

## Women in the heart of Publishing Capitalism: the case of English-language authors in the Grêmio Literário Português do Pará / *Mulheres no coração do capitalismo editorial: o caso das autoras em língua inglesa no Grêmio Literário Português do Pará*


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### ABSTRACT

Considering the process of cultural globalization promoted by the transnational circulation of printed works in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, this article analyses female writers of English-language texts, which were part the collections of the *Grêmio Literário Português do Pará*, a circulating library founded in the capital of the then Pará province in 1867. Regarding this sub-set of the collection, containing twenty-three texts by female authors from the European and American continents, we are interested in discussing: who these women were, what genres they published, and the publishing strategies they used to guarantee that their work was made available to the public. To this end, we emphasize how women engaged with the periodical press and book publishing market.

**KEYWORDS:** Circulating Library; Novel; Travel Writing; Female Writers; Publishing Capitalism.

### RESUMO

Tendo em vista o processo de globalização da cultura promovido pela circulação transnacional dos impressos no século XIX, este artigo tem como corpus privilegiado de análise autoras de língua inglesa cujas obras fazem parte do acervo do Grêmio Literário Português do Pará, gabinete de leitura fundado na capital da então Província do Pará nos idos de 1867. No que concerne a essa parcela do acervo, composta por vinte e três obras de escritoras

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provenientes dos continentes Europeu e Americano, interessa discutir quem eram elas, que gênero de obras publicavam e que estratégias editoriais utilizavam para garantir que suas obras chegassem ao público leitor. Com esse intuito são enfatizados aspectos da atuação dessas mulheres na imprensa periódica e no mercado editorial livreiro.

**PALAVRAS-CHAVE:** Gabinete de Leitura; Prosa de Ficção; Relatos de Viagem; Escritoras; Capitalismo Editorial.

## 1 Introduction

Research on the transatlantic circulation of printed materials in the nineteenth century reveals that English language novels penetrated the Brazilian territory making their way into periodicals, bookstores, and onto the shelves of circulating libraries (VASCONCELOS, 2016; RAMICELLI, 2009). The repertoire of prose fiction available to Brazilian readers during this century was exceptionally varied, and included: historical fiction, adventure, sentimental and gothic novels, among others (VASCONCELOS, 2016). Technical innovations, such as the invention of steam boats and ships, guaranteed that fiction novels produced in Great Britain arrived in Brazil either in their original language or as translated versions, often the result of triangulations between France and Portugal (VASCONCELOS, 2016; RAMICELLI, 2009). A good example of this phenomena is the novel *Persuasion*<sup>1</sup>, where the French translation served as the basis for its translation into Portuguese. Through this translation, the novel came to be known in Brazil as *A família Eliot* (The Eliot family) or *Inclinação antiga* (Ancient Inclination), with its authorship arbitrarily attributed to Isabelle de Montolieu.

Maria Eulália Ramicelli (2009) demonstrates that British fiction was commonly translated for publication in French periodicals, such as *Revue Britannique*, founded in 1825 by Louis-Sébastien Saulnier, Jean-Michel Berton, and Prosper Dondey-Dupré. The periodical published various prose fiction and non-fiction texts of English origin, aiming to bring British culture to the French territory, keeping the French up to date on what was happening on the neighboring island. Similar to *Persuasion* by Jane Austen, translations published in *Revue Britannique* sought to adapt original texts in keeping with the tastes and expectations of French readership, which implied a number of modifications. In this process of cultural adaptation, titles were changes, explicative footnotes were added, entire segments were excluded, and plots were altered, along with names and characters' traits (RAMICELLI, 2009). Ramicelli (2009) goes further and

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<sup>1</sup> It should be observed that the Jane Austen's novel was translated into French in 1821 with the title *La famille Eliot*, or *l'ancienne inclination* and published in parts by the editor Arthus Bertran. In Portugal, the novel was translated by Manuel Pinto Coelho Cota de Araújo – M. P. C. C. d'A – who also worked on other British novels published by Tipografia Rollandiana founded by a French man. A Portuguese version of this work was published in 1847 based on the Isabelle Montolieu version, leaving the translation's modifications in the text translated into Portuguese. (VASCONCELOS, 2016)

suggests that a significant portion of British prose fiction that wound up in Brazil was derived from French translations, or rather, *Persuasion* was far from an isolated case. She demonstrates that various texts originally from *Revue Britannique* made their way into the pages of Brazilian periodicals.

Considering this cultural-historical context, which illustrates the existence of a true “cultural globalization process” promoted in part by the transnational circulation of printed texts, this article analyses female English language writers whose works are part of the *Grêmio Literário Português do Pará*<sup>2</sup> collections, a circulating library founded in the then capital of the Province of Pará back in 1867. Regarding this sub-set of the collection, containing twenty-three texts by female authors from the European and American continents, we are interested in discussing: who these women were, what genres they published, and the publishing strategies they used to guarantee that their work was made available to the public. To this end, we emphasize how women engaged with the periodical press and book publishing market, highlighting the results of their choices, and when possible, aspects that speak to their editorial success.

## 2 Women in the publishing market

The collections of the G. L. P. P contain twenty-three works by writers of the English language who were dedicated to diverse genres, including fiction and non-fiction.<sup>3</sup> The repertoire available in the G. L. P. P. collections includes works belonging to authors who obtained significant great commercial success, containing the works that became most well-known, or the “bestsellers” of these authors. This is the case of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, a novel initially published in 1841 in leaflets of *The National Era*, and later in 1852, in two additional volumes with an initial print run of 5,000 copies (even though calculations figure that in its first year, nearly 300,000

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<sup>2</sup> We use the abbreviation G. L. P. P. to refer to this circulating library in Pará state, Brazil.

