

*VIDA DO GRANDE DOM QUIXOTE E DO GORDO SANCHO PANÇA*  
BY ANTONIO JOSÉ DA SILVA AND MIGUEL DE CERVANTES'S  
*DON QUIXOTE DE LA MANCHA*: COMPARATIVE ASPECTS\*

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ABSTRACT

This article focuses on *Vida do Grande Dom Quixote e do Gordo Sancho Pança*, a play based on the second part of Cervantes's *Don Quixote*, which was written and performed in Lisbon by the Brazilian born New Christian Antonio José da Silva in 1733. Because the work of the Brazilian New Christian was modeled on Cervantes's masterpiece, the analysis departs from a comparative approach that takes into consideration aspects of the socio-cultural context of Spain during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth, and that of Portugal during the first half of the eighteenth century, as well as literary characteristics of both texts. Since the Luso-Brazilian writer who admired Cervantes is still unknown to many within and outside the Portuguese-speaking world, before delving into the comparisons of their literary works and the societies that engendered their texts, the study will also focus on biographical aspects of Antonio José da Silva, and on the impact of his work on the literary canon.

KEY WORDS: Antonio José da Silva and Miguel de Cervantes, comparative study, literary genres, historical context and Inquisition.

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INTRODUCTION

In a recent article entitled "Escritura cervantina e mito quixotesco no romance brasileiro" Maria Augusta da Costa Vieira observes that, although the *Quixote* is known throughout the world, not many people really read this masterpiece by Cervantes. In the specific case of Brazil, the critic notices that the same paradox applies: *Don Quixote* is widely known, but read by only a few.<sup>1</sup>

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The paradox that Costa Vieira observes in regards to Cervantes's *Don Quixote* can also be applied to Antonio José da Silva's play, *Vida do grande Dom Quixote e do gordo Sancho Pança*, performed in Lisbon in 1733. Although the work by the Luso-Brazilian of Jewish origin remains practically ignored outside Brazil and Portugal, a myth has been created around him. The myth seems to have originated from the fact that he was killed by the Inquisition. In a way that resembles that of Cervantes, Antonio José da Silva is known by many people in Brazil and Portugal, but his literary work is seldom read.

In this work, I will focus on da Silva's *Vida do grande Dom Quixote e do gordo Sancho Pança*, which is based on the second part of Cervantes's *Don Quixote*. Because the work of the Brazilian New Christian was modeled on Cervantes's masterpiece, my analysis is a comparative approach that takes into consideration the socio-cultural contexts of Cervantes's *Don Quixote*, and da Silva's *Vida do grande Dom Quixote e do gordo Sancho Pança*, as well as literary characteristics of both texts. However, since the Luso-Brazilian who admired Cervantes is still unknown to many outside the Portuguese-Speaking World, before delving into the comparisons of their literary works and the societies that engendered them, I will introduce a historiographic summary about Antonio José da Silva and his literary production.

#### ANTONIO JOSÉ DA SILVA'S TREATMENT BY THE 18<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY PORTUGUESE INQUISITORS AND THE 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY LUSO-BRAZILIAN HISTORIOGRAPHERS

Antonio José da Silva was born in Rio de Janeiro on May 8, 1705. In 1714 he was forced to leave Brazil because his mother was accused of practicing Judaism. Because there was no Tribunal of the Holy Office in Brazil, the cases of heresies of the inhabitants of the Portuguese America were under the jurisdiction of the Lisbon Inquisition. Da Silva's parents, João Mendes da Silva and Lourença Coutinho, were sent to Lisbon in 1712. In the *auto-da-fé* that took place in July 1713, both his parents were condemned to "penas de abjuração, cárcere, hábito penitencial e confiscação dos bens" (*Traslado do Processo...*, 1896, p. 6). This type of verdict prohibited them from leaving Portugal for the rest of their

lives. Since the couple could not return to Brazil, Antonio José, and his brothers were obliged to live with their parents in Lisbon.

