

## 5. SANCHO PANZA COMES TO BRAZIL

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**Abstract:** The Brazilian-born Jewish dramatist António José da Silva (1705-1739) marked the history of Luso-Brazilian theatre with the first “Portuguese opera”, a puppet opera premiered at Lisbon’s Teatro do Bairro Alto (1733) and entitled *A vida de D. Quixote de la Mancha e do gordo Sancho Pança*. Still during the 18th century, two scenes were extracted from it to form the *entremez O grande Governador da Ilha dos Lagartos*, in which Sancho Pança assumes the governorship of an island. The present text focuses on the process of “resurrection” of this *entremez* through a carefully-documented project developed at the Universidade Federal de Goiás (Brazil), which involved a whole range of literary, musical and theatrical tasks, including the identifying, adaptation and performance of suitable music, raising important issues with regard to editing, creative reconstruction, authenticity and performance practice. Following the 2014 production in Pirenópolis and publication of text, score, essays, photographic album and CD-ROM videos, it received successful performances at Ouro Preto and Belo Horizonte in 2019.

**Keywords:** Antonio José da Silva, Portuguese opera, *entremez*, D. Quijote de la Mancha, creative reconstruction.

### SANCHO PANZA LLEGA A BRASIL

**Resumen:** *El dramaturgo brasileño de ascendencia judía António José da Silva (1705-1739) cambió la historia del teatro luso-brasileño con la primera “ópera*

*portuguesa”, una ópera para títeres estrenada en Lisboa en el Teatro do Bairro Alto (1733) y titulada A vida de D. Quixote de la Mancha e do gordo Sancho Pança. En el propio siglo XVIII, dos escenas de esta obra fueron extraídas para formar el entremés O Grande Governador da Ilha dos Largartos, en el cual Sancho Pança asume la gobernación de una isla. El presente texto se enfoca en el proceso de “resurrección” de este entremés logrado a través de un riguroso proyecto documental desarrollado en la Universidade Federal de Goiás (Brasil), y que tuvo una variada gama de implicaciones literarias, musicales y teatrales, incluyendo la identificación, adaptación e interpretación de la música más apropiada e implicando al mismo tiempo importantes retos relacionados con las prácticas editoriales y de reconstrucción creativa, así como asuntos de autenticidad y de interpretación. A partir de la producción de 2014 y la subsecuente publicación del texto teatral, de la partitura orquestal y las particellas instrumentales, de estudios, de un álbum fotográfico y de vídeos en un CD-ROM, este proyecto incentivó nuevas interpretaciones exitosas en Ouro Preto y Belo Horizonte en 2019.*

**Palabras clave:** ópera portuguesa, entremés, D. Quijote de la Mancha, reconstrucción creativa.

## INTRODUCTION

Unlike Spain, where a great deal of 18th-century theatre music in Spanish has survived, Portugal is plagued by a paucity of surviving sources. There are very few indeed, often incomplete and often difficult to articulate with the texts to which they belonged, whether full-length works (*óperas portuguesas, comédias, tragédias*) or short interval-/after-pieces (*entremeses, farças*). This reality imposes upon the musicologist an arduous task when it comes to trying to produce modern editions of any kind. The idea of trying to produce a critical, Urtext edition is never a remote possibility —there are no autograph scores, there are never multiple sources of the same work that would admit of comparison, and surviving material may be from several decades after composition, with many alterations introduced. Furthermore, there are no full scores, only vocal and instrumental parts, some of which

are almost always missing —particularly the vocal parts, all of which implies the need for a lesser or greater degree of reconstruction, when not actual composition, to make the material viable for use in a modern performance, whether in concert or on stage. In every respect it is “the art of the possible”, as much an act of creation as of scholarship.

Departing as it does, necessarily, from the requirements of the hallowed “critical” edition, the kind of creative reconstruction that the sources demand can easily become anarchic, open to abuse and whim. This text illustrates the problems and, by taking an extreme case (a work for which no music at all has come down to us), proposes a paradigm that, while consciously distancing itself from the critical edition, may, nevertheless, be seen as satisfying scientific criteria —the principled or criterion-based edition (in Portuguese, *edição criteriosa*).

