

## The Theatre of Jorge Andrade

RICHARD A. MAZZARA

Para se escrever sôbre um meio, é necessário senti-lo, até no sangue, e não poder viver nêle. Assim como, para escrever sôbre um ser humano, é necessário compreendê-lo, a ponto de amá-lo . . . e não poder fazer nada por êle—às vêzes, nem suportá-lo.

These words of Jorge Andrade have been repeated by his critics in evaluations of his work, and most appropriately, for indeed he has lived and felt the subjects of his plays, either directly, or by hearsay, study, and meditation; but he has written about them most objectively. Following Arthur Miller's advice, also repeated in several articles and introductions in Portuguese on Jorge Andrade's plays, he has recorded discrepancies between the concrete reality and aspirations of people that he has observed since childhood. What follows is another introduction to Jorge Andrade's works, the first one in English to the best of my knowledge, and analyses of six of his best-known plays.<sup>1</sup>

Jorge Andrade is the eldest son of once-prosperous *fazendeiros* in the State of São Paulo, descended from impoverished miners and political refugees who migrated from southern Minas Gerais to carve out coffee empires during the early nineteenth century. More given to the study of history than to the typical occupations of a rancher's son, the boy contributed to increasing lack of comprehension between himself and his father. The coffee crisis of the 1930's, loss of lands, and consequent emotional impact on his family left lasting impressions on the child. His parents' much diminished financial stature obliged the young man to try another, yet traditionally acceptable career, the law, the study of which he soon abandoned, as well as a job in a São Paulo bank, to return to the *fazenda*.

In 1951, during a performance of the Teatro Brasileiro de Comédia, he felt a sudden vocation for the theatre, first as an actor, but soon as a dramatist. He was to be the sensitive historian and understanding judge of a fast-disappearing society. He has become in every sense the first completely successful modern Brazilian playwright, doing for São Paulo what the novelists of the Northeast, and Érico Veríssimo in the South (whose attitudes and techniques are at times very close to those of

Jorge Andrade), have been accomplishing for their regions, for Brazil, and for the world since the 1930's. That São Paulo should find its literary spokesman in the drama rather than the novel is probably due in part to the more active, extroverted, and especially industrial-urban climate of the state. And also to the nature of the theatre, whose flowering often indicates the peak of a civilization, and which has begun, sporadically, to flower in Brazil only since the 1940's.

Having been persuaded in 1951 by the actress Cacilda Becker that acting was not for him, Jorge Andrade enrolled in São Paulo's now famous School of Dramatic Art to discover what his particular calling in the theatre might be. At the end of that year he had written *O Telescópio* (later revised), which won a prize, as did several of his next plays. In 1954 came *O Faqueiro de Prata* (later revised as *As Colunas do Templo*) and *A Moratória*. Curiously, the first of these two, although it won two prizes, seems never to have been produced or published; in any case, there is almost complete silence on the work.<sup>2</sup> *A Moratória* (produced in 1955), on the other hand, has been greatly appreciated, if only by a relatively enlightened public within the limited circles of Brazilian theatregoers. Although influenced by Nelson Rodrigues' *Vestido de Noiva* and Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman*, in *A Moratória* (as in the revised *Telescópio*) Jorge Andrade avoided the sensational and maintained authenticity both as regards the material and his own deep though restrained feelings. Perhaps the subject was too pessimistically treated for São Paulo audiences, too local for others; perhaps the author was insufficiently objective for some sophisticates, insufficiently sentimental for still others; certainly the theme and artistry were too subtle for most. At any rate, with *A Moratória* Jorge Andrade began to acquire considerable reputation, albeit that of a somewhat too "intellectual" and "difficult" author.

This opinion was strengthened by *Pedreira das Almas* (written in 1956-57, produced in 1958, later revised), which is less directly authentic and more ambitious artistically. In it Jorge Andrade is inspired by the history of his *mineiro* forebears, epic heroes for *paulistas*, and his form and style are tragic. Experimentation with ancient tragedy, and adaptation to Brazilian subjects, had already been practiced in Pernambuco by Hermilo Borba Filho and Ariano Suassuna, whose works were perhaps known to Jorge Andrade. However, the heroic origins of the *fazen-*

*deiros* of São Paulo, of his own family, had long interested the playwright. In historical and fictional time (1842), the subject of *Pedreira das Almas* precedes that of his first plays (1920's and 1930's) and the treatment given it is logically archaic.

