specifically sexual details (such as Petrarch's *Canzoniere*) and on the other from mere pornographic or obscene verse. . . . In erotic poetry the sexual is by some process of ordering made to subserve an aesthetic effect, to submit to the artistic stylization of experience in the poem. (250-51)

In the case of Gregório de Matos Guerra's Erotic poetry, the erotic entails different levels of defiance to social norms, which ranges from erotic contemplation to

references to the actual act of intercourse. This subtlety is necessary because societal rules and religious dogmas do not allow for the explicit expression of eroticism in the arts in Colonial times. As his society demands composure, modesty and circumspection, Gregório de Matos Guerra produces erotic work that encompasses elements ranging from mischievous and malicious wordplay, full of ambiguity, to open profane allusions that some social sectors of his time considered indecent and inappropriate.

I propose that Gregório de Matos Guerra's Erotic poetry constructs an imagery based on the body that alludes to sexual intercourse and to all the rituals that take place before and after the act. Such imagery may also be perceived as part of an analogical poetic movement that characterizes the colony and its relationship to the colonizer. The sexual act is a primitive tool for the release of carnal desires and a source for mundane pleasure; it takes place within a context that limits and controls these cravings, which are seen as sinful and corruptive. This tension—the duality—between the fulfillment of sexual desires and moral and religious notions of chastity and purity can also be seen in the mixed social settings of Colonial Bahia. Within this social environment, I read the erotic and pornographic in Matos Guerra's work as providing an analogous correspondence to the colony-colonizer relationship. This comparison is present in different moments of the colony's life: when the new land is seen as a paradise, full of virtues, and when the new land is exploited in an almost vicious way, analogous to an obsessive sexual drive, due to the sugar cane cycle. Moreover, the mixed racial and social contexts of the colony provide fertile ground for the fomentation of transgressive and deviant creole behavior as noted by critics such as Bauer and Mazzotti:

Human beings were now seen to be like plants, entirely dependent on their climate and soil. Thus, the term creole frequently came to refer not only to persons born in the New World but also to those who had been transplanted there, and, thus, been subject to its peculiar natural influences for an extended period. The environmental determinism of Enlightenment philosophes such as Montesquieu, Raynal, Voltaire, and Buffon led to the inevitable conclusion that Americans of whatever ancestry were “destined” (in the words of William Robertson) “to remain uncivilized” because of New World climates and soils. (5-6)

If we take into account the aforementioned theory of colonization, the lack of purity brought about by miscegenation, along with the climate and practices of the land, are seen as the cause for the immoral, transgressive and deviant behavior of the members of the colony, whether they are transplanted to or born into the New World. The struggle between virtue and sin is present throughout Gregório de Matos Guerra’s work, reinforcing the conflict that is proper of the Baroque period; and his Erotic poetry reveals evidence of such contraventional conduct. Such evidence is congruent with Gregório de Matos Guerra’s critical view of his societal structure: his poetic eroticism presents an overview of how esteemed members of such community violate moral values imposed by the Catholic Church and European social conventions of his time.

Gregório de Matos Guerra clearly shows this contradiction in his Erotic poetry, in both content and form, demonstrating a Colonial baroque duality. When it comes to form, it is important to mention that most of Gregório de Matos Guerra’s choices for

structure in his poetry are borrowed from European conventions such as the Renaissance and the Spanish baroque conventions, just as in his Lyric poetry. However, Gregório de Matos Guerra utilizes a combination of elements that are found only in the Colonial environment to add novelty to the literary conventions that he inherits. Thus, along with utilizing both sonnets and *décimas* in his verse, Gregório de Matos Guerra includes very specific indigenous and African vocabulary to show the duality of his society and to emphasize the image of a body that is starting its decay due to the immoral behavior presented by the settlers.

One of the verse forms that Matos Guerra employs in his erotic poetry is the *décima*. According to Alex Preminger *et al.* (1974), *décimas* are a Spanish verse form comprised of ten-line stanzas. “The first *décimas* approximating the final form were the fourteenth and fifteenth century 10-line variations of the *copla de arte menor*” (186). Examples of this poetic form are the erotic *décimas* “Pica-Flor” and “Minha Rica Mulatinha”.

Let us first analyze how Gregório de Matos Guerra’s renowned poem “Pica-Flor” combines the European format of the *décima* with Colonial elements. This poem draws on two cultural traditions—the twelfth-century European troubadour tradition and the musical culture of Brazil—to create a rich and suggestive image of intercourse. From these two traditions, Matos Guerra brings in poetic form—the *décima* and the sonnet—, linguistic musicality, and a rich cultural context, to present a criticism of the power relations in *Bahiano* Colonial society.

“Pica-Flor” is supposedly a response to a comment made by a nun regarding Gregório de Matos Guerra’s physical appearance as we can see in the poem’s

epigraph. The author reacts with sarcasm and irony to being called fragile and delicate, mocking the nun and her potentially flawed character and values— her susceptibility to the temptations of the flesh.

“Pica-Flor”

A uma freira que satirizando a delgada fisionomia do poeta lhe chamou

“Pica-Flor”

Se Pica-Flor me chamais,
Pica-Flor aceito ser,
mas resta agora saber,
se no nome que me dais,
meteis a flor, que guardais
no passarinho melhor!
Se me dais este favor,
sendo só de mim o Pica,
e o mais vosso, claro fica,
que fico então Pica-Flor.

