

Beyond pornography: a history of Brazilian erotic newspapers of the greater Nineteenth Century / *Para além do pornográfico: uma história dos jornais eróticos brasileiros do grande século XIX*

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ABSTRACT

We analyzed pornography in Brazilian printed matter from the great 19th century with the objective of identifying how pornography was taken in its context of production and circulation in pornographic newspapers, starting from the place in which the historian of reading and literature considers appropriation and representation of the discourse of a given time. This identification is possible if we consider the studies of Literature History, as well as some concepts of Cultural History such as the notion of representation, appropriation, reading practice and reading community. We perceive that the appropriation of pornography in the 19th century prints is not limited to its function of excite the reader, because in the case of the newspaper *The Grin*, our main object of study, pornography appears as an instrument of political attack on the government of the time. In order to verify this appropriation, it was necessary to understand the possible dialogues between the pornographic newspapers of the great 19th century at the time of their enunciation, revealing elements that allow us to understand the representation of a part of the reading community of 19th century.

KEYWORDS: Literary history; Pornography; Printed 19th century; Cultural History.

RESUMO

Analisamos a pornografia nos impressos brasileiros do grande século XIX com o objetivo de identificar o modo como a pornografia foi tomada em seu contexto de produção e circulação nos jornais pornográficos, partindo do lugar no qual o historiador da leitura e da literatura considera a apropriação e a representação do discurso de uma dada época. Essa identificação é possível se considerarmos os estudos da História da Literatura, bem como alguns conceitos da História Cultural como a noção de representação, apropriação, prática de leitura e comunidade leitora. Percebemos que a apropriação da pornografia nos impressos de oitocentos não se limita a sua função de excitar o leitor, pois no caso do jornal O Riso, nosso principal objeto de estudo, a pornografia aparece como instrumento de ataque político ao governo da época. Para verificarmos essa apropriação, foi necessário compreender os possíveis diálogos entre os jornais pornográficos do grande século XIX no tempo de sua enunciação, revelando elementos que nos permitem entender a representação de uma parte da comunidade leitora de oitocentos.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: História da Literatura; Pornografia; Impressos de Oitocentos; História Cultural.

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1 Pornographic press: research results

This article presents some results of research carried out in the doctoral studies¹ in Literature at the Federal University of Paraíba (2013-2015) program, and has continued with activities developed in Graduate Program in Language Studies of the Federal Rural University of Pernambuco. The main objective of this research is to understand the pornographic discourse in Brazilian newspapers, and its relationship with the history of literature through pornography and politics in the newspaper *The Grin*². For this purpose, the object of our study is the newspaper *O Riso (The Grin)* (1991-1912) and its relationship with other pornographic newspapers on the Brazilian editorial scene.

The newspaper, *The Grin*, circulated in Brazil at the beginning of the 20th century, a time marked by medical and law enforcement censorship with regard to discussions of sexuality (EL FAR, 2007). However, at that time, there was no explicit law punishing those responsible for the circulation of pornographic material or the buyers of "forbidden" material. El Far (2007, p. 289) points out that "the Republican Penal Code (1891), in turn, made no explicit mention of the production and dissemination of pornographic works, limiting itself to punishing possible indecent assault and public offenses"³.

Although there was no legal punishment (EL FAR, 2007), the reading of pornographic books and newspapers was viewed in a biased manner by society during the transition period from the 19th to the 20th century. But this so-called censorship - if we can call it that, as there was no investigation of nor severe punishment for it - was not directed to all members of society who consumed pornographic products. The "great victims" of the reading community were women, either because of their exclusion from the pornographic publishing market, since pornographic literary genres were explicitly aimed at men, as expressed by the classifications attributed by the publishing market – "reading for men only", "men's novels", "reading for men", "short stories for

¹ This research is a cut of the work developed in the doctorate and aims to demonstrate how there are gaps in the historiography of literature, especially if we consider the pornographic literature that circulated in newspapers at the end of the 19th century and early 20th century. For a more detailed view of the pornographic trajectories of Brazilian newspapers in the great 19th century, see Azevedo (2015).

² We have opted for linguistic updating of the words present in the newspapers of the 19th and 20th centuries in order to facilitate the reading of the article.