<sup>3</sup> Of this total, five were published in more than one volume, including: *A Cabana do pai Thomaz e Dred*, A Tale of the Great Dismal Swamp, both by Harriet Stowe published in 2 vol; the first in the city of Paris in 1853 by the Rey and Balhate publishing house and the second in the city of Leipzig in 1856 by the editor Bernhard Tauchnitz; Jane’s Austen’s: *A família Elliot*, de Jane Austen, was published in 2 vol. in the city of Lisboa in 1847 by Tipografia Rollandiana; *Opulência e Miséria*, by Ann Sophia Stephens, published in 3 vol. in the city of Lisboa in 1853 by Tipografia Lisbonense D’Aguiar Vianna; *Um crime misterioso*, by Mary Braddon, published in 2 vol., in Lisboa in 1879 by the bookstore-publisher Matos Moreira and Company. All of these books are testament to a common practice in the 19<sup>th</sup> century book market that consisted of publishing a single work in various volumes to sell them to circulating libraries – whose directors were interested in guaranteeing the simultaneous borrowing of the same work to diverse readers. On the other hand, these works are testament to the transnational circulation of printed material, as the translations and the diverse locations where they were printed demonstrate.

copies would have been sold in the United States alone).<sup>4</sup> The translated edition of this work that landed in the G. L. P. P. collections is from 1853, the year following the first publication of the novel in book form.

Since it is not possible to discuss all these female authors and their works, we dispense with those who have received critical recognition in previous centuries, such as Harriet Stowe, Jane Austen and George Eliot. We focus instead on authors less commonly known or valued today. In short, we seek to offer a panorama of a sub-set of female authors and their works that are part of the above collections and discuss aspects related to how these women entered the 19<sup>th</sup> century publishing market with considerable success. We show how authors' decisions related to the genres they produced - fiction or non-fiction – and how the material form in which authors circulated their texts may have been decisive to the longevity of their careers. It is important to point out that for women (and for men) who sought literary careers in the nineteenth century, the periodicals were an important means of circulating their works. In analyzing the professional trajectories of female writers whose works are found on the shelves of the G. L. P. P., we perceive, however, that female engagement went beyond seeking a publication space within standard periodicals. These women took it upon themselves to create and direct magazines or newspapers, designated for their own publications and other contemporaries; however, this alone was not enough. Women sought to transform their works into editorial successes and commonly accomplished this by gambling on new material forms, which made books cheaper, and guaranteed their broad circulation. They also dedicated themselves to producing the print genres that were guaranteed to be sold. In the following section, we discuss female engagement in the publishing industry, outlining the biographies of several female authors, emphasizing their professional engagement.

Blanche Willis Howard (1847-1898) was born in Bangor, Maine, and died in Munich in 1898.<sup>5</sup> In 1877<sup>6</sup> she moved to Germany to study, also acting as a correspondent for the *Boston*

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<sup>4</sup> Regarding the number of copies and circulation of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* Cf: HAWTHORNE, Nathaniel; MELVILLE, Herman; STOWE, Harriet Beecher; *et al. 1850 to 1900 - Books That Shaped America | Exhibitions - Library of Congress*. Available: <https://www.loc.gov/exhibits/books-that-shaped-america/1850-to-1900.html>. Accessed: July 3, 2019.

<sup>5</sup> Regarding the author and her publications, cf. Blanche Willis Howard Collection, 1847-1898 | Maine Women Writers Collection University of New England in Maine, Tangier and Online. Available: <<https://www.une.edu/mwww/research/featured-writers/blanche-willis-howard-collection-1847-1898>>. Accessed: 3 jul. 2019.

<sup>6</sup> Other affirm that she moved to Germany in 1875. (GUSTAFSON, 2010).

*Evening Transcript*.<sup>7</sup> Establishing herself in Stuttgart she begins to teach and write novels, plays and poetry – in addition to creating the English language periodical called *Hallberger's Illustrated Magazine*.<sup>8</sup> Over the course of her literary career, almost entirely lived out in Germany, Howard published nine novels, one travel narrative, and many stories, poems and translations – with some of these works designated to periodicals targeted to children and adult audiences in America, England, and Germany (GUSTAFSON, 2010). The G. L. P. P collections have one copy of Blanch Willis Howard's novel *Guenn: a wave on the Breton coast*. The edition was published in Boston by Ticknor and Company and lacks a publication date, but we know that the novel would have first come to light in 1884 (LEAVITT, 2019). One finds mention of this novel in a biography that Virginia Cse Leavitt dedicated to the American painter Eager Irving Couse (LEAVITT, 2019). The biography affirms that Couse decided to visit Concarneau, a French commune in Brittany, after reading the novel *Guenn*: "Couse, who had decided to go to that part of Brittany as well, may have picked Concarneau the previous summer, after he and Virginia read *Guenn*, a romance novel published in 1884 and popular among Parisian art students" (LEAVITT, 2019, p. 67).<sup>9</sup> The mention of Blanche Willis Howard's novel occurs at a time when prose fiction is having a significant impact on people's daily lives – to the degree that it could determine one's travel destination. This apparently banal episode, demonstrates a radical shift in the publishing market, extending beyond national borders – since the literary production of an author residing in Germany circulates among readers from diverse continents and countries – being read almost simultaneously by an American painter, arts students in Paris, and readers frequenting a circulating library in the extreme north of Brazil in the nineteenth century.

