

## Old Soldiers Never Die, They Just Tell Their Stories: Lobo Antunes and Some Others

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My point is that there are meaningful links of various kinds between António Lobo Antunes's earliest fiction and the fiction of the English Malcolm Lowry, the Polish Joseph Conrad, and the American Ernest Hemingway.<sup>1</sup> Speaking, in 1996, of his initial reaction to Hemingway's work, Lobo Antunes recalled: "Ele passou pela minha adolescência sem eu me aperceber de que era tão importante e de que podia aprender muito com ele. Há determinadas soluções técnicas que o tipo encontra com facilidade e que são aparentemente fáceis" (*Visão*). ["He slipped by me during my adolescence without my having perceived that he was as important as he was or that I might learn much from him. There are certain technical solutions that the fellow brings off with facility and that only appear to be easy."]

Some of Hemingway's "technical solutions" are mirrored, I would venture, in Lobo Antunes's novel *Os cus de Judas*, published in 1979, and re-titled *South of Nowhere* in its American version. In certain discernible ways this novel parallels Hemingway's 1950 novel *Across the River and Into the Trees*, a work that remains overshadowed by Hemingway's great successes in the novel, *The Sun Also Rises* and *A Farewell to Arms*.<sup>2</sup>

The last novel that Hemingway completed and saw through to publication, *Across the River and Into the Trees* appeared a decade after the appearance of *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, his controversial 1940 novel about the Spanish Civil War. The controversies over Hemingway's big novel were two-fold,

political and esthetic. On the one hand, readers were unclear as to whether or not the author was sympathetic to the Republican cause; while on the other, critics questioned the efficiency of Hemingway's literary realism—did he get the Spanish character right or did his imagination fail him when he tried to invent incidents and episodes that would realize the Spanish character? The plausibility of the episode in which the peasants organize a ritual killing of the village “fascists,” for instance, was vociferously questioned.<sup>3</sup>

Between the time of Hemingway's experiences in Spain and his publication of *Across the River and Into the Trees*, the horrific events of the Second World War occurred. Whether or not Hemingway intended it to be, this novel was hailed as his definitive World War II novel, to be compared (usually, as it turned out, unfavorably) with his own 1929 World War I novel, *A Farewell to Arms*. Expectations were high when Hemingway's publisher announced the novel. By the time it appeared in bookstores in quantities, however, reviewers and critics had weighed in, almost unanimously attacking the book and, in some cases, discrediting its author in the bargain. Only one reviewer of prominence, the novelist John O'Hara, holding forth on the front-page of the *New York Times Book Review*, stood up for Hemingway:

The most important author living today, the outstanding author since the death of Shakespeare, has brought out a new novel. The title of that novel is *Across the River and Into the Trees*. The author, of course, is Ernest Hemingway, the most important, and outstanding author out of the millions of writers who have lived since 1616. (1)

There were responses to O'Hara's grand and grandiose claim for Hemingway's importance—one of which was the wry, but appropriate question: “And what makes O'Hara think Shakespeare is that good?” The *New Yorker* joined in the attack with E. B. White's delicious parody of *Across the River and Into the Trees* entitled “Across the Street and Into the Grill” (28).

Since Hemingway's novel is not well known, it might be useful to summarize the story it tells. Centered on a professional soldier, an officer in the United States Army, its setting is Venice and the action takes place over a three-day weekend. During the war just ended (World War II), Colonel Richard Cantwell had achieved the rank of Brigadier General, but was broken in rank as punishment for breaking some military rule or regulation. The narrative begins in the present, flashes back to the events of the past few days,

and then returns to the present for its conclusion. Embedded in the middle of this flashback is the long monologue the Colonel addresses to Renata, his nineteen-year-old lover. His account is one of mistakes and tragedies in war as seen and practiced by a commander of troops in the European campaign. The young woman, a willing and eager listener, only occasionally interrupts the Colonel's story with a question or brief remark.