Having thus vindicated through its ancestors a society whose demise he had begun to record, Jorge Andrade now turned to another class of that society, the tenant farmers. *A Vereda da Salvação* (written in 1957, produced in 1964) has as its point of departure a true incident in Catulê, Malacacheta, Minas Gerais, the details and analyses of which the playwright studied most carefully. During the long period of revision, Jorge Andrade reconsidered the events, theatrical and public criticism of his work, but chiefly his intimate knowledge of the lower class of his own *fazenda* and later meditations on the human condition. In *O Telescópio* and *A Moratória* the family was all-important, and in *Pedreira das Almas* the group; but *Vereda* emphasizes the collective. The masses are prone to accept religious demagoguery to escape their misery, perhaps to encounter a greater disaster in the end. More than ever, the new *Vereda da Salvação* is neither *mineiro* nor *paulista*, but Brazilian and universal. In fact, it has enjoyed long successful runs in Poland, where it was produced in the translation of the great Ziembinsky. Its success may be attributed to political overtones, but the author concentrates on philosophical and esthetic purity rather than on any propagandistic thesis. Fanaticism has been treated in the Brazilian theatre, yet never prior to *Vereda da Salvação* with Jorge Andrade's insistence on collective action, for better as well as worse, never with his powerful voice of protest and poetry.

Nineteen sixty-one brought another great success, perhaps more commercial than intellectual and artistic, *A Escada*. It is a kind of sequel to *A Moratória*, with the subject handled satirically, even farcically, and appealing to popular sentimentality. Less subtle in form, too, it substitutes a simpler counterpoint, more obviously in space as in *O Telescópio*, for the counterpoint in space and especially in time of *A Moratória*. *Os Ossos do Barão* (1963) was a still greater financial success, but despite its popularity it is artistically more rewarding than *A Escada*. Somewhat of a *Bourgeois gentilhomme* from the latter's point of view, it is a satire with farcical and sentimental elements, but also offers an

eminently reasonable and satisfying answer to some *paulista* socio-economic problems today.

*O Telescópio*<sup>3</sup> is a one-act play in two scenes, with one basic set, whose action takes place within the space of a few hours. It shows the disintegration of a *fazendeiro*'s family, in part because of incompatibility between city life, depicted as a corrupting force, toward which some of the children gravitate, and the traditional family life of a *fazenda*. On the one hand, the children seem to be pitted against the parents and their contemporaries, and on the other they are pitted against each other, somewhat prematurely, for inheritance of the land. All conflict appears to be concentrated in the rivalry between two of the daughters of Francisco and Rita.

Leila and her aristocratic but impoverished husband have come home to the *fazenda* in order to establish a claim to the best of the estate. He is interested only in the money that the land will bring, but she is tired of fast city life and especially of the snubs that she has received from aristocrats. She is even willing to have a child in order to assure her claim, but her decision comes too late to hold her husband. Ada, an earthy beauty, more closely reflects a traditional attachment to the *fazenda* for its own sake. She attempts to seduce her sister's husband, anticipating Leila's promise of a child, wanting not the man so much as to prejudice her rival for the land.

The other children are of less importance in the play, but all are equally disrespectful and disappointing to their parents. The oldest son is a prodigal, wasting his father's dwindling resources on drink instead of assuming his rightful position at his side. The youngest son and daughter live on the *fazenda*, but he is an illiterate boor, and she is as spoiled and willful as her sisters.

The parents are aging and tired, yet still able to work hard to support the family. The handwriting is on the wall, however, and the crisis of *A Moratória* is approaching. Rita hopes that her children will awaken to responsibility and uphold tradition. Her dream, which she knows also will not be fulfilled, is to take a vacation pilgrimage to Rome. More severe and realistic, Francisco has lost hope in his heirs, taking refuge in the study of astronomy, and, through his telescope, visiting other worlds. The stars satisfy him intellectually and spiritually, and he loves to share his poetry with his wife and guests.