#### I. “AN *ENTREMEZ* BY ‘THE JEW’”

In his tragically short life,<sup>1</sup> the dramatist António José da Silva, “the Jew” (1705-1739) wrote eight Portuguese operas (*operas portuguesas*), first performed by roughly human-sized puppets made of cork (*bonifrates*) at Lisbon’s Teatro do Bairro Alto between 1733 and 1739. With them he established a new paradigm in Portuguese theatre, with alternating prose dialogue and lyrical numbers: sung items (*cantorias*), mostly Italianate arias and duets, larger ensembles, sung minuets and choruses, but also, in some instances, declaimed poetic *formes fixes*, such as sonnets and *décimas*. The music for most, if not all of these operas, was by António Teixeira (1707-1779), who trained first in Lisbon and later in Rome.

Vocal and instrumental parts for three of António José’s Portuguese operas have survived in Portuguese libraries, though none of them made

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<sup>1</sup> Born in the state of Rio de Janeiro, in 1712 his family accompanied his mother to Lisbon, where she was to be imprisoned by the Inquisition for Jewish practices. António José was himself incarcerated and tortured for the same motive in the summer of 1726, and again in October 1737, remaining in prison till his death by burning in an *auto-da-fé* on 18 October 1739.

up exactly of the music as indicated in the earliest printed editions, either of individual operas or in the collected edition of 1744. Closest to the printed editions is *As variedades de Proteu* (1737), with only a few changes. The respective parts were probably copied in the 1760s and were seemingly used in Rio de Janeiro in the 1780s.<sup>2</sup> The material for *Guerras do Alecrim e Manjerona* (1737), missing the vocal parts for the male characters and the dulcimer part, was copied and used in Rio de Janeiro in the 1780s.<sup>3</sup> Here there are a lot more substituted numbers and there are many indications for the B-sections of *da capo* arias to be cut. For António José's last opera, *Precipícios de Faetonte* (1739), little of the original music remains in the surviving material, used for performance at the Teatro do Salitre, Lisbon, around 1790.<sup>4</sup> All of the original *cantorias* have been cut, substituted or truncated (by omitting the *da-capo* B-sections), while a number have been added. Moreover, there are no vocal parts apart from for a quartet, very possibly composed by Marcos Portugal (1762-1830), musical director at the Teatro do Salitre at that time. Progressively, then, the challenge for the musicologist in preparing a modern edition grows increasingly difficult, to the point that for *Precipícios de Faetonte* it would only be possible to produce an edition with music from up to half a century after the original production (retaining little that could plausibly be attributed to Teixeira). Even then, the vocal parts for all but the quartet would have to be composed anew.

And yet there is an interest in making these scores available. António José was a fine dramatist and much appreciated by his contemporaries and succeeding generations, as can be shown from the many known productions throughout the eighteenth century, in both Portugal and its then colony Brazil. Indeed, he continues to attract interest to this day. In particular, there is something of a tradition of staging his operas, which while not continuous, can be traced from time to time at Pirenópolis, a small, originally colonial,

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<sup>2</sup> The parts are to be found at the Musical Archive of the Museu-Biblioteca da Casa de Bragança, Vila Viçosa, with the call-mark G2-006. For details regarding this material and that of the other operas discussed here, see Cranmer 2017.

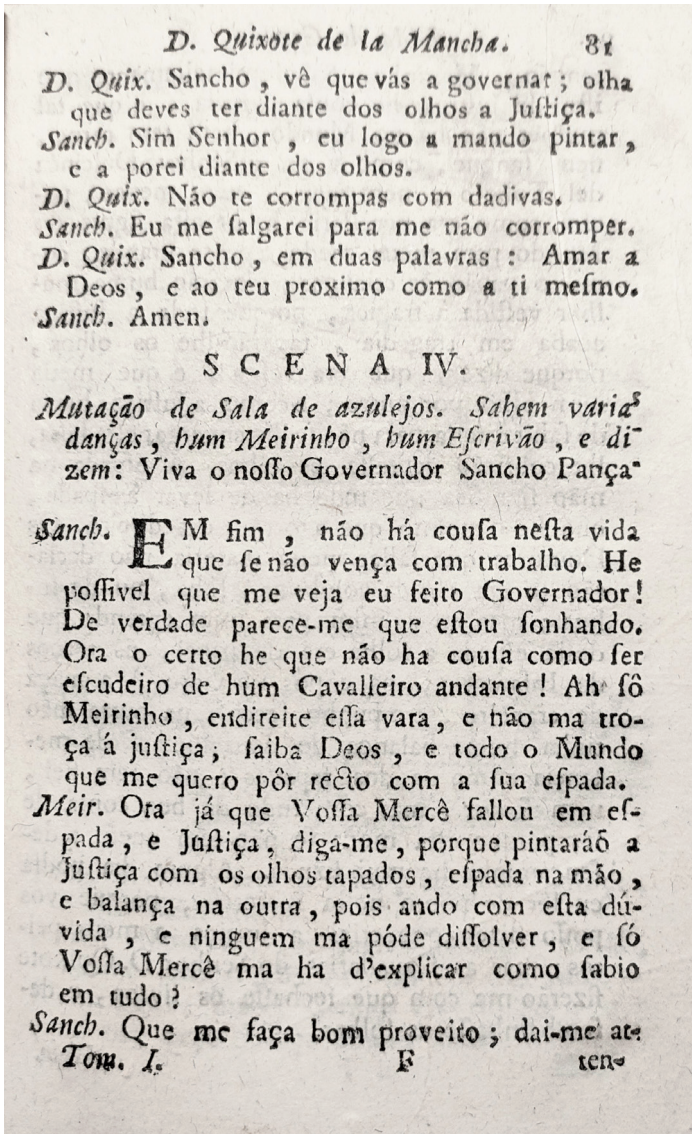
<sup>3</sup> Likewise at Vila Viçosa, Museu-Biblioteca da Casa de Bragança, Musical Archive, G2-007.