The poem “Pica-Flor” suggests that someone (the nun) referred to the lyrical voice as being as fragile and delicate as the humming bird, so this lyrical voice reacts to that statement and dares the nun to discover the virility behind that fragile figure by offering him her flower (purity) because he is the best of all birds and deserves to receive

her favors. Considering eroticism as a game of seduction, we can argue that Gregório de Matos Guerra takes up the *décima* in “Pica-Flor” so as to engage in this game with the nun he is trying to seduce and to mock. The *décima* is a mainstay of the European troubadour tradition, including the heptasyllabic verses (also known as *redondilha maior*) and it is a very popular poetic convention of the Baroque era because of its ambivalent imprint of versatility, being quite useful to compose odes of seduction or satirical verses. I believe the author’s choice to use a *décima* in his composition of “Pica-Flor” entails traits that portray a unique Colonial setting, in which there is more tolerance towards taboo topics such as the sexual permissiveness and indulgences of church members.

Moreover, the graphic representation of the *décima* suggests the construction of the poem into one single block of verses making a phallic allusion to the penis. Besides, the choice for the heptasyllabic verses and a rhyme scheme such as ABBAACDEED promotes a certain flirtatious musicality that suggests the rhythmic pace of a steady and lively coital interaction. This musical element shows Gregório de Matos Guerra’s versatility in terms of combining elements of the baroque—as I discuss below—with features inherited from classical Portuguese poetic traditions. That is so because *Trovadorismo* is considered the first literary expression of Portuguese as a language. This oral form of poetry can be traced back to the realms of Occitania in the Provence, but its emergence takes place in twelfth-century Europe. In Portugal, *Trovadorismo* flourishes in the Galician region and it is mostly characterized by *Cantigas* (songs sung to the sound of the flute, viola or lute). These oral poems possess lyric

characteristics, humor and even irony, three elements that are quite often present in Gregório de Matos Guerra's work and in this poem.

However, the rhyme scheme is not the only element that gives musicality to the poem. Taking into account the repetition of sounds, or alliteration, the musicality present in "Pica-Flor" is infused by a resonant sibilant sound promoted by the alliteration of the letter "s". This structural aspect gives the poem fluidity and produces a vivid and playful erotic image of a hummingbird (*pica-flor*) dashing from flower to flower in a colorful garden.

Thus we see that Matos Guerra has taken a European tradition—the ballad of courtly love—and he has twisted it to serve a new purpose: the mocking and seduction of a nun, whose behavior is also apparently divergent from the standard. The order of things is subverted. A poem that is supposed to be of love becomes overtly mocking and provocative. This perversion of order contributes to Gregório de Matos' reflection in his poetry of the hybridity of life in the colony. As I argue below, this hybridity suggested in his poetry resonates with the combining of diverse forces in the Portuguese New World of the 1600s, where European tradition is brought by the colonizers, but meets a divergent natural environment and climate and the miscegenation of several peoples: Portuguese, African, Indigenous, and Dutch, among others.

As "Pica-Flor" is a response to a nun's comment regarding the fragile appearance of the poet, Gregório de Matos Guerra proceeds in his intent to subvert a possibly innocent comment into a malicious and flirtations mockery. Gregório de Matos Guerra achieves this goal by using two quite harmonizing and complementary images: the

hummingbird and the flower. Here again, the author resorts to the troubadour tradition, which preferred love, especially sexual love, as a central theme:

The troubadours made sexual love their most exclusive theme, and developed the social phenomenon of courtly love... Though the love celebrated by the troubadours was sensual, their ideal of “pure” love prohibited sexual intercourse between the lovers—at least in theory... This prohibition had the effect of endowing any casual contact, gesture, or token with enormous erotic significance, and they bequeathed to later European love poetry a whole vocabulary of amorous symbol. Most troubadour lyrics are, thus, amorous in the extreme, but some are satirical or political. (Preminger *et al.* 871)

Considering that courtly love is the thematic object of the troubadour tradition, one can conclude that “Pica-Flor” is a baroque “*trova*” of sexual love since the poet prefers to refer to the lyric voice (the humming-bird) as *Pica-flor* instead of using *Beija-flor*. As Gregório de Matos Guerra’s work has a very characteristic way of incorporating colloquial vocabulary from the streets of the colony, his erotic poems exhibit a peculiar lexicon that generate an expressive and graphic effect. That is so because *Pica-flor* is a Latin compound word that is present in both Spanish and the peninsular variety of the Portuguese language; however, in the Colonial variety of Portuguese, this compound takes a different form by the substitution of the word *Pica* for the word *Beija* (kiss) in the Colonial setting when referring to the hummingbird. Once more, Gregório de Matos Guerra proves his command of a vast lexical repertoire because his word of choice, *pica*, carries double meaning as it is frequently used with a sexual connotation as a synonym

for penis. Not only does he use nouns to recreate a sexual ambivalence, but he also uses verbs such as *meteis* (put) in his sexual wordplay. This verb is also used in both Portuguese and Spanish, being listed in dictionaries as the act of introducing one thing into another. This double entendre reinforces the graphic phallic image suggested by the disposition of the verses into a *décima*.

In “Pica-Flor”, the phallic reference is also repeated in the use of the word *passarinho* (little bird), which is a diminutive form for *pássaro* (bird). The use of diminutive forms in Portuguese entails not only a reference to the size of an object, but also a connotation of affection and intimacy. For this reason, the author’s preference for the use of the diminutive form, here, suggests a deep level of intimacy from the poet in regards to the nun and her with him, a behavior pattern not expected from aristocratic members of Colonial society and even less expected from a member of a religious order.