The children are contemptuous of this aspect of their father's life as of everything that their parents represent. Attitudes are crystallized in a masterful scene where in the living room the heirs squabble over cards, revealing their rivalries, but also animosities toward their elders, while on the veranda the latter escape into the past and to the stars. This counterpoint in space and time, literal and figurative, is dramatized by occasional exchanges in the otherwise separate dialogues of older and younger generations. For the time being the conflicts seem irreconcilable. Yet the tragic inevitability that the young will triumph over the old, regrettable though this may be, is symbolized in the destruction of the telescope by the older son as he returns home drunkenly, heedlessly.

*A Moratória*<sup>4</sup> is a play in three acts with two sets, and demonstrates greater maturity. The subject is essentially a continuation of that of *O Telescópio*, both chronologically and thematically, but reflects considerable development of the author as a person and artist. Here the slow, painful, and somehow inconclusive passage from one era to another is emphasized more sharply. Simultaneous use of two sets, one the *fazenda* in 1929, the other a city apartment in 1932, necessitates superior technical skills and literary sophistication for full realization and appreciation.

The play opens on the first level, that of the present (1932). The *fazendeiros* live in the city, eking out their existence as best they can, primarily on what the daughter, Lucília, earns as a seamstress. Her servitude and acceptance of harsh reality is symbolized concretely by the presence of a sewing machine whose whirring punctuates shifts from past to present. Joaquim suffers because he is now unable to maintain his family in traditional style, but has faith that they will return to the plantation and the old way of life. She is proud and resentful, especially of the assistance that they must now accept from Elvira, a wealthy aunt. Joaquim exits, appearing shortly on the second level, in different attire but speaking of the need for rain for the coffee crop, which was the subject of the last remarks on level one. He converses further with Helena, his wife, on the falling price of coffee, a sale that he has made on credit, a loan that he needs but refuses to ask of Elvira. Helena exits, then Joaquim, shouting to awaken his son Marcelo for a serious talk. Back in the present Marcelo is still sleeping as Helena returns from church. She defends him as having assumed responsibility, but in fact his devel-

opment is slow and unsteady, as is natural in a young man of his suddenly disoriented class.

Physical and thematic liaisons thus bind the two levels very tightly and with marked though varied rhythm. The counterpoint becomes most pronounced as Helena finally begins to engage the charming Marcelo in semi-serious conversation on level two (later continued on one and two), while on level one Joaquim and Lucília discuss Olímpio, now his lawyer and her ex-fiancé. Marcelo is to go to the city to invite Elvira to visit Helena. He will also recall Lucília who against Joaquim's wishes is with her aunt while taking a course in dressmaking (social bias), and keeping company with Olímpio (political bias). Joaquim asks Lucília what progress Olímpio has made in obtaining the moratorium on which Joaquim's hopes rest, and when they plan to marry. The obstacles to this marriage raised by Joaquim in the past and, as his attitudes change partially, those raised by Lucília in their present circumstances form another constant. A complementary exposition having been given on both levels, a crisis must similarly be developed on each at the close of Act I.

With Elvira's arrival on level one the *fazendeiros* begin to learn how disastrous their financial position is. On level two Joaquim reads of the moratorium on debts of the economic crisis, and he and his daughter rejoice. The tragic situation in the past and the joy of the present are pitted one against the other simultaneously, leaving the spectator with mixed emotions but temporarily, for his hindsight causes him to anticipate tragedy in the future. Each line is developed at first in contrast with the other, the one in a minor key, the other in major-minor keys, in crescendo, to the end of Act II. There both come together in a single tragic climax: the *fazenda* is lost a first and a second time. The denouement is in diminuendo on both levels. In the past Joaquim and Helena painfully take leave of the *fazenda*; although they continue to treat the property as their own and he speaks of returning, they relive the past and express regrets. Typically, Marcelo says that he will seek employment, and Lucília has already acquired her sewing machine. In the present Lucília again faces her work, yet has a long overdue showdown with Elvira. Helena and Lucília wish vainly that Joaquim might continue to hope, but he is now a completely disillusioned old man. For

Lucília there may be some hope with Olímpio, while all that seems to remain for the others is to pretend that they are back on the plantation.