When Antonio José da Silva was twenty years old, the Inquisition reached him with its iron claws. In 1726, following the imprisonment of his mother, he himself was denounced to the Holy Office. At that time he was studying canonic law at the University of Coimbra. The Inquisition trial number 2.027 found in the archives of Torre do Tombo, in Lisbon, indicates that his books and other possessions were confiscated by the official of the Holy Office, and that during his incarceration, the New Christian from Brazil was severely tortured. The torture that he endured while imprisoned made it impossible for him to write for a long time. Even the documents of his release from the Inquisition jail had to be signed by someone on his behalf because his hands were too swollen. On page 50 of his Inquisition process one finds the following explanation: “the witnesses and his representative are signing here because [Antonio José da Silva] could not sign due to the torture suffered”.<sup>2</sup> It was under torture that the New Christian from Brazil confessed that he was an adept of Judaism. Apparently reconciled in the *auto-da-fé* of October 13, 1726, he was sentenced to house arrest and to wear the inquisition garment, *sambenito*, as punishment for his heretic behavior and deviation. Eleven years later, for a second time, the Inquisition arrested Antonio José da Silva. This time, because he was considered to be a relapser or re-incident in Judaism, the Inquisition did not spare him. On October 16, 1739, after participating in the *auto-da-fé*, the New Christian from Rio was killed, and his body was burnt at the stake.

There is no clear information about the life that Antonio José da Silva led or any occupation that he had between October, 1726, the end of the first trial, and 1733, the year when he released the play *Vida do Grande Dom Quixote de la Mancha e do Gordo Sancho Pança*. Starting with this parody of Cervantes’s masterpiece, the former law student began to popularize the use of puppets in the Portuguese theater. The play was performed at a theater known as Teatro do Bairro Alto, located outside the inner circles of the city of Lisbon. Since the inquisitors had confiscated his possessions and prohibited him from continuing his studies at the University of Coimbra, it seems that financial pressure led da Silva to start working in the Teatro do Bairro Alto. Besides directing

the plays, and manipulating the puppets, da Silva was also in charge of opening the building and taking care of the stage settings. Apparently not many people knew that, in addition to these duties, Antonio José da Silva was the person who had written many of the plays that were performed at the theater of Bairro Alto.

Due to the cloud of mystery about Antonio José da Silva and his literary work some critics have tried to decipher the puzzle piece surrounding his life by studying some of the social milieu of the Portuguese court society of the first half of the eighteenth century. José Oliveira Barata, a literary critic who has studied the theater of the Brazilian-born New Christian with profundity, believes that the playwright of Jewish origin was an active member of the enlightened circles that were starting to emerge in Lisbon in the first half of the eighteenth century. Among this group of enlightened subjects Francisco Xavier de Menezes (1673-1743), known as the fourth count of Ericeira, seemed to have played the role of mentor for the younger intellectuals. Oliveira Barata believes that it was in the vast and rich library owned by the count of Ericeira that Antonio José da Silva read Cervantes and learned the art of playwright. Some of the owners of publishing houses were also part of the enlightened intellectuals that frequented the library of the count of Ericeira. Based on the fact that in 1736 and 1737 the well-known editor, Antonio Isidoro da Fonseca managed to obtain permission from the Inquisition to publish anonymously three plays and one poem by the Brazilian New Christian, one can speculate that the self-made playwright was respected in some of the intellectual circles of Lisbon.