Gregório de Matos Guerra’s engagement in social criticism is clear in this poem through the use of burlesque metaphors with sexual connotations. These images conflict with that of the innocent idyllic garden that once was the colony. Words such as *pica* and *meteis* are used in contexts where the sexual intercourse has no affective value and is reduced to a mundane act of relief of carnal desires. This profane and utilitarian sexuality could be coherent with his criticism of the Colonial practices of economic exploitation and race mixing, so that the *flor* (the Colonial flower) is being penetrated by the infamous *pica*.

The author uses the image of a flower to convey the idea of purity, beauty, fragility and fertility once the *flor* can be defined as the reproductive organs of superior plants. At the same time, Gregório de Matos Guerra continues his wordplay because *flor*

may also refer to the female genitalia, which is being violated by the *pica-flor*. Thus, the word *flor* can be an interchangeable representation of the nun who, in theory, is delicate and virginal just as the nature of Colonial Brazil once was.

Gregório de Matos Guerra uses nuances of metaphor and irony to create antithetical images that lead to the interpretation of “Pica-Flor” in two different levels of analogy. On the one hand, at a verbal level the *pica-flor* represents the colony in terms of an erotic interaction between the empowered and the other. On the other hand, at the level of ideas, it provides an allegorical movement to criticize the exploitation of the natural resources of the colony.

In “Necessidades forçosas da natureza humana”, Matos Guerra makes use of another poetic structure to take the erotic to a very explicit expression, as we will see in the analysis that follows.

“Necessidades forçosas da natureza humana”

Descarto-me da tronga, que me chupa,

Corro por um conchego todo o mapa,

O ar da feia me arrebatada a capa,

O gadanho da limpa até a garupa.

Busco uma freira, que me desentupa

A via, que o desuso às vezes tapa,

Topo-a, topando-a todo o bolo rapa,

Que as cartas lhe dão sempre com chalupa.

Que hei de fazer, se sou de boa cepa,

E na hora de ver repleta a tripa,

Darei por quem mo vase toda Europa?

Amigo, quem se alimpa da carepa,

Ou sofre uma muchacha, que o dissipa,

Ou faz da mão sua cachopa.

This poem communicates the consuming desire that takes over the lyrical voice's body with such intensity that any woman, whether beautiful or ugly, prostitute or not, will satisfy his Colonial aristocratic needs. However, the lyrical voice is in search of a nun who will relieve his sexual tension because nuns are the only women who can provide complete contentment by performing oral sex, as they are not really allowed to engage in intercourse. The lyrical voice's urge is so compelling that the only option left for relief, if no nun is found, is to perform masturbation: his need is solely physiological.

Unlike "Pica-Flor", this piece of erotic poetry is composed in the format of a Petrarchan sonnet with the rhyme scheme of ABBA ABBA CDE CDE. Once again, we find Gregório de Matos Guerra drawing upon European traditions to create his poetry. The choice of the Petrarchan form revisits the Renaissance tradition, which is now allied with the use of the Baroque technique widely known as Cultism. As I mentioned in the introduction, the baroque Cultist tradition focuses on the external

aesthetics of the poem to show off the poet's erudition. Thus, Gregório de Matos Guerra uses a series of wordplays that are established by the use of figures of speech allied with high register phrasing at the grammatical level.

The first trait of the Cultist tradition appears in the title that presents the figure of hyperbole, which consists of an extravagant exaggeration of an idea in order to create emphasis. Thus, “Necessidades Forçosas da Natureza Humana”, which can be translated as “The forcible needs of human nature”, is an unnecessary exaggeration, accomplished through redundancy, of the obvious needs (sexual needs) that are innate to the human being. Another Cultist feature can be seen in the organization of the poem at the sentence level as the author uses the hyperbaton, or the inversion of the grammatical structure. The verse “A via, que o desuso às vezes tapa,” is an example of how Gregório de Matos Guerra utilizes this feature to show his erudition and ability to write convoluted sentences. As the natural SVO (Subject Verb Object) sentence structure (“O desuso às vezes tapa a via”) has been broken, the outcome is an effect of Cultist emphasis combined with the use of vulgar language.

Moreover, we can highlight other figures of speech that characterize the Cultist tradition. For instance, the alliterations of the letters *T*, *P*, *M*, *N* and *O*. As the letters *P* and *T* are plosive consonants, their repetition projects a certain feeling of explosion, which is what the poetic voice longs for in terms of sexual relief because his sexual organ has not been used for quite some time as can be evidenced in the verses “A via, que o desuso às vezes tapa, / Topo-a, topando-a todo o bolo rapa”. Not only that, but the articulation of the letter *P*, which is bilabial, suggests the sound produced when one sucks on something; in this case, a reference to the sound produced by the lips on the

penis. The alliteration of the nasal letters *M*, *N* and *O* bring a tone of moaning to the poem, possibly reflecting the unintelligible sounds one makes during intercourse.

In this poem, Gregório de Matos Guerra also uses metonymy and metaphor. In the verse “Topo-a, topando-a todo o bolo rapa” Gregório de Matos Guerra repeats a very common habit in the streets of the colony, cards playing. By using the expression “*o bolo rapa*” (takes all the cards), the poet is engaging in metaphorical discourse applying a hidden meaning of sexual satisfaction after oral sex through the use of the metaphor of the winning move in a game of cards.¹⁷ This reference to the game of cards brings about another inference regarding the Bahia of Gregório de Matos Guerra since it would have been easily understood by the reader of his time since it was common practice among all social classes in the colony.