<sup>4</sup> Conserved at the Universidade de Coimbra, Biblioteca Geral, MM 876.

town in the state of Goiás, in the interior of Brazil. Owing to the town's musical traditions, the Federal University of Goiás initiated an annual musical conference there in 2009.

For the 2014 conference, I was approached with a view to staging “an *entremez* by ‘the Jew’”. My first reaction was: “but he didn't write any *entremezes*”, that is to say, one-act intermezzi or end-pieces. And that could easily have been the end of the subject. However, I recalled that, still within the eighteenth century, an *entremez* had been printed, with the title *O grande Governador da Ilha dos Lagartos* (The great Governor of the Isle of Lizards), two scenes taken virtually *verbatim* from António José's first opera, *Vida do grande Dom Quixote de la Mancha e do gordo Sancho Pança* (figure 5.1). The opera was based loosely on episodes from Part II of the Cervantes classic, the *entremez* taking up the episode in which Sancho Panza becomes governor of an island (Cervantes' Isle of Barataria). It consists of a court scene on the perennial theme of the abuses of justice, as pertinent today as it was in its own day, and a banquet scene on an issue that, for us, seems remarkably contemporary —what the medical profession advises us not to eat. In actual fact, this *entremez* was evidently a popular work, for as well as the first edition, published in Lisbon in 1774 at the printing press of Francisco Sabino dos Santos, there were at least three other (presumably later) editions, published by Francisco Borges de Sousa (one dated 1784, the other undated) and by Filipe da Silva (undated).

Musically, however, this is a highly problematic text. No music is known to have survived from the original opera and within the two scenes of the *entremez* the only reference to music is a stage direction: “Tocaõ os instrumentos muito dezafinados” (The instruments play very out-of-tune”. The instruments refer to two “rabecas” (fiddles) and a “rabecaõ” (bass —possibly cello, but equally likely double bass) mentioned among the extensive list of characters in the *dramatis personae*. Once again, this absence of music could easily have been the end of the story. However, the quality of the text, in terms of the subject matter, as well as its humorous qualities as sheer entertainment, led me to seek a workable solution. This proved to be through the insertion of suitable music, though not originally intended for this text. The question was what would constitute “suitable music”, by what criteria would it be selected, and what adaptations would be needed with respect to



**Figure 5.1:** António José da Silva, *A vida do grande D. Quixote de la Mancha e do gordo Sancho Pança*, opening of Part II, scene 4, where the *entremez O grande Governador da Ilha dos Lagartos* begins. *Theatro comico Portuguez* [...], 4.<sup>a</sup> impressão, tomo I, p. 81. Lisboa: Simão Thaddeo Ferreira, 1787 (author's collection).

both text and music? Furthermore, given that performance would be in the context of a musicological conference, on what scientific bases could such a project be defended?

It was this challenge that led me to conceive the notion of a criterion-based “principled edition”, taking as its starting point not the classic paradigm of the authenticity of the text (and the “sacredness” of the Urtext), but, rather, a very different one: the authenticity of period practices. In the context of eighteenth-century theatre, this meant a totally pragmatic, empirical practice of how to put together a popular favourite, or a novel entertainment, with the resources available, whether great or limited, in such a way that the public would buy subscriptions or tickets and enable the impresario to balance his books.