The American, Elizabeth Williams Champney (Springfield, 1850 – Seattle, 1922) also went to Europe after she married a Civil War veteran in 1873. When she returns to the US in 1876, she publishes narratives about her travels in *Harper's Magazine* and in *The Century Magazine*, for which she publishes more than eighty articles.<sup>10</sup> In 1883, she publishes *Three*

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<sup>7</sup> The *Boston Evening Transcript* published the accounts of Blanche Howard in number One Year Abroad in 1877. Cf. Blanche Willis Howard Collection, 1847-1898 | Maine Women Writers Collection | University of New England in Maine, Tangier and Online. Available: <<https://www.une.edu/mwwwc/research/featured-writers/blanche-willis-howard-collection-1847-1898>>. Accessed: July 3, 2019.

<sup>8</sup> Copies of this periodical can be found in BLANCHE WILLIS HOWARD. *Hallberger's Illustrated Magazine*. [s.l.]: E. Hallberger, 1876. Available: <<http://archive.org/details/hallbergersillu00howagoog>>. Accessed: July 27, 2019.

<sup>9</sup> Couse, who had decided to go to this part of Brittany, as well, could have chosen Concarneau the previous summer, after he and Virginia read *Guenn*, a romance novel published in 1884 and popular among Paris art students.

<sup>10</sup> Information on the author's life and her literary produce can be obtained on the site of the college where she studied. Cf. Elizabeth Williams Champney - Vassar College Encyclopedia - Vassar College, Available: <http://vcencyclopedia.vassar.edu/alumni/elizabeth-williams-champney.html>, Accessed: July 3, 2019.

*Vassar Girls Abroad*, which gives way to a series of eleven novels. The protagonists of the series, which came to be known as *Three Vassar's Girls* have adventures in England, South America, Italy, France, Turkey, Switzerland etc.<sup>11</sup> Wagering on publishing novels as a series was apparently successful for the author, who after 1889 invests in a new but similar writing project, which begins with the publication of the novel *Witch Winnie: The Story of a "King's Daughter"* and continues with eight more novels, maintaining part of the original title as a way to make them recognizable to her readers: *Witch Winnie's Mystery or The Old Oak Cabinet* (1891); *Witch Winnie's Studio or The King's Daughter's Art Life* (1892), *Witch Winnie in Paris or The King's Daughters Abroad* (1893), *Witch Winnie at Shinnecock* (1894), *Witch Winnie at Versailles* (1895), *Witch Winnie in Holland* (1896), *Witch Winnie in Venice* (1897) and *Witch Winnie in Spain* (1898). Of this vast literary production, G. L. P. P has only one copy of *Great grandmother's girls in New Mexico*, an edition published in 1888 in Boston by the John Wilson & son University Press. This novel, just as the others published by Elizabeth Williams Champney, remained for posterity as representative of a genre of literature supposedly designated for children. This is demonstrated by the fact that the author is included in *The Oxford Companion to Children's Literature* (HAHN; MORPURGO, 2015, p.115), a type of bio-bibliographic catalog of children's literature published by the University of Oxford Press. Editorial information from this catalog allow us to assume that the copy belonging to the G. L. P. P. collections is the first edition of the novel, which is the first in the *Great Grandmother's Girls*, series as previously mentioned.

Criticism made regarding the originality of a work of art would certainly find the author's editorial strategy opportunistic, which begins with travel narratives<sup>12</sup>, which at the time are very popular and then molds them into novel, publishing them as a series to reach the younger reader audience. However, this original publishing formula continued with success after the 19th as the achievements of British writer J.K. Rowling, author of *Harry Potter*, demonstrates; she also published a series of seven novels. Yet, Elizabeth Williams Champney, like other writers we discuss below, was not concerned about critics. Her career path, like that of some of her contemporaries, demonstrates that professional choices, such as choosing genres with broad appeal among large reading audiences and successful publishing strategies, allowed them to support themselves through their writing.

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<sup>11</sup> The series of novels by this author are available here: Elizabeth Champney - Series. Available: <https://readseries.com/auth-bc/champny.html>. Accessed: July 3, 2019.

<sup>12</sup> Regarding the circulation and acceptance of travel literature in Britain and by its peoples in the nineteenth century, cf PRATT (2007).



The British writer Matilda Betham-Edwards (Westerfield, 1836 – Hastings, 1919) also wrote for periodicals and transformed her travel experiences into published works. She became a popular writer through her novels and children's books set in France, a country she visited constantly.<sup>13</sup> With her friend Barbara Bodichon, the founder of the first women's university in England, Girton College, she traveled to Algeria and Spain. Her book *In French Africa: scenes and memories*<sup>14</sup> was born from her Algerian travels and was published in London by Chapman and Hall in 1912. Her Spanish travels gave way to *Through Spain to the Sahara*, published in 1868 by Hurst and Blackett based in London. In the field of journalism, Betham-Edwards covered French themes for the *Daily News* and collaborated with the *Household Words* magazine run by Charles Dickens.

She also dedicated herself to novels, beginning with the book *The White House by the Sea: a love story* (1857), which was reprinted various times and pirated by editors from the US.<sup>15</sup> Joan Rees (2006) states that the author, whose literary career was so connected to France that she received the title of *Officier de l'Instruction Publique de France* from the French government. She maintained relationships with prominent figures from the London literary scene, such as George Eliot and Henri James. Even though she was a prolific writer, publishing thirty-seven novels from 1857 to 1902<sup>16</sup>, G. L. P. P. has just one of her novels in its collections, *The flower of doom or The conspirator* published in one volume by London-based Ward & Downey.