Just like the game of cards, there were practices widely spread in the colony with which the author did not agree. Among such practices, Gregório de Matos Guerra severely criticized the way the church seemed to condone the loss of principles such as purity and celibacy. Thus, in “Necessidades Forçosas da Natureza Humana”, the author, once more, associates the member of a religious order “*uma freira*” (a nun) with vulgar sexual practices. In the case of this poem, the sexual engagement between the nun and the poetic voice is different from the one suggested in “Pica-Flor”. While “Pica-Flor” elaborates on the graphics of the coitus performance itself, “Necessidades Forçosas da Natureza Humana” focuses on the performance of oral sex. However, I believe that the latter is more openly pornographic than the former as Gregório de Matos Guerra uses a lexical range that is much more colloquial, street-like, and vulgar to address the oral sex

¹⁷ Explanation of the term provided by Francisco Topa’s notes in his *Edição crítica da obra poética de Gregório de Matos. Vol. II: Edição dos sonetos* (495-96).

act. For instance, the author uses words such as *muchacha* (from Spanish—young woman) and *cachopa* (from Portuguese—lady) combined with quite vulgar nouns, such as *tronga* (prostitute) and *chalupa* (buttocks, arse), and verbs like *chupa* (suck).¹⁸

This combination of the colloquial and vulgar with the image of a nun has a Conceptist foundation. That is so because Gregório de Matos Guerra presents an argument implying that nuns are, allegedly, the best option to provide pleasure by performing oral sex on a man as we can see in the following stanza: “Busco uma freira, que me desentupa / A via, que o desuso às vezes tapa, / Topo-a, topando-a todo o bolo rapa, / Que as cartas lhe dão sempre com chalupa.” Here, the author suggests that the nun ‘will unclog his clogged veins’ because they are able to use their hands quite well just like in a “card game”. Not only that, but it is also implied that efficacy in delivering satisfaction is certain since one gets lucky enough to be with a nun: “Que as cartas lhe dão sempre com chalupa.” (the cards given by nuns are always lucky ones—*chalupa*).¹⁹ Such inferences are founded on the grounds that nuns do not engage in the practice of coitus so not to risk losing their “virginity” (anatomic chastity) for the sake of being married to Jesus. However, as long as their hymen was intact, providing other form of sexual pleasures (oral sex and masturbation) might not have been seen as such a horrendous sin.

In this poem, Gregório de Matos Guerra presents a social commentary on the depravation of the presumably sacred environment of the church. In this piece of erotic poetry, Matos Guerra is criticizing the figures who surrender to sin and engage in mundane practices the Church does not, theoretically, allow. This perversity of values

¹⁸ Ibid. 495-96

¹⁹ Ibid. 495-96

seems to have great impact on the governance of the colony once the power of the Crown/State is not detached from the Church, as suggested by Regina Carvalho:

Em sua época, a Igreja Católica tinha grande poder, por não estar separada do estado. O número de padres e freiras era muito maior do que o de hoje, e havia muita depravação, em todos os sentidos. (131)

As the poem suggests, this lack of separation between Church and State also implied a lack of separation in respect to the values exercised in the colony, meaning that immoral values and behavior commonly seen in that society would be transferred back and forth from one societal layer to the other.

Along these lines, Gregório de Matos Guerra's erotic poetry confirms the foreshadowing of the Colonial crisis mentioned in chapter one. One of the main indications in his writings that the Portuguese colony is facing a crisis is the fact that the mixing of races is present, mostly, in his erotic poems. As a man of Portuguese descent, Gregório de Matos Guerra took on a righteous position and articulated the threats and temptations posed to the promiscuous white men by those who belonged to an African line of ancestry, which, in his view, necessarily led to miscegenation.

During Gregório Matos Guerra's time, the white elite exercised power over morality and determined whether one's behavior was acceptable according to class interests. Matos Guerra's Bahia was a patriarchal slave society whose center was the figure of *senhor de engenho*. According to Gilberto Freyre's *The Masters and the Slaves: (Casa-grande & Senzala) a Study in the Development of Brazilian Civilization*, the *senhor de engenho* was a sugar cane plantation owner who controlled Colonial life with a merciless hand in order to defend his status of wealth and power. Freyre affirms

that the *senhor de engenho* was “the true lord of [Colonial] Brazil,” more powerful than viceroys or bishops (xxxv). These aristocratic landowners were, in an almost absolute majority, Portuguese men entitled with almost sovereign power since they did not have to fully report nor respond to interferences from the Portuguese Crown. The reason for this relies in the fact that economic power enabled Colonial aristocracy to do whatever they felt was necessary to maintain their purity of lineage and guarantee their profit.

As part of their display of wealth and to keep their sugar cane production costs low, these “*senhores de engenho*” needed to acquire slaves to work in their plantations. For that reason, their sugar cane industry created a demand for the slave trafficking industry. Thus, the power of these plantation masters was amplified because they promoted profit to Portugal bi-dimensionally by producing sugar and consuming the product of slave trade.