³ TN: All translations are ours unless otherwise stated. Translated from Portuguese: "o Código Penal Republicano (1891), por sua vez, não fazia menção explícita à produção e disseminação de obras pornográficas, limitando-se a punir possíveis atentados ao pudor e ofensas públicas".

older men" were expressions commonly used to refer to pornographic texts – either by the "mental fragility" that was attributed to them by 19th century doctors and clergy.

As the term itself suggests, the plots that received this subtitle should be forbidden to women, seen at that time as people with fragile personalities, and therefore susceptible to the charms of the narrative. Men, on the contrary, able to discern the world of fiction from the everyday life of rules and good behavior, did not run the same risk. Therefore, they had unrestricted access to these readings.⁴ (EL FAR, 2007, p. 290)

We point out that this statement, made by the author, is about the titles of pornographic works published in newspapers. If on the one hand the market for pornographic literature restricted its dissemination to the male public, on the other hand, conservative society had no control of the "secret" readings of 19th century women, because, as Michel de Certeau (2012) poignantly observed, the reader is endowed with astuteness in order to deviate and subvert social norms in the name of reading practices. However, women were not the only ones repressed regarding the reading of pornographic novels. Men suffered physical harm. From the medical perspective, at the end of the 19th century (EL FAR, 2007), men who read "forbidden" novels also ran risks, and could develop sexually transmitted diseases (the advertising of products to cure syphilis⁵ and gonorrhoea⁶ was frequent in the 19th century newspapers), mental weakness, weariness, anemia, among others.

Men, in turn, should avoid the celibate lifestyle, that is, the daily routine of dances, parties and flings. This type of behavior not only represented a refusal of the ideals of marriage and family, but also provoked the growth of cases of abortion, infanticide, prostitution and sexually transmitted diseases. In this medical perspective, the body inevitably suffered from an enormous weakness, becoming weak, powerless and "worn out". The dissemination of these ideas at the end of the 19th Century was so effective that the novel entitled *A Worn Man* (1885), signed by the pseudonym L.L., quickly gained ground in the columns of literary criticism of that period. It was the drama of a rich Brazilian, newlywed, who, after years of fooling around, was prevented from consummating his marriage. In the words published in a newspaper, he lacked the "essentials for marital functions" (*A Semana*, 9/5/1885). [...] Along

⁴ Translated from Portuguese: "Como o próprio termo sugere, os enredos que recebiam tal subtítulo deveriam ser proibidos às mulheres, vistas naquela época como pessoas de personalidade frágil, por isso, suscetíveis aos encantos da narrativa. [...] Os homens, de modo diferente, por serem capazes de discernir o mundo da ficção do cotidiano das regras e dos bons costumes, não corriam o mesmo risco. Por isso, tinham acesso irrestrito a essas leituras."

⁵ "NOGUEIRA'S ELIXIR - by Pharmacist Silveira - the only one who cures syphilis and its terrible consequences." (*The Grin*, Rio de Janeiro, 16/11/1911, n. 26, Anno I, p. 5). We point out that the advertising of Nogueira's Elixir is repeated on more than one page in the several published issues of *The Grin*.

⁶ "Bruzzi's Pills - the only specific plant that heals Gonorrhoeae. Deposits: Hospice 144 ES. Peter 82." (*The Grin*, Rio de Janeiro, 16/11/1911, n. 26, Anno I, p. 14).

with the provocative scenes, A Worn-out man, advertised as a "a man's novel", while loving, cuming and dying..., seemed also to believe in the scientific precepts propagated at the time.⁷ (EL FAR, 2007, p. 301).

Notably, a common association made with regard to these pornographic genres was the practice of masturbation or the deviation from the order of procreation (ROUDINESCO, 2008), a punishable sin (DELUMEAU, 2003). This was the moral perspective, directly linked to the precepts of the Catholic Church. However, the 19th century medical perspective on mental processes was different: the practice of masturbation had another connotation, according to Roudinesco (2008), and assumed the status of a disease – a pathology, a disease rather than a deviation from religious precepts.