For nineteenth century female writers, it appears that the European continent was not broad enough. Perhaps the most impressive of these writers in terms of her restlessness was Isabella Lucy Bird (Boroughbridge, 1831 – Edimburgo, 1904), who affirms that she was a fragile child, a constant victim of insomnia, headaches and backaches.<sup>17</sup> There are various versions of her first trip outside the European continent. Some sources confirm that in 1850 she underwent surgery to remove a tumor from her spine and upon medical recommendation left for North America in 1854, spending many months in Eastern Canada and the United States.<sup>18</sup> When she

<sup>13</sup> With respect to the author, cf: Women in the Literary Marketplace, Available: <[http://rnc.library.cornell.edu/womenLit/getting\\_into\\_print/Betham\\_Edwards\\_L.htm](http://rnc.library.cornell.edu/womenLit/getting_into_print/Betham_Edwards_L.htm)>, Accessed: July 5, 2019. Betham-Edwards, Matilda. In: 1922 Encyclopædia Britannica. [s.l.: s.n., s.d.].

<sup>14</sup> BETHAM-EDWARDS, Matilda. *In French-Africa; scenes and memories*. [s.l.]: London: Chapman and Hall, 1912. Available: <<http://archive.org/details/infrenchafricasc00beth>>. Accessed July 5, 2019.

<sup>15</sup> Matilda Betham-Edwards, in: *Wikipedia*, [s.l.: s.n.], 2019.

<sup>16</sup> At the Circulating Library Author Information: Matilda Barbara Betham-Edwards. Available: <[http://www.victorianresearch.org/atcl/show\\_author.php?aid=87](http://www.victorianresearch.org/atcl/show_author.php?aid=87)>. Accessed: July 5, 2019.

<sup>17</sup> Isabella Lucy (bird) Bishop | Encyclopedia.com. Available: <<https://www.encyclopedia.com/people/history/british-and-irish-history-biographies/isabella-lucy-bird-bishop>>. Accessed July 28, 2019.

<sup>18</sup> Isabella Lucy (bird) Bishop | Encyclopedia.com. Available: <<https://www.encyclopedia.com/people/history/british-and-irish-history-biographies/isabella-lucy-bird-bishop>>. Accessed July 28, 2019.

returns to Europe, she decides to publish letters sent to her sister, Hennie, which was the origin of her first book *The Englishwoman in America* (BIRD, 1856). Her contact with the American continent intensified after the death of her father in 1858. Afterward, she made three more trips to North America, one to the Mediterranean and another to Hawaii where she spent six months. Her 1872 stay in Hawaii gave way to a book published in 1875, called *Six Months in the Sandwich Islands*.<sup>19</sup> After leaving Hawaii she went to the west coast of the United States, traveling by horseback to San Francisco, to Lake Tahoe and afterward to the Rocky Mountains and Colorado. Her experience resulted in the book *A Lady's Life in the Rocky Mountains* published in 1879.

From San Francisco, Bird left for Japan, visiting the northernmost region of the country, where she remained among the members of the Ainu tribe, original non-Japanese islanders. This experience serves as the base of her book *Unbeaten Tracks in Japan* published in 1880. From Japan, she travels to Hong Kong, Canton, Saigon and Singapore; from Singapore to the Malay Peninsula where it stays for five weeks.<sup>20</sup> It would be too extensive to enumerate the trips taken by Isabella Lucy Bird<sup>21</sup>, who becomes the first woman to be elected as a member of the *Royal Geographical Society*. Yet, it is useful to point out that Bird did not simply travel for its own sake, but also writes about these trips in a context that is particularly conducive to reception on the European and American continents.<sup>22</sup> As one can see, the coveted market for travel writing was not exclusively occupied by men, although they are usually the primary subjects of analysis when it comes to discussing this genre. It is evident that women also played this role, publishing travel narratives or fictionalizing these experiences. The trajectory of these four women, born on different continents, reveals that lived experiences in different cultures served as a ballast, or even as a pretext, for these women to dedicate themselves to the universe of writing, gaining visibility with the reading public. The proficiency with which they published undoubtedly demonstrates that their choices were correct, since none stopped after the publication of their first texts, but rather continued to write and publish in subsequent years.

Of all the authors that we discuss in this text, Isabela Lucy Bird can be considered the travel writer *par excellence*. The G. L. P. P. has a copy of the edition of *A Lady's Life in the Rocky Mountains*, published in London by John Murray on Albemarle Street in 1885. The travel memoirs

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<sup>19</sup> Isabella Lucy (bird) Bishop | Encyclopedia.com. Available: <<https://www.encyclopedia.com/people/history/british-and-irish-history-biographies/isabella-lucy-bird-bishop>>. Accessed July 28, 2019.

<sup>20</sup> Isabella Lucy (bird) Bishop | Encyclopedia.com. Available: <<https://www.encyclopedia.com/people/history/british-and-irish-history-biographies/isabella-lucy-bird-bishop>>. Accessed July 28, 2019.

<sup>21</sup> Copies of her work can be found at: Internet Archive Search: Isabella Lucy Bird. Available: <<https://archive.org/search.php?query=isabella%20lucy%20Bird>>. Accessed: Accessed July 28, 2019.

