

THE POLITICAL ADAPTATIONS OF MONTEIRO LOBATO

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Abstract

Monteiro Lobato, enemy of the nationalist economic policies of the Getúlio Vargas government (1930-1945), used his adaptations of children's literature in order to insert many of his political, economic and educational ideas. Of particular interest are the retellings of Peter Pan and Don Quixote by the liberal grandmother, Dona Benta, who encourages the children on the Yellow Woodpecker Farm to think for themselves. Monteiro's alter egos are the naughty rag doll, Emília, who is always questioning and refusing to accept the status quo, and Pedro, who intends to become an entrepreneur when older. His sister, Narizinha, will belong to a new generation of liberated working women. Indeed, the anarchy of both Peter Pan and Don Quixote are appreciated by the children, and the negative comments on Brazilian society in Peter Pan were partially responsible for Lobato's imprisonment in 1941. Peter Pan was also withdrawn from circulation in the state of São Paulo.

Keywords: Monteiro Lobato, Peter Pan, Don Quixote, Dona Benta, Adaptation.

Introduction

This article will examine the way in which the Brazilian publisher, author of children's literature, pamphleteer and translator, José Bento Monteiro Lobato, adapted works of children's literature and inserted his own political opinions, which were very

much against the nationalist and protectionist policies of Brazilian dictator Getúlio Vargas, during Vargas' first period in office, from 1930 to 1945.

Monteiro Lobato - "A Nation is made by men and books"

Lobato is the key figure in the development of the Brazilian book industry, firstly at Monteiro Lobato e Cia., and then at Companhia Editora Nacional. He was the first publisher in Brazil to attempt to develop a mass market for books and to develop the book industry as a consumer industry. Until Lobato, most publishing was in the hands of Portuguese or French-owned companies, and the target market was very much that of the Francophile middle-class elite.

Lobato's initial success was with *Urupês* (1918), stories about rural life inspired by his experience as a farm owner near São Paulo, in which he introduced Jeca Tatu, the indolent yokel who represented rural backwardness and ignorance. This was followed by his first collection of children's stories, *A Menina do Narizinho Arrebitado* [*The Girl with the Little Turned-up Nose*] (1921), in which he introduced his cast of children and dolls at the Sítio do Picapau Amarelo [Yellow Woodpecker Farm]. The success of both books was phenomenal and in many ways started the book industry in Brazil. *Urupês* went into five editions, and the first edition of *Narizinho* sold 50,500 copies, 30,000 of which were distributed to schools in the state of São Paulo. By 1920 more than half of all the literary works published in Brazil were published by Monteiro Lobato e Cia., and in 1941, 1/4 of all books published in Brazil were produced by Lobato's Companhia Editora Nacional (Koshiyama 1982:133). Lobato was a major public figure in Brazil from 1918 to 1927 as, in addition to the success of these two books, he wrote a regular column for the influential newspaper *O Estado de São Paulo* and bought the middle-brow journal, *Revista do Brasil*.

Lobato believed that a growing book industry would greatly aid Brazilian development, “Um país se faz com homens e livros” [“A nation is made by men and books”] (Koshiyama 1982:99). People act through knowing the human experience of other people, which is found in the means of communication, especially books, and then acting on it.

But despite this exaltation of the book, Lobato had a hard-headed commercial attitude to selling books, which he saw as commercial objects which could be sold just as other goods were, in a variety of sales points: “livro não é gênero de primeira necessidade... é sobremesa: tem que ser posto embaixo do nariz do freguês, para provocar-lhe a gulodice” [“Books are not staple products... they are desserts: they must be put under the nose of the customer, to excite his gluttony”] (in Koshiyama 1982:72); He managed to increase the sales points for his works from 40, the total number of bookshops in Brazil, to 1,200, including chemists shops and newsstands. He innovated in terms of the visual presentation of the book, and was responsible for much more attractive covers than the dull yellow featureless covers which followed the French fashion.