Pornographic newspapers begin to appear throughout Brail, in this scenario of the condemnation of certain sexual practices and the publication of pornographic works, as Sodré mentions (2011), but having meager circulation.

Sodré (2011), addresses this subject with the examination of the circulation of the pornographic newspaper *O Rio Nu* (1898-1916), which breaks with this paradigm, since it is established as a long-term newspaper, remaining in circulation for 18 years, printed bi-weekly. The same path was followed by *The Grin*, which, even having circulated for only two years, stood out in the national scenario press with uninterrupted publication, and with the use of the most modern printing resources to disseminate, beyond the pornographic themes, an "acidic" criticism against the republican government.

2 Sexuality in the newspaper *The Grin*: a mix of pleasures

In order to understand the discourses present in newspapers, it is necessary to consider how they are made – their materiality and characteristics of production and circulation. Thus, we must consider the strategies of the *The Grin* editors, as well as the strategies of the editors and

⁷ Translated from Portuguese: "Os homens, por sua vez, deveriam evitar o estilo de vida celibatário, quer dizer, o cotidiano de bailes, festas e de namoros efêmeros. Esse tipo de comportamento não representava apenas uma recusa aos ideais do casamento e da família, como provocava também o crescimento de casos de aborto, infanticídio, prostituição e de doenças sexualmente transmissíveis. Nessa perspectiva médica, o corpo sofria inevitavelmente uma enorme debilidade, tornando-se fraco, impotente e "gasto". A disseminação dessas ideias no final de oitocentos era tão eficaz que o romance intitulado *Um homem gasto* (1885), assinado pelo pseudônimo L. L., rapidamente ganhou espaço nas colunas da crítica literária daquele período. Tratava-se do drama de um rico brasileiro, recém-casado, que, em resposta aos anos de libertinagem, via-se impedido de consumir seu casamento. Nas palavras publicadas num jornal, faltava-lhe o "essencial para as funções matrimoniais" (*A Semana*, 9/5/1885). [...] Além de possuir cenas provocativas, *Um homem gasto*, anunciado como um "romance para homem", assim como *Amar, gozar e morrer...*, parecia acreditar nos preceitos científicos propagados na época."

the diversity of literary genres that constituted the journal, taking into account its materiality and typographic resources as constitutive elements of the production of meaning. The main interest here is to perform a descriptive work to present our object of investigation: the newspaper itself, and its view of itself. .

An aspect that should be observed in the presentation of the periodical refers to the heteroclitite nature of the newspaper. As Barbosa (2007a) points out, the newspaper is constituted in heterogeneity, in the plurality of the various literary genres that compose the printed material. From this premise, we must recognize the presence of allegories in the pornographic nuances of *The Grin*, considering the fact that the plurality of literary genres employed in the newspaper becomes fertile ground for using allegory, especially with regard to the construction of satire. On the allegory present in 19th century newspapers, Barbosa (2007a) states that the use of allegorical language is a recurring element and, in this sense, there is a direct relationship between allegory and the composition of newspapers of the 19th century. Based on these observations, it is necessary to catalog the genres that make use of pornography as an allegory for the construction of satire.

Notably, the description of the newspaper *The Grin* takes into account the ways pornography is used in literary genres, which, by the very nature of the object, we will consider the present time of enunciation in the genres, taking into account the gender, the reading community and the utilitarianism⁸ of the genres in its time, or, as Barbosa (2007a, p. 64) highlights: "what has been produced in the journals - including the literary - cannot be dismissed from the present of that utterance and cannot be read in a perspective of transparency with the reference"⁹.

The newspaper *The Grin*, self-named "Artistic and humorous weekly newspaper", circulated in the federal capital, Rio de Janeiro, from May, 1911 to November, 1912, with an initial circulation of 15,000 copies, at the cost of 200 réis per copy. The newspaper office was located on Rua da Alfândega, nº 182, under the command of Rebello Braga. From the 47th issue, April 11, 1912, A. Reis & C took over the ownership of the newspaper, changing the editorial address to Rua do Rosário, nº 99. From the 60th issue, July 11, 1912, the newspaper increased its circulation to 19,000 copies, keeping the same price of 200 réis per copy.