Another indication of Antonio José da Silva's success as a playwright comes from an explanation made by Francisco Luiz Ameno, another reputable Portuguese editor who, in 1744, published the first volume of a collection of plays entitled *Theatro cómico português*, which included eight comic operas attributed to the Brazilian New Christian. Ameno included in his collection the three plays previously published by Isidoro da Fonseca, and five additional ones that had been performed at the theater of Bairro Alto during the time that Antonio José da Silva worked there. Following Isidoro da Fonseca's strategy to escape Inquisition censorship that could prevent the publication of the operas, Ameno also refrained from any statement that could openly

identify Antonio José da Silva as the author of the operas. However, even though he did not mention overtly the name of the playwright, in the introduction of his *Theatro cómico português*, the editor explains that, between 1733 and 1738, the eight plays or operas had made great success in Lisbon. In the introductory part of the book, in addition to the permissions for publication issued by the officials of the Inquisition and of the Portuguese Crown, one finds two dedicatórias or dedications. In the first one, addressed to the “Mui nobre senhora Pecúnia Argentina”, the writer admits the material and moral influence of money in the development of the theater. In the second “dedicatória”, addressed to “leitor desapaixonado”, the writer asks the reader to be impartial in the criticism of the work. He also calls attention to the fact that performance is an imitation of events that happen in real life.<sup>3</sup> The dedication to the reader ends with a poem in acrostic that formed the name of Antonio José da Silva. With this clever device, Ameno was able to escape censorship from the Inquisition, which was still very firm in Portugal in 1744, and simultaneously, managed to subtly inform the more attentive readers that the New Christian from Brazil was the author of the operas.

The authorship of the comic plays published posthumously by Ameno in 1744, was deciphered only in the second part of the nineteenth century, and more than a century after Antonio José da Silva’s death. In 1858, the bibliophile Innocêncio Francisco da Silva recognized in a poem in acrostic found in the introduction of Ameno’s *Theatro cómico Português*, the name of the young playwright whose life was cut short by the Inquisition. The identification of A. J. da Silva as a playwright at the Teatro do Bairro Alto appeared for the first time in Innocencio Francisco da Silva’s *Diccionario bibliographico português*. In an entry found on page 180 of the first volume of the dictionary, the bibliophile alluded to the fact that historiographers, such as Francisco Adolfo de Varnhagen (1816-1878), who had previously published about Antonio José da Silva, had failed to identify the New Christian from Brazil as the author of the plays performed in Lisbon between 1733 and 1738, and included in *Theatro cómico português* edited by Ameno. Besides stating that the operas published by Ameno were written by the New Christian from Brazil, Innocencio pointed to the poem found in the introduction of Ameno’s *Theatro cómico português*. Innocencio concluded his entry on A.J. Da Silva stating that in order to “desterrar todas as dúvidas” (p.

180), or to unveil all doubts about the authorship of the play, he would transcribe and highlight in bold the letters the poem in acrostic found in the introduction of Ameno's *Theatro cómico português*. As one can see below, the acrostic formed the name Antonio José da Silva. The middle name of the author was anglicized, perhaps to make the identification less obvious.

<b>A</b> migo leitor, prudente,	Affable, prudent reader,
<b>N</b> ão crítico rigoroso,	Not a demanding critic,
<b>T</b> e desejo, mais piedoso	To you I most faithfully plead
<b>O</b> s meus defeitos consente:	Of my defects give leave:
<b>N</b> ome não busco excelente,	No excellence in name do I seek,
<b>I</b> nsigne entre os escritores;	In the rank of distinguished writers;
<b>O</b> s aplausos inferiores	Of your mild applause
<b>J</b> ulgo a meu plectro bastantes;	Judge I enough for my plectrum;
<b>O</b> s encomios relevantes	Only greater geniuses
<b>S</b> ão para engenhos maiores.	Seek truly relevant praise.
<b>E</b> sta cômica harmonia	Endowing serious pastimes
<b>P</b> assatempo é douto e grave;	Pleasing with comic harmony
<b>H</b> onesta, alegre e suave,	Honest, happy and soft
<b>D</b> ivertida a melodia.	Diversion in melody.
<b>A</b> polo, que ilustra o dia,	Apollo, who brightens the day,
<b>S</b> oberano me reparte	Sovereignly grant me
<b>I</b> deas, facundia e arte,	Ideas, eloquence, and gab-
– <b>L</b> eitor, para divertir-te,	– Lo! – reader, to amuse you,
<b>V</b> ontade para servir-te,	Volition to serve you,
<b>A</b> fecto para agradecer-te.	Affection to please you.