Lobato stressed the importance that Brazil should give to its own culture. He was always against following the dominant Francophile culture, copying the latest Parisian fashions in art, music and literature. He wanted to open Brazil out to German, Russian, Scandinavian and Anglo-American literatures and translated and adapted such works as *Peter Pan*, *Alice in Wonderland*, *Robinson Crusoe*, *Tom Sawyer*, *Huckleberry Finn* and *Gulliver's Travels*. Lobato's Companhia Editora Nacional, opened in 1925 after the bankruptcy of Monteiro Lobato e Cia., which over-invented in printing presses, also published works by Conan Doyle, Eleanor H. Porter, Hemmingway, H. G. Wells, Melville, Jack London, Steinbeck, and Kipling. Thus Lobato helped to initiate a movement towards the importation of works written originally in English, which would continue right up until the Second World War, when English finally ousted French as the major foreign language studied and spoken in Brazil. His publishing companies also published unknown

authors, thus democratizing access to the publishing industry, as getting published had usually meant the need for influence of friends in high places or money.

In “Traduções” (Lobato 1964: 125-130) Lobato emphasizes the spiritual enrichment which translations, and not only translations from the French can provide, and mentions the scarcity of good translations from languages other than French. At the time he was writing very little had been translated into Brazilian Portuguese: Lobato mentions the lack of translations of Homer, Sophocles, Herodotus, Plutarch, Aeschylus, Shakespeare, Goethe, Schiller, Molière, Rabelais and Ibsen. The Brazilian reader needs light, air and new horizons, wide-open windows in his dark prison.

Lobato believed that Brazil should look to the interior, its own folklore and own traditional myths. But the interior of Brazil needed reawakening. Always the practical man, he encouraged vaccination campaigns and improvements in basic sanitary conditions. The government needed to stimulate investment in the interior, and the country people themselves suffer from indolence, characterized in his picture of the idle yokel, Jeca Tatu, who is in total contrast to the idealized rural figures found in the works of José de Alencar.

From 1927 to 1931 Lobato was commercial attaché for the Brazilian government in the US and was greatly impressed by American economic organization and efficiency. He was a great fan of Henry Ford and visited Detroit. Such mass production could be used in the book industry. The way in which the US had taken advantage of its mineral wealth, particularly iron ore, coal and oil, showed Lobato what Brazil might be capable of if the country took the correct steps, and developed its own oil industry, rather than leaving it at the mercy of the trusts, especially the Standard Oil Corporation. On his return from the US, Lobato invested all his efforts and capital in oil prospecting in Brazil. However, these plans were foiled by the onset of the hardening of the Vargas dictatorship in 1937 and the advent of the hardline dictatorship of the *Estado Novo*, when all prospecting plans were centralized and placed under

the control of the government, and Lobato's financial losses were considerable.

All the children's literature which was available in Brazil when Lobato began writing was written in the Portuguese of Portugal, and the desire to provide stories his own and other Brazilian children could read stimulated Lobato to write texts for his own and all other Brazilian children. Lobato believed in developing the Brazilian language, and that after 400 years of subservience to Portugal, it was now time to definitively break away from Lisbon and develop a separate Brazilian language.

Lobato's retellings and adaptations

In a 1921 letter he mentions his plans to produce a series of books for children "with more lightness and wit" (Vieira 2001:146) than the previously published stories organized by Jansen Muller, which he would rework and "improve". Lobato was puzzled by the language used in the Brazilian translations published by the French-owned house, Garnier, and remarked "Temos que refazer tudo isso - abrasileirar a linguagem" ["We must redo all of this – Brazilianize the language"] (Koshiyama 1982:88), and he recommended that the translator Godofredo Rangel took the liberty of improving the original where necessary. Thus Lobato's translation technique is one of adaptation, using a more simplified and colloquial language, which could immediately be understood by children, Lobato's target audience.