<sup>22</sup> Regarding the wide circulation of travel writings in the European territory during the 19<sup>th</sup> century cf. PRATT (2007)



of this British author have remained in the market until today; today one can still find audiobooks and journalistic material about Bird on the web. On April 19, 2014, the *Independent* published a tourist piece titled *The Rocky Mountains: A lady's life less ordinary* (ARNOTT, 2014). In the article, the journalist narrates a trip she made retracing Bird's path, weaving in commentaries to compare the places the author traveled through to their current situation. In the beginning of the article, she observes that in 1873 when the British woman, of a little more than 40 years, went over 800 miles in the Rockies, Colorado was only an informal "territory" in North America. She affirms that the book, which resulted from this trip, became an instant bestseller and has become a classic of the travel writing genre until today.

These five women were not alone in making correct decisions regarding publishing. Other writers, whose works are found on G. L. P. P shelves, dedicated themselves to certain genres of prose fiction and easily penetrated the publishing market. One such author was Harriet Parr born in the English city of York on January 31, 1828. Some biographies state that before becoming a novelist she worked as a housekeeper.<sup>23</sup> In 1854, Parr begins her writing career with the publication of the novel *Maude Talbot*.<sup>24</sup> From 1854 to 1883, she produces approximately one novel per year, all published by the London firm Smith, Elder & Co., under the pseudonym of Holme Lee.<sup>25</sup> Parr sparks the attention of Charles Dickens who buys some of the narratives to publish in the Christmas numbers of his weekly magazine.<sup>26</sup> The author's works, appreciated by the founder of the largest circulating library of Victorian London, Charles Edward Mudie, are also published by Bernhard Tauchnitz's German company, specializing in English language pocket books. As if this were not enough, her novels crossed the Atlantic and were published in America.<sup>27</sup> Of Harriet Parr, who was often said to be the favorite of Queen Vitória<sup>28</sup>, the G. L. P. P has one copy of *Thorney Hall, a story of an old family*, published in London by Smith, Elder and Company in 1862. This same edition was found by Kristina Alešová in the Český Krumlov castle

<sup>23</sup> Harriet Parr. In: *Wikipedia*. [s.l.: s.n.], 2019. Available: <[https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Harriet\\_Parr&oldid=882757823](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Harriet_Parr&oldid=882757823)>. Accessed: July 28, 2019

<sup>24</sup> HARRIET PARR. *Maude Talbot*, by Holme Lee. [s.l.: s.n.], 1854. Available: <<http://archive.org/details/maudetalbotbyho02parrgoog>>. Accessed: July 28, 2019.

<sup>25</sup> At the Circulating Library Author Information: Harriet Parr. Available: <[https://www.victorianresearch.org/atcl/show\\_author.php?aid=621](https://www.victorianresearch.org/atcl/show_author.php?aid=621)>. Accessed: July 28, 2019.

<sup>26</sup> The Wreck of the Golden Mary: Being the Captain's Account of the Loss of the Ship, and the Mate's Account of the Great Deliverance of Her People in an Open Boat at Sea. The Extra Christmas Number of Household Words, Christmas, 1856. Available: <<https://www.fadedpage.com/showbook.php?pid=20180640>>. Accessed: July 28, 2019.

<sup>27</sup> Harriet Parr. In: *Wikipedia*. [s.l.: s.n.], 2019. Available: <[https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Harriet\\_Parr&oldid=882757823](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Harriet_Parr&oldid=882757823)>. Accessed: August 9, 2019.

<sup>28</sup> Harriet Parr's portrait published in 1910 in *The Sphere* was requested by Queen Victoria. Cf. JSBlog – Journal of a Southern Bookreader: Harriet Parr in Shanklin. Available: <<http://jsbookreader.blogspot.com/2014/05/harriett-parr-in-shanklin.html>>. Accessed: July 28, 2019.

library collections located in the south of the Czech Republic (Alešová, 2013). As the aforementioned documents demonstrate, Parr's novel not only circulated in geographically distant locations, such as Great Britain, the Czech Republic, and the then capital of the Province of Pará, but also seems to have reached a very diverse audience; this is remarkable when considering the different social, economic and cultural points of view, maintained by the British, Czech nobility and the trade workers of Pará, Brazil reading the works of the G.L.P.P. collection.

When discussing best-selling authors, we must mention Mary Mackay (Londres, 1855 – Stratford-upon-avon, 1924), more commonly known by her pseudonym Mari Corelli. This London writer's first novel *A romance of two worlds*<sup>29</sup> was published in 1886. After this debut work, she published more than thirty novels, "devoured by people in England, the Americas and the colonies".<sup>30</sup> Ignored and scorned by critics, she was, however, among the best-selling and best-paid authors in England in her day.<sup>31</sup> Her access is also associated with an important change in the British publishing market. In 1984, circulating libraries announced to publishers that they would give preference to books produced in less expensive formats – published in a single volume in detriment to traditional publications in three volumes.

It was indeed in this format that Marie Corelli published her most successful novel *The Sorrows of Satans*, sold for the price of six shilling (£30 today).<sup>32</sup> The G. L. P. P collections contains a 1985 edition of this novel published by Methuen and company. Considered a Faustian novel, it tells the story of Geoffrey Tempest, a poor, hungry, and indebted writer who receives a fortune through inheritance, but loses it because of his friendship with the devil, who offers to help him. James Joyce, after meeting Marcel Proust, is said to have that he himself resembled the hero of Corelli's novel. It is not possible to confirm this anecdote, but it is a fact that James Joyce knew the author's fiction since he mentions the title *The Sorrows of Satans* in episode nine - Cila and Caribdis - of the novel *Ulysses*.<sup>33</sup>

It is worth pointing out that the association between fictional texts written by women and love or domestic themes is not valid when it comes to examining of Marie Corelli's fiction. Nor is it valid for other authors, such as Matilda Betham Edwards, whose novel *The Flower of Doom* or

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<sup>29</sup> On a website dedicated to this author, the site states that the Dutchess of Roxburghe lent a copy of the novel to Queen Victoria and that after reading it, she asked that all the works of Marie Corelli be sent to her after publication. The writer was also invited to visit Buckingham Palace to meet Empress Frederick, the Queen's eldest daughter. Life | Marie Corelli. Available <<http://mariecorelli.org.uk/life/>>. Accessed: July 29, 2019. This appreciation is also told by JAMES (2003).

<sup>30</sup> Works | Marie Corelli. Available: <<http://mariecorelli.org.uk/works/>>. Accessed: July 28, 2019.

<sup>31</sup> Regarding the scorn of criticism cf. MAYS (2002)

<sup>32</sup> Life | Marie Corelli. Available: <<http://mariecorelli.org.uk/life/>>. Accessed: July 28, 2019.

<sup>33</sup> In 1926, *The Sorrows of Satans* was adapted for film by D. W. Griffith.

*The Conspirator* has as its hero an explosive-keen conspirator and a heroine who tries to dissuade him from his criminal life. Barbara Arnett Melchiori affirms that his type of fiction, which she denominates as *dynamite romances*, can be characterized by a “hotchpotch of elements borrowed from more serious novelists, jumbled together to make a readable tale, and structured with the elaborate plot development of a modern photo-romance” (BARBARA, 1985, p.225).<sup>34</sup> Regarding the circulation of these romances, such as those by Betham-Edwards, the author observes that in the 1880s, they were abundantly published as weekly or monthly series in magazines.

Choosing the right commercial strategy also interested authors on the other side of the Atlantic who were committed to sustaining themselves through writing. This was the case of Ann Sophia Stephens (Seymour, 1810 – Newport, 1886), whose career as a writer coincided with the invention of *dime novels*. The term is associated with the publication of inexpensive paperbacks launched in 1860 by American editors Erastus and Irwin Beadle.<sup>35</sup> Dime novels, printed and bound in newspaper with colored illustrations on their covers were sold for 25 cents. The first book in the Beadle series, launched on June 9, 1860 authored by Beadle, was indeed, *Malaeska, the Indian Wife of the White Hunter*, by Ann S. Stephens. The book was a re-print of novel previously published in the periodical *Ladies' Companion* in February, March and April of 1839. Choosing dime novels was a publication strategy, which made books less expensive, and thus allowed Stephens to sell 65,000 copies of her novel in the first months following its publication.<sup>36</sup> Stephens' knowledge of the publishing world certainly played an important role in her decision to publish the novel in this format; after all, in 1837, Ann Sophia Stephens, together with her husband Edward Stephens, founded and edited the *Portland Magazine*, a literary periodical where she published her first works. In that same year, she moved to New York where she became an associate editor for *The Ladies Companion*. In New York, she also collaborated with other periodicals, such as *Godey's Lady's Book* and *Graham's Magazine*, published by Edgar Allan Poe. In 1856, again with her husband, she founded the *Mrs. Stephens' Illustrated New Monthly* magazine for which she became editor. In 1858, this magazine was sold to *Peterson's*

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<sup>34</sup> A “hotchpotch of elements borrowed by more serious novelists mixed amongst themselves to create a legible story and structured with the development of an elaborate plot typical of a modern photo-romance.

<sup>35</sup> Regarding American dime novels cf. American Dime Novels 1860-1915. The Historical Association. Available: <<https://www.history.org.uk/student/resource/4512/american-dime-novels-1860-1915>>. Accessed: July 3, 2019. For more on dime novels written by women, cf: American Women's Dime Novel Project - Dime Novels for Women, 1870-1920. American Women's Dime Novel Project. Available: <<http://chnm.gmu.edu/dimenovels>>. Accessed: August 11, 2019.

<sup>36</sup> American Dime Novels 1860-1915. The Historical Association. Available: <<https://www.history.org.uk/student/resource/4512/american-dime-novels-1860-1915>>. Accessed: July 3, 2019.

Magazine and Ann Sophia Stephens came its co-editor, working as such from 1842 to 1853 (MCHENRY, 1983).

This American writer, who also used the pseudonym Jonathan Slick, the G. L. P. P. lauds a single work, *Opulência e Miséria* – Opulence and Misery, published in Lisbon in 1859 by Tipografia Lisbonense D’Aguiar Vianna. Due to the similarity of the title, we believe that this copy is a translation of the novel *Fashion and famine* published in 1854. Robert MacHenry, the author of *Famous American Women: A Biographical Dictionary from Colonial Times to the Present* affirms that on the occasion of the author’s death in 1886, twenty-three of her novels were reprinted, which attests to the popularity she obtained in her lifetime (1983, p.392).