The verses above – that Oliveira Barata believes were written by Antonio José da Silva and edited by Ameno – warn the reader that the poet is aware of his literary limitations, but that his “comic harmony” is serious and grave.

When Innocencio deciphered the authorship of the anonymous operas published by Ameno he referred to Antonio José da Silva's comic plays as theater of the Jew (*teatro do Judeu*). Since before Innocencio Francisco da Silva nobody had referred to A.J. da Silva and his theatre as “theater of the Jew”, it is safe to say that the nickname “Judeu” came

from the nineteenth century and originated from Innocencio's 1858 entry. The historical novel entitled *O Judeu*, written in 1866 by the Portuguese romantic novelist, Camilo Castelo Branco (1825-1890), contributed to bring attention to the New Christian's theatrical production, and to propagate the myth that to this date surrounds Antonio José da Silva life and literary work.

As stated previously, only in 1744, five years after the execution of the Brazilian-born New Christian by the Inquisition, Francisco Luís Ameno edited the book *Theatro cómico português* that comprised of a two volume collection containing the following plays performed at the Teatro do Bairro Alto between 1733 and 1738: *Vida do grande Dom Quixote e do gordo Sancho Pança* (1733), *Esopaida ou vida de Esopo* (1734), *Os encantos de Medeia* (1735), *Amphorae ou Júpiter e Alcmena* (1736), *O labirinto de Creta* (1737), *As variedades de Proteu* (1737), *As guerras de Alecrim e Mangerona* (1737), and *Precipice de Phaetonte*, performed in 1738, when the playwright was jailed for the second time.

#### DIFFERENCES AND SIMILARITIES BETWEEN CERVANTES'S DON QUIXOTE AND ANTONIO JOSÉ DA SILVA'S *VIDA DO GRANDE DOM QUIXOTE E DO GORDO SANCHO PANÇA*

Because *Vida do grande Dom Quixote e do gordo Sancho Pança*, the first play written by the Brazilian-born New Christian was based on Cervantes's famous novel, from now on I will focus some textual aspects that differentiate the work of Antonio José da Silva from that of Cervantes. I will also elaborate on some external circumstances that approximate these two creative writers.

In da Silva's adaptation of the second part of Cervantes's novel there are many innovative ideas. In addition to the fact that the New Christian from Brazil transformed the novel into a tragic comic play, there are many other aspects that differentiate the Luso-Brazilian work from the Spanish novel. One of them appears at the opening of the play. Different from volume two of Cervantes's novel that begins with a "conversation about our knight's illness, between and among the priest, the barber, and Don Quijote himself" (p. 362), Antonio José da Silva deletes the priest from his play.

Some critics believe that the exclusion of the priest from the play indicates that Antonio José da Silva was trying to avoid complications with the Holy Office. In her work *O Quixote no teatro de Antonio José da Silva*, Elza Gonçalves de Araújo states that: “Com esta exclusão ... [the playwright] tentaria fugir à suspeita de sua posição frente às coisas da igreja e seus ministros” (p. 39).

Other improvisations found in Antonio José da Silva’s play include the substitution of the Island of Barataria for the Island of Lagartos (Lizards), the trip of Sancho to the Mount Parnasus, the abundance of expressions with double meaning, the reliance on the comic and on the grotesque, and the use of satire and ridicule as a way to criticize the negative tendencies that he detected in the 18<sup>th</sup> century Portuguese society. In the play, the figure of the “gordo” or fat Sancho occupies a role that is even more central than the one that he has in the second part of Cervantes’s novel. In the play of the Luso-Brazilian New Christian, Sancho embodies the popular hero that unmasks the imposters such as the bad poets, and the false nobles of his time.