Employing carefully selected situations, emotions, and language, which appear simple and natural without "naturalistic" triviality, the author solves the age-old problems of classical tragedy with Flaubertian precision. The entire, balanced action turns on the past and its influence on the present through the use of graphic reminiscences, which join the two times and places for the author and spectator, whereas the characters must rely on memory alone. With both the past (1929) and the fictional present (1932), we in the actual present have additional perspective historically and dramatically. Transitions from hope to despair on one level, underscored ironically or fatalistically on the other, grip the audience emotionally but also with the objectivity of art. The tragedy is felt by the characters only as they acquire the hindsight, never the foresight, that we have from the beginning.

It has been noted that Jorge Andrade was inspired to write *Pedreira das Almas*<sup>5</sup> by his study of history and need to replenish himself, as well as those whom he represents, personally and artistically. The choice of an epic subject to be treated dramatically necessitated the forms of tragedy. The author turned to the ancients more explicitly than in *A Moratória*, and, because of some similarity in theme, one is specifically reminded of *Antigone*. The action of the play, in two acts and four scenes or tableaux, takes place over a period of some two weeks, in one setting, and is very tightly knit.

As the play opens, a religious ceremony is in progress in the church of Pedreira das Almas. Outside the church, in the graveyard set with the church in the mountains of Minas, Mariana, soon joined by Clara, eagerly awaits the return of Gabriel and Martiniano, the former's fiancé and brother, respectively. They are anxious because of the men's revolutionary activities, but also because Gabriel is to lead the living souls of Pedreira das Almas to new fertile lands of São Paulo. Poetically they express their dream of long standing. There are obstacles to their joy, however: not only is Gabriel wanted by the government, but his father, now dying, and Mariana's mother, the matriarchal Urbana, have determinedly opposed desertion of the dead by the living. Suddenly Gabriel appears, announcing the defeat of the rebels and Martiniano's capture.

There is more exposition of the tragic past, their continued dependence on death, and more lyrical expression of hope for the future.

The people leave the church and recapitulate the conflict between leaving and staying in chorus, followed by further development between individual members of the group. Father Gonçalo intervenes to prevent incipient violence, but is himself torn by the conflict. Urbana appears serene, discusses plans to restore the church, build a new cemetery, and relives the glories of Pedreira das Almas. Gonçalo knows that these are past, but she refuses to have the status quo disturbed. She takes refuge in this attitude when warned that government forces present a threat. She will consent to Mariana's marriage only if Gabriel remains, and against Gonçalo's protest invokes God's wrath on those who disregard her authority. A similar scene with Gabriel makes it clear that he cannot and will not stay, and Urbana's intransigence inclines Mariana to disobey her mother.

The second scene takes place one week later. On the one hand, preparations are being completed for the exodus from Pedreira das Almas; on the other, slaves are carrying in earth for the new cemetery. Suddenly word comes that government troops are in sight. Mariana hides Gabriel in one of the town's many caves. Urbana has threatened to denounce him, and to save the future of the living, Mariana promises to remain and die in Pedreira das Almas. Vasconcelos and his men arrive to proclaim martial law. When Urbana protests the entire loyalty of the town, to her great surprise Vasconcelos produces Martiniano. Torn between her word to Mariana, the contrary arguments of the people, and fear for Martiniano, Urbana vacillates. Martiniano protests, breaks away, and is shot by one of Vasconcelos' men. Now the townspeople are united in their silence on the subject of Gabriel. Vasconcelos' only weapons against their solidarity are to refuse Martiniano burial and to take all the men prisoners. Mariana replaces her grief-stricken mother as spokesman: if Martiniano's body is to remain exposed to satisfy the law represented by Vasconcelos, let God punish the latter for his transgression against divine law. The body is carried into the church and the people continue their chant which is also a challenge to Vasconcelos.

Act II begins with a chorus of soldiers commenting on the static situation of the past three days. The men remain captive, no one has re-

vealed Gabriel's hiding place, Urbana and Mariana are still in the church with the corpse. A mixture of boredom, piety, and superstition make them begin to side with the people of Pedreira das Almas. The still-intransigent Vasconcelos confronts groups of stony-faced women in mourning which, one after the other, appear mysteriously from the network of caves of Pedreira das Almas. They hammer away at him, demanding that he bring Martiniano back to life, or allow him to be buried so that his soul may be free, and asking the whereabouts of their men. Vasconcelos is surrounded by the women, and in fact in physical danger because his men are insufficient to cover all of the caves.