His adaptation of *Don Quijote*, *Don Quixote das Crianças*, clearly shows his adaptation technique: The naughty rag doll, Emília, Lobato's alter ego, prises a thick book off the shelf, a Portuguese translation of *Don Quijote*, which Dona Benta begins reading to her grandchildren and the dolls. However, they and Dona Benta herself find the literary style turgid. After hearing "lança em cabido, adarga antiga, galgo corredor" (Monteiro

Lobato 1957:16), Emília, who, like Lobato, is against everything which is old-fashioned and backward, fails to understand anything, loses interest and is ready to go off and play hide and seek. So, Dona Benta herself retells the story to the children. This retelling and adaptation also takes place in *Peter Pan*, La Fontaine's *Fábulas* (1969) and *Historias de Tia Nastásia* (1968), while *Robinson Crusoe* (1930), *Gulliver's Travels* (1937), *Alice no País das Maravilhas* [*Alice in Wonderland*] and *Alice no País do Espelho* [*Alice through the Looking Glass*] are adapted with no interventions. Near the end of *D. Quixote das Crianças*, Pedrinho asks whether his grandmother Dona Benta is telling all the story or just parts, and Dona Benta replies that only mature people should attempt to read the whole work, and that only what will entertain children's imagination should be included in such versions (Monteiro Lobato 1957:152). "Literary" qualities have no place in a work for children, whose imaginations should be stimulated by fluent, easy language. In a 1943 letter, Lobato describes the difficulties he had to

extirpar a "literatura" de meus livros infantis. A cada revisão nova mato, como quem mata pulgas, todas as literaturas que ainda as estragam. O último submetido a tratamento foram *As Fábulas*. Como achei pedante e requintado! De lá raspei quase um quilo de "literatura" e mesmo assim ficou alguma... (Abramovich 1982:152)

[get rid of the "literature" in my children's books. With each revision, I kill, just like someone who is killing fleas, all the literatures which are spoiling them. The last one I did was Aesop's *Fables*. How pedantic and sophisticated it was. I managed to shave off almost a kilo of "literature", but there was still some left...]

In *Peter Pan* and *D. Quixote das Crianças* this intimate contact with the story is emphasized through the interaction the listeners

have with the story and the characters. Lobato uses the technique of Sherazade, with Dona Benta interrupting the story every night at nine o'clock, bedtime, and promising more entertainment for the next evening. The listeners get caught up with the stories: In *Peter Pan*, Emília makes a hook to put on her hand. In *D. Quixote das Crianças*, she dresses up as Don Quijote, and attacks the hens and the cook, saying she is the giant Freston; Pedrinho, Lobato's other alter ego, gets involved in books in the same way as Don Quijote does. After reading the history of Charlemagne, he says that Roldon became incarnated in him as he got an old sword, went to the corn plantation, and, thinking the corn plants are 300,000 moors, cut them all down (Monteiro Lobato 1957: 94-95).

Lobato's work is overtly didactic as he is always placing his pet themes in the middle of the story. One of the most prominent is that of expanding the book market in Brazil. At the beginning of *Peter Pan*, the children, Pedrinho and Narizinho, and the doll, Emília, having heard about Peter Pan in *As Reinações de Narizinho* [*The Reigns of Narizinho*], ask their grandmother, Dona Benta, who Peter Pan is. As Dona Benta doesn't know, she writes to a bookshop in São Paulo, who send her Barrie's work in English. Lobato thus inserts an advertisement for mail orders for book shops, and then Dona Benta retells the story to the children and dolls in Portuguese, thus re-enacting in the book the situation of an oral retelling. Pedrinho has also inherited Lobato's entrepreneurial spirit as he intends to set up a toy factory when he grows up, and market a variety of dolls, including copies of those at the Sítio do Picapau Amarelo (Monteiro Lobato 1957: 12).