⁸ We consider "utilitarianism" to be the way in which literary genres, as well as texts, contribute to the production of meaning in a given text. In our case, utilitarianism shows the contribution of pornographic literary genres to the construction of a political criticism and/or to the excitement of the reader.

⁹ Translated from Portuguese: "o que foi produzido nos periódicos – inclusive o literário – não pode ser despregado do presente daquela enunciação e lido em uma perspectiva de transparência com a referencialidade".

This quantity of copies is relevant, since *O Correio da Manhã* (*The Morning Post*) (1901-1974), considered one of the main political newspapers in Brazil, which circulated during the transition period of the century and government, with 30,000 copies in 1910 (BARBOSA, 2007b). Thus, a humorous and pornographic newspaper, or as Sodré (2011, p. 478) says, "ephemeral magazines"¹⁰, starting its circulation with 15,000 copies, then increasing to 19,000, shows that *The Grin* was widely accepted by the public, and enjoyed considerable sales.

With regard to the value of the newspaper, we see in Figure 1 that the newspaper, *O Paiz*, considered one of the main political newspapers (SODRÉ, 2011) in circulation during the same period of publication of *The Grin*, sold for 100 réis per copy. *O Paiz* (1884-1934) circulated daily, while *The Grin* had a bi-weekly circulation at the following prices: single publication (200 réis), previous publications (300 réis), annual subscription in the capital (10\$000¹¹) and abroad (12\$000).

Figure 1 - Header of *O Paiz*, n. 10.140



Source: (*O Paiz*, Rio de Janeiro, 11/07/1912, n. 10.140, Anno XXVIII, p. 1)

As far as materiality is concerned, the newspaper *The Grin* had an average of 16 to 22 printed pages, with several erotic photographs and images alongside the critical, political texts in the newspaper. The cover of the newspaper was always represented by erotic images, and the other pages of the print were composed of several photographs, usually of French dancers next to literary texts.

For the most part, *The Grin's* covers were printed with photographs of dancers or naked actresses, but many issues emphasized the humor of caricatures and/or engravings with erotic themes. This aesthetic resource was made possible by advances in the printing technology of the time. According to Sodré (2011, p. 405), due to the modernization of society, the journalistic companies were "equipped with the necessary graphic equipment to perform their function"¹². Improvements in the field of print production caused the newspaper's production plan and,

¹⁰ Translated from Portuguese: "revistas efêmeras".

¹¹ For a notion of the value of prices, "The Voice of the Worker, an organ of the Brazilian Workers' Confederation, presents more moderate and probably more realistic figures. According to this source, in 1908, the fabric factories of Rio de Janeiro rent houses to working families for 8\$000, 10\$000 and 30\$000". (LOBO et al, 1971, p. 256). This means that the annual subscription to *The Grin* in the capital was equivalent to the monthly fee for a house for fabric factory workers.

¹² Translated from Portuguese: "dotadas de equipamento gráfico necessário ao exercício de sua função".

consequently, its circulation, changed "the newspaper's relations with the advertiser, with politics, with readers"¹³ (SODRÉ, 2011, p. 405).

Figure 2 – Cover of *The Grin*, n. 51



Source: (*The Grin*, Rio de Janeiro, 09/05/1912, n. 51, Anno II, cover)

These factors were decisive in increasing the sales of the papers, and, thus, in the circulation of periodicals. An example of a cover that uses some of these graphic features is shown in Figure 3 – a short Christmas dress with the neckline showing breasts, to attract readers by creating an erotic, and colorful caricature.

Figure 3 - Cover of *The Grin*, n. 33



Source: (*The Grin*, Rio de Janeiro, 04/01/1912, n. 33, Anno II, p. cover)

Copies of the newspaper with humorous pictures always made some reference to political and social issues. These issues of *The Grin* were characterized by the use of vivid color pictures, possibly to attract the reader's attention. This was not the case on the covers that

¹³ Translated from Portuguese: "as relações do jornal com o anunciante, com a política, com os leitores".

presented photographs of naked women, since the photographs of the time were in black and white. Notably, this is not an editorial decision, but the result of the technological limitations of the time. Similar to the covers, the photographs were present on the other pages of *The Grin*. From the paper's inception, the editors made their concern with the aesthetic dimension of the editorial enterprise explicit: "Our concern, our program is all about aesthetics [...] having as its only course the Beauty in all its manifestations"¹⁴ (*The Grin*, Rio de Janeiro, 26/05/1911, n. 1, Anno I, p. 1). Thus, even if the texts published in the pages of *The Grin* were directed to political or social criticism, the aesthetic concern with the presence of erotic images of women and/or caricatures that sought the excitement of the reader was prominent.