Alienated from their motherland, these masters of land and enslaved bodies were the representation of a dilemma that appears in most of Gregório de Matos Guerra’s erotic verses: the contradiction between the image of a white elite and the realization of carnal desire. This conflict, which is very baroque (man divided between body and soul), translates into the paradoxical discourse of “do as I say, but not as I do”: the *Bahiano* elite defend themselves with the hypocritical moralism, openly supported by the religious apparatus of Catholicism, while at the same time, elite individuals engage in practices that are considered sinful and inappropriate. The elite present a public façade of righteousness and piety; however, in private quarters, this same elite succumb to the carnal desire of pursuing black women or, even, other men. Moreover, members of the church also engaged in such immoral practices, breaking their vows of chastity and

succumbing to monetary greed and ostentation. For instance, members of the church possessed private property—engenhos de açúcar—and maintained families just as if they were lay people. As a consequence, the *Bahiano* society engages in corrupt practices as well, presenting a dichotomy typical to the New World. An example of such is the following poem:

“Minha Rica Mulatinha”

Minha rica mulatinha
Desvelo e cuidado meu,
Eu já fora todo teu,
E tu foras toda minha:
Juro-te, minha vidinha,
Se acaso minha ques ser,
Que todo me hei de acender
em ser teu amante fino
pois por ti já perco o tino,
e ando para morrer.

In the poem “Minha Rica Mulatinha” the male lyrical voice appears to be proposing an intimate relationship to a *mulata*. From the first verses, one perceives that this man has been sexually involved with this *mulata* before and, as the lyrical voice suggests, they belong together. Under the condition that he becomes her sophisticated

white lover, this man asks the *Mulatinha* to accept his proposal because this woman—or his desire for her—drives him insane.

In this poem, which is a *décima* just like “Pica-Flor”, we can see that Gregório de Matos Guerra is being quite direct when addressing the *Mulatinha* as a woman he could take advantage of in opposition to the attitude he would have towards a white woman. In Colonial Brazil, women were treated as objects at the disposal of men’s desires; however, the *mulatas* were objectified differently from white women. The objectification of the *mulatas* entails physical abuse—forceful intercourse and also corporal punishment, which were common practice at the time—and no commitment in terms of honor and marriage, while the white woman carried on the role of a seigniorial matron whose main task in life was to provide healthy “pure” white offspring to maintain the continuation of aristocracy and the privileges in the colony.

The poet shows that, even if the poetic voice feels physically attracted to the *mulata*, his status as a rich man of noble lineage is almost untouchable. However, the white man might lose his mind over the sexual desire he has for this mixed race woman and the insanity provoked by a sudden passion for *mulatas* may result in death (death of a caste society or his own emotional death). Here there is an allegory of Bahia, where the mixed-blood population had an increasing presence in the streets of the colony’s capital by the end of the seventeenth century. Thus, by analogy, the poetic voice serves as representation of the Portuguese Crown in the sense that it only wants to have sexual intercourse with the *Mulatinha* of the poem, who is analogous to the colony and its miscegenation. The fact that the poetic voice is incapable of offering a commitment of a real marriage to the *mulata* (the Colony) reflects a type of immoral behavior that was

widely accepted in Colonial Brazil: a white man, married to a white woman, keeping a lover—usually *mulatas* or mixed-race women—to satisfy his lust.²⁰ Such exploitation is the intent of the Crown in relation to the Colony, that is, to take advantage of the economic possibilities of the new land, not offering in exchange a way of developing and keeping the high morality in the *Bahiano* society with a fruitful marriage.

Moreover, in “Minha Rica Mulatinha”, Gregório de Matos Guerra presents a poetic voice that deals with the duality of the baroque period, using contrasting ideas to express paradoxical feelings of chaste love and carnal desire. The poetic voice starts addressing the woman, with whom he has already had an intimate relationship in the past (“Eu já fora todo teu e tu fora toda minha”), with affection (“desvelo e cuidado meu”), following the courtly love tradition of *Trovadorismo*. In the sequence, he moves to a more colloquial and direct proposal, offering to be her refined lover (“Que todo me hei de acender em ser seu amante fino”); but, not her husband because a man of his social stature could not surrender to the temptation to marry a *mulata*. This is evidence that the poetic voice shares the same aristocratic values as the author, who conducted himself as a man of white privilege and saw racial mixing as an appalling allusion to the death of the caste society he belonged to. Here, corruption is reinforced by one of the many ambiguities of Matos Guerra’s discourse: the fact that being male is inevitably correlated to feeling sexual desires that are relieved by *mulatas*, justifying the Portuguese practices of racial mingling. Once again, Gregório de Matos Guerra engages in the argumentative

²⁰ According to Tabatha Fernandes *Mulato/a* refers to person who is born from parents whose origins are African and European. Mixed refers, here, to the other miscegenation patterns that existed in the colony and encompasses the *Caboclo/a* (European and Indigenous descendants) and the *Cafuso/a* (African and Indigenous descendants). (67-69)

discourse that communicates the inevitability of the immoral behavior as we have already discussed in “Necessidades Forçosas da Natureza Humana.”

In the three poems analyzed in this chapter, Matos Guerra uses eroticism to criticize *Bahiano* society. The poetic voice he employs deconstructs the idea of courtly love, of chastity, of purity of feelings and focuses on carnal desire, on the sexual drive that overtakes the morality and manners of the Colonial elite. The increasingly mixed-race population of the colony and its behavior is like a reflection of the “mixed” malpractices of the Portuguese Crown and the empowered “senhores de engenho.” As the corruption of the Colonial society grows, in an obsessive and insane way, and as the imperial project exploits the economic advantages the new land offers, this exploitation is matched by the obscenity and lust at the level of the individual. The idyllic, courteous love is replaced by pure carnal desire, idealization gives way to the objectification of women. As the colony, initially a paradise, decays in moral standards and practices, so do the relations between the new land and the Portuguese Crown. This decay, as we see in the poems, originates in the flawed nature of the human beings, especially that of the white men who inhabit the colony. The white elite succumb to mortal sins such as adultery and capital sins of lust and ambition. From this point of view, the idealization of Colonial Brazil as a *ufanist* American Eden is being corrupted by the desires of the flesh and the fall from paradise is inevitable.