The Colonel, who has already suffered several heart attacks, is certain that these three days will be his final ones with Renata, the last days of his life, and so, like an ancient mariner, he wishes to tell all, to get it all down. His tale is peppered with names of places, battles, generals and politicians, as he tries to set the record straight. This part of the book is virtually a long dramatic speech, in the course of which the Colonel mentions not only Shakespeare, but the Brownings—Elizabeth and Robert—grand English presences in Venice, the latter being, as everyone knows, the prime practitioner of the dramatic monologue in Victorian literature. It is worth noting, incidentally, that future editions of Hemingway's novel will benefit from footnotes useful to general readers of a generation and more removed from the lived experiences of World War II. The names of generals such as Omar Bradley, Leclerc, and Mark Clark, the British Field Marshal Bernard Law Montgomery and the Germans Erwin Rommel and Ernst Udet already call for identification. So, too, would George S. Patton (the Colonel dismissively calls him Georgie) and Dwight D. Eisenhower require glossing, were it not for the durable life on the television screen of the movie starring George C. Scott in the case of the former, and the fact that the latter served two terms as President of the United States. If Hemingway's contemporary reviewers disliked not only his hero but his hero's account of how things were done at the highest levels of the Allied command during World War II, the present-day reader coming to *Across the River and Into the Trees* for the first time, more often than not, will find that his cultural literacy is not up to the task of making sense of all the references.<sup>4</sup>

The relevance of this factor to my subject seems to me certain, if not immediately apparent. Novelists rely on their readers' cultural literacy to differing degrees, but in the two novels under discussion—*Across the River and Into the Trees* and *Os cus de Judas*—one's cultural literacy is put to the test. Hemingway's litany of battles and generals and politicians can be set up against Lobo Antunes's plethora of names of (usually) Americans and the products they create or use. Lobo Antunes's physician-soldier suffuses his war

stories with references (and I exclude Portuguese names): to actors—Mae West, Douglas Fairbanks, Edward G. Robinson, David Niven, Fritz Lang, Charlie Chaplin, Buster Keaton, James Dean (he's called a "blond archangel"), Lauren Bacall, Humphrey Bogart; to movie directors—Antonioni, Nicholas Ray, Buñuel; to musicians—Thelonius Monk, John Coltrane, Ben Webster, Charley Parker, Dizzy Gillespie, Bob Dylan, Paul Simon (whose song "Fifty Ways to Leave Your Lover" is quoted at length)<sup>5</sup>; to historical figures—Che Guevara, Fidel Castro, Robespierre, Camilo Torreses, the Allendes of Chile, Rosa Luxemburg, Al Capone; to artists—Giacometti, Magritte, Salvador Dali (his clocks), Matisse, El Greco (his blind men), Vermeer; to a Russian cosmonaut, Yury Gagarin; to magazines and movies—*Reader's Digest*, *Better Homes and Gardens*, *Gone with the Wind*; to fictional characters—Huckleberry Finn's father, Peter Pan, taxi drivers in Ohnet, Nicholas Ray's American actresses; to poets and writers—F. Scott Fitzgerald, Samuel Beckett (and his *Godot*), Lewis Carroll, J. D. Salinger, John Dos Passos.

This list could be used, in a sense, to test the reaches and limits of contemporary cultural literacy. But, taken in the aggregate these names have a clear function in Lobo Antunes's novel. Whereas the Modernists employed Classical and Romantic references—Joyce's Ulysses and Daedalus, T. S. Eliot's Tiresias, Pessoa's Faust—to offer a contrast between grander worlds of myth and their own impoverished times—something apart from the psychology or personality of their poetical or fictional characters—Lobo Antunes employs his largely contemporary references to establish and define the interior world of his story's antihero. Cultural and historical, these references serve to characterize an individual who is *au courant* with his times, aware of the icons and personalities of his media-swamped age, but whose very being, if you will, is in thrall to the memory that wracks life—his war-experience in Angola. Indeed, the dramatized story of *Os cus de Judas* can be seen as its narrator's attempt to talk his way into some sort of rapprochement with his spiritually and psychologically crippled self. As such, it is a veritable register, far-reaching if virtually indiscriminate, of popular culture—American popular culture, mainly—that has inundated his and our time. Lobo Antunes's device is one that he shares with the literary figure his narrator most explicitly identifies with—Malcolm Lowry, the author of the 1947 novel *Under the Volcano*.