He calls for Mariana who, aged and now resembling her mother, emerges from the church. She remains rigid and silent in the face of his justifications and threats, and he orders his men to take her. The women plead for her and, hiding their faces, call on the exiled soul of Martiniano. The soldiers are frightened and their cries are interspersed with those of the women, which have become a litany to the dead. At first enraged, then touched with admiration, Vasconcelos offers to do what he can to save Gabriel's life and to permit work on the cemetery to continue. The women beg Mariana to help them all, while the soldiers begin to rebel against Vasconcelos. Finally Mariana comes to a decision.

She explains that her mother has died over the body of her son, and demands that if Vasconcelos wants Gabriel he enter the church to see the effects of his unjust law. Vasconcelos cannot believe that Gabriel is in the church. After a long and painful scene of hesitation and growing horror, he follows his men who have already retreated. Mariana's insistence that Vasconcelos enter the church to verify the impiety of his law, and to discover Gabriel's presence, is ambiguous. We learn that Gabriel is in fact not in the church, dead or alive; yet Martiniano and Urbana have died to save Gabriel, and what he means for Pedreira das Almas may well be seen on their disfigured faces.

Three days more elapse before the final scene. The town is all but deserted, and the few persons remaining try to dissuade Mariana from staying. She has however taken over her mother's role, because of her promise, feelings of guilt, and so that Urbana's sacrifice shall not be in vain. Gabriel must lead the people to São Paulo for similar reasons, although the adventure has no meaning for him without Mariana. Urbana has been noble and generous to the living in her death, and has at

the same time gained control over them to serve the dead. Thus, the ancestors pave the way for succeeding generations, but their sacrifices deserve respect and commemoration.

The individual may face reality squarely and save himself in the midst of general disintegration. The family may derive a certain valid inspiration from its forebears, and the group thus find new frontiers to conquer. Without sound guidance, however, one may easily lose one's way. This is the thematic progression from the realistic *A Moratória* to the epic *Pedreira* to the more classic spirit and form of tragedy of *A Vereda da Salvação*.<sup>6</sup> A new Passion play, *Vereda* does not repeat a myth but creates one by distillation of recent socio-psychological data whose tradition, too, is both recognizable and novel. The horror of the deeds of real-life figures is tempered by verisimilitude and decorum, according to which Jorge Andrade's creatures become touching, sympathetic, tragic. In its definitive version, *Vereda* is compressed into two acts having greater impact and unity of action within a single though diversified setting and brief period of time.

All action is confined to the narrow world of the tenant farmers on a *fazenda*, presented from their point of view, in language that is stylized for the audience's comprehension but derived from their speech. They are largely an anonymous mass, in their world as well as on the outside, and the limitation of time prevents delineation of all but the principal characters upon which the whole structure depends. Far more than environmental determinants, it is the human factors that matter, thematically and formally.

Act I is dominated by Manoel, leader of the tenants in earthly affairs, seemingly a strong man in every way despite his mature years. Artuliana is his counterpart, a young woman with a fierce maternal instinct who desires Manoel because of his virility. They are expecting a child and plan to marry the following day during the course of a Holy Week pilgrimage to Tabocal. Their downfall is already prepared, however, for the Adventist sect to which the tenants belong is in the act of purifying itself through self-denial and public confession. Onofre, a kind of patriarch, exhorts them to this before they undertake the pilgrimage. Feelings of guilt caused by their extreme poverty drive them to divest themselves more and more of earthly concerns in order to rout the devil that must be in their midst. Manoel has failed in his efforts

with the *fazendeiro* on behalf of his people. Further, his daughter and son by previous marriages refuse to accept his authority, Ana by remaining faithful to Catholicism, the "official" religion, Gerardo by preferring Joaquim's influence.

The latter, assuming spiritual leadership during Onofre's absence, vents his many frustrations on Manoel, Artuliana, and the others. His weaknesses, however, become strengths in the eyes of others. Artuliana opposes him, but her unborn child is destroyed by her own mother's denunciation and the action of their neighbors under Joaquim's command. Both Dolor, Joaquim's mother, and Manoel are powerless. His authority undermined now in every way, Manoel too accepts Joaquim's weakness as a sign of grace or divinity. Joaquim begins to acquire stature in his own eyes and in ours for, despite the repeated infanticides and mounting hysteria of Act II (reminiscent of Arthur Miller's *Crucible*), he does in a sense purify his people and himself (which is not the case of the witch-hunters in *The Crucible*).