In this sense, the novels that were published by the newspaper presented three distinct models, which we will call a pornographic novel, epistolary pornographic novel and pornographic novella¹⁵:

- Pornographic novel: series with pornographic themes that were published on the last pages of each issue of the newspaper, in a space dedicated to the publication of the novel.

✓ *As aventuras do Rei Pausolo – Romance jovial* (*The adventures of King Pausolo – jovial novel*). The newspaper's most extensive novel, published from n. 1 on May 26, 1911, to n. 54 on May 30, 1912.

✓ *Supremo Abraço – Romance d'Amor* (*Supreme Embrace – Romantic Novel*), by Victorien du Saussay: a novel that replaces *The adventures of King Pausolo*. It was published from n. 55, on June 6, 1912, to n. 80, on November 28, 1912. Unlike the newspaper's first novel, the *Supreme Embrace* was not completed, as the newspaper was no longer published after number 80.

- Epistolary pornographic novel: a series of novels with pornographic themes composed of letters.

✓ *A Aventura* (*The Adventure*), by Pierre Verber. The epistolary novel was published from n. 17, on September 14, 1911, until n. 38, on February 8, 1912. The novel was not concluded and was interrupted in n. 38.

¹⁴ Translated from Portuguese: "Nossa preocupação, nosso programa é todo de estética [...] tendo por único rumo a Beleza em todas as suas manifestações".

¹⁵ As the newspaper itself presents, the short novel or novella is a "quick novel" published in a single issue or divided into two parts in different numbers.

- Pornographic novella: short novels with a pornographic theme with one or two publications.

✓ *A Substituição - romance rápido e por cartas (The replacement – novellas in letters)*, by M. H. It was published in a single issue of the newspaper, n. 3, on June 7, 1911.

✓ *Um Cobarde (A coward)*, by Catule Mendés. A novel divided in two parts. The first was published in n. 6, on June 29, 1911, and the second part in n. 8, on July 13, 1911.

It is worth noting that, in addition to the novels, other literary genres circulated in the newspaper, each of them with a utilitarian function for the reading community, that went from simple recreation through humor to the use of pornography, in order to build a political and/or social critique, as we can see in relation to the criticism present in the newspaper about the persecution of gambling.

NUMBERS RACKET AND MORE RACKETS

This is worse than Lerna's hydra, and there is no more Hercules to exterminate the new monster that has taken over all of Brazil, and has become the nightmare of our police, who try to slam the numbers racket, but are slamming blindly. Those who dare to even mention the numbers racket near any police officer run a great risk. The authorities have taken matters into their own hands to unceasingly squash the racket, and terror is already invading the spirits of the peaceful inhabitants of this racked city. Because of the numbers racketsome unfortunate rake, due to a simple complaint, was dragged off to a police station, where it was found that the only racket he played was a broken tennis racket. (*The Grin*, Rio de Janeiro, 26/05/1911, n. 3, Anno I, p. 3)¹⁶

Although games of chance are very present in daily life during the *Belle Époque*, both gamblers and card sellers¹⁷ were persecuted, but the Brazilian elite had the right to have fun with other games, and encourage the creation of leisure spaces reserved for betting: "Even the most

¹⁶ TN: The numbers racket in Brazil involved the buying and selling of bingo-like cards with the pictures of animals on them, which then would be chosen and the spoils given to those who had picked the winning animals of that week – thus, the name of the game, *Jogo do Bicho*, or animal game. We have translated it as the Numbers Racket in the previous section and preserved the word play of the Brazilian journalist with the word 'racket', and variants, rack, rake. Translated from Portuguese: BICHO E MAIS BICHO