Besides the fact that da Silva transformed Cervantes’s novel into a tragic comic play, and used the stage to interact with his audience, another major aspect that differentiates Antonio José da Silva’s work from that of his model is the emphasis on the theme of justice. Following the theatrical tradition of Gil Vicente who used the stage to teach moral values, Antonio José da Silva permeates his play with passages that illustrate his concern with social and institutional justice. In the opening scene of the first part, for example, of the play *Don Quixote* states: “... não é justo que fique sem fim minha memorável história. [...] Quantos pupilos estarão sem justiça? Enfim, não tenho mais nada que dizer: vou a castigar insolents a endireitar tortos” (p. 29). In scene four of the second act of the play Sancho demands justice and protection for the underprivileged. In addition, he condemns the insolence and the dishonesty of the corrupt. The playwright also associates Justice with Dulcineia del Toboso, a figure who was invented by Don Quixote, but who never existed in the world:

Sancho: Ah, sô Meirinho, endireite essa vara, e não ma troça à justiça: saiba Deus e todo o Mundo que me quero pôr recto com a sua espada.

Meirinho: Ora já que vossa mercê falou em espada e justiça, diga-me: porque pintaram a Justiça com olhos tapados, espada na mão e balança na outra, pois ando com esta dúvida, e ninguém ma pode dissolver, e só vossa mercê ma há-de explicar, como sábio em tudo?

Sancho: Que me faça bom proveito! Dai-me atenção, Meirinho. Sabei, primeiramente, que isto de Justiça é cousa pintada e que tal mulher não há no mundo, nem tem carne nem sangue, como v.g. a Senhora Dulcineia del Toboso, nem mais, nem menos; porém, como era necessário haver esta figura no Mundo para meter medo à gente grande, como o papão das crianças, pintaram uma mulher vestida à trágica, porque toda a justiça acaba em tragédia, taparam-lhe os olhos, porque dizem que era vesga e que metia um olho por outro, e, como a Justiça havia de sair direita, para não se lhe enxergar esta falta lhe cobriram depressa os olhos, porque dizem que era vesga e que metia um olho por outro.

Homem: Senhor Governador, peço justiça.

Sancho: Pois de que quereis que vos faça justiça?

Homem: Quero justiça.

Sancho: É boa teima! Homem do diabo, que justiça quereis? Não sabeis que há muitas castas de justiça? Porque há justiça direita, há justiça torta, há justiça vesga, há justiça cega e finalmente há justiça com velidas e cataratas nos olhos.”

Homem: Senhor, seja qual for, eu quero justiça.

Sancho: Pois contra quem pedis justiça?

Homem: Peço justiça contra a mesma Justiça.

Sancho: Pois, beberrão, não sabeis que não há nesta ilha outra justiça, senão pintada? (p. 89-92)

In an attempt to understand the reasons why the New Christian from Brazil chose to frame Cervantes' *Don Quixote* in the context of eighteenth century Portugal, in addition to engaging in a close reading of the Spanish famous novel, I also turned to literary and cultural critics that have analyzed the work of Cervantes in the context of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century Spanish empire. Works such as *Utopia and counterutopia en el "Quijote"* by José Antonio Maravall, and *Antonio José da Silva: Criação e realidade* by José Oliveira Barata were instrumental for my interpretation of Antonio José da Silva's *Vida do grande Don Quixote e do gordo Sancho Pança*.