Lobo Antunes writes:

O meu verdadeiro nome é Malcolm Lowry, sou escuro como o túmulo onde jaz o meu amigo, escrevo romances imortais, recomendo *Le gusta este jardín que es suyo? evite que sus hijos lo destruyan*, e o meu cadaver será lançado na última página, como o de um cão, para o fundo de um barranco. (54)<sup>6</sup>

[My real name is Malcolm Lowry, I am as dark as the grave wherein my friend is laid, I write immortal novels, I admonish, *¿Le gusta este jardín que es suyo? ¡Evite que sus hijos lo destruyan!* and my corpse will be thrown onto the last page, like a dog to the bottom of a ravine. (33-34)]

Lowry's antihero, the Consul, is shot and his body thrown into a ravine. The last sentence of the narrative is "Somebody threw a dead dog after him down the ravine" (388), followed by a blank page, which, in turn, is succeeded by a page with, at its center in large capital letters, the legend that has been mentioned several times previously. This sign behind the fence threatens expulsion to anyone who would do this garden damage.

¿GUSTA ESTE JARDÍN

QUE ES SUYO?

¡EVITE QUE SUS HIJOS LO DESTRUYAN! (398)

[DO YOU LIKE THIS GARDEN

THAT IS YOURS?

SEE TO IT THAT YOUR CHILDREN DO NOT DESTROY IT].

Lobo Antunes's homage to Malcolm Lowry links his antiheroic narrator to the garrulous, doomed, drunken Consul of the legendary drinking novelist's *Under the Volcano*, possibly the most thoroughly alcohol-soaked novel in the English language, perhaps in any of the world's literatures.<sup>7</sup> Moreover, as the English poet-critic Stephen Spender claimed, "*Under the Volcano* is, it is true, perhaps the best account of a 'drunk' in fiction" (viii). Whether or not Lobo Antunes's novel holds its own as an alcohol-soaked narrative I shall leave to others. Suffice it to say that its pages are drenched with Cuba libres, beer, vodka, Drambuie ("o oitavo") and scotch—Logan's and JB ("sem agua").<sup>8</sup>

This fact—the talk of drink—brings us back to Hemingway, someone Lobo Antunes's narrator evokes with admiration:

Um duplo sem gelo? Tem razão, talvez desse modo logre a lucidez sem ilusões dos

bêbados de Hemingway que passaram, gole a gole, para o outro lado da angústia, alcançando uma espécie de serenidade polar, vizinha da morte, é certo, mas que a ausência de esperança e do frenesim ansioso que ela inevitavelmente traz consigo torna quase apaziguadora e feliz, e consiga enfrentar a ferocidade da manhã dentro de um frasco de *Logans* que a proteja, tal como os cadáveres dos bichos se conservam em líquidos especiais nas prateleiras dos museus. Talvez desse modo se consigam sorrir risos de Sócrates depois da cicuta, levantar-se do colchão, ir à janela, e defronte da cidade matinal, nítida, atarefada, ruidosa, não se sentir perseguidos pelos impiedosos fantasmas da própria solidão, de que os rostos sardônicos e tristes, tão semelhantes ao nosso, se desenham no vidro para melhor nos troçarem; há derrotas, percebe, que a gente sempre pode transformar, pelo menos, em vitoriosas calamidades. (159)