Despite the authors’ popularity, her works receives little critical attention, a pattern that repeats with other authors of dime novels, such as Mittie Frances Clarke Point. Of her eighty dime novels, G.L.P.P. has just one book, *Countess Vera or The oath of vengeance*, for which we could hardly obtained any information – with the exception of images of the front cover, which has the price of the volume (sold for 25 cents) and the pseudonym of the author.<sup>37</sup> Born in Doswell, Virginia, Mittie Frances Clarke Point graduated from the Richmond Female Institute in 1868. After the death of her first husband, she begins to write stories for two magazines, *Old Dominion* and *Temperance Advocate*. In 1878, she marries Alexander McVeigh Miller and moves to Fayette County, West Virginia. Her novel *The Bride of the Tomb*, published in 1883, is a great success, which enables her to sign a contract with three weekly New York newspapers earning up to US \$ 2.000 for each story (COX, 2000, p.174).

As can be observed from these women’s biographies, all of whose works are found in this Pará state circulating library, writing for these women was not a mere pastime freeing them from a supposedly boring daily life. Many of these women were directly involved in important happenings in the European and American publishing industries, such as changes in the format of books designated for Great Britain circulating libraries or the invention of dime novels in the USA – very likely because they wanted their literary production to reach broad audiences. As a result, adapting to the demands and novelties of the publishing industry likely did not seem to them as despicable or undesirable; in fact, research indicates the contrary.

We might even affirm that these adaptations allowed for very successful careers, which included women dedicated to working with periodicals. This was the case for the British author

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<sup>37</sup> The image of the edition can be accessed at: *Countess Vera; or, The oath of vengeance*. Available: <[https://www.goodreads.com/work/best\\_book/45193095-countess-vera-or-the-oath-of-vengeance](https://www.goodreads.com/work/best_book/45193095-countess-vera-or-the-oath-of-vengeance)>. Accessed: July 30, 2019.

Elizabeth Lynn Linton (1822-1898), who after the publication of her second novel, *Amygone: a romance of the days of Pericles* (1848), began to work for *The Morning Chronicle*, remaining as part of the editorial team from 1848 to 1851 (GARNETT, 1901). Beginning in mid-1860, Linton becomes one of the most important authors of articles in the *Saturday Review*, mainly writing against the suffragists (GARNETT, 1901). *The Girl of the Period*, from 1868, is one of her most well-known antifeminist essays. The novel *The autobiography of Christopher Kirkland* (1885) is considered her first autobiography, as she tells a little about her life as if she were a man (LAYARD, 1901).

The British woman, Mary Elizabeth Braddon (1835-1915), the editor of *Belgravia magazine* and *Temple Bar*, also stands out. Her most famous novel *Lady Audley's secret* is considered one of the main representatives of the *sensation novel* genre – which include fictional narratives involving divorce, bigamy, abuse, crime and insanity that begins to flourish in 1860 in Great Britain inspired by tabloid newspaper headlines (PYKETT, 2011). The story of the publication of *Lady Audley's Secret* in leaflets provides us with insights into the writer's intensity regarding production. Braddon begins to publish her novel in 1861 in the pages of *Maxell's Robin Goodfellow*. She interrupts the narrative without finalizing it because she simultaneously dedicates herself to her novel *Aurora Floyd*, published from January to April of 1862 in the pages of the periodical *Temple Bar*. *Lady Audley's secret* reappears in January of 1862 in the pages of *Tillotson's Sixpenny Magazine* (SUSSEX, 2010, p. 92). In 1862, her son is born, and the author works on the production of eight different series, four of them in her name and the others published under a pseudonym or anonymously in *Maxell's Halfpenny Journal* (SUSSEX, 2010, p. 94).

Her ambitions, however, were not limited to supporting herself by her writing earnings. In 1865, the author writes a letter to Buwer Litton, in which she confesses her intention of rivaling Wilkie Collins, whose work *The Moonstone* (1868) is considered the first modern English police thriller (SUSSEX, 2010, p.95). Collins first published this novel in the periodical *All the Year Round* founded by Charles Dickens between November 1859 and August 1860. To understand the success of this work, in this year alone, eight editions of the novel were published. In the previously referred to letter, Braddon affirms that with her forthcoming work, to be published in *Sir Jaspers Tenant*, she intended to overcome Collins with his own weapons: crime and mystery. (SUSSEX, 2010, p.95). According to RUBERY (2009), Mary Braddon, like Charlotte Brontë, Wilkie Collins, Joseph Conrad, Charles Dickens, George Eliot, Elizabeth Gaskell, Henry James,

Rudyard Kipling, Charles Reade, Bram Stoker, William Makepeace Thackeray and Anthony Trollope, revolutionized the novel, using narrative conventions borrowed from periodicals which, between 1836 and 1861, had enjoyed suppressed taxation, significantly expanding and diversifying its readership. Periodicals like *The Daily Telegraph*, considered the first *penny daily* in British history, published scandalous stories of murder, bigamy, and divorce to which *sensations novels* are commonly associated with by literary critics (RUBERY, 2009). It is no accident that when Henry James refers to Mary Braddon's novels, he says that the British author offered her readers, "the England of today's newspaper" (JAMES *apud* RUBERY, 2009, p.49).

### Final Considerations

The publications and editorial activities of the women discussed here, whose works represent part of the collections of the Pará state circulating library, show that written production – be it fiction or non-fiction – was far from being a passing occupation for these women. These women were multi-taskers, working in various realms of the publishing industry: they founded and directed magazines, published in periodicals that did not belong to them, wrote novels, travel accounts, short narratives and essays. In the case of fictional texts, they dedicated themselves to all possible genres, from novels for younger audiences and more mature audiences, with diverse nuances, defending more conservative values, as the case of the anti-suffragist and anti-feminist novels demonstrate; or they ventured into publishing new pieces in contemporary periodicals, involving crime or social behaviors considered unacceptable, such as bigamy. The material format of these publications was quite varied. As we tried to show, periodicals were important vehicles for the circulation of these women's works. In the Britain context, the elimination of taxes on periodicals allowed their price to be reduced significantly – favoring their access to social classes with fewer means – one of the reasons that these authors published novels in periodicals (magazines and newspapers) sold at very low prices. In this way, we can ascertain that the dissemination of female literary production went hand in hand with the transformations occurring in the publishing industry, which in the British and French contexts implied reductions in the prices of periodicals, and their consequent popularization amongst the lower social classes.