Similar to the case of Miguel de Cervantes y Saavedra (1547-1616) who lived at a time when Spain was experiencing the decline of the Golden Age, when A. J. da Silva wrote his plays Portugal was starting to face the dusk of its Golden Age. Because gold found in the Southeast region of Brazil in the last decade of the seventeenth century had transformed Portugal into one of the richest European empires, the similarities that exist between Cervantes' Spain and da Silva's Portugal are striking. Starting with a comparison between the kings Philip II of Spain and Dom Joao V of Portugal, one can see that these two Iberian monarchs epitomize an "absolute power", even for royalty. Their successors, on the other hand, are seen as lacking in strength and direction. Among the documents that reflect the contradictions of the Portuguese empire under Dom João V, one finds *Grandezas e misérias da Lisboa Joanina*, a document written by foreigners who visited or lived in Portugal during the first half of the eighteenth century, and also by Portuguese diplomats such as Dom Luis da Cunha (1662-1749), among other intellectuals who were despised by members of the ruling aristocracy, and called pejoratively, *estrangeirados* or outsiders, because their foreign (and enlightened) ideas were perceived as a threat to Portugal. Shortly after the death of A.J. da Silva, Luis da Cunha wrote an important document entitled *Testamento político*, which describes very clearly the poor condition of the Portuguese countryside by the end of João V's ruling: "Achará, não sem espanto, muitas terras usurpadas ...perdidas..."(p. 41). In many ways, the contradictions that Antonio José da Silva experienced in Portugal during his lifetime were similar to those that Cervantes detected in Spain of the Golden Age, and that are described by critics such as José Antonio Maravall. In his *Culture of the baroque*, for example, he contrasts the wealth of the nobility and the splendor and exuberance of the cities of Spain with the deprived countryside plagued with the "ruin of small landowners and sharecroppers" that led the "mass of needy people" to continuously move into the cities and to start there "the formation of groups inclined toward subversion..." (p. 33).

Accepting Maravall's thesis that Cervantes wrote the second part of the Quixote as an alert against "the impracticability and ineffectiveness (p. 18) of the evasive utopia that was transforming Spain into a stagnant society, I argue that Antonio José da Silva modeled

his first play in the second part of the Quixote, in order “to produce a strong critical or reformative impact on the society out of which his work emerge[d]” (MARAVALL, 1991, p. 34). Similar to the changes that Cervantes observed in Spain between the reign of Charles V and Philip III, A. J. da Silva was aware of the political and economic crisis that was beginning to overtake Portuguese society. As a reader of Cervantes, A.J. da Silva was able to associate the contradictions that appeared in the Golden Age Spain described by Cervantes with those that he detected in Portugal. The gold brought to Portugal from Brazil during the first part of the eighteenth seemed to have contributed to the decadence of the Portuguese society. While in Golden Age Spain, the minerals were used to feed the expensive wars aimed at maintaining the power of Philip II, in the Portugal of the D. João V, the gold that came from Brazil was used to pay the Succession Wars against Spain and also to satiate the lust and the desire for luxury of Dom João V and the decadent elite.

Analogous to the situation that Spain experienced in the sixteenth century, the metals that came from Brazil, did not contribute to the creation of a stable economy. Instead of helping to develop solid agriculture and industry, the gold and diamonds were used to feed the megalomania of the nobility and aristocracy that increased significantly in the last part of the seventeenth and in the first half of the eighteenth century. Gold sharpened the social differences in Portugal. As Liberto Cruz explains in his analysis of 18th century Portugal: “A corte de D. João V, com o dinheiro vindo do Brasil, ganhara um prestígio e impusera uma alegria desafogada, tanto nos costumes como no caráter da classe nobre” (p. 28). In the rural areas the situation was also calamitous. With the lack of support and with the exodus to the cities, the landowners could not cope. The fields became empty and bare. During the reign of D. João V, when enlightenment started to flourish among the educated bourgeoisie, it was confronted by some members of the aristocracy, known as “puritanos”, who defended purity of blood as the main value that should prevail in society. While the noble and aristocratic class would enjoy theater with elaborated operas, such as *Ludovicus et Stanislaus*, performed in Évora in 1720, and *Concors Discordia*, played in Coimbra in 1727, and praised in the national newspapers for the exuberant choir and also for its expensive stage decoration, another type of theatre would entertain a public less wealthy but probably more

enlightened than the noble class. The popular theater of A.J. da Silva appealed to the civic and political capacities of his contemporaries, to the extent that he provided them unadulterated situations. The nature and style A.J. da Silva's plays indicate that he entertained a diverse audience composed by members of the popular sector, as well as by individuals and Portuguese intellectuals who traveled extensively to France and other European countries and who introduced in Portugal enlightened ideas such as those of the free Masons. In an attempt to suffocate the enlightened ideas that were invading the Iberian Peninsula, the Portuguese Inquisition became ferocious during the first four decades of the eighteenth century. Oliveira Marques gives a clear idea of its furor when he documents in his *Historia de Portugal* that the years between 1734 and 1743 "were particularly violent, with fifty one executions" (p. 544). Among those who were killed we find Antonio José da Silva.

