

erudição, o estudo meticuloso com suas conclusões sobre nosso complexo ambiente intelectual. Um exemplo sublinhado por Mariângela Alves de Lima, em excelente comentário ao volume, é a distância desdobrada pelo ensaísta entre teoria e prática teatral, o que de alguma forma responde *a priori* as minhas observações.

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Williams, Daryle. *Culture Wars In Brazil: The First Vargas Regime, 1930-1945*. Durham: Duke UP, 2001. xxii + 346 pp.

Daryle Williams' *Culture Wars in Brazil: The First Vargas Regime, 1930-1945* will engage historians, anthropologists, political scientists, art historians and architects alike. It will also be of use to anyone interested in the particular notion of *brasilidade* or in the relationship between state and culture in general. *Brasilidade*, which is meant to denote a specific sense of "Brazilianness" or national culture, is a vague and contested concept. While touting a long history, appearing often in academic and artistic works about Brazil, rarely is *brasilidade* as well dissected and analyzed as it is in Williams' book. The historical stage on which the action unfolds, the first regime of populist dictator Getúlio Vargas (1930-1945), is a crucial time in 20th century Brazilian history. Known as the Estado Novo, it marked the demise of the old Republic and was a period of intense state and nation building. Drawing on a wide array of data, from paintings to public architecture, from educational media to museum management and world expositions, Williams analyzes the battles waged by politicians, administrators, artists, intellectuals, critics and everyday citizens for control of the meaning and management of culture within the burgeoning nation.

The introduction unpacks the title metaphor of war. Citing the infamous massacre at Canudos (1896) as the defining moment that made warfare part of the official idiom of state building, Williams illustrates how the violent response of republican authorities to civil protest was re-enforced during the Estado Novo. Not only did violence become the accepted norm in responding to political and civil crises (a legacy that endures today), but the new regime and the dictator himself draped themselves in metaphors of war to symbolize the conquest of the Estado Novo over the Old Republic. Chapters 1-3 develop the metaphor of "cultural wars" by describing the struggle of control for "cultural management" within the Vargas regime. Williams traces the notion of "cultural management" or "an institutionalized, administrative relationship between the state and culture," back to the beginning of the 19th century when the Portuguese royal family, fleeing Europe and the revolutionary advances of Napoleon, arrived in Brazil to find the country lacking in any kind of cultural infrastructure. Along with establishing such institutions as a royal press, library, botanical garden and museum, the royal court in Rio invited a delegation of French artists to oversee the opening of the Royal School of the Sciences, Arts and Trades. This preference for European over Brazilian artists and artisans sparked a battle of ideologies among artists, politicians and administrators. Later, during the Vargas regime, this would become a battle of the unconventional modernists who celebrated *brasilidade* as a mix of the new, old, foreign and indigenous against the conservatives who rallied for a *brasilidade* rooted in the country's colonial and 19th century past. Chapters 4 - 6 look at specific examples in which this war was waged: in the establishment of a national historical and artistic patrimony, in the creation and

management of museums, and in the “export culture” of world expositions. Williams’ book, rich with detailed data and theoretically suggestive, demands close and careful reading. The text is enhanced with black-and-white and color photographs of art work and architecture, tables and charts, and a biographical appendix of some of the various cultural and political figures discussed. Though dealing mainly in the elite culture of fine arts and architecture which was the main interest of the state at the time, there are references to popular culture, such as samba, which during the second Vargas’ regime in the 1950s played a central role in national identity - a theme one hopes Williams may embrace in future work.

The most exciting aspect of *Culture Wars in Brazil: The First Vargas Regime, 1930-1945*, is the framework it offers for understanding contemporary struggles over the representation and management of Brazilian culture. In a globalized world where “culture” is increasingly exported, who currently claims rights to *brasilidade*? Who are the contemporary warriors in these “cultural wars”? With the current exhibit at New York’s Guggenheim Museum, “Brazil: Body and Soul,” a retrospective of Brazilian arts from the Baroque to the Modern, this question could not be more timely. From examples of Baroque catholic artwork to contemporary religious art of candomblé, from 17th century “anthropological portraits” of the indigenous by colonizers to the interactive artwork of Lygia Clark and Hélio Oiticica of the 1960s, the exhibit bombards the viewer with a kaleidoscope of conflicting images. For anyone dealing with the variety that is *brasilidade*, Williams’ book provides historical perspective, a useful theoretical language and a critical lens.

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Fitz, Earl. *Sexuality and Being in the Poststructuralist Universe of Clarice Lispector: The Différance of Desire*. Austin: U of Texas P, 2001. xiii + 246 pp.

Quando para muitos a crítica parecia relativamente saturada de explicações “definitivas” sobre a arte de Clarice Lispector, quando novas e novos escritores pareciam ocupar o lugar nos estudos literários desta que talvez seja hoje a escritora brasileira mais consagrada dentro e fora do Brasil, surge o livro *Sexuality and Being in the Poststructuralist Universe of Clarice Lispector: The Différance of Desire*, de Earl Fitz. Autor de vários outros ensaios importantes sobre Lispector (além de ser um dos tradutores para o inglês de *Água viva* [*The Stream of Life*]), Fitz é talvez o crítico que melhor tenha examinado as relações entre os procedimentos narrativos desenvolvidos pela autora durante sua carreira literária (1944-77) e os principais pressupostos, ou aqueles consensuais, que norteiam o pensamento pós-estruturalista—por exemplo, “that we can never express or know anything perfectly” (122) posto que a linguagem, lugar onde o ser se dá a conhecer e, num sentido, a existir, não passa de um “constantly changing and relentlessly ambiguous system of self-referential tropes” (122).

Livro organizado em seis capítulos, além de uma introdução e conclusão, vê-se aqui “crescer” (para usar uma metáfora cara à autora do conto “Amor”) e se esclarecer o argumento central de sua tese: sob a aparência de uma escrita hermética, às vezes severamente acusada de um solipsismo irremediável—“the endless ruminations of agonized and acutely self-aware consciousnesses” (123)—, a literatura de Lispector reflete *avant la lettre* tais pressupostos pós-estruturalistas, cujas implicações éticas e