Conclusion

As presented in the introduction of this work, Octavio Paz's broad literary conceptualization of analogy requires readers to possess an intrinsic capability of using correspondences to make meaningful connections through differences. Consequently, analogy becomes key to unlock the secrets of the universe (10). It is unquestionable that analogous approaches to Matos Guerra's work have already been established; however, most of the critics who sought to scrutinize his poetry have focused on analogous connections between his Satirical poetry and Colonial Brazil (Costigan, 1994 and Nogueira, 2005). More often than not, previous studies have overlooked the possible analogical correspondences between Colonial Brazil and Matos Guerra's Lyrical, Erotic and Religious poetic composition. This study has attempted to extend the analogous relation between Colonial Brazil and Gregório de Matos Guerra's poetry to the realm of his Lyrical and Erotic writings. In the present work these two types of poetic expression have received careful analysis with the intent of finding connections that corroborate the following proposal:

Through the examination of poetic components such as language, structure, metaphor and allegory, Matos Guerra's Lyrical and Erotic work can be interpreted as analogies of Brazilian Colonial society in the making.

The Colonial experience molded the author's perspectives of the world surrounding him; by the same token, Gregório de Matos Guerra's writings shape one's views of Colonial society since Matos Guerra's poetry mirrored the Colonial-Creole

society in which he was immersed. Likewise, his work is embedded with nuances of Colonial ambiguities, the author and the poetic voice engage in a dynamic dance with the colony and its contradictions, where they synchronically move with, away and towards one another. Thus, the outcome of such dance is permeated by tensions and irregularity that makes Gregório de Matos Guerra's work the (im)perfect Baroque "pearl".

As mentioned before, the Portuguese lexical item *barroco* – Baroque – is a derivation of the Italian word *baroco* and this term was widely used in the XVII century to define the constant conflicts represented by Baroque art. In art form, these conflicts were infused with tension, duality and ambiguity and resulted in the contrastive binaries that reflect the human condition. Thus, the Baroque man is caught between a "battle" of contradictory impulses, such as the tension between sensuality and religion (Wellek, 100). Matos Guerra's Lyrical and Erotic work are perfect examples of this duality, tension and binary aspect of the Baroque man of that century.

Lyrical Poetry

In the present work I have attempted to show that Matos Guerra's Lyrical Poetry depicts an image of Colonial Brazil through the embedding of classic Baroque writing elements²¹ in combination with unique characteristics of a "tropical Baroque". Spina (1995) defines "tropical baroque" as the outcome of the incorporation of aspects of colony's natural landscape, social life and its linguistic reality into Gregório de Matos Guerra's literary heritage.

²¹ See introduction for a detailed account of Baroque writing elements such as antitheses, paradoxes, hyperboles, hyperbatons and metaphors.

With that being said, the analysis of “Discreta e formosíssima Maria” provides an allegory for Brazil in its glorious Colonial beginning. It is a ufanist perception of the Colony, that also applies to the “A uma dama dormindo junto a uma fonte”. Both poems present the idea of *Carpe Diem* as celebratory of the richness and abundance of the New World, combined with the concept of the feminine Muse in perfect harmony with Nature. The analysis of the connection between land, woman and Muse provides evidence that Matos Guerra’s “Discreta e formosíssima Maria” and “A uma dama dormindo junto a uma fonte” have the land of Colonial Brazil as a source of constant inspiration as noted by Annette Kolodny’s view of North America as a feminine land: “America’s oldest and most cherished fantasy: a daily reality of harmony between man and nature based on an experience of the land as essentially feminine - that is, not simply the land as mother, but the land as woman, the total female principle of gratification - enclosing the individual in an environment of receptivity, repose, and painless and integral satisfaction.” (4)

The three poems aforementioned show evidence of the close connection between the lyrical voices and Colonial nature by means of personification. While in “Discreta e formosíssima Maria” and “A uma dama dormindo junto a uma fonte” Colonial nature is personified through the feminine image (Muse), in “Ao Rio Caípe recorre o queixoso poeta de que sua senhora admite por esposo outro sujeito” the personification of nature happens through the establishment of a dialogue between the river and the lyrical voice.

Additionally, the close reading of “A uma dama dormindo junto a uma fonte” and “Ao Rio Caípe recorre o queixoso poeta de que sua senhora admite por esposo outro sujeito” provides an understanding of Matos Guerra’s Colonial landscape. Drawing from the Baroque tradition of exaggeration, Matos Guerra uses sensorial/synesthetic elements

(e.g.: light, color, shape, contour, etc.) to enhance cognitive perceptions and (re)create the sonorous, chromatic and textual/texturized frenzy of the Colony.

As mentioned in the analysis of “Ao Rio Caípe recorre o queixoso poeta de que sua senhora admite por esposo outro sujeito”, there is also a new relation with *ufanismo* that differs from the euphoric *ufanismo* present in the sonnets “Discreta e formosíssima Maria” and “A uma dama dormindo junto a uma fonte”. Since the sonnet “Ao Rio Caípe recorre o queixoso poeta de que sua senhora admite por esposo outro sujeito” possesses a certain sad melancholic quality, it is possible to infer that the lyrical voice’s mourning for the loss of his beloved translates the author’s mourning for a Colony that might be on the verge of a crisis.