#### CONCLUDING REMARKS

After reading the criticism that emerges between the lines of his writings, particularly in the operas that he wrote and performed at the Teatro do Bairro Alto, one may see that Antonio José da Silva used his writings to express his feelings toward the inequities of the Portuguese society. Similar to some passages found in the writings of New Christian writers such as Luis de Carvajal (1566-1596) and Bento Teixeira (1561-1600), who were persecuted by the Inquisition during the reign of Philip II of Spain, Antonio José da Silva's disappointment with the inequities of society and with the cruelties of the Inquisition, reached the point of despair. This disappointment abounds in his text, conveying implicitly the tensions that were experienced by those who were persecuted by the Inquisition.

It is not surprising to find out that the first play attributed to A.J. da Silva is a parody of Cervantes' *Don Quixote*. *Vida do grande Dom Quixote de la Mancha e do gordo Sancho Pança* performed in 1733, reveals that talent and misfortune were common traces that linked the Spanish writer to the Brazilian-born playwright. In my opinion the talent and the originality of the genre of da Silva's theatre have not yet

been fully emphasized. Compared to Cervantes, Antonio José da Silva suffered misfortunes that greatly surpassed those of the Spanish writer. Besides being persecuted and killed by the Inquisition, Antonio José da Silva's literary work remains ignored by many and marginalized from the universal canon.

*VIDA DO GRANDE DOM QUIXOTE E DO GORDO SANCHO PANÇA*, DE ANTONIO JOSÉ DA SILVA E *DON QUIXOTE DE LA MANCHA*, DE MIGUEL DE CERVANTES:  
ASPECTOS COMPARATIVOS

#### RESUMO

Este artigo centra-se no texto *Vida do grande Dom Quixote e do gordo Sancho Pança*, uma peça escrita e encenada em Lisboa em 1733 pelo cristão-novo brasileiro, Antonio José da Silva, baseada na segunda parte da obra de Cervantes, *Don Quixote de la Mancha*. Uma vez que a peça do cristão-novo brasileiro teve como modelo a obra-prima de Cervantes, a análise textual parte de um estudo comparado que, além das características textuais, explora aspectos socioculturais do contexto espanhol de finais do século dezesseis ao início do dezessete e do contexto português da primeira metade do século dezoito. Em razão de o escritor luso-brasileiro ainda ser desconhecido por muitos, dentro e fora do mundo de fala portuguesa, antes de adentrar na comparação textual e nas respectivas sociedades em que os textos foram produzidos, este artigo aborda aspectos biográficos de Antonio José da Silva e o impacto de sua obra no cânone literário.

**PALAVRAS-CHAVE:** Antonio José da Silva e Miguel de Cervantes, estudo comparado, gêneros literários, contexto histórico e Inquisição.

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#### NOTAS

- 1 In Costa Vieira's words: "Como em outras partes, verifica-se a presença do mesmo paradoxo quando se trata da recepção do *Quixote*, ou seja, apesar de ser bastante conhecido, é de fato pouco lido" (p. 455).
- 2 In this part of Inquisition trial subtitled *Juramento em forma*, one finds the statement: "assignem aqui... as testemunhas... e seu curador por não poder assinar por causa do tormento" (Traslado do Processo, 1896, p. 50).
- 3 "Saberá o mesmo leitor apaixonado... que... a representação é uma imitação dos sucessos que naturalmente aconteceram..." (*Theatro Cômico Português*, v. I, 1957, p. 6).

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