[A double Scotch? You're right, maybe this way you'll achieve the lucidity of Hemingway's drunkards who voyaged to the other side of anguish, achieving a kind of serenity resembling death, yes, but a serenity that is almost comforting. For you might be capable of facing the ferocity of the morning only inside a protective bottle of Logan's Scotch as you become something very much like a laboratory specimen preserved in formaldehyde. Maybe this way we will be able to smile as did Socrates after he drank the hemlock, get out of bed, go to the window and confront the city, bright, busy, noisy, and not feel persecuted by the impious ghosts of our own solitude, whose sardonic and sad faces mock us in the bathroom mirror. There are defeats, you see, that we can always turn into triumphant calamities. (105)]

There are still other instances of homage to Hemingway in Lobo Antunes's novel, if we have eyes to see them, in the recurrent imagery and symbolism of rain. "Janeiro acabava," writes Lobo Antunes, "chovia, e íamos morrer, íamos morrer e chovia, chovia, sentado na cabina da camioneta, ao lado do condutor, de boné nos olhos, o vibrar de um cigarro infinito na mão, iniciei a dolorosa aprendizagem da agonia" (43). ["It was the end of January, it was raining and we were going to die, we were going to die and it was raining, raining; sitting in the cab of the truck, next to the driver, with the visor of my cap over my eyes and a cigarette in my hand, I began my apprenticeship to death" (26)]. Although the rain-war equation has its early precedents in war fiction and continues to be common enough, it is possible that Lobo Antunes's soldier (or at least his creator) has been reading his Hemingway—*A Farewell to Arms*, to be exact—in which Hemingway's ex-soldier, having just said good-

bye to his dead lover, walks out into the rain. Indeed, “rain” is the last word of Frederic Henry’s narration, the last word of Hemingway’s novel—rain that has fallen at every bad turn or destructive event in the novel.

Structurally, however, *Os cus de Judas* resembles the large portion of *Across the River and Into the Trees* that Hemingway devotes to his unheroic soldier’s narrative of war as told to a listener, who only occasionally intervenes, and then briefly. Lobo Antunes’s novel is one long narrative told by his unheroic soldier, as in Hemingway, to a woman.<sup>9</sup> If Colonel Richard Cantwell tells much of his story to a young lover in a restaurant, Lobo Antunes’s soldier-physician, dropping down several notches on the social scale, begins to tell his protracted story to a woman, a stranger picked up in a bar. In both instances, long narration—Hemingway’s and Lobo Antunes’s—taxes our willing suspension of disbelief to the point of annoyance. Hemingway’s colonel keeps offering to break off his tale, while Lobo Antunes’s ex-soldier, obviously unwilling to break off his story, uses, cannily, an almost rampant allusiveness to all sorts of beings, things, and arbitrarily brought-in events. Colonel Cantwell informs an Italian citizen who spent the war in wartime Italy; while the Portuguese soldier needs to entertain, as well as inform, this Portuguese woman standing before him, one who, presumably, spent the war years far from the African campaigns.

[L]he estou contando uma espécie de romance de mau gosto impossível de acreditar, uma história inventada com que a comovo a fim de conseguir mais depressa (um terço de paleio, um terço de álcool, um terço de ternura, sabe como é)? que você veja nascer comigo a manhã na claridade azul pálida que fura as persianas e sobe dos lençóis, revela a curva adormecida de uma nádega, um perfil de braços no colchão, os nossos corpos confundidos num torpor sem mistério. (81)

[I am narrating for you a cheap, implausible novel, a contrived story composed of one third bullshit, one third alcohol and one third tenderness, you know what I mean? to persuade you to watch the sunrise with me in the pale-blue clarity that pierces the blinds and crawls through the sheets, revealing the curve of a thigh, the silhouette of a shoulder on the mattress, our bodies entangled in torpor. (51)]

But there is, unmistakably, a generational gap separating Lobo Antunes from Hemingway. The times have changed and what is now permitted or tolerated in a best-selling writer would have astonished earlier generations of readers. If Hemingway’s explicit language for bodily functions and curses and swearing

were excised from *A Farewell to Arms* (as they were), often to be replaced by even more suggestive dashes, Lobo Antunes, fifty years later, can pretty much use the language he wants to when talking directly about what was pretty much forbidden to him and everyone else before the 25<sup>th</sup> of April Revolution.