The second half of the play is clearly dominated by Joaquim, then, who delivers his people from evil and bondage. Artuliana continues to oppose him, but Manoel pays no attention. Dolor, the only character created entirely by Jorge Andrade, is the other principal of Act II. She has opposed her son in order to protect him on rational, practical bases, but gradually realizes that he has passed the bounds of reason. She now defends him on irrational but equally practical grounds in a new context. She is undeniably a *Mater Dolorosa* and perhaps her son's title of *Maria das Purezas* is not undeserved by her. Although evil technically resides in her as the unwed mother of many, and in Joaquim as her only surviving (and unconsciously incestuous) son, have they not been purified by much suffering? Does their sole joy not stem from Joaquim's desire to die a new Christ on a cross that all have borne during their whole lives? And is their sole hope not that of ascending into Heaven with him? After the public confessions and assumption of biblical names of Joaquim's congregation, one is prone to believe with Dolor's ambivalence. To underscore this, the author eliminated the third act of his earlier version, lengthening the first two to have the end of the play coincide on one level of understanding with the ascension or effort literally to fly to Heaven.

Dolor's reproach to Ana for abandoning the circle of the tenant farmers, for having called in the *fazendeiro* and the police, representatives of all that is rational and yet unjust, emphasizes in a masterful scene the bankrupt society that can bring physical but not spiritual defeat to its masses. The massacre of the tenants by the police, who remain offstage, is simultaneous with their attempted flight. One may suspect that Joaquim would fail to ascend with his people—as he did at the close of Act II in the earlier version of the work—but this failure is prevented by death. On another level of understanding, then, an evil cause may have a good effect. Like Dias Gomes in his *Pagador de Promessas*, Jorge Andrade has found the perfect tragic conclusion with its characteristic note of triumph in defeat.

Despite many similarities in theme between *A Moratória* and *A Escada*, the latter is sufficiently different in subject, form, and attitudes to warrant considerable discussion. The two plays deal basically with the same class, the *ex-fazendeiros* who, although usually upper middle class in their natural habitat in the country, seem to belong more to the aristocracy in the city. The crucial distinction is concern with still valid socio-economic traditions versus sterile preoccupation with the trappings of this society.

*A Moratória* treats both aspects of this class, but *A Escada* deals only with the second. And while Jorge Andrade understands the former thoroughly, he is physically removed from the latter and quite uninvolved. This, as well as the subject, makes for a simpler objectivity and certain superficiality, accentuated by a more panoramic form and relatively large number of characters. The setting, while always the same, is a simultaneous one, with the stairway, central figures, and family relationships uniting the four apartments and their occupants. It seems appropriate to compare *A Moratória* to Érico Veríssimo's *O Tempo e o Vento*, for example, where counterpoint in time is more significant than in space, and *A Escada* to *Caminhos Cruzados* where many characters and places are emphasized. The latter are *tours de force*, but the former are more subtle and penetrating. Conflicts in attitudes, both between the plays and in *A Escada*, are crystallized in a figure familiar also to readers of Veríssimo, that of the writer-son-of-the-family who is of course the author's mouthpiece. His emotions remain mixed, however,

and he cannot break completely with tradition, as does the granddaughter who marries the mulatto in *A Escada*.

Chief points of criticism are centered in the old couple, Amélia and Antenor, and their oldest son, Francisco. The old people's prejudices might have tragic significance, were they not so ludicrous in their unconscious exaggeration (especially Antenor's), and so pathetic in their automatous repetition (especially Amélia's). They are senile, as is everything that they represent. It is both irritating and touching to see them hold on to glories and possessions of the past; but it becomes intolerable when their son begins to take it all seriously. This side of Francisco is developed only to provide the climax of the crisis in Act III, but is corrected soon enough to keep the play uncontroversial. What is useless and harmful in the past is and should remain irrevocably past.