Isso está pior do que a hidra de Lerna, e não ha mais Hercules para exterminar o novo monstro que se apoderou do Brasil inteiro, e tomou-se o pesadelo da nossa polícia, que está dando pancada de matar bicho, porém é pancada de cego. Corre grande perigo quem se atrever a falar em bicho perto de qualquer agente policial. As autoridades têm feitos coisas próprias de quem não cessa de matar o bicho, e o terror já vai invadindo o espirito dos pacatos habitantes dessa cidade bichada. Por causa do bicho um pobre homem, por uma simples denuncia, foi arrastado até uma delegacia, onde se verificou que o bicho que ele tinha era de pé. (*O Riso*, Rio de Janeiro, 26/05/1911, n. 3, Anno I, p. 3)

¹⁷ TN: See footnote 17.

widespread form of popular game, the numbers racket, is prohibited and persecuted, although the sociability of elegant elites actually developed around the casinos, and the Jockey Club.”¹⁸ (SEVCENKO, 2003, p. 47).

In the criticisms of the newspaper, it is clear that persecution only happens against the "common man". As we can see in the previous quote, taken from the newspaper¹⁹, the characters who suffered from the violent action of the police were from a lower social class, such as: "the poor man with a broken racket", "invasion of a tavern with animals in its cheeses", "houses with moths and termites" etc. Thus, we see that the federal government was more concerned with selecting games for its target audience than with inventing a society free of corrupting craftsmen through games and offenders:

The fact that the Republic favoured the big game of the stock market and persecuted racketeers and the small game of the numbers racket suggests a different reception of the new regime on the part of what could be called the proletarianizing of capital.²⁰ (CARVALHO, 1987, p. 29)

This harassment of gamblers and common folk is the battle-cry for *The Grin's* frequent criticism of the government and the defenders of hermism.

As in other examples in the newspaper, the chronicle "Racket and more rackets"²¹ is accompanied by a photograph of a nude female, having nudity and politics share the same space, and the same readers.

In order to better visualize the mix of pleasures, that is, the most diverse pornographic and/or political compositions present in the newspaper *The Grin*, we catalogued genres²² in order to demonstrate the textual genres that were published in the newspaper's 80 issues.

¹⁸ Translated from Portuguese: "Mesmo a forma de jogo popular mais difundida, o jogo do bicho, é proibida e perseguida, muito embora a sociabilidade das elites elegantes se fizesse em torno dos cassinos e do Jockey Club."

¹⁹ Because it is a long text, we show only an extract to exemplify the criticism that the newspaper *The Grin* (Anno I, n. 3, in 07/06/1911, p. 3) made to the carioca police. However, throughout the text, other examples of police persecution are cited.

²⁰ Translated from Portuguese: "O fato de a República ter favorecido o grande jogo da bolsa e perseguido capoeiras e o pequeno jogo dos bicheiros sugere uma recepção diferente do novo regime por parte do que poderia ser chamado de proletariado da capital."

²¹ TN: Literally Animal (Bicho) and Animals (bichos) – animal bingo lotto card game, which we have translated as 'racket', referring also to a common gambling practice of this era in poor communities – the numbers racket.

²² To read the complete picture of the genres present in the 19th century issues of the newspaper *The Grin*, we indicate the reading of Azevedo (2015). In this article, we will demonstrate only a few genres in order to represent the newspaper's heteroclit construction.

Table 1²³: Genres published in the newspaper, *The Grin* (1911-1912)