Here is how Hemingway handles the scene in *Across the River and Into the Trees* in which his protagonist commemorates his return, in the immediacy of 1946, the first postwar year, to the place of his wounding in World War I:

The river was slow and a muddy blue here, with reeds along the edges, and the Colonel, no one being in sight, squatted low, and looking across the river from the bank where you could never show your head in daylight, relieved himself in the exact place where he had determined, by triangulation, that he had been badly wounded thirty years before.

“A poor effort,” he said aloud to the river and the river bank that were heavy with autumn quiet and wet from the fall rains. “But my own.”

He stood up and looked around. There was no one in sight and he had left the car down the sunken road in front of the last and saddest rebuilt house in Fossalta.

“Now I’ll complete the monument,” he said to no one but the dead, and he took an old Sollingen clasp knife such as German poachers carry, from his pocket. It locked on opening and, twirling it, he dug a neat hole in the moist earth. He cleaned the knife on his right combat boot and then inserted a brown ten thousand lira note in the hole and tamped it down and put the grass that he had cored out, over it.

“That is twenty years at 500 lira a year for the Medaglia d’Argento al Valore Militare. The V.C. carries ten guineas, I believe. The D.S.C. is non-productive. The Silver Star is free. I’ll keep the change,” he said.

It’s fine now, he thought. It has merde, money, blood; look how that grass grows; and the iron’s in the earth along with Gino’s leg, both of Randolpho’s legs, and my right kneecap. It’s a wonderful monument. It has everything. Fertility, money, blood and iron. Sounds like a nation. Where fertility, money, blood and iron is, there is the fatherland. We need coal though. We ought to get some coal. (18-19)

Here, carefully elaborated for effect, is the naturalist’s way of establishing his connection to the natural world. Here, too, in a sense, is a pastoral scene, one radically updated to characterize the unforgiving years of deprivation in a post-war Europe, one in which are melded the simulacra of the horrors of war



(amputations and burials) with the shibboleths of Bismarck's plan or map for the making of a pan-German nation.

Thirty years later, Lobo Antunes sets his cloacal scene indoors:

Sofia, instalo-me na sanita como uma galinha a ajeitar-se no seu choco, abanando as nádegas murchas das penas na auréola de plástico, solto um ovo de ouro que deixa na loiça um rastro ocre de merda, puxo o autoclismo, cacarejo contentamentos de poedeira, e é como se essa melancólica proeza me justificasse a existência, como se sentar-me aqui, noite após noite, diante do espelho, a observar no vidro os vincos amarelos das olheiras e as rugas que em torno da boca se multiplicam numa fina teia misteriosa, idêntica à que cobre de leve os quadros de Leonardo, me assegurasse que ao fim de tantos anos de deixar-te permaneço vivo, durando, Sofia [...]. Que imbecile aquela guerra, Sofia, digo-te eu aqui acorocado na sanita diante do espelho que implacavelmente me envelhece, sob esta luz de aquário e estes azulejos vidrados, estes metais, estes frascos, estas louças sem arestas [...]. (180-81, 190)

[Sofia, I am sitting on the toilet like a hen incubating an egg, no golden egg here, just a trace of shit in the bowl; I flush the toilet, cackle with contentment, and it is as if this feat has justified my existence, it is as if sitting here, night after night, looking in the mirror at the yellow creases of the circles under my eyes and the wrinkles around my mouth, a thin mysterious skein identical to the lines that lightly cover Leonardo's paintings, provides me with assurance that even after all these years since I abandoned you I am still alive, Sofia, so to speak [...]. What an idiotic war, Sofia, I say to you sitting on the toilet in front of the mirror that ages me implacably, under this aquarium light and these glassy tiles, these pipes, these bottles, these porcelain fixtures [...]. (119-20, 125)]

Compared with this soldier's "feat"—deflationary, narrow, confessional and narcissistic—Hemingway's officer's defecation on the banks of a foreign river is grandly epic, a well-executed ritual with its attendant mock-solemnity.<sup>10</sup>

*Os cus de Judas* also recalls Joseph Conrad—as does Hemingway's novel in its own way—especially Conrad's central-Africa story "Heart of Darkness." Lobo Antunes's narrator is a more spasmodic, Dionysian teller of tales than is Conrad's Marlow, whose African journey has a mysterious purpose, a vague focus, and its end point in the legendary Kurtz. Indeed, in Lobo Antunes's book, it is almost as if we have the kind of story of terror and horror that

Marlowe could have sprung on Kurtz's fiancée back in Belgium rather than the great lie his silence tells. Lobo Antunes's book tries to spell out the images of Kurtz's words—"the horror, the horror"—in terms of Portugal's colonial war in Angola. The barely controlled, shotgun narrative that Lobo Antunes's physician-writer fires at us has the power of true Dionysian blackness. The skulls on posts surrounding the site of Kurtz's last stand have become in Lobo Antunes's narrative a cascade of pulsating blood, blown and severed body parts, photo-ops—when, for instance, soldiers photograph themselves standing with the severed thighs of an "enemy." What Hemingway's Colonel refers to, almost neutrally, as the losses of war, Lobo Antunes's narrator describes in the lurid colors of a banal story gone screamingly mad.

Yet it has been this physician-writer's illusion that, once away from Angola, he will be able to shed the war and everything that goes with it.

[P]osso regressar a Lisboa sem alarmar ninguém, sem pegar os meus mortos a ninguém, a lembrança dos meus camaradas mortos a ninguém, voltar para Lisboa, entrar nos restaurantes, nos bares, nos cinemas, nos hotéis, nos supermercados, nos hospitais, e toda a gente verificar que trago a merda limpa no cu limpo, porque se não podem abrir os ossos do crânio e ver o furriel a raspar as botas com um pedaço de pau e a repetir Caralho caralho caralho caralho caralho, acocorado nos degraus da administração. (235)

[I can return to Lisbon without alarming anyone, without imposing the memory of my dead companions on anyone, I can return to Lisbon, go into the restaurants, the bars, the movies, the hotels, the supermarkets, the hospitals, and everyone will be assuming that I have clean shit in my clean ass because they can't crack open my skull and see the sergeant scraping his boots with a piece of wood, muttering Shit shit shit shit shit shit on the steps of the administration building. (149)]<sup>11</sup>

This is what, in our time, Conrad's Kurtz's operatic cry—"the horror, the horror"—has come to. It is as if, to his Hemingway and Conrad, Lobo Antunes has added something as well of the French physician-writer Céline, still another damaged veteran of war.

Not even the casual reader will ever mistake Lobo Antunes's style, his endless cascading of metaphors and similes for Hemingway's or Conrad's far more Apollonian, often classically minimalist, writing. (Lowry's style is a different matter, as we have seen.) Yet it should not be forgotten that for all his

backward looks, Lobo Antunes remains, in the end, a writer of his own time. If his works parody those of earlier masters of fiction, they do so—and this is significant—not to ridicule or diminish them in any way.

By way of conclusion, let me again quote Lobo Antunes on Hemingway: “O Hemingway é um escritor que muito respeito. Ele tinha grandes problemas de afirmação pessoal, a todos os níveis e não só a nível literário” (*Jornal de Letras*) [“Hemingway is a writer I very much respect. He had great problems with self-assurance, at all levels, not just at the literary level”]. We have only to substitute the name “Lobo Antunes” for that of “Hemingway,” and that revised sentence will tell us something we need to know if we are to appreciate the well-springs of Lobo Antunes’s demon-driven fiction.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> In this paper I have chosen not to take up the matter of William Faulkner’s overall influence on António Lobo Antunes’s fiction, most strikingly present, I would suggest, on the narrative strategies of *Os cus de Judas* and *Fado alexandrino*. For a spirited reading of Lobo Antunes’s *Auto dos danados* in the context of Faulkner’s *As I Lay Dying*, see Margarida Vale de Gato, “The Influencing Machine: Faulkner Revised by António Lobo Antunes.”

<sup>2</sup> References to these works are indicated throughout this paper by page numbers within parentheses.

<sup>3</sup> See, for example, Arturo Barea’s case against Hemingway’s depiction of Spain and its people in “Not Spain but Hemingway.”

<sup>4</sup> In *The Dictionary of Cultural Literacy*, E. D. Hirsch, Jr., Joseph F. Kett, and James Trefil offer the following useful definition of “cultural literacy”: “Cultural literacy, unlike expert knowledge, is meant to be shared by everyone. It is that shifting body of information that our culture has found useful, and therefore worth preserving. Only a small fraction of what we read and hear gains a secure place on the memory shelves of the culturally literate, but the importance of this information is beyond question. This shared information is the foundation of our public discourse. It allows us to comprehend our daily newspapers and news reports, to understand our peers and leaders, and even to share our jokes. Cultural literacy is the context of what we say and read...” (ix).

<sup>5</sup> Hemingway’s Colonel Cantwell offers a fifty-first way to leave a lover: he suffers a fatal heart attack.

<sup>6</sup> The italicized sentences come from Malcolm Lowry’s *Under the Volcano*.

<sup>7</sup> Nearly two decades after *Under the Volcano* was published, Stephen Spender found it necessary to defend Lowry: “A book in which for three quarters of the time the hero is drunk may seem too special, too much a case history. It is not, they may protest, about normal life, and therefore it does not concern them [...]. But it is only at the very end that the Consul seems his own special case. The fragmentariness of this last section rather serves to underline the control and lucidity of all that happens until the Consul’s death. For this is a most lucid novel” (viii).

<sup>8</sup> I am reminded of Hemingway’s description in *Across the River and Into the Trees* of the Montgomery dry martini—15 parts gin to one part vermouth—so named because the British commander Field Marshall Montgomery would not consider moving his troops to attack unless

his forces outnumbered his enemy's by a ratio of 15 to 1.

<sup>9</sup> *Memória de elefante*, it will be recalled, is the title that Lobo Antunes first intended for *Os cus de Judas* but assigned to a different work published in the same year. (See: [http://www.citi.pt/cultura/literatura/romance/lobo\\_antunes/ala63.html](http://www.citi.pt/cultura/literatura/romance/lobo_antunes/ala63.html)).

<sup>10</sup> I do not wish to belabor the suggestion that the literary source for Lobo Antunes's scene is Hemingway's scene in *Across the River and Into the Trees*. Perhaps it constitutes a coincidence of the imaginary, a reflection of literary temperament. What is more interesting is that these similar scenes are nevertheless in no way interchangeable. Neither writer could have agreed to that. As T. S. Eliot wrote about one's earlier writing, "That was a way of saying it then." It is interesting, too, that in this scene Lobo Antunes reaches out to Leonardo's paintings to help characterize his narrator—even as, in Hemingway's novel, a central symbol of the Colonel's values is a portrait of the young Renata herself.

<sup>11</sup> In my opinion, a more forceful equivalent for "caralho" in this immediate context would be "fuck"—not "shit"—though I can see how the translator's choice reinforces the novel's often "excremental" atmosphere.

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