This is not to say that the modern types are without their faults, many of them reminiscent of defects of character found in *O Telescópio* and *A Moratória*. There is the granddaughter whose engagement has been broken by the grandparents' interference, and who like Lucília works furiously at her knitting, to earn a living but also to punish her family. Sons are likely to be too charming and carefree. There are loving, dedicated wives and mothers, but intolerant, weak husbands and fathers. While the old people function, during rotating visits to the four apartments, to bring out the worst in their children, they serve also to excuse them. They are both the cause and the victims of all their faults. They can no longer help their children, but must be helped by them. As roles are gradually reversed, painful, violent crises are inevitable, until the new idea is accepted by all and Amélia and Antenor sent to a home. It is the only solution possible and a welcome one, even to the old people. Yet it is a familiar one also, and sad because everyone must eventually repeat the process.

*Os Ossos do Barão* clearly deals with the solution of some contemporary socio-economic problems, albeit on an individual level. The growth of São Paulo depends on the alliance of the old aristocracy with the vigorous descendants of immigrants. The former have created Brazilian history, and their traditions are important. But the latter's new blood and money are needed to preserve and continue them.

As usual, especially since *Pedreira das Almas*, Jorge Andrade presents two seemingly irreconcilable points of view and attempts to find

a satisfactory compromise. The complement of characters is accordingly well balanced on both sides: Miguel, Verônica, and Izabel, with the old aunts and uncle as a pendant, the aristocrats; Egisto, Bianca, and Martino, the immigrant family, augmented by Izabel and little Egisto, the result and assurance of the sometimes precarious compromise. Here, however, instead of tragic means the author has used those of classical comedy.

The action begins with Egisto's improbable but effective offer to sell the aristocrats' heirlooms, including the bones of the Baron. Egisto continues to pique their honor and greed with symbols of their past glories now in his possession, and promises of wealth which his efforts, all superficially of a gross physical nature, make possible for them. Necessarily, for the plot is a slim one, the author has employed considerable variety in his comedy, including transparent scenes of *dépit amoureux* and serious *comédie larmoyante*. Although there is satire and sentimentality, the subject is essentially a delicate one, and extremes of caricature and inverisimilitude are avoided. Face is saved for aristocrats obsessed with genealogies in the audience through the obviously humorous pedantry of those in the play, who though encouraged by Egisto are counterbalanced by Tia Ismália from among their ranks. While his machinations are plebian in the extreme, Egisto's basic honesty and thoroughly honorable intentions make him a sympathetic character. Modern young people cannot be expected to fall in love on their parents' request. Yet Izabel and Martino do want to break down their respective walls, "of the dead" and "of machinery," for which the author permits them a decent period of rebellion (on-stage) and accommodation (offstage). He then presents them in Act III, about to christen their first son and complete the synthesis, physically and symbolically, which is the honorable and practical solution to the problem.

Products of the classical method used by Jorge Andrade to create characters, those of *Os Ossos do Barão* are types, comic in this case and so even less individualized than other creations of his. Chief among the characters of this play are Miguel and Egisto. The former is the representative *par excellence* of the four-hundred-year-old aristocracy of São Paulo, his full ancestry containing the essence of the sixteen families that came over on the Brazilian counterpart of the *Mayflower*. Egisto, on the other hand, is the epitome of the Italian immigrant who has struck

it rich in São Paulo and influenced the state and city in every cultural detail. (Witness the flavor of the Portuguese heard there, a pidgin form of which is used, with the age-old comic effect of dialect, in the mouths of Egisto and Bianca throughout the play.) Unlikely though their association may seem at first glance, the economic factor, the old need to *redorer le blason*, makes it inevitable for the aristocrat, while the psychological factor, the need to be assimilated, drives the immigrant. Practical as he is, Jorge Andrade, through Egisto, has a financial arrangement precede family ties. However, Egisto has not only bought, but in every way earned, the right to have his bones repose one day with those of his former master, the Baron, through hard work, shrewdness, and above all good will. For he sincerely wishes to restore what the aristocrats have allowed to slip through their fingers. As has been pointed out, winning over the aristocrat is a delicate operation and, characteristic of Jorge Andrade's realistic women, Miguel's opportunistic wife and emancipated daughter, as well as the earthy Bianca and practical Ismália, assist Egisto in forming a new nobility to guide the great destiny of São Paulo.