This sad and solemn *ufanist* attitude gains a greater meaning as we can see in this analysis of “Desenganos da vida humana, metaforicamente”. As the sobriety and somberness present in the poem suggest, the Colony’s decay will be brought about by both the devastating action of time over nature and the exploitation of the Colony’s riches. Once more Gregório de Matos Guerra’s work provides elements that translate the duality of the Baroque condition as well as the Colonial condition since the lyrical voice in “Desenganos da vida humana, metaforicamente” is apprehensive and concerned about the recklessness of Colonial subjects’ behavior.

While poems like “Discreta e formosíssima Maria” and “A uma dama dormindo junto a uma fonte” present *Carpe Diem* as a celebration of life, in “Desenganos da vida humana, metaforicamente” *Carpe Diem* gains another dimension since the eschatological elements of destruction go beyond nature and time. As discussed in the chapter, the

untouched Edenic land has come into contact with the Portuguese Empire and its reckless exploitation.

Moreover, it is undeniable that Gregório de Matos Guerra's poetry voices his concerns towards the uncontrolled ambition presented by the arrogant Colonial administration. This haughty attitude is reinforced by the wide-spread belief that the colony is a land of infinite resources and, if one of these resources is exhausted by the greed of the administration, the generous Colonial Phoenix will regenerate from its green ashes and provide a more lucrative alternative than the first, just as the exhaustion of *Pau Brasil* gives room to a new cycle of exploitation: the sugar cane cycle. This conclusion is supported by the reading of poems such as "Desenganos da Vida Humana, Metaforicamente", where there is a prediction of what is to come for the Colony, and the Empire itself, if no action is taken to control the local administration and the *colonos* so to bring their misdemeanors to an end.

Nonetheless, Gregório de Matos Guerra sees beyond the imagery of a Phoenix and the somber tone of the last stanza in the poem suggests that the Phoenix may not be as immortally generous after all since the "rose will meet the afternoon" and its fate.

Hence, the dialogue between the lyrical voice and Fábio in "Desenganos da vida humana, metaforicamente" serves as tool for the author to voice his concern regarding the danger of violation that menaces the body of the virginal Muse-land of Brazil. This concern about the future of Colonial Brazil reveals the author's dissatisfaction with the transformations the Colony is experiencing since such changes create a gap between a creole reality and the once idealized Edenic *ufanist* Brazilian paradise.

Thus, this close reading of Matos Guerra's lyrical poems provides an analogous depiction of a hybrid society that may succumb to Colonial decay brought about by the ambition and irresponsibility of both the Crown and the settlers. This interpretation is supported through the analysis of the Matos Guerra's Erotic poetry, where the aforementioned metaphor of the body is reinforced.

Erotic Poetry

As I proposed in chapter two, Gregório de Matos Guerra's Erotic poetry also presents a metaphor that goes beyond the descriptive elements of a body. As the body gains life and matures, the need for procreation arises and Matos Guerra's Erotic poetry allows for the visualization of rituals regarding sexual intercourse. The images presented by the author are also interpreted as analogous to the Colony and its relationship with the Crown.

In this regard, the imperial ruling of the Crown now degrades the innocent body of the Muse-land, forcing it to engage in sinful and corrupt behavior. As mentioned before, the Baroque duality also pertains Matos Guerra's Erotic poetry since it overtly exposes the conflict between sexual contentment and religious chastity and purity as well as the careless miscegenation practices commonly found in all levels of Colonial *Bahiano* society.

The comparison between the Colony and Matos Guerra's poetry allows for identification of different moments of the colony's life: when the new land is seen as a virtuous paradise and when there is a savage exploitation of the new land. The latter is analogous to the author's Erotic poetry in the sense that the sexual drive present in these

poems is comparable to the drive for seizing all resources of the land. Furthermore, the idea of a fertile soil is also analogous to the notion of a fertile social setting that allows for the conception of a deviant creole society as suggested by Bauer and Mazzotti (5-6).

Hence, the conflict between desire and virtue permeates the poems in this chapter, suggesting that the poetic voice confronts the violation of moral values perpetrated by respected members of society. Engaging in the same Baroque tradition of verse format as the Lyrical poetry, Gregório de Matos Guerra innovates in his Erotic lyric since he uses elements of the Colonial social landscape to compose poems such as “Pica-Flor”, “Necessidades forçosas da natureza humana” and “Minha rica Mulatinha”.

In “Pica-Flor” and “Necessidades forçosas da natureza humana” the author uses the European tradition of verse to create social commentaries on the depravation of the Holy Church, a presumably sacred institution. In these pieces of his Erotic poetry, Matos Guerra criticizes both the members of the clergy, especially women, who concede to sin and engage in sexual practices that are against the Church’s teachings, as well as the elite who benefit from the Church’s corruptibility.

The poem “Pica-Flor” mocks a nun and suggests that her religiousness will succumb to the poetic voice’s virility. The author also shows a skillful command of the Portuguese language lexicon since the word play in the poem is quite suggestive and complex. There are phallic references that conflict with the innocent idyllic garden that once was the Colony, implying that the *flor* (the Colonial flower) is being violated by the *pica*. This poem’s analysis illustrates how Matos Guerra creates antithetical images that allow for two different levels of analogy: (1) the verbal-graphic level, where the *pica-flor* (*pica* = the empowered and *flor* = the subjugated other) represents the Colony engaging

in a exploitative interaction, and (2) the conceptual level, where an allegorical movement is created to criticize the exploitation of the natural resources of the colony.