## 2. A PRINCIPLED, CRITERION-BASED CONSTRUCT

The expectations in this instance were clear: on the basis of the text identified, we would need music roughly of the time when António José da Silva was active as a dramatist, i.e. the 1730s. As we saw above, António Teixeira was his musical collaborator, but it seemed undesirable simply to create a pastiche from numbers drawn from the three surviving (but, to varying degrees, altered) operas. A better solution was to identify and modify, as required, other music by Teixeira or his contemporaries. Bearing in mind the typical orchestral textures of this period (melody line and bass, or two upper lines and bass), the known composition of the orchestra at the Teatro do Bairro Alto, and assured that these instruments would be available, it seemed appropriate to score for some or all of 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> violins, bass (*basso continuo*), two oboes and two horns.

Eighteenth-century *entremeses*, when they had music —many had none at all— could have anything up to around six sung numbers, but often had fewer, perhaps an aria or two and, quite commonly, some kind of closing number —a simple homophonic “chorus”, involving all those on stage, or, more rarely, a more elaborate, more discursive number. In this instance, in the light of the music I was able to identify and adapt, there were to be two arias in the first scene and a closing ensemble (quartet) in the second.

## 1. Sancho's aria

This was taken from a manuscript volume of cantatas by Teixeira and contemporaries, preserved at Évora Public Library.<sup>5</sup> The text was adapted to the context and two horns were added to the two violins and bass of the original, to add greater pomp for the newly appointed Governor. As the opening *ritornello* of the aria is missing in the manuscript, this was supplied, based on the closing *ritornello*.

## 2. The woman's aria

This was based on a single, at that time uncatalogued, aria (manuscript vocal, 1<sup>st</sup> violin and bass parts) attributed to Teixeira at the Portuguese Na-

**Figure 5.2:** António Teixeira, *Voce quer cazar*, voice and bass part of the woman's aria. Lisboa, Biblioteca Nacional de Portugal, M.M. 3803.

<sup>5</sup> Évora, Biblioteca Pública, Códice CLI/2-9, N.º 14, currently fols. 19-21, originally (according to the foliation of the time), fols. 31-33.



tional Library, which the then Director of the Music Service, Sílvia Sequeira, had found.<sup>6</sup> The text does not match any known theatrical text of the period, but could be inserted unaltered in scene 1 of the *entremez* with a minimal adjustment to the surrounding text. The 1<sup>st</sup> violin part lacks the B-section of this *da capo* aria, and the 2<sup>nd</sup> violin is entirely missing. These had to be reconstructed taking into account the vocal and bass parts (figure 5.2).

### 3. The closing quartet

This made use of a duet from the cantata manuscript at Évora,<sup>7</sup> which Filipe de Sousa had previously “borrowed” for insertion in his edition of *Guerras de Alecrim e Manjerona*. It is incomplete in the manuscript, breaking off after a few bars of the *da capo* section B. In this instance the section A, originally for two high voices, was adapted for four male voices (two tenors and two baritones), with two oboes and two horns added to the original strings.

On the other hand, although the 18th-century *entremezes* did not, as a rule, have purely orchestral or instrumental items, except, occasionally, a dance integrated within the plot itself, there were various reasons why they should be introduced in this instance. In the first place, the sole musical indication in the text, “The instruments play very out-of-tune”, required music to play out-of-tune. Secondly, although the *entremez* genre was intrinsically used as an interval – or after-piece, on this occasion it was to serve as the sole piece in the show. While a full-length baroque three-part Italian *sinfonia* would be out of proportion to open so short an entertainment, a single movement, such as Teixeira composed for *As variedades de Proteu*, could both satisfy modern audience expectations of some kind of overture and help create an appropriate atmosphere for what was to follow.

In addition, in terms of action and dialogue, there are two moments of hiatus in *O grande Governador*, where music could usefully cover what would otherwise be embarrassing silences. More obviously, there is the change of

<sup>6</sup> Lisboa, Biblioteca Nacional, subsequently attributed the call-mark MM 3803.

<sup>7</sup> Évora, Biblioteca Pública, Códice CLI/2-9, N.º 14, fols. 14v-18v.

scene, when it would be necessary for there to be movement of stagehands, but with no advance in dramatic terms; there is also a moment of silent inaction when a court official leaves the stage to go and fetch an accused donkey —Sancho's own donkey, as it turns out. Accordingly, four brief orchestral numbers were added.