Thus, *Os Ossos do Barão* is another in the episodes dealing with the history of São Paulo *fazendeiros* so dear to Jorge Andrade. The birth of a grandson here may well lead to still another sequel. Whether it will be a sad or a happy one is uncertain, but with *A Escada* and *Os Ossos do Barão*, Jorge Andrade has begun to court the average Brazilian theatregoer. Relatively unpretentious now if one considers his earlier works, he has not however sacrificed basic truth and personal authenticity. Always exciting without sensationalism, contemporary without avant-gardism, Jorge Andrade shows greater objectivity and maturity in wishing to reach a wider audience for his important theatre.<sup>9</sup>

## Notes

1. In Portuguese one may profitably consult:

Sábato Magaldi, *Panorama do Teatro Brasileiro* (São Paulo: Difusão Européia do Livro, 1962), pp. 212-219.

Delmiro Gonçalves, "Drama do Café Encontrou seu Autor," *Visão*, 24, No. 24 (19-junio 1964), 20-23.

2. Other unpublished or unproduced plays on which there is little or no information:

*Os Vínculos* (1960), written in collaboration with Clô Prado, apparently a bid for "commercial" success.

*O Incêndio* (1962), another plea for social and political justice, based on a true incident in Paraná.

*A Senhora da Bóca do Lixo* (1963), again on the decadence of São Paulo aristocracy.

*O Sumidouro* (long in preparation, perhaps not completed), another epic tragedy, on the subject of *bandeirantes* in Minas torn by old loyalties to Portugal and the new loyalty to Brazil.

3. *Pedreira das Almas* and *O Telescópio* (Rio: Agir, 1960), introduction by Paulo Mendonça.

4. (Rio: Agir, 1959), introduction by Décio de Almeida Prado. See also the latter's *Apresentação do Teatro Brasileiro Moderno* (São Paulo: Martins Editôra, 1956), pp. 143-151.

5. See note 3.

6. (São Paulo: Editôra Brasiliense, 1965), preface by Antônio Cândido, introduction by Sábato Magaldi.

7. *A Escada* and *Os Ossos do Barão* (São Paulo: Editôra Brasiliense, 1964), introductions by Décio de Almeida Prado and Sábato Magaldi.

8. See note 7.

9. The research and writing of this and other essays in progress on modern Brazilian drama have been subsidized since 1963 by the NDEA, Franklin and Marshall College, the American Philosophical Society, OAS, the Social Science Research Council, and Oakland University.

## Rubén Darío: El Poeta en el Teatro

RUTH S. LAMB

Desde sus primeros años escolares, Rubén Darío mostró marcada inclinación por el teatro. Alfonso Valle, un compañero de colegio, ha dejado de este aspecto poco conocido de la vida de Darío, páginas de verdadero interés:

La escuela del querido Maestro Ibarra—dice Valle, en "Rectificaciones"—estaba dividida en decurias, grupos de diez escolares cada banca. . . . Un día de tantos Rubén ordenó a la pandilla que construyésemos un escenario en el patio de su casa, porque iba a darnos una representación teatral. Mal o bien, entre todos armamos un tablado, y esa misma tarde nosotros y varias muchachas de la vecindad vimos aparecer en el improvisado escenario a Rubén envuelto en el uniforme galoneado de su difunto padrino el Coronel Ramírez Madregil, con un chapó de media vara de alto embutido hasta las orejas y arrastrando el descomunal espadón. Luego declamó con voz tonante unas cuantas tiradas de versos heroicos no sé si suyos o ajenos y bajó en medio de las entusiastas aclamaciones de su auditorio. . . .<sup>1</sup>

Cuenta Rubén en su *Autobiografía*, que encontró "en un viejo armario . . . los primeros libros que leyera. Eran un *Quijote*, las obras de Moratín, *Las mil y una noches*, la *Biblia*, . . . un tomo de comedias clásicas españolas. . . ."<sup>2</sup>

Por los años 1884 a 1886 parece Darío muy preocupado por el teatro. Había leído a los clásicos del teatro en la Biblioteca Nacional de Nicaragua, y de esta etapa data el largo estudio que escribió sobre Calderón de la Barca: