

REMIXING MACHADO DE ASSIS: THREE CONTEMPORARY BRAZILIAN PARODY MASHUP NOVELS

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ABSTRACT: This study highlights the relationship between the digital-age practices of sampling and remix and the literary and theoretical notions of parodic adaptation in three contemporary Brazilian mashup novels: *O alienista, caçador de mutantes*, by Natália Klein; *Dom Casmurro e os discos voadores*, by Lúcio Manfredi; and *Memórias desmortas de Brás Cubas*, by Pedro Vieira. Following the example established by Seth Grahame-Smith's *Pride and Prejudice and Zombies* (2009), each author adapts and recasts Machado de Assis's original novels within a context of science fiction, fantasy, or horror. In addition to the numerous intertextual and intermedial references to popular culture, each mashup explores contemporary cultural issues, relevant to young adult readers in Brazil.

Keywords: Remixagem. Mashup. Adaptação. Paródia. Machado de Assis.

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REMIXAGEM DE MACHADO DE ASSIS: ADAPTAÇÃO PARÓDICA EM TRÊS ROMANCES *MASHUP* DA CONTEMPORANEIDADE BRASILEIRA

RESUMO: Este estudo ressalta o relacionamento entre as práticas digitais de *sampling* e remixagem e os conceitos literários e teóricos de adaptação paródica em três romances *mashup* da contemporaneidade brasileira: *O alienista, caçador de mutantes*, de Natália Klein; *Dom Casmurro e os discos voadores*, de Lúcio Manfredi; e *Memórias desmortas de Brás Cubas*, de Pedro Vieira. Seguindo o padrão estabelecido por *Orgulho e preconceito e zumbis* (2009), de Seth Grahame-Smith, cada autor adapta e reformula os romances originais de Machado de Assis, incorporando elementos de ficção científica, fantasia ou horror. Além de fazer inumeráveis referências intertextuais e intermediáticas à cultura popular, cada *mashup* examina assuntos da cultura contemporânea, relevantes aos leitores infanto-juvenis no Brasil.

Palavras-chave: Remix. Mashup. Adaptation. Parody. Machado de Assis.

*For storytelling is always the art of
repeating stories, and this art is lost when
the stories are no longer retained.*

Walter Benjamin

*The study of adaptation needs to be joined
with the study of recycling, remaking, and
every other form of retelling in the age of
mechanical reproduction and electronic
communication. By this means, adaptation
will become part of a general theory of
repetition, and adaptation study will move
from the margins to the center of
contemporary media studies.*

James Naremore

In recent publishing trends, Seth Grahame-Smith's New York Times bestseller, *Pride and Prejudice and Zombies* (2009), has established the model for parody mashup novels, that is, a literary classic in the public domain that has been modified by including elements of science fiction, fantasy, or horror.¹ Part of the charm of *Pride and Prejudice and Zombies* is the jarring juxtaposition of content and form—gory zombie attacks written in the style of Jane Austen's social satire. The unanticipated success of the novel not only provoked similar novels in English² but also in other languages. The Portuguese translation, *Orgulho e preconceito e zumbis*, appeared in Brazil in January 2010 and later that year, five mashup novels based on classic works of Brazilian literature were published. Three of these rewrote the novels of nineteenth-century writer Joaquim Maria Machado de Assis: *O alienista caçador de mutantes* by Natalia Klein; *Dom Casmurro e os discos voadores* by Lúcio Manfredi; and *Memórias desmortas de Brás*

¹ Due to the unexpected anticipation of the novel, Quirk Books increased the initial print run from 12,000 to 60,000 copies (GOODWIN, 2009). By mid-April 2009 it had reached Amazon's top ten list (COHEN, 2009) as well as the third spot on the New York Times Paperback Trade Fiction Bestseller List (NEW YORK TIMES, 2009). Panorama Media's 2013 press release of the film adaptation claims the book has sold over 1.5 million copies (print and electronic) and has been translated into over two dozen languages (GOLDBERG, 2013). According to *Box Office Mojo*, the 2016 comedy horror film, however, did not experience the same level of success, only taking in \$16.4 million, against a budget of \$28 million (2017).

² In response to Grahame-Smith's New York Times bestseller, we have seen a proliferation of mashup novels in the ensuing years. Five mashup novels appeared in 2009: *Sense and Sensibility and Sea Monsters*, *The Undead World of Oz*, *Anna Karnivora*, *Mansfield Park and Mummies*, and *Dracula vs. Zombula*. A number were published in 2010, including: *The War of the Worlds Plus Blood, Guts, and Zombies*, *Jane Slayre*, *Little Vampire Women*, *Little Women and Werewolves*, *Android Karenina*, *Emma and the Vampires*, *Wuthering Bites*, *Mansfield Park and Mummies*, and *Romeo and Juliet and Vampires*. As the fad seems to be fading, fewer novels have been released in recent years: *The Meowmorphosis*, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn and Zombie Jim*, *Grave Expectations*, two different books that share the title *Alice in Zombieland*, as well as *Through the Zombie Glass*.

I have not included in this list *mashup-like* novels that place a literary or historical figure within the contexts of science fiction, fantasy, and horror. For example, *Pride and Prejudice and Zombies* inspired a prequel, *Dawn of the Dreadfuls*, as well as a sequel, *Dreadfully Ever After*. While they use Jane Austen's characters, they are not rewritings or mashups of a specific title. If we were to expand the list to include these kinds of novels, we would include nine titles written under the series, "The Further Adventures of Sherlock Holmes," as well as no less than six zombie-themed novels about the sinking of the Titanic, all of which appeared in 2012, the year of its centenary. I have also excluded titles only available as ebooks; otherwise, the list would increase threefold. This, however, should not be misconstrued as a criticism of self-published books. I echo China Miéville's observation at the 2012 Edinburgh International Book Festival: "We piss and moan about the terrible quality of self-published books, as if slews of god-awful crap weren't professionally, expensively published every year" (GUARDIAN, 2012).

Cubas by Pedro Vieira.³ Each mashup maintains the basic plot structures and characters of the original works while incorporating elements of science fiction, fantasy, and horror. In restructuring, rewriting, and reformulating the work of Machado de Assis, the adaptors employ similar techniques normally associated with sampling and remixing audiovisual mediums. The authors scatter numerous pop cultural references throughout their adaptations of Machado's well-known novels while modifying the plotlines to reflect contemporary societal issues. Consequently, the new text positions readers between the historical and the modern, requiring them to actively engage in discovering and interpreting the numerous allusions and intertextual references external to the text. These three Brazilian mashup novels employ digital-age practices of sampling and remix within the mode of parodic adaptation in order to update and recast the underlying themes of Machado de Assis's original novels within a context more easily relatable to young adult readers in Brazil.

THEORIZING THE PARODY MASHUP NOVEL

While there may be nothing new under the sun, to quote *Ecclesiastes*, writers continually recombine old ideas and present them in new and innovative ways. Such is the case with the parody mashup novel. The name itself evokes a blending of genres, styles, and artistic modes. Parody has existed in written form since at least the mock-heroic imitations of Greek epic poetry, as Aristotle discusses in *Poetics*. The study of parody in literature has enjoyed a long and robust critical history, but attempts to establish a totalizing or essentializing definition tend to highlight certain aspects while excluding others. Bearing this in mind, Simon Dentith studies parody broadly as an aesthetic mode, defining it as “any cultural practice which makes a relatively polemical allusive imitation of another cultural production or practice” (DENTITH, 2000, p. 37). This “deliberately widely drawn definition” allows for distinct and even competing definitions of parody, while opening the discussion to broader socio-historical contexts and applications (DENTITH, 2000, p. 37). Theorizing mashups, even within a discussion of the mode of parody, presents challenges not overtly inherent to other forms of textual analysis. Brett Westbrook's recent comments about the dearth of theoretical approaches developed specifically for film adaptation also apply to the similar state of literary adaptation theory. Westbrook observes:

³ The other two mashups are *Senhora, a bruxa* by Angélica Lopes (based on *A senhora* by José de Alencar) and *A escrava Isaura e o vampiro* by Jovane Nunes (based on *A escrava Isaura* by Bernardo Guimarães).

[T]he fundamental notion of an adaptation presupposes not just one, but two identifiable texts: a precursor text and then the [adaptation] based on that precursor text. (...) The highly problematized notion of text in general, whether novel or film or some other “text,” inhibits theorizing about a field the basis for which is composed of (at least) two texts as they stand in relationship to each other. (WESTBROOK, 2010, p. 26)

Comparison understandably lies at the root of all adaptation studies. The complication resides in the fact that everything is textual and contingent upon relationships to other texts to signify meaning, as Terry Eagleton notes: “‘Textual’ means that nothing stands gloriously alone” (2003). To wit, interpreting an adaptation generally calls for an analysis of the precursor text. Given that a mashup fundamentally relies upon a preceding text, one could disregard it as parasitical or derivative. Likewise, one could argue that film adaptations far exceed the number of mashup novels, thus not necessitating its own niche in the critical topography. Theorizing mashups as a legitimate form of adaptation, however, allows us to approach the precursor texts from different angles, asking a series of questions unique to the mashup form, thus opening up new critical vistas and perhaps eventually developing a mashup hermeneutic.

In contrast to the long history of the parodic tradition, the term “mashup,” sometimes stylized as “mash-up,” is relatively new, sharing a conceptual and creative genealogy with remixing and sampling music, thus requiring a basic knowledge of how these terms fit into the larger scope of new media. While I recognize the inherent drawbacks of using “new media” as a catchall term, I subscribe to the principles outlined by Lev Manovich, who argues that, at its core, new media is “the translation of all existing media into numerical data accessible through computers” (MANOVICH, 2001, p. 20).⁴ With the advent of digitization—that is, converting sounds, texts, and images (both still and moving) into digital bytes of information—content creators can now manipulate and transmogrify various forms of digital media (graphics, moving images, sounds, shapes, spaces, or texts) in ways unimaginable only decades ago. The proliferation of and accessibility to affordable hardware and software provides ordinary

⁴ Manovich outlines the following characteristics of new media: numerical representation, a new media object can be described mathematically and is subject to “algorithmic manipulation” (2001, p. 27); modularity, “media elements (...) are represented as collections of discrete samples” (2001, p. 30); automation, “The numerical coding of media (...) and the modular structure of a media object...allow for the automation of many operations involved in media creation, manipulation, and access” (2001, p. 32); variability, a new media object is not “fixed” and “can exist in different, potentially, infinite versions” (2001, p. 36); transcoding, the ability to translate a new media object from one format to another (2001, p. 47).

individuals with the ability to reshape works on an unprecedented scale. While print media is clearly not a form of new media, the “conceptual strategies” authors employ in mashup novels evoke techniques and principles generally associated with audiovisual forms (NAVAS, 2012, p. 6). Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin further develop this distinction: “What is new about new media comes from the particular ways in which they refashion older media and the ways in which older media refashion themselves to answer the challenges of new media” (BOLTER; GRUSIN, 2000, p. 15). As we shall see, mashup novels—a form of old media, rooted in the analogue realm—are clearly informed by practices of new media predominantly found within the digital realm.

A closer examination of the concepts of remixing and sampling, frequently associated with music, will elucidate the formal and theoretical aspects of literary mashups. The history of musical remix can be traced back to the rise of dub in Jamaica in the 1960s and 1970s and to disco in New York in the 1970s, although similar tendencies, as David J. Gunkel points out, can be found in “the audio collage efforts of Pierre Schaeffer’s *musique concrète*, John Oswald’s *Plunderphonics*, *Negativland*, and the Evolution Control Committee” (2016, p. xvii). Nevertheless, the predominant usage of the term “remix” refers to hip-hop DJs, artists, and producers of the 1980s and 1990s in their approach to musical composition, production, and performance. Analyzing remix from a theoretical and aesthetic perspective presents considerable challenges in regards to terminology. Consequently, a discussion of literary mashups necessitates a brief overview of definitions. According to Gunkel, “Remix’ generally refers to the practice of recombining preexisting media content—popular songs, films, television programs, texts, web data—to fabricate a new work” (GUNKEL, 2016, p. xvii). Within music production, “sampling” occurs when “a recognizable portion of an existing recording, such as several measures of music or a characteristic vocal sound, is used in the creation of a new song” (GUNKEL, 2016, p. 8). A “mashup,” according to Kembrew McLeod and Peter DiCola, is the practice of “laying a vocal melody line from one song on top of an instrumental melody from another song” (MCLEOD; DICOLA, 2011, p. 173). The audiovisual mashup—a subgenre of the remix—appropriates, manipulates, and recirculates two or more works of art for purposes usually not intended or even imagined by the original creators. Primarily conceived and created within the digital realm, mashups often lay bare the artificiality of the final recombination by calling attention to the strange, odd, and potentially humorous nature of the juxtaposed sources. Gunkel, citing the blog *IP in the Digital Age*, attempts to differentiate the similarities and differences between these three terms:

Remixes are reinterpretations of a single song, often quite significant departures from the original work, but nonetheless grounded in that one work. Mash-ups, in contrast, are

combinations of multiple songs, and sampling involves the use of small slices of one work in another mostly new work (...). (GUNKEL, 2016, p. 17)

Gunkel further explains: “Understood in this way, remix and mashup are two different methods for recombining existing source material in a new composition. The former works with one source; the latter draws from and combines a number of different sources” (2016, p. 17). The fact that these terms all refer to both products and practices may cause confusion. McGranahan seeks to clarify:

Remix is an umbrella term that encompasses all types of music that alter original recordings to create new versions, or remixes, of those recordings. Sampling is one of the many techniques used in remixing, and mashups are one of many genres of remixes. (MCGRANAHAN, 2010)

Finally, remix and mashup are “always unoriginal” parasitical forms of discourse that privilege fragmentation over the whole (NAVAS, 2012, p. 4; 12). Although remixes and mashups are ultimately derivative, they take on an identity of their own. For this reason, I adhere to Linda Hutcheon’s approach to studying adaptations as adaptations. That is, I do not examine these mashup novels as “autonomous works” but as “deliberate, announced, and extended revisitations” of Machado de Assis’s work (2006, p. xvi). While printed books are not forms of new media, the approaches the adaptors employ in their retellings resemble techniques of artistic creation within the digital realm. These three Brazilian mashups, in particular, exhibit characteristics of remix and sampling to a greater degree than the English-language mashups of recent years.

In repurposing the works of Machado de Assis, Klein, Manfredi, and Vieira expand on Grahame-Smith’s approach and push the concept of the mashup further, a task facilitated and accentuated by the fact that Machado anticipated many of the narrative techniques most often associated with modern and even postmodern conceptualizations of metafiction and intertextuality. In Machado’s *Memórias póstumas de Brás Cubas* and *Dom Casmurro*, for example, the autodiegetic narrators frequently comment on the act of writing as a process of interpretation. In many ways, Machado’s self-referential and self-reflective narrative style anticipates Robert Alter’s definition of metafiction: “A self-conscious novel, briefly, is a novel that systematically flaunts its own condition of artifice and that by so doing probes into the problematic relationship between real-seeming artifice and reality” (ALTER, 1975, p. x). Furthermore, Machado scatters numerous references to literary works—both classical and contemporary to his time—throughout much of his later work. In broad terms, intertextuality refers to the act of ascribing meaning to a given text by referencing another external text. Author and reader

accordingly construct meaning through the dialogue of these intertexts.⁵ As Verônica Daniel Kobs points out, Machado's novels lend themselves to this kind of author-reader relationship, especially in parodic adaptations:

Esse processo assinala, simultaneamente, a universalidade e o anacronismo da obra de Machado de Assis em relação à sociedade contemporânea. Essa duplicidade se reflete [nos mashups] de modo a propor um jogo instigante ao leitor, obrigado a transitar com razoável desenvoltura entre as características machadianas que se mantêm, no novo texto, e aquelas que são modificadas. (KOBBS, 2014, p. 12).

Much like the use of analogy, allusion, and intertextuality in literature, remixes and mashups call attention to the original source being sampled, thus requiring the reader recognize the parts in order to appreciate the recombined whole. Apropos this point, Mail Marques de Azevedo makes the following reflection regarding *Dom Casmurro e os discos voadores*, which applies to all three mashups studied in this analysis:

Utilizando-se do meio específico da mídia impressa, a palavra, [os mashups] estabelece[m] relação intermediária com filmes, séries televisivas, animação computadorizada, quadrinhos, e outras mídias. Ideias prévias e o senso comum permitem ao leitor reconhecer no texto os modelos midiáticos citados, além de outros. O reconhecimento pelo leitor, no entanto, depende dos contextos histórico e discursivo vigentes à época. O leitor que não esteja familiarizado com a literatura de Machado de Assis, ou com os produtos das mídias mais recentes, não perceberá a estrutura intermediária do texto, nem terá condições de avaliar-lhe o resultado. (AZEVEDO, 2013, p. 197)

As Azevedo adroitly observes, without a prior knowledge of the allusions to various forms of media, readers will not understand the intermedial structures that authors construct in their mashups.

The concept of intermediality, in literary terms—as summarized by Rajewsky—refers to the myriad points of creation along the spectrum of process and product. On one hand, intermediality is “the way in which a media product comes into being, (...) with the transformation of a given media product (...) or its substratum into another

⁵ The term “intertextuality,” like many theoretical concepts with broad applicability, “is one of the most commonly used and misused terms in contemporary critical vocabulary” (ALLEN, 2000, p. 2). Much of our understanding of intertextuality depends upon the philosophical context, be it Kristeva's reading of Saussure and Bakhtin, the structuralist approach of Genette and Riffaterre, or the poststructuralist shift of Barthes. Furthermore, the term elicits differing meanings in postcolonial and gender studies vis-à-vis a postmodern application of the term. For a succinct overview of the critical evolution of the term see Allen's *Intertextuality*.

medium” (RAJEWSKY, 2005, p. 51). It is also the “process of combining at least two conventionally distinct media or medial forms or articulation” (2005, p. 52). Rajewsky concludes: “Intermedial references are thus to be understood as meaning-constitutional strategies that contribute to the media product’s overall signification: the media product uses its own media-specific means, either to refer to a specific, individual work produced in another medium (...) or to refer to another medium *qua* system” (RAJEWSKY, 2005, p. 52).

The theorization of intermediality fits well within our study since mashups employ techniques generally associated with musical recordings, but resulting in a textual product. It behooves us to note the conceptual and even operational similarities between remix and mashup with the artistic techniques of collage, pastiche, and bricolage. Synonymous in many respects, at the heart of these approaches resides the assemblage or collocation of different forms or mediums to produce a new whole, which then elicits new significances. Examining each taxonomic nuance or dissecting every instance of self-reflexivity in the mashups would prove pedantic and monotonous; therefore, we will simply place these terms under the umbrella of intertextuality or intermediality, as each case dictates.

Merely for organizational purposes, I have placed my analyses along a spectrum of fidelity to the original text, but the discussion of adaptation will move beyond the confines of how close or how far the mashup novels are to the originals. Grahame-Smith’s *Pride and Prejudice and Zombies* includes roughly 85% of Jane Austen’s novel, and with only 15% of new content the overall plot remains largely unaffected (KELLOGG, 2011). The three Brazilian mashups, however, retain much less of Machado’s original language. Of the three mashups, Klein’s *O alienista caçador de mutantes* preserves much of the structure of Machado’s story: “Preservei muito do original, acho que uns 60, 70%. Respeitei totalmente o fluxo da trama, o que muda são os detalhes” (DUME, 2010a). While she retains some of the antiquated speech of the original, she has updated most of the language and context to a contemporary setting. Manfredi claims to preserve roughly 30% of the original in *Dom Casmurro e os discos voadores*. (DUME, 2010b). Over one third of the mashup introduces new content that bears little resemblance to Machado, deviating substantially from the original plot. In terms of fidelity, Vieira’s mashup strays the farthest from the precursor text, casting *Memórias desmortas de Brás Cubas* as a sequel to Machado’s novel.⁶ Due to the fact that these novels retain little of Machado’s original writing, Antonio Luiz M. C. Costa hesitates to even refer to them as mashups:

⁶ In the interest of clarity and brevity I will sometimes truncate the titles of the mashup novels to *Caçador de mutantes*, *Discos voadores*, and *Memórias desmortas* in order to differentiate them for the titles of the originals.

Pois, nenhuma dessas obras é um mash-up: são ficções alternativas. Valem-se de personagens e situações dos clássicos brasileiros, mas não do texto literal, citações à parte. É mais trabalhoso, mas abre mais espaço para a criatividade e evita a impressão de se querer profanar ou ridicularizar os clássicos por pura birra de adolescente irritado com a lição de casa. Soa mais como uma homenagem bem-humorada. (COSTA, 2010)

Nevertheless, as we will discuss in the concluding remarks, these novels are parody mashup novels in that they follow the pattern established by *Pride and Prejudice* and *Zombies* in taking a classic novel, infusing it with elements of science fiction, horror, or fantasy, and marketing it to young adult readers.

O ALIENISTA, CAÇADOR DE MUTANTES

In Machado's 1882 novella, *O alienista*, Simão Bacamarte, one of the greatest medical minds in eighteenth-century Brazil, uses the people of Itaguaí as subjects in his experiments on madness and insanity. He eventually commits 80% of the population to Casa Verde, the psychiatric hospital built for his studies. In an ironic twist, due to this disproportion, he begins to discharge those who are "mad" and admit those who are "sane." Once he has cured them of their "sanity" he remains as the sole patient in the hospital, where he dies alone. In this story, Machado expresses his skepticism of organized religion, government, the institution of marriage, as well as an absolute adherence to scientific thought. Likewise, he criticizes the fervor of positivism that swept through Brazil at the end of the nineteenth century.

Klein remixes Machado's *O alienista* along with "reportagens sobre o E.T. de Varginha e personagens do X-Men" (DUME, 2010a). After a spaceship crashes near Itaguaí, villagers begin to develop mutations and superpowers. Bacamarte soon arrives to town and becomes the town's *alienista*, a portmanteau of *alienígena* and *especialista*. The mashup follows the basic plot. In this version, however, Bacamarte seeks to find a cure for the mutations caused by an alien virus released in the crash. Initially, he examines those who exhibit physical mutations: people made of rubber, elastic, or steel and even a giant blob. Then, he treats those with superhuman powers: levitation, super strength, heat vision, telekinesis, teleportation, regeneration, and even a man with the Midas touch. Despite his concerted efforts to collect all the mutants in the village, sometimes Bacamarte admits relatively normal people to Casa Verde, such as Gil Bernardes: "Era um rapaz de trinta anos, amável, de boa conversa, educado, mas tão educado, que não cumprimentava alguém sem levar o seu boné ao chão" (KLEIN, 2010,

p. 60). Bacamarte hospitalizes him for “o excesso de gentilezas,” due to “uma alteração genética” (KLEIN, 2010, p. 61). Another example is Coelho: “embora sua fisionomia causasse certo estranhamento, pela extrema brancura de sua pele e de seus cabelos, e também pelos olhos avermelhados, Coelho não era mutante, ele era apenas albino” (KLEIN, 2010, p. 61–62). When the infected begin to outnumber the healthy, Bacamarte eventually releases the mutants from Casa Verde and hospitalizes the healthy, in an effort to determine why they do not display the effects of the virus. He eventually cures them of their mediocrity and ordinariness by uncovering their latent mutations. Bacamarte, now the only non-mutant, commits himself to Casa Verde. In this process of elimination, Simão Bacamarte discovers that he is the root of all the mutations. It is revealed that he was the alien pilot of the ship that had crashed near the town thirteen years before. In spite of the protests of his friends and family, he rebuilds his spaceship and leaves Itaguaí.

Klein includes numerous references to contemporary pop culture, the majority of which refer either to the Internet (Twitter, Facebook, Wikipedia, Google), television, movies, or comic books (*E.T.*, *Alf*, *the X-Men*, *The Sound of Music*, *The Exorcist*, *Superman*, *Star Wars*, *300*, *James Bond*). While many of these forms of media are named outright, other allusions require readers to puzzle them out based on textual clues, such as this reference to the Incredible Hulk: “A cara era um pimentão, mas um pimentão verde (...). Todo ele tremia, a boca espumava, os músculos se inchavam (...). Isso se repete toda vez que ele fica nervoso. Então ele se transforma em um homem feio, cabeludo, com as mangas da camisa rasgadas” (KLEIN, 2010, p. 43).

Likewise, there are a number of allusions specific to Brazilian culture. One of the mutants is none other than Xuxa, the pop singer and children’s show host. To spread the news throughout the town, Machado’s town crier uses a *matraca*, or wooden noise maker; Klein replaces this with *um carro de som*. In the original, the townsfolk who rebel against the local government are called the *Canjicas*, named after the traditional sweet porridge made of corn, milk, sugar, clove, cinnamon, and sometimes peanuts. The mashup updates their name to the *Temakis*, a cone-shaped sushi roll, thus highlighting the influence of Japanese culture in modern-day Brazil. Due to the quantity and frequency of intermedial and cultural references—almost to the point of excess—readers of Klein’s mashup necessitate a familiarity not only with Machado’s original text but with a variety of texts across media platforms.

Amongst the infusion of humorous pop cultural references, however, Klein comments on the presence of a perceived mutation, which applies to contemporary society. In her version, Bacamarte is homosexual. In the original story, Machado’s Bacamarte marries a homely woman for purely practical reasons. He wishes to produce offspring but without the nuisance of sexual attraction, which distracts him from his

work. In the mashup, Klein uses Bacamarte's homosexuality as a contemporary solution to his lack of physical attraction to his wife. Furthermore, Klein presents him as a grossly exaggerated stereotype of Brazilian gay culture. He wears silk robes, comments on the virtues of Lycra, and gestures with effeminate affectations. Varied and sundry phallic objects persistently capture his attention: Cuban cigars, suggestively shaped vegetables, and even the long nose of one of the mutants. He finds physical intimacy with his wife D. Evarista abhorrent, and constantly propositions his best friend Crispim Soares, the local pharmacist. To help mitigate these strong sexual desires, Bacamarte constructs "uma cadeira erótica vibratória," upon which he sits while reflecting upon his scientific inquiries (KLEIN, 2010, p. 31). Klein's hyperbolic representation of Bacamarte's homosexuality raises timely questions about heteronormativity. On the surface, the mashup presents Bacamarte as the only true mutant in Itaguaí, not because he is an alien from outer space, but because his sexual orientation relegates him to the periphery. Klein's treatment of his orientation, although comically hyperbolic, suggests that his "mutation" is perfectly acceptable since everybody is an aberration of nature, thus negating the socially constructed concepts of natural, normal, and acceptable. In fact, the overall message of the mashup novel embraces heterogeneity and celebrates diversity. Effectively, if everybody is a mutant, then nobody is a mutant. While Machado criticized positivistic thought in *O alienista*, Klein questions contemporary Brazilian society's definitions of heteronormativity in *Caçador de mutantes*.

DOM CASMURRO E OS DISCOS VOADORES

While much of the primary narrative thrust of *Dom Casmurro* revolves around the question of Capitu's infidelity, in Lúcio Manfredi's *Dom Casmurro e os discos voadores*, the self-reflective autodiegetic narrator questions the nature of his wife's identity and her motivations in drawing close to the Santiago family. In a series of digressive flashbacks, the narrator attempts to piece together the mysterious and strange experiences of his childhood, adolescence, and adulthood. Over the course of his version, Manfredi projects key plot points and major scenes from Machado's original novel upon a backdrop of interspecies relationships and intergalactic turmoil. Toward the end of the novel, it is revealed that Capitu, her father, and Escobar are human-alien hybrids of the *aquepalos*, an amphibian race of aliens that has maintained colonies on Earth for centuries. The amphibians are currently caught up in an intergalactic cold war with the *anunaques*, an antagonistic reptilian race. The *aquepalos* and *anunaques* maintain a tenuous peace imposed upon them by the *Legislatura*, a post-singularity

civilization that polices the universe. Despite a general cease-fire, both groups employ subterfuge, sabotage, and a network of spies to manipulate the human race for their own gain, although the amphibians claim to have altruistic motives.

Manfredi's mashup largely follows the plot of Machado's novel up to Escobar's accidental drowning, at which point the remixed version deviates significantly from the original. Dona Glória considers Bentinho's birth a miracle, having experienced a visitation of three personages, dressed in white, who ministered to her during a troubled pregnancy. We later learn they were not, in fact, angels, but *aquepalos* who performed an extraterrestrial medical procedure on Bentinho, which manipulated his DNA to combine specifically with that of Capitu. As an expression of gratitude to God for what she supposed was the miraculous birth of her son, Dona Glória vows to send him to the seminary to become a priest. This plan is threatened, however, when Bentinho falls in love with his childhood friend. José Dias, the Santiago's *agregado*, turns out to be an android: his voice possesses a certain metallic quality, he walks stiffly like a clockwork soldier, and efficiently carries out his duties like a well-oiled clock (MANFREDI, 2010, p. 8, 61). With the help of Padre Cabral—who is also in the service of the *anunaques*—the android seeks to undermine the union of Bentinho and Capitu at every turn while staying in the good graces of Dona Glória. As planned, Bentinho enters the seminary, where the reptiles brainwash humans for their nefarious purposes. Escobar, an amphibian agent, is sent to extract Bentinho from the seminary. In the end, Bento leaves the seminary and eventually marries Capitu.

Hints of Capitu's true nature surface over the course of the novel. As teenagers, after being drawn in by her "olhos de ressaca," Bentinho notices something odd about her shoulders while combing and braiding her hair: "Havia alguma coisa nos ombros de Capitu, mais exatamente nas omoplatas. Roçando a ponta dos dedos, eu sentia sob o tecido uma depressão, como um buraco, de onde escapava um sopro semelhante ao que nos sai pelas narinas" (MANFREDI, 2010, p. 74). Years later, during their wedding night, he sees her bare shoulders for the first time: "Em ambos os ombros, havia uma cicatriz. Mais que uma cicatriz, uma fenda vermelha, que se assemelhava a um corte profundo. Não, melhor ainda: eram como as guelras nas laterais de um peixe" (MANFREDI, 2010, p. 182). Capitu explains they are "marcas de nascença," pointing out that everybody in her father's family has them (MANFREDI, 2010, p. 182). Their son, Ezequiel, inherits these same birthmarks. Several years later, while their families are at the beach, Bento sees that Escobar possesses similar marks. At this point, Bento is certain of Capitu's infidelity and assumes Escobar is Ezequiel's father. Unlike the original, Escobar does not die in an accidental drowning; rather, he and José Dias perish during a skirmish between two *aquepalo* and *anunaque* spaceships. Although Capitu's innocence is

confirmed, Bento's feelings of betrayal prevent him from forgiving her. While Capitu admits that their relationship was arranged from the beginning, she truly loves him:

É verdade que eu fui projetada desde o início para que você me amasse. Cada detalhe, da minha aparência à minha personalidade, foi programado para tocar e responder aos seus desejos (...). Mas acha que o mesmo não se passou comigo? Que os meus circuitos emocionais não foram impressos com a sua imagem, para que eu me sentisse atraída por você, e só por você, desde a primeira vez que nos vimos? (MANFREDI, 2010, p. 244–245)

Capitu and Ezequiel go into exile, returning to the *aquepalo* home planet near Sirius, found in the Canis Major constellation. Much like the original novel, Bento Santiago turns into Dom Casmurro and lives the remaining years of his life as a bitter and angry misanthrope. Having built a replica of his childhood home, Dom Casmurro writes his story with the expressed purpose of tying together “as duas pontas da vida, e restaurar na velhice a adolescência” (MACHADO DE ASSIS, 2015, p. 907).

In *Discos voadores*, we learn the sad truth of Manfredi's Dom Casmurro. In the final pages, Manfredi adds another plot twist and reveals that his narrator lives in the year 2012, suffers from paranoid schizophrenia, and is interned in a mental hospital under the care of Dr. Simão Bacamarte. Although these facts are foreshadowed in two earlier chapters, the epilogue includes the following revelation:

Dez anos atrás, Felipe Cadique havia sido um crítico de certo destaque nos círculos acadêmicos e um escritor diletante de ficção científica nas horas vagas. Sua especialidade profissional tinha sido a obra de Machado de Assis, terreno mais do que desgastado, mas para o qual ele trouxera um ângulo de abordagem novo, introduzindo a perspectiva da nueroteologia. Como autor amador, chegara a escrever três romances, dois dos quais publicados, e um punhado de contos espalhados por meia dúzia de antologias. (MANFREDI, 2010, p. 257)

(...)

Era esse, em essência, o delírio de Felipe Cadique. Aos 53 anos, descobrira que sua mulher, quinze anos mais jovem, o traía com seu melhor amigo. A semelhança com o enredo de *Dom Casmurro* não poderia escapar a um especialista em Machado de Assis como ele. A cabeça de Cadique entrara em parafuso. Identificara-se com Bentinho, imaginava viver dentro do mundo do livro. Mas na versão remixada por sua esquizofrenia, o mundo do livro incluía alienígenas, e Capitu convertera-se em uma figura só parcialmente humana. (MANFREDI, 2010, p. 259)

Not only does Felipe Cadique’s mental state explain the structure of the mashup—remixing elements of science fiction in the works of Machado de Assis—it also presents a somewhat self-reflective view of Manfredi’s role as a burgeoning author. (By 2010, he had also published two novels and several short stories.) Moreover, it further reinforces one of the central themes of the novel—the challenges of distinguishing reality from fantasy. On one hand, the trope of “it was all in his head” comes across as a heavy-handed usage of *deus ex machina* in order to tie up some loose ends. On the other hand, this could be Manfredi’s modest attempt to include the metanarrative underpinnings of the original in his mashup. While early Brazilian critics viewed *Dom Casmurro* as another realist novel about adultery, since the mid-twentieth century, critics such as Helen Caldwell, Paul Dixon, Marta de Senna, Marta Peixoto, João Adolfo Hansen, and others, deem Capitu’s guilt or innocence of little consequence. Current scholarship tends to examine the narrator’s unreliability, the digressive qualities of metafiction, and the overall metanarrative structure. Throughout the original novel, the narrator frequently and consistently undermines his own arguments and observations about his relationship with Capitu with numerous digressions, internal contradictions, and lapses in memory. According to Earl Fitz, the narrator’s “apparent bias in regard to his telling of the story gradually emerges as the novel’s great clandestine theme” (FITZ, 1989, p. 53). Ultimately, the story of possible adultery simply provides the framework in which Machado creates a novel that demands a new kind of reader, one that actively participates as a co-creator in ascribing meaning to the text. While Manfredi’s narrator occasionally directs a comment to the reader, *Discos voadores* excises much of the underlying metanarrative structure, thus reducing and simplifying the complex relationship between author, narrator, and reader. Although Manfredi’s novel lacks much of the metanarrative structure that provides richness and depth to *Dom Casmurro*, the mashup emulates Machado’s extensive use of allusion and intertextuality.

Manfredi interweaves the overall plot of Machado’s original novel with scenes of flying saucers, alien technology, mysterious deaths by radiation poisoning, clandestine meetings between aliens and humans, and sinister secret societies. He even imbeds a few science fiction allusions in his text, such as *The X-Files*, “A verdade está la fora” (MANFREDI, 2010, p. 128) and *Star Trek*, “Vida longa e próspera” (MANFREDI, 2010, p. 175). In comparison to the other mashups examined in this study, however, Manfredi does not include nearly as many references to popular culture. What Manfredi remixes into the original are more literary in nature. He follows Machado’s penchant for allusion and intertextuality by namechecking authors, including Argentine writers Jorge Luis Borges and Julio Cortázar, American novelist Thomas Pynchon, Portuguese Modernist

poet Fernando Pessoa and even Machado de Assis himself.⁷ He refers to Pierre Alexis Ponson du Terrail's *feuilleton* character Rocambole and Christopher Marlowe's Mephistopheles in *Dr. Faustus*. Manfredi also incorporates well-known characters and plot points from Machado's work, including *O alienista*, *As memórias póstumas of Brás Cubas*, and *Quincas Borba*. Manfredi even recasts the character of Manduca, one of Bentinho's friends in the original novel, as a reflection of the biographical Machado de Assis. In the mashup novel, Manduca dies mysteriously of what is later revealed to be radiation poisoning but he leaves a well-timed letter that provides necessary exposition to the plot. The dying boy signs his name "Joaquim M. Machado," a truncated form of Machado's full name. Moreover, Manfredi casts other authors as characters in his novel. In law school, for example, Bento's law professors include Pierre Menárd, from Borges's story "Pierre Menárd, autor del *Quixote*," as well as Dr. Herbert Stencil, a character in Thomas Pynchon's novel *V*. Bento and Capitu are married by Padre Cortázar. Borges himself makes a cameo appearance as a fellow student in the seminary:

"Tinha, por exemplo, o Jorge Luiz Borges, que não chegou a se fazer padre. Fez-se, isto sim, escritor. Depois de largar o seminário, mudou-se para a Argentina, onde conquistou alguma fama nos círculos literários, antes que uma cegueira progressiva viesse atrapalhar seu diálogo com as musas" (MANFREDI, 2010, p. 107).

Much like Machado infuses *Dom Casmurro* with intertextual allusions, Manfredi invites his reader to play a game of "guess that reference." While most are more direct, several require a certain foreknowledge of the reader, such as this indirect mention of Borges: "Um escritor mais talentoso do que eu poderia até dizer que apaixonar-se é criar uma religião pessoal em honra a um deus falível. Não sei por que, quando me ocorreu essa frase, imaginei que o escritor em questão teria porque teria de ser argentino. E cego" (MANFREDI, 2010, p. 15). Without a certain level of familiarity with these authors, their lives, and their works, the reader would miss out on the literary richness that Manfredi brings to his mashup.

While much of the intertextuality remains unexplained, Manfredi includes an author's note at the end of the book in which he clarifies certain intertextual clues that even the most astute reader might miss. He justifies his anachronistic use of several modern technological terms in regards to alien technologies. He explains: "É óbvio que

⁷ In a 2012 article in *Revista Forum*, Idelbar Avelar claims that Cortázar is overrated, particularly in Brazil, and does not belong in the same category of Borges. Humorously, he opines that this particular pairing is like comparing *Ê O Tchan* with *Pixinguinha*. He continues: "Coisa semelhante acontece no Brasil com a literatura argentina: os nomes "Cortázar" e "Borges" são mencionados na mesma frase e, às vezes, até analisados comparativamente em teses, como se pertencessem à mesma galáxia do universo literário argentino." For good or for ill—despite Avelar's assessment — Cortázar and Borges are frequently paired and compared when studying the Argentine short story.

alienígenas reais utilizariam palavras diferentes, mas espero que também seja óbvio que essa linguagem seria tão incompreensível para o leitor quanto o nosso jargão seria tão incompreensível para Bentinho. Em nome da clareza, preferi o anacronismo” (MANFREDI, 2010, p. 261). He includes brief explanations of John von Neumann’s concept of a technological singularity as well as the origin of the term *Legislatura*, which derives from the work of neurobiologist Bernard Baars. The two alien races—the *aquepalos* and the *anunaques*—are rooted in modern day conspiracy theories, which one can trace back to the mythologies of Mali and Babylon, respectively. As if readers needed a reminder of the fictitious quality of *Discos voadores*, Manfredi points out that he does not adhere to these mythical beliefs: “Desnecessário dizer que ambas as hipóteses são empregadas aqui com propósitos puramente ficcionais, que não implicam em qualquer crença por parte do autor em humanoides reptilianos ou anfíbios de Sirius. São, quando muito, metáforas” (MANFREDI, 2010, p. 262). Even in the incredulity of the overall story, Manfredi displays significant care in remixing the original with plausible scenarios linked to our world. Marques de Azevedo comments on his blending of old and new media:

As referências de Lúcio Manfredi ao processo de composição de seu híbrido (...) ilustram o mecanismo de remediação que embasa tanto a remodelação da mídia antiga—o texto realista de Machado de Assis—para responder aos desafios da mídia tecnológica, como a criação de um novo gênero literário, ainda não definido, que engloba elementos de mídias eletrônicas diversas. (AZEVEDO, 2010, p. 195–197)

In fact, of all the authors, Manfredi displays the greatest awareness of how his novel fits within the various genres and subgenres of speculative fiction. In a promotional interview with *Goma de Mascar*, Manfredi explains why he opted not to write *Discos voadores* as a steampunk novel:

Eu gosto de *steampunk* mas, de novo, queria fugir do óbvio. Quando se fala em uma história de ficção científica passada no século XIX, o *steampunk* é a primeira ideia que vem à cabeça, e isso às vezes não deixa a gente perceber que existem outros caminhos igualmente interessantes e ricos, tanto pros autores quanto pros leitores. A única tecnologia que aparece no livro é alienígena e, mesmo assim, não é o foco principal. Como no original do Machado, o foco continua sendo a relação entre o Bentinho e a Capitu. (LIMA, 2010a)

While a steampunk approach to *Dom Camsurro* is certainly viable, Manfredi sees *Discos voadores* as an example of slipstream fiction:

[A]pesar de já ter escrito histórias de terror, me identifico mais com a ficção científica, e mais ainda com a literatura *slipstream*, que procura encarar a realidade cotidiana pelo prisma do fantástico, transitando entre os gêneros e cruzando fronteiras. Uma versão de *Dom Casmurro* em chave de ficção científica é quase uma materialização do ideal *slipstream*, então a minha cabeça gravitou naturalmente para essa direção. (LIMA, 2010a)

Again, we see that the theme of the perception of reality, especially when crossing between the boundaries of reality and unreality, lies at the heart of Manfredi's mashup, which the author explains in an interview with *Livraria da Folha*:

Dom Casmurro desenvolve alguns temas que me são caros, como até que ponto podemos conhecer outra pessoa, até que ponto podemos conhecer de fato a nós mesmos e até que ponto podemos saber o que é ou não real. Todos esses temas continuam presentes na minha versão, com a diferença de que agora eles são retrabalhados dentro da perspectiva da ficção científica. (DUME, 2010b)

Due to Lúcio Manfredi's familiarity with the central themes of the original novel, as well as a conscientious regard to genre—particularly within the realm of science fiction—*Dom Casmurro e os discos voadores* presents a highly readable alternate version of the classic story of Capitu and Bento. Moreover, due to the fact that Manfredi does not overly rely on an inundation of pop cultural references to entertain his readers, *Discos voadores* may prove to endure longer than the other mashups analyzed in this essay.

MEMÓRIAS DESMORTAS DE BRÁS CUBAS

Published in 1881, *Memórias póstumas de Brás Cubas* marked a new phase in Machado's work. The novel is a radical departure from the straightforward narrative style of nineteenth-century realist and naturalist novels, like Gustave Flaubert or Émile Zola, and instead follows in the footsteps of Lawrence Sterne's *Tristram Shandy* and Xavier de Maistre's *Voyage autour de ma chambre*. Machado presents a highly imaginative and playfully self-aware narrative that portrays bourgeois society in Rio de Janeiro with irony, indifference, and pessimism. Narrated in the first person, Brás Cubas decides to write his autobiography after he has passed on, thus his posthumous memoirs. In the first lines of the novel, Brás Cubas emphasizes his postmortem state in a play on words by switching the noun and modifying adjective. He is not an *autor*

defunto, an author who has passed on, but a *defunto autor*, a dead man who now narrates his life's story from the grave. And as a *defunto autor*, no longer constrained by social norms and decorum, Brás Cubas decries the hypocrisy found in a gamut of institutions: marriage, church and state, and, to a lesser extent, slavery. While the novel cannot be characterized outright as antimonarchical, anticlerical, and certainly not abolitionist, the narrator interweaves these social critiques while relating the numerous personal failures, both amorous and professional, of his unremarkable and mediocre existence. What sets *Memórias póstumas* apart from other novels of the period, and even from Machado's own work up to that point, is the erratic, elliptical, and self-reflexive narrative style. From the perspective of literary history, Machado de Assis is one of those writers whose style defies categorization and periodization. In many ways, his work anticipates characteristics normally associated with modernism and even postmodernism. Consequently, Machado's open-ended, intertextual, metanarrative style seems well suited for a twenty-first-century mashup.

In *Memórias desmortas de Brás Cubas*, Vieira mimics Machado's truncated, non-linear style as well as his caustically humorous and disparagingly self-effacing tone. In the mashup, the autodiegetic narrator, depicted as a zombie who has escaped from the grave, picks up where the original leaves off and presents his story as a sequel. Vieira explains this approach in the prologue: "Brás Cubas narra o que lhe aconteceu como defunto: Brás Cubas escapou de seu caixão, transformado em um morto-vivo, espalhando caos e carnificina pelo Rio Antigo" (VIEIRA, 2010, p. 5). Vieira's portrayal of Brás Cubas as a zombie makes sense especially when one considers the macabre imagery the narrator employs in the dedication to Machado's original: "Ao verme que primeiro roeu as frias carnes do meu cadáver dedico como saudosa lembrança estas memórias póstumas" (MACHADO DE ASSIS, 2015, p. 598). In a series of flashbacks, Brás Cubas recreates his living death from the final scenes of Machado's novel up to his current situation in Rio de Janeiro in the year 2010. Consequently, the numerous references to contemporary pop culture do not seem anachronistic, although the protagonist's vast knowledge of such seems implausible. Throughout the novel, Brás Cubas references numerous intertextual and intermedial sources, juxtaposing high and low cultures: zombie movies (*Night of the Living Dead*, *Dawn of the Dead*, *I Am Legend*—both versions, starring Charlton Heston and Will Smith, respectively); science fiction and action movies (*Blade Runner*, *Star Wars*, *Commando*, and *The Highlander*); British writers (Shakespeare, John Dryden, Alexander Pope, William Wordsworth); works of fiction, nonfiction, and scripture (Stephanie Meyer's *Twilight*, Alexandre Dumas's *Les trois mousquetaires*, Darwin's *Origin of the Species*, and David Hume's *A Treatise of Human Nature*, and even the *Holy Bible*); popular music (Queen, Celine Dion, Clara Nunes, Noel Rosa, *música funk*, and Adriana Calcanhotto), video games (*Pitfall!*, *Alone*

in the Dark, and *Resident Evil*); and the Internet (*Google*, *Wikipedia*, and chat rooms). Of all the mashups, Vieira's is perhaps the most replete with intertextual and intermedial references. Just as the *defunto autor* consumes the brains of his victims, Vieira consumes a wide spectrum of classic and popular art forms, remixing and mashing them up in a humorous story of zombie horror.

While *Memórias desmortas* offers numerous scenes of skull-crushing, brain-devouring zombie carnage, Vieira turns the zombie trope into a criticism of academia.⁸ Vieira's Brás Cubas laments the fact that many high school students have been subjected to the twisted and misconstrued opinions of pompous and pedantic professors, as revealed in a rewritten dedication: "A todos os jovens alunos que foram forçados a ler minhas primeiras *Memórias Póstumas*, dedico estas memórias como forma de retribuição" (VIEIRA, 2010, p. 9). Throughout the novel, Brás Cubas comments on how literary critics and professors have "devoured" and misinterpreted his original memoirs over the years. He laments:

Claro, nunca havia de esperar que se tornasse tal best-seller. Nem que seria tão levada a sério nesses meios acadêmicos onde tanto se fala e nada se diz, por gente que mal sabe diferenciar uma metáfora de um zumbi devorador de cérebros. Um defunto autor é um defunto autor, eu pensei que havia explicado de maneira clara o suficiente. Custa muito ler da maneira como está escrito? DEFUNTO AUTOR. Vou ter que fazer um desenho da próxima vez? (VIEIRA, 2010, p. 19–20)

Over the decades, uninformed professors who have consistently misinterpreted the true meaning of *defunto autor* have subsequently forced their misreadings on unsuspecting students: "Quantos jovens alunos de ensino médio aprenderam caldeirões de excrementos inúteis despejados sobre as minhas queridas *Memórias póstumas* sem sequer serem informados que aquelas foram apenas mal traçadas linhas de um morto-vivo atormentado pela falta de miolos?" (VIEIRA, 2010, p. 20). Brás Cubas explains that in his sequel he will no longer cite Virgil and Seneca, rather, *Blade Runner* and *Night of the Living Dead* (VIEIRA, 2010, p. 20). He writes these updated memoirs for the "jovens mancebos" and not for the academics, who he knows will not take them seriously: "[E]ste

⁸In "Brás Cubas, o autor-zumbi de *Memórias desmortas*," Verônica Daniel Kobs states: "Na era do novo gótico, os zumbis são os protagonistas. Nas artes, nos meios de comunicação de massa e até mesmo nas manifestações populares, o horror, o estranho e o desagradável refletem as transformações da sociedade contemporânea" (KOBBS, 2014, p. 10). Kobs situates Vieira's mashup within the larger framework of artistic expressions of the zombie, which provides a wide range of possible readings. Of particular interest is her reading of *Memórias desmortas* as social critique of the tensions between nationalism and globalization (2014, p. 25–28), which is certainly one of the underlying themes of Vieira's text.

texto não é pra você, intelectualoide de plantão, que vai escrever um trabalho pifio para o mestrado e depois uma tese patética de doutorado, e por fim há de compor um deveras xexelento pós-doutorado, vivendo o resto de sua existência infeliz à custa de distorcer minhas *Memórias*” (VIEIRA, 2010, p. 20).

Before providing his readers with an overview of his philosophy, Humanitas, Brás Cubas complains about the “professora de literatura do colégio” who made studying literature a bore: “Aquela tiazinha, contando de forma obsessiva os anos que faltavam pra se aposentar, de cabelo ensebado e profissionalmente frustrada, que, obviamente, detestava literatura (...)” (VIEIRA, 2010, p. 48). But she is not entirely to blame, since she was only repeating “as asneiras escritas em um livro didático qualquer, que por sua vez fora redigido por um pedagogo ignaro” (VIEIRA, 2010, p. 48). In his opinion, both of them deserve “[uma morte] lenta, dolorosa, provavelmente envolvendo roedores famintos” (VIEIRA, 2010, p. 48).

His disdain for academics is palpable. He compares academic criticism to a postmortem examination: “Teóricos, o que fazem? Te *dissecam*. Eles querem que você morra, vão abrir seu peito com um bisturi e colocar seus órgãos, um por um, naquelas bandejinhas de metal e etiquetar cada um e ficar tomando notas sobre a cor, a consistência e o cheiro. Fígado. Rim. Pulmão. Metalinguagem fisiológica” (VIEIRA, 2010, p. 57). Instead of academics dissecting his writing, Brás Cubas would rather have fanboys who participate in cosplay: “*Fanboys* de verdade não te julgam. (...) *Fanboys* brigam entre si para disputar quem sabe mais sobre você. Teóricos brigam pra ver quem consegue uma bolsa polpuda no exterior às suas custas” (VIEIRA, 2010, p. 57). He continues:

O teórico te fatia, te desmembra, te espalha entre outros tantos nomes de escritores e intelectuais, reduz você à mínima partícula da sua essência e engendra as mais mirabolantes conclusões a partir daí. Ou o contrário: ele inventa as conclusões antes e depois te mutila para que os pedacinhos se encaixam na ficção que criou. Uma frase mal invertida, uma metáfora fora do lugar, significantes e significados fragmentados (...)” (VIEIRA, 2010, p. 98).

Professors of literature and academic critics, therefore, exert more violence to the body of the text than Brás Cubas does to the brains he devours. Each image of analytical dismemberment counterbalances the protagonist’s own violent consumption. In spite of these harsh critiques toward academics, Kobs points out that Vieira’s caustic comments mirror Machado’s style: “apesar de ter ocorrido um deslocamento no alvo das críticas, pois essas, antes, não se dirigiam aos professores, a combinação da crítica e da conversa

com o leitor, características essenciais ao romance machadiano, é preservada” (KOBBS, 2014, p. 15).

Ironically, Vieira exposes his own literary erudition by including a number of cameos in his mashup. (At the time of publication, Vieira was pursuing postgraduate studies in English and Portuguese letters at UERJ.) In this intertextual romp, Brás Cubas traipses through Machado’s body of work, devouring the brains of several Machadian characters. Brás Cubas enlists characters from “A cartomante,” “Missa do galo,” “A causa secreta,” “Segunda vida,” *O alienista*, and “Um homem célebre” in his ever-growing army of the undead.⁹ Rubião from *Quincas Borba* even makes a brief appearance as a zombie hunter dead set on taking out Brás Cubas and his zombie horde. Vieira, in this humorous and ironic manipulation of the zombie as an anti-literary critic, reminds the reader that much of Machado’s original work was meant for popular consumption. Both “O alienista” and *Memórias póstumas de Brás Cubas* appeared as *folhetins* before they were published as novels. Likewise, he reminds readers of all ages that they can read and enjoy Machado de Assis outside of the classroom.

CONCLUSION

Our discussion of parody mashup novels has shown how Natália Klein, Lúcio Manfredi, and Pedro Vieira have employed literary techniques of allusion, intertextuality, and intermediality, which parallel the theoretical and operational techniques of remix and sampling, most often associated with music production. Each author has utilized these techniques to various degrees to entertain their readers. Moreover, each text highlights cultural aspects relevant to a young adult readership in Brazil. Natália Klein, in her farcical send-up of *O alienista*, broaches the timely issues of heterogeneity and sexual orientation within a predominately heteronormative society. Lúcio Manfredi, in his retelling of *Dom Casmurro*, evokes universal questions concerning reality and mental health. In his violently hyperbolic recasting of *Memórias póstumas de Brás Cubas*, Pedro Vieira appropriates the zombie trope to criticize academic pedantry. As we have mentioned, mashups are by definition derivative and parasitical forms of artistic expression, and as such, will always point back to their progenitor texts. Consequently, can parody mashup novels equal or supersede the originals, or are they destined to be literary curios? One angle we have not fully analyzed, until now, are the market forces that produced the numerous mashup novels. Some discussion regarding

⁹ See Kobs for a complete list of Machado’s characters who appear in *Memórias desmortas* (2014, p. 13).

the publishers, the authors, and the marketing campaigns may help us gain a greater appreciation for these questions.

Lua de Papel, an offshoot of the Portuguese publishing house LeYa, arrived in Brazil in December 2009. Pedro Almeida, “jornalista e professor de literatura, com curso de Marketing pela Universidade de Berkeley,” was selected as its editor-in-chief (PUBLISH NEWS, 2012). Almeida sought to expand their catalogue since they primarily published “autoajuda, livros práticos e outros títulos de apelo comercial,” as well as “séries de romances femininos (...) e uma linha de livros de negócios” (LIVRARIA DA FOLHA, 2009; PUBLISH NEWS, 2012). Shortly after the success of *Pride and Prejudice and Zombies*, Lua de Papel commissioned the publication of four parody mashup novels. In the end matter of each novel appears the following explanation:

Como seriam alguns de nossos clássicos se tivessem sido escritos hoje? Foi com esta ideia que surgiu a coleção Clássicos Fantásticos. Quatro autores com grande experiência em humor e roteiros para TV se debruçaram sobre algumas de nossas obras mais festejadas e criaram uma versão desses livros, agora com elementos de ficção moderna. Os leitores irão se surpreender ao perceber que, partindo da história original, foi possível incluir elementos fantásticos e criar tramas sem perder o significado dos clássicos.

The purpose in updating these classic works of Brazilian literature is to appeal to a modern audience. Almeida, in an interview with Livraria Cultura, explains this objective. The target audience are “jovens adultos que participam em redes sociais, Twitter, Facebook” (LUA DE PAPEL, 2010a). He observes that the youth of today are obliged to read classics from centuries past, which were written for adults of that era. By updating the language and modifying the plots to fit a contemporary context, young adults can appreciate the originality of these classic novels. In the prologue to *Memórias desmortas*, Vieira stipulates a similar goal in writing his mashup:

Este livro trata, obviamente, de uma paródia da obra machadiana. O propósito é apropriar-se, de maneira bem humorada, de contextos e personagens criados por Machado e compor uma narrativa pop e atual, de modo a atingir o público jovem—que tão frequentemente toma ojeriza por Machado, graças às obrigações impostas pelas aulas de literatura e pré-vestibulares nos ensinos médios Brasil afora. (VIEIRA, 2010, p. 5)

Natália Klein, known for her blog and television program, *Adorável Psicose*, as well as her comedic writing for *Zorra Total*, was well suited to reinterpret the acerbic wit and sarcasm of Machado’s original in a contemporary context. In a promotional interview, Klein explains the challenge in accomplishing this task:

A principal questão, em termos de estilo, foi conciliar o humor refinado de Machado de Assis com as minhas inserções de humor *nonsense*. Porque *O alienista* já é um livro engraçado, só que é uma graça menos óbvia e mais sarcástica. O que fiz foi procurar nas entrelinhas possibilidades de quebra para piadas mais irreverentes. (LIMA, 2010b)

Even though many pop cultural references in *Caçador de mutantes* fall within science fiction and fantasy, as we have seen, Klein states the following: “apesar do que o título sugere, é muito menos uma história de ficção científica e bem mais um livro de humor” (LIMA, 2010b). Presenting a humorous and engaging text takes precedence over demonstrating any knowledge of pop culture.

In 2010, Lúcio Manfredi, who had written for *A casa das sete mulheres*, *Um só coração*, *Como uma onda*, and *Ciranda de pedra*, was also an up-and-coming science fiction author, having published several short stories and two novels (LIMA, 2010a). Manfredi, in contrast to Klein, employs little humor in his mashup and seems more concerned with how his version fits within the subgenres of science fiction, particularly slipstream fiction. Moreover, he hopes his novel highlights the greatness of Machado’s original:

E uma das definições de um clássico é a de que é uma obra que sempre possibilita novas leituras, visões diferentes. *Dom Casmurro e os discos voadores* é isso, uma releitura de um clássico pelo prisma da literatura fantástica. E o fato de que o livro do Machado permite essa releitura só reforça (como se isso fosse necessário) a grandeza do original. (LIMA, 2010a).

Klein and Manfredi were only given two months to produce their mashup (DUME, 2010a). In order to ensure the success of their endeavors, Lua de Papel implemented a robust publicity campaign, with newspaper and online interviews, as well as book launches in September 2010 at Livraria da Travessa in Rio de Janeiro and Livraria Cultura in São Paulo (LUA DE PAPEL, 2010b; 2010c). Apparently Almeida’s experiment succeeded. The initial print run of 32,000 quickly sold out, which was followed up with another 10,000 copies—respectable numbers for national literature (DUME, 2010a). (Currently, they are out of print and only available through the used book market.) Almeida initially planned on publishing more titles, but he left Lua de Papel in 2012 (PUBLISH NEWS, 2012).

Not part of the “Clássicos Fantásticos” series, *Memórias desmortas de Brás Cubas* was published by Tarja Editorial in August 2010. Tarja began in the early 2000s as an independent publisher as part of the “terceira onda da ficção científica nacional” but

decided to close shop in April of 2013 (LEITOR CABULOSO, 2013). In 2010, Richard Diegues, editor of Tarja, apparently had the same idea as Almeida and hoped to emulate in Brazil the success of English-language mashup novels. Pedro Vieira studied graphic design at UFRJ and had already published one novel, *Nerdquest*, in 2008. At the time of writing *Memórias desmortas* he was pursuing a graduate degree in English literature at UERJ, specializing in science fiction and fantasy. Due to the lack of promotional materials, as well as the closing of Tarja, little information is available regarding the print run and sales of this title. Like the other novels, it sold out and is currently out of print.

Perhaps in another decade or two literary critics will possess the proper vantage point to assess the cultural and literary impact of parody mashup novels, although scholars have written on the subject.¹⁰ In Brazil, the quick creation and swift publication of these three mashup novels, following the surprise success of *Pride and Prejudice and Zombies*, suggests that publishers were primarily driven by a desire to capitalize on an international publishing phenomenon. Nevertheless, these talented, young writers produced entertaining and engaging stories. By reading these playful parody mashups, Almeida hopes readers will rediscover the classics: “Então, eu creio que essa coleção vai gerar interesse, inclusive, para que as pessoas possam revisitar os livros publicados anteriormente” (LUA DE PAPEL, 2010a). Likewise, Vieira expresses a similar sentiment: “A paródia é uma ferramenta importante (...) para alimentar o interesse das novas gerações pelas obras canônicas, e nada melhor do que uma boa dose de carnificina zumbi para colocar os clássicos em seu devido lugar!” (VIEIRA, 2010, p. 6). Certainly the mashup novels analyzed in this study will never replace or even approach the literary sophistication of the original texts, but perhaps they have encouraged young adult readers to revisit and rediscover the brilliance of Machado de Assis.

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¹⁰ In addition to the work of Mail Marques de Azevedo and Verônica Daniel Kobs already cited in this article, see Heloísa Helena Dall’Antonia Ferreira’s undergraduate thesis, “*Mashups*, a criação de um novo gênero literário” (2012), and Sheila Darcy Antonio Rodrigues’s master’s thesis, “*Mashup* brasileiro, a coleção *Clássicos Fantásticos*: A literatura como produto do mercado editorial” (2013).

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