Lobato introduces vocabulary extension exercises as Dona Benta explains "pigmento (Monteiro Lobato 1971: 22), cinegética [related to hunting] (Monteiro Lobato 1971: 60), "excêntrico" (85), the use of "líquido" in "uma questão líquida" (Monteiro Lobato 1971: 59), and "interpolada" (Monteiro Lobato 1957: 190), References to Marie Antoinette (Monteiro Lobato 1971:30), the etymology of the name of Captain Hook's ship, "Hiena dos Mares" ["Hyena of the

Seas”] (Monteiro Lobato 1971: 75), the background to Cervantes writing *Don Quixote* (Monteiro Lobato 1957: 100), the explanation of stalactites and stalagmites (Monteiro Lobato 1971: 59), the different formats of books: folio, in octavo etc. (Monteiro Lobato 1957: 152-3), also broaden the general knowledge of the reader.

In *Aventuras de Hans Staden*, a retelling of one of the early adventurers in Brazil he uses the same technique, with Dona Benta explaining nautical terms like “zarpar” [“weigh anchor”] (Monteiro Lobato 1954: 13-14), historical features such as the war between Spain and France in the 16th century (Monteiro Lobato 1954: 14), the different types of miles (Monteiro Lobato 1954: 18), the meaning of “epopéia” [“epopee”]. Dona Benta always tries to open up the horizons of her grandchildren, encouraging them to read Darwin’s *The Voyage of the Beagle* and openly discussing the anthropology of the various Indian tribes in Brazil. Indeed, Hans Staden spends such a large amount of time waiting to be eaten that it would be difficult to avoid this theme!

Narizinho says she enjoys *Peter Pan* because it is a modern story, funnier and so different from the traditional stories of Grimm, Andersen, Perrault, with their never-ending succession of kings, queens, princes, princesses and fairies, thus reflecting Lobato’s attempts to renovate Brazilian children’s literature (Monteiro Lobato 1971: 28). *Histórias de Tia Nastácia* contains a selection of such traditional folk tales retold by Tia Nastácia, the black cook, who is semi-literate, superstitious, religious, and somewhat looked down upon by Lobato as a representative of the Jeca Tatu indolent backward Brazilian mentality. After *Peter Pan*, Emília is more demanding and also dislikes those tales with princes and magical transformations. The tales are a mixture of traditional Portuguese folk tales, traditional Brazilian animal fables, often based on those of La Fontaine, which were collected by Silvio Romero from the Northeast of Brazil. Many of them reflect the conservative Jeca Tatu mentality, with Dona Benta telling us that they have been passed down uncritically from generation to

generation, usually by people who are illiterate. Only those who can read “e lê bons livros, é que se põe de acordo com os progressos que as ciências trouxeram ao mundo [and read good books can keep up-to-date with the progress that the sciences have brought to the world] (Lobato 1968: 81). After the first tale Emília turns her nose up and says “Essas histórias folclóricas são bastante bobas [...] Por isso não sou “democrática”! Acho o povo muito idiota... [These folk tales are silly [...] That’s why I’m not “democratic”! I think the people are pretty stupid...] (Lobato 1968: 16). Narzinho also says that she has become much more demanding since she read *Peter Pan*. By contrast, Pedrinho, the future intellectual, takes a detached anthropological view, stating that the stories are good in order to study the mentality of the Brazilian people. Indeed, Pedrinho has already begun to read Darwin, talking about the survival of the fittest (Lobato 1968: 95).

This kind of liberal education is encouraged by Dona Benta, who takes no notice of Tia Nastácia’s criticism that the children are “ficando os maiores hereges deste mundo. Chegam até a defender o canhoto, credo!...” (“becoming the worst heretics in the world. They even defend the Devil!”) after a story called “O Bom Diabo” (“The Good Devil”). Dona Benta shrugs this remark off, “[...] se você conta mais três histórias de diabo como essa, até eu sou capaz de dar um viva ao canhoto” (“[...] if you tell another three stories about the devil like this one, I might even cheer him!”) (Lobato 1968: 73).