“Pica-Flor” and “Necessidades Forçadas da Natureza Humana” refer to the sexual interactions effect a power play where the lyrical voice seeks to overpower and manipulate the nun. Hence, these two poems present Matos Guerra’s criticism towards the Church’s loss of morality through the objectification of clergy women (nuns), implying their loss of fundamental principles such as purity and celibacy. Matos Guerra sees this distortion of sacrosanct morals as one of the causes for the failure in the governance of the Colony since the State is not separated from the Church as suggested by Carvalho (131). This lack of separation between Church and State betrays an entanglement of immoral values and practices in all societal layers. Thus Gregório de Matos Guerra’s Erotic poetry validates the prediction of a crisis in the Colony as mentioned in Chapter One. Furthermore, there is an element that aggravates the crisis in the Colony: the mixing of races.

As Matos Guerra’s Bahia was a patriarchal slave society and the white sugar plantation owners held economic power, it was the white elite that exercised power over social and moral rules, doing what it saw fit to maintain status. These masters of land and enslaved bodies also become a representation of the Baroque since they protect their white privileges, with the support of the religious institution, and engage in inappropriate practices of miscegenation. Thus, the hypocritical *Bahiano* elite conduct a life of duplicity, engaging in morally corrupt practices in private quarters and putting on a public façade to suit an aristocratic standard. This double life presents the typical dichotomy of New World creole societies as we can see in “Minha Rica Mulatinha”.

The poem “Minha Rica Mulatinha” presents an allegory of seventeenth century Bahia, where an increasing presence of a mestizo population endangers the stability of the Colony. As my analysis suggests, the poetic voice is a representation of the abusive Portuguese Crown and the *Mulatinha* represents the colony and its miscegenation. As we can see in this reading of “Minha Rica Mulatinha”, Gregório de Matos Guerra’s poetic voice represents the white male aristocrat that succumbs to the carnal desire for a woman of color and, at the same time, denies this woman a right to a legitimized relationship. Thus, the relationship between the Crown and the Colony is based on the exploitation of the economic possibilities of the New Land without providing a promise of protection in return. Analogously to a marriage, the commitment between the Crown and the Colony should guarantee stability and recognition of a status in which the Land is protected and provided for.

Hence, Matos Guerra’s poetry examined in this study reveals two images of a love object: the pure virginal woman in his poems “Discreta e Formosíssima Maria” and “A uma dama dormindo junto a uma fonte” and the available dark skinned *mulata* in “Minha Rica Mulatinha”. His Erotic verses emphasize the desires of the flesh resulting in the miscegenation aspect of the creole Brazilian society, which is a corrupting force that brings about the degradation of the Colony.

Satirical Poetry

As outlined in the introduction, literary critics such as Bosi, Costigan, Nogueira and Spina have investigated Gregório de Matos Guerra’s satirical work extensively. Spina affirms that the author composes “the kind of satire that is embedded with a caustic

spirit, neighboring farce, and filled with all types of prejudice. This satire is, at the same time, full of a chronicle nuance that allows the depiction of a mixed race Colonial society” (117-118 in Coutinho).

As it has been established in the scholarship on Matos Guerra, his satire constructs graphic metaphors of the body, especially of a body in decay. Here, as many critics have already noted, the body serves as an analogy for the corrupted *Bahiano* society, which has fallen from grace for having succumbed to greedy and lascivious behavior.

According to Costigan and Nogueira, Gregório de Matos Guerra compares Bahia to a contaminated body in decay. The body represents Bahia, the capital of the colony, and the limbs correspond to the hands, legs and feet who are poorly governing this body. However, the head is the Crown that gives commands to the body that appears not to respond to it. Hence, Gregório de Matos Guerra uses his satire to criticize the corruption that has taken over the colony. A body that was once healthy and productive, but that has surrendered to the temptations of various deadly sins such as usury, promiscuity, greed, lust, and, worst of all, *mestizaje*. Now this body suffers from an incurable disease and the body of Bahia will perish helplessly before the head (the Crown) fights back and produces antibodies to save it.

Religious Poetry

As we can see, Baroque duality permeates Gregório de Matos Guerra’s poetry and reflects Colonial life itself. Similarly, one can propose that this dichotomy also might apply to his Religious poetry. In his Religious poetry, Matos Guerra acknowledges the

philosophical transience of things and draws reflections on man, world and life. It seems that, in his Religious verses, the poetic voice echoes a man in anguish and full of perplexity towards his time. The lyrical voice shows the duality of a baroque soul: the constant struggle between good and evil. Poems such as “A Jesus Cristo, nosso Senhor” offer a good example of how the poetic voice seeks forgiveness in the divine mercy of God; but, at the same time, defies God with an arrogant attitude.

Hence, if an analogical reading were to be applied to Matos Guerra’s Religious poetry, it might find evidence to corroborate the hypothesis that Matos Guerra is searching for redemption of the colony and its defense. The author’s dissatisfaction with the misdeeds of the colony pushes him to plead for the salvation of this land of wonders before it is too late. Nevertheless, this close reading of the Religious poetry as an analogy for the Colony is not addressed in the current study. Thus, in order to deepen such analysis, further scrutiny of the Gregório de Matos Guerra’s Religious work is required.

In conclusion, this reading of Gregório de Matos Guerra’s poetry communicates the double meaning of his work as both a representation of traditional Baroque conventions and, by analogy, his critique of a Colony undergoing the stresses of exploitation, miscegenation, neglect and religious corruption. Following the model of Satirical poetry previously established in scholarly studies, this study demonstrates that Gregório de Matos Guerra’s Lyrical and Erotic poetry participate in an analogical construction of Colonial Brazil. It is most likely that the same model could be applied to Matos Guerra’s Religious poetry thus confirming the contribution made by this thesis.

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