These authors, however, were not restricted to the publication of their works in periodicals. To make a living through writing, they made choices that demonstrate their knowledge of the publishing industry of the 19th century; they published books in formats that



facilitated their wide acceptance into circulating libraries or allowed readers with fewer means to acquire books sold at very low prices, as is the case of dime novels. On both sides of the Atlantic, these writers' works certainly came into the hands of the new readers - women, children and workers - who emerged in the nineteenth century as part of the reading public – fostered by the processes of mass literacy that took place particularly in nations such as France, England, and Germany. Research on book history and of reading shows that poor people's access to books during this time was directly associated with the emergence of reading rooms – called *circulating libraries* in Great Britain and the USA, *Cabinet de Lecture* in France and *Gabinetes de Leitura* in Portugal and Brazil, which guaranteed book borrowing at a low price.

On the other hand, the possibility of building a personal library through book purchasing depended upon book materials more affordable. This was guaranteed through cheap publications, such as dime novels in the USA or pocket books on the European continent. The physical characteristics of low-cost books – for which dime novels are examples – leave no question as to the publishing choices that allowed their prices to be reduced: poor paper quality, reduced margins, paperback covers, little space between the lines. It is clear that we cannot speak of publishing success or best sellers without necessarily considering the physical materiality of the books that reached the public. We must also discuss the print run and number of book editions distributed. Although these changes in the publishing world allowed readers of lesser means to access books, research on the circulation of these female authors' works demonstrate, from a social point of view, the verticality of their penetration. Or, in other words, many of these books have been read by readers of different social classes. Thus, it would be a mistake to say that there is a certain type of literary work which, due to its formal or aesthetic characteristics, is intended for a specific type of reader (distinguished by social or economic class). What is important to note, as we previously stated, is that the same work may have been read by the Queen of England, the Czech nobility, and trade workers from a distant province of northern Brazil. The collections of *Grêmio Literário Português do Pará* – and the works by English language writers are examples of this phenomenon and testament to the extent of the cultural globalization processed occurring in the 19th century – guaranteed by the transnational circulation of printed materials made possible by the proliferation of low-cost book materials. It was not by chance that the main works of these authors came to the Province of Pará. On the contrary, thanks to their strong insertion in nineteenth-century publishing capitalism, these women's works crossed social and national boundaries.

This finding raises an important question for researchers in the field of book history, reading, and literature: How were these works read by these different readers? It would be naive to imagine that the same text, appropriated by different readers from different cultures, would be interpreted uniformly. Despite their relevance, these different appropriations do not result solely from changes induced in the translation process, as shown by the research by the authors Ramicelli and Vasconcelos. Even in the case of a stable text, published in its native tongue, we can infer that the attribution of meaning largely depends on the reader's social and cultural belonging, which is endowed with historicity, like the text it appropriates, and which gives it meaning. The material form in which their works were published also had a significant impact on the research of the reception of these women's work by the reading public of the era in question. Certainly, researchers would not find these women discussed in literary histories of their era or even those of subsequent centuries. Their links to low-cost editions printed in bulk with mediocre materials certainly place these writers' in a position that literary criticism, since at least the nineteenth century, identifies as opposite to that of a work of art, supposedly oblivious to pecuniary interests. Meeting the demands of the publishing industry in the context of declining patronage came to be seen as a venal sin when committed by writers. It would have been too close mass market capitalism and, consequently, to the unskilled reader, likely oblivious to the discussions on national literature(s) that interested literate nineteenth century men. However, these writers certainly left indelible marks on the hearts and minds of anonymous readers who are usually of no interest to literary scholars.

Yet, these women and their works are increasingly under scrutiny by literary critics concerned with broadening their scope of analysis beyond that of works and authors commonly consecrated by national literary historiography. However, a long road remains to be traveled. Not surprisingly, these authors and their works feature in critical collections devoted to genres previously considered "minor", such as sensations novels - strongly identified with periodicals and *fait divers*, considered sufficient enough to devalue them - or with crime literature, detectives or police, also historically discredited by criticism because of its commercial appeal. Mentions of these women can also be found in dictionaries of authors dedicated to children's literature or in dictionaries related to periodical publishing. They can also be encountered in studies on specific publishing enterprises, such as those on dime novels, or even still on websites of institutions seeking to praise literary figures linked to their own history. That the records of their existence and performance during their era are so dispersed – interpreted another way – seems to reaffirm

the importance of these women in their time, since they demonstrate how these women reached a broad and an anonymous reading audience. In this sense, we dare to argue that if there were an interest in writing a history of literature from the reader's perspective, researchers would be forced to consider periodicals, books published in portable formats with low-quality materials, and finally copies of works still occupying the bookshelves of circulating libraries that spread to various countries in the nineteenth century. When investigating the collections of the *Grémio Literário Português do Pará*, we were not only faced with authors consecrated by British or American historiography but found within the old wooden bookshelves authors and works which, although they had wide editorial circulation in their time, obtained little posthumous visibility.

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