#### 4. Overture (*Sinfonia*)

A single-movement *sinfonia* was created based on the initial *ritornello* of the aria “Odo già della sua tromba”, which opens the cantata *Gloria, Fama, Virtù*, by António Teixeira, preserved at the Portuguese National Library.<sup>8</sup> The original orchestration had two trumpets as well as two horns. The trumpet parts were integrated into the horn parts —a relatively simple task since they tended either to alternate or to double each other.

#### 5. Other orchestral interventions

The remaining orchestral interventions were all adapted from keyboard sonatas by Carlos Seixas (1704-1742), chosen for their textures and other salient features, and taking as their source the modern edition prepared by Santiago Kastner (1992). The piece for playing out-of-tune (i.e. in a generally unrefined manner) was adapted from the minuet of sonata n.º 43, which in its texture implies the inclusion of two horns in the orchestration. The *intermezzo* between scenes takes the minuet (though with the tempo-marking *presto*) from sonata n.º 66, whose three-part texture was easily transcribed for two violins and *basso continuo*.

A number of sonatas open with a motif that includes an octave leap down, reminiscent, in a sense, of the braying of a donkey. Taking advantage of this phenomenon, the first movement of sonata n.º 77 was adapted for when the official fetches the donkey. On the octave leaps, the unison violins were reinforced by the oboes and horns, and the tonality was transposed

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<sup>8</sup> Lisboa, Biblioteca Nacional, MM 4794.

down a semitone, bringing it closer to the keys of the aria preceding and the *intermezzo* following (figure 5.3).

3. Sonata do burro

(Carlos Seixas)

**Figure 5.3:** Carlos Seixas, opening of sonata no. 77, adapted as the “sonata do burro” (notice the octave leaps down reinforced by the oboes and horns).

## CONCLUSION

What emerges from the process described above is a series of features that may be said to characterise a “principled edition” — a way of going about a creative process that is firmly rooted in criteria and procedures. By taking an extreme case — one in which the starting point was no music at all — what emerged in the case of *O grande Governador* serves to illustrate, in more general terms, a set of potential solutions when the possibility of reconstruction breaks down, as it does, consistently, in the eighteenth-century Portuguese musical theatre repertoire. We may summarise what characterises the “principled edition” in the following terms:

Establish criteria for reconstruction

1. The source(s) for the text and music
2. How the text and music are to interact
3. The limits to be imposed
4. Period practices to be invoked — available resources and the implications

### Register

1. What has been used and where it is from
2. What has been modified
3. How have the modifications been made and why?

### Admit

1. What has been added/altered
2. What has been created from scratch

The creative process and the product, in this instance, proved not merely to respond to the perceived need, but served as a source of inspiration for the whole School of Performing Arts of the Federal University of Goiás, as staff and students of the various departments involved themselves enthusiastically in the production. They adapted the text for a modern Brazilian audience, they conceived and created props for the set, they made puppets for the characters, which actors manipulated, and singers and instrumentalists prepared their parts.

But not all ran smoothly from the musical angle. It turned out that there were no oboe students, so the oboe parts had to be played by clarinets and transposed parts had to be produced. There was only one horn student, so the second horn had to be played on the trombone. Between the dress rehearsal and the performance, the horn player had a motorbike accident and had to be replaced by a trumpet. Thus, the timbres of the wind parts ended up rather differently from what had been conceived. Purists would certainly object, but those involved acted in much the same way as I believe would have happened in an eighteenth-century theatre. Using the resources available, they made the show go on. In the event, such was its success, both as a project and as a performance, that the Federal University of Goiás produced a whole set of related publications, issued the following year: a volume of essays describing the process of putting the production together, a volume with the full score, vocal score and instrumental parts, an album of photographs of the preparations and performance, and two CD-ROMs—a video of the show itself and a documentary about its making (Souza and Bueno 2015). The availability of the score and parts made possible a further, highly successful production at Ouro Preto and Belo Horizonte in 2019.

In an ideal world, a great many more musical sources of eighteenth-century Portuguese theatre music would have survived, critical editions would be possible, and reconstruction would be minimal. But reality is otherwise. We are, thus, left with a choice: we can lament the reality and regard this, effectively, as a lost repertoire; or we can propose an alternative approach to the little we do have and return that repertoire to life.



**Figures 5.4 (left) & 5.5 (right):** Photographs taken during the 2014 Pirenópolis performance of António José da Silva, *A vida do grande D. Quixote de la Mancha e do gordo Sancho Pança*, respectively Scene 1 (courtroom) and Scene 2 (banquet).

Photography team: José Alencar de Melo (Zekethy), Nicolás Andrés Gualtieri, Rhanna Asevedo (reproduced by permission).

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