Genres	Discourse community	Communicative purpose	Examples
Chronicle	General readers	To announce the facts of the week and the intention of the publication through humorous criticism.	" <i>Chronica</i> " (Short-shorts). In: <i>The Grin</i> . (26/05/1911, n. 1, p. 1)
Proverbs	General readers	To produce entertainment and recreation through humor and pornography.	" <i>Pensamentos...</i> " (Thoughts). In: <i>The Grin</i> . (21/09/1911, n. 18, p. 6)
News	General readers	To present humorous and/or pornographic political and social criticism.	"O nú artístico, uma nova profissão feminina" (The artistic nude, a new profession). In: <i>The Grin</i> . (26/05/1911, n. 1, p. 3-4)
Short stories	General readers	To disseminate amoral precepts through humor and pornography.	" <i>Temperamento exquisito, por H. Pito</i> " (Odd temperament, by H. Pito). In: <i>The Grin</i> . (03/08/1911, n. 11, p. 4-5)
Epistolary Novel	General readers	To disseminate amoral precepts through humor and pornography.	"A substituição, por M.H." (Substitution by M.H.). In: <i>The Grin</i> . (07/06/1911, n. 3, p. 9-10)
Book advertising	Readers interested in pornographic books	To spread pornographic leaflets on books and novels, as well as erotic photo albums.	" <i>Bibliotheca d'The Grin</i> " (Library of the Grin). In: <i>The Grin</i> . (13/07/1911, n. 8, p. 7)
Mailbox	General readers	To present reader letters with humorous nicknames.	" <i>Caixa postal d'The Grin</i> " (The Grins's Mailbox). In: <i>The Grin</i> . (20/07/1911, n. 9, p. 6)
Cartoon	General readers	To produce entertainment and recreation through humor and pornography.	In: <i>The Grin</i> . (The Grin) (14/09/1911, n. 17, p. 14)
Ballads	General readers	To produce entertainment and recreation through humor and pornography.	" <i>Baladinhas ambulantes, de um quitandeiro</i> ". (Door to door shindigs from a produce seller) In: <i>The Grin</i> . (12/10/1911, n. 21, p. 8)
Motto and gloss	General readers	To produce entertainment and recreation through humor and pornography.	" <i>Motte, por Dr. Sinete</i> (Theme by Dr. Sinete) In: <i>The Grin</i> . (25/01/1912, n. 36, p. 12)

Table 2 aims to present some pornographic newspapers that circulated in Brazil during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, dialoguing and/or influencing the composition and style of *The Grin*.

²³ Tables 1 and 2 are free adaptations of the exhibition framework proposed by Cruz (2014).

Table 2: Main pornographic newspapers in circulation between 1898 and 1916

Newspaper	Editor	Designation	Location	Periodicity	Circulation Period	Thematic
<i>Rio Nu</i>	Heitor Quintanilha, Gil Moreno e Vaz Simões	Caustic and humorous Humorous and illustrated * *From number 33	Rio de Janeiro	Weekly Biweekly * *From number 33	1898-1916	Erotic, humorous, controversial, political and social criticism, cultural setting.
<i>O Nabo</i>	Frei Nabiça e Frei Maxixe	Humorous, caustic, mocked and informative	Rio de Janeiro	Weekly	1900	Erotic, humorous, political and social criticism.
<i>O Coió</i>	? Rebello Braga* *A partir do nº 61/1902	Humorous and illustrated	Rio de Janeiro	Weekly Biweekly * * From number 61/1902	1901-1902	Erotic, humorous, controversial, political and social criticism, cultural setting.
<i>The Grin</i>	Rebello Braga e A. Reis & C.* *A partir do nº 47/1912	Humorous and artistic	Rio de Janeiro	Weekly	1911-1912	Erotic, humorous, controversial, political and social criticism, cultural setting.

The list of pornographic newspapers shows that *The Grin* dialogued with the other pornographic newspapers of its time. It is necessary to analyze the common and distinct points between the newspapers that shared the same editorial market to understand the widespread pornographic discourse shared by printed material and novelists of the Brazilian *Belle Époque*²⁴, as well as verifying the presence of the scathing criticism against the republican newspapers that supported the political system, or the president Hermes da Fonseca.

Another possibility of dialogue that we find among the newspapers is the praise lauded to *The Morning Post* in the articles of *The Grin*. The "exchange" of kindness was not rare, even if it was a critical and humorous newspaper, but the editors defended themselves in the opening issue, claiming that "Our concern, our program is all about aesthetics and good humor. With no

²⁴ The Brazilian *Belle Époque* was shaped by an extra-art attempt to be the Paris of the tropics, especially in the federal capital, Rio de Janeiro, which imported everything from the mannerisms to "from butter to the volupias brought by the French cotes that so gracefully decorated the maisons closes, cabarets and fashion stores of Rua do Ouvidor" (IVO, 2012, p. 6).

hate and no passion, the sole *parti-pris* is laughing at everything and at everyone." (*The Grin*, Rio de Janeiro, 26/05/1911, n. 1, Anno I, p. 1).