Lobato and Politics

Lobato was no friend of the *Estado Novo* nationalist government of Getúlio Vargas, who despised him for his internationalism, his constant negative comparisons of Brazil to the US and the UK, his atheism, and his continual meddling. In March 1941 Lobato was accused of sending an insulting letter to dictator Getúlio Vargas,

the President of the Republic, and General Gois Monteiro, and was imprisoned for six months, of which he served three, despite considerable protest from intellectuals against his imprisonment.

Lobato's *Peter Pan* suffered considerable political problems. In June 1941, a São Paulo state public prosecutor, Dr. Clóvis Kruel de Moraes, reported to the Tribunal de Segurança Nacional in favour of prohibiting the distribution of *Peter Pan* as it would give children the wrong opinion of the government of Brazil and gave an impression that Brazil was an inferior country to Britain.

When the narrator, Dona Benta, compares Brazilian children to English children, she says that, unlike Brazilian children, all English children have a special room of their own, a nursery, which will be full of toys, have special furniture and wallpaper. By contrast, the room of the Brazilian child will be “um quarto qualquer e por isso não tem nome especial” (Monteiro Lobato 1971: 59), thus demonstrating the inferiority of living conditions of Brazilian children. Likewise, he compares heating systems. In forward-looking cold countries all houses have central heating, and not an open hearth. Although central heating is not needed in most parts of Brazil, it is clearly one of the “países atrasados” (Monteiro Lobato 1971: 59-60).

A further passage in which Lobato betrays Brazil is when Emília asks whether English children play with a “boi de xuxu”, a toy animal made by sticking pieces of wood into a vegetable, common in country areas in Brazil where children had to improvise toys out of odds and ends. One of the main characters of Lobato's children's stories is the doll Visconde, who is made from an old shuck of corn (Monteiro Lobato 1971: 12). Dona Benta replies that English children are very spoilt and are given the toys they want, and that they are not incredibly expensive, as they are in Brazil. High-quality German toys made in Nuremberg are also praised. Whereas, in Brazil, the toy industry is only just beginning. Of course, here, as in the section quoted, Lobato is inserting his opinions against the economic protectionism of Getúlio Vargas' *Estado Novo* government.

Another report for the Tribunal de Segurança Nacional [National Security Tribunal], made by Tupy Caldas, accused Lobato's works of being excessively materialistic, and lacking any kind of spiritualism, and recommended they should be banned as they were dangerous to the national educational programme as they failed to contribute to the formation of a "juventude patriótica, continuadora da tradição cristã, unificadora da Pátria" [patriotic youth, continuing the Christian tradition, and unifying the motherland"]. Vargas himself, aware of the possible role which books could play, underlined this very danger:

Todo e qualquer escrito capaz de desvirtuar esse programa é perigoso para o futuro da nacionalidade. O nosso mal até aqui foi justamente dar liberdade excessiva aos escritores, quando é o livro o mais forte veículo de educação. (in Carneiro 1997: 76)

[All written matter which may pervert this programme is dangerous for the future of the nationality. Our problem until now has been that we have given excessive freedom to our writers, when the book is the most powerful means of education.]

Both Peter Pan and Don Quijote can be seen as anarchic figures, failing to respect authority. Pedrinho says of Don Quijote: "- O que eu gosto em D. Quixote - observou Pedrinho, é que êle não respeita cara. Mêdo não é com ele. Seja clérigo, seja moinho de vento, seja arrieiro, êle vai de lança e espada em cima, como se fôssem carneiros." [What I like in Don Quixote is that he doesn't respect anybody. He's not one to be afraid. Whether it's a priest, a windmill, or a mule-driver, he goes at them with his lance and spear as if they are sheep."] (Monteiro Lobato 1957: 91).

On many other occasions Lobato in his adaptations Lobato makes implicit criticism of the corrupt Brazilian political system, and the excessive powers of the large *latifundiários*, the *coronéis*. Pedrinho

is surprised to find that there were *coroneis* in the 16th century, and Dona Benta replies that there were fewer than nowadays “e melhores, como esse Tomé de Sousa, que foi um benemérito” [“and better, like this Tomé de Sousa, who was a worthy man”] (Monteiro Lobato 1954: 56). She also questions the orthodox view of history: replying to Pedrinho’s question of why the Spanish and Portuguese *conquistadores* are seen as great and glorious heroes, she emphasizes that it is they themselves who have written history (Monteiro Lobato 1954: 74).

In his adaptations of La Fontaine’s Fables, *Fábulas*, lack of social justice can be clearly seen. In “Os animais e o peste” (“The Animals and the Plague”), the only animal to be punished and sent to its death is the ass, who is judged to have committed the worst crime of all, “[...] não pode haver crime maior do que furtar a sacratíssima couve do senhor vigário” “[...] there can’t be anything worse than stealing the very sacred cabbage of the vicar”) (Monteiro Lobato 1969: 92). After each of the tales, the children make comments and judgments. In “A Mosca e a Formiguinha” (“The Fly and the Ant”), Visconde, the professor-like doll, made form a corn shuck, comments: “[...] Mas muitas vezes um planta e quem colhe é o outro...” (“[...] But often one person plants and another harvests”) (Monteiro Lobato 1969: 100). In “O Lobo e o Cordeiro” (“The Wolf and the Lamb”), La Fontaine’s most famous tale, in which the lamb, through fear, can never contradict the wolf, Dona Benta explains that the fable “[...] revela a essência do mundo. O forte tem sempre razão. Contra a força não há argumentos” (“reveals the essence of the world. The one who is strong is always right. There are no arguments against force”) (Monteiro Lobato 1969: 138). And in “O Cavalo e o Burro” (“The Horse and the Ass”) she teaches the meaning of the word “solidaridade” (“solidarity”) (Monteiro Lobato 1969: 141).

Lobato’s anti-clericalism was not surprisingly unpopular with the right-wing of the Catholic Church, whose views can be seen in Padre Sales Brasil’s *A Literatura Infantil de Monteiro Lobato ou*

Comunismo para Crianças [*The Children's Literature of Monteiro Lobato or Communism for Children*] in which he accused Lobato of encouraging the Communist revolution, bad manners within the family, atheism, and rebellion against the right to private property.

As a result of the instructions given by the Tribunal de Segurança Nacional, the São Paulo Department of Social and Political Order (DEOPS) apprehended and confiscated all the copies of *Peter Pan* it could find in the state of São Paulo.

Another factor which contributed to Lobato's imprisonment was the interview he gave to the BBC London in 1940 or 1941, in which he emphasizes the indebtedness of Brazil to England. "No Brasil veneramos de coração a Inglaterra porque desde os começos da nossa historia vimo-la interessar-se por nós e cooperar para o nosso desenvolvimento" ["In Brazil we venerate England in our hearts as from the beginning of our history we have seen that England has been interested in Brazil and has cooperated in our development"] (Monteiro Lobato 1951:173). Britain gave Brazil its railways, ports, its development capital, a parliamentary model during the reign of Dom Pedro II, civil liberties, habeas corpus, and leading figures such as Zacarias de Goes, Cotegipe, Barão de Rio Branco, Saraiva and Paranaguá, and especially the leading jurist and orator, Ruy Barbosa, were all anglophiles. "A palavra "inglês" sempre foi, e contua sendo, um sinónimo de solidez, lealidade e resistência a novidades mal cosidas" ("The word "English" has always been, and still is, a synonym of solidity, loyalty and resistance to badly thought out novelties (Monteiro Lobato 1951:175). And Lobato remarks that that all these qualities of calm and resistance, depicted in Kipling's "If...", which had recently attracted considerable attention and a number of translations in Brazil, were now necessary for England in the Second World War. It is implicit that, in the same way that the Nazis have threatened these great English values, Vargas' Estado Novo dictatorship has resulted in the loss of such values in Brazil:

...a humanidade tonteia diante do surto dos valores da violência
 (...) O justo passa a injusto, o certo é o errado e o errado o certo; o bom é o mau e o mau é o bom; o pensamento livre é o crime e a delação é a virtude; a história é falseada nas escolas para que também se torne instrumento dessa obra de *inversão de todo (sic) os valores*.

...humanity is shaken at the rapid increase of violent values
 (...) The just becomes unjust, the right is wrong, and the wrong is right; the good is bad and the bad is good; free thought is a crime, and denunciation is a virtue; history is falsified in schools so that it also becomes an instrument of *inverting all values*"
 (Lobato 1951: 175-6).

But though England may be at war, and though threatened by the concentration camp, it has managed to plant "a árvore da dignidade humana" ("the tree of human dignity") (Monteiro Lobato 1951: 176) in the USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa.

Lobato and Anthropophagy

In Lobato's adaptations we see a very important way in which a developing nation like Brazil will use original works from the First World. Lobato adapts the original stories, he changes the original emphasis; in *D. Quixote das Crianças* he "translates" the original difficult Portuguese into a much simpler and more readable language. Today, he says "usamos a linguagem a mais simplificada possível, como a de Machado de Assis, que é o nosso grande mestre" ["we use the most simplified language possible, like that of Machado de Assis, our great master]. By contrast, Portuguese classical writers used a much richer language and more complex constructions (Monteiro Lobato 1957: 190-1). In *Peter Pan* Lobato makes comparisons with the Brazilian reality, as, for example,

when the North American redskins are compared to Brazilian Indians and comparing them to the *caboclos* (half-Indians).

In 1928 Oswald de Andrade published the *Manifesto Antropofágico*, in which he presented the image of the Brazilian cannibal, who would “devour” the enemy, so he could take over his soul. Thus the Brazilian writer, like the cannibal, would not take in the foreign influence in a passive way, but rather by transforming it into something new. The original will be actively swallowed and reproduced in a different form.

Adriana Vieira compares Lobato’s “anthropophagy” to that of Haroldo and Augusto de Campos (Vieira 2001: 153). Though Lobato is adapting popular literature within a commercial setting, and the Campos brothers are translating much more erudite non-commercial literature, Vieira believes that both Lobato and the Campos brothers use the original text in an anthropophagic way, adapting the original and putting their own characteristic Brazilian mark on it.

Conclusion

In *Translation in a Postcolonial Context* and “Translation and Political Engagement”, Maria Tymoczko, based on her experience of studying translations and adaptations of the Old Irish legends of Cú Chulainn, describes different ways in which translation can be used for political ends. She emphasizes the way in which these legends were manipulated by Standish O’Grady and Lady Gregory, who cut scatological material and made Cú Chulainn conform more to Victorian ideal of the medieval knight. These versions, which popularized traditional Irish myths, provided a sense of a national culture and history at the time of the independence movement, existed alongside more scholarly versions, which emphasized the academic importance of Cú Chulainn legend.

Similar manipulations can be seen in Lobato’s adaptations of *Peter Pan*, *Don Quijote* and in his retellings of traditional tales in

Fábulas and *Histórias de Tia Nastásia* where he inserts his own opinions on education, writing for children, and the economic and political ills of Brazil. Another important point, mentioned by Tymoczko, is that certain texts are chosen with political goals in view (Tymoczko 2000: 41-42). Both Don Quijote and Peter Pan can be seen as anarchic figures, who rebel against what is expected of them in society. And the comments of the ideal teacher and educator, Dona Benta, leave us in no doubt as to Lobato's severe critique of the clergy, the traditional landowning classes in Brazil and political corruption.

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