The idea of opening the other's mind belongs undoubtedly to the second category; but to open the heart of the lovelier sex, removing from there the secret of the feminine opinion on the bearded sex is without doubt akin to genius. And so, it reached the dazzling pinnacles of human ingenuity of *the Morning Post* [...] However, a notice from the contest organizer suggests that the newsroom has been coyly hiding in the basket of other papers that express positively impressive desires. The advice in the letters of reply, is that the ladies *should completely disregard the physical qualities they prefer in their husbands*.²⁵ (*The Grin*, Rio de Janeiro, Anno I, n. 2, em 01/06/1911, p. 1)

We see that in the section "Short shorts" of number 1, June 1, 1911, *The Grin* praises the courage and cleverness of *The Morning Post* editors in creating a contest in which the readers would write letters describing what the ideal husband would be like, but it points out, in a joking tone, that physical (erotic) attributes should be eliminated from the readers' letters.

This way, we chose to show that, in addition to the pornographic newspapers, *The Grin* maintained a strong dialogue with other traditional newspapers, especially *The Morning Post*, due to a possible critical political support to the republican government of Hermes da Fonseca. What was at stake in *The Grin's* relationship with conservative newspapers was the political content, rather than the pornographic one, since *The Morning Post* supported Rui Barbosa's candidacy against Hermes da Fonseca and always posited itself as a newspaper opposed to 'hermism', thus maintaining a friendly dialogue with *The Grin*.

Pornographic horizons: some final considerations

The development of research on pornography has long since been considered controversial in the academic field due to its nature, due to its objects (newspapers and books forgotten by the history of literature) and its content (explicit sex). We decided to observe pornography through the representation of its discourse, and its relationship with the social-political environment in the newspaper, *The Grin*, which circulated during the Brazilian *Belle Époque*, given the understanding that "pornographic literature acts on the border of social

²⁵ Translated from Portuguese: "A ideia de abrir a cabeça do próximo pertence indiscutivelmente á segunda categoria; mas a de abrir o coração do belo sexo tirando de lá o segredo da opinião feminina sobre o sexo barbado é sem duvida alguma genial. E assim alcançou os píncaros deslumbrantes do engenho humano o *Correio da Manhã* [...] Entretanto um aviso do organizador do concurso permite supor que a redação tem ocultado pudicamente na cesta de papeis outras que manifestam desejos positivamente impressionadores. Diz o aviso que nas cartas de respostas as senhoritas *devem-se abstrair por completo das qualidades físicas preferidas nos maridos*."

space"²⁶ (MAINGUENEAU, 2010, p. 23). We take into consideration that it is necessary to know pornographic material to realize the satirical purpose, and the appropriation of pornography as a literary category in order to guide, and attract the reading public to the political attacks over the president Hermes da Fonseca and his confreres. From this point of view, it is possible to surmise that, in satire, pornography is established as a constitutive element of the (in)direct attack on the republican regime, especially with regard to Hermes da Fonseca.

All the particularities observed in relation to pornography associated with the political criticism of the *Belle Époque* indicate that the researchers who intend to analyze cultural goods, such as newspapers, should anchor themselves on the time of circulation in order to avoid anachronistic and decontextualized analysis. Based on this practice we are able to perceive the political criticisms from the moment we turn to the social-political crises, especially that of the persecution of gambling, and its relationship with a newspaper that proposes to be humorous and pornographic.

Thus, pornography must be seen in the singularity of its production of meaning, for there is no homogeneity in its composition. On the contrary, it is replete with multiple meanings through the most distinct creative procedures of using sex in literature.

The processes of appropriation of pornography and procedures for using allegory to criticize the government, are directly linked to the need for establishing satire as a vehicle for attacking social-political issues. In this sense, satire is not presented as a literary genre, but as a mechanism of language that becomes a weapon against a political system through art. Thus, both literary genres and pornographic discourses hidden behind the texts are constructed in the name of attacking, and not just the reader's mere excitement.

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²⁶ Translated from Portuguese: “literatura pornográfica atua na fronteira do espaço social”.

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