

Introduction

Theorizing Travels and Translations of Brazil in the Americas

Brazilian emperor Dom Pedro II (1825–1891) traveled by steamship from his native Rio de Janeiro to New York in 1876, the centennial of independence of the United States. After his arrival in mid-April, the emperor spent the next three months traversing the nation’s continental span via railroads and river steamships.¹ Traveling as Pedro de Alcântara, the emperor enjoyed a freedom of movement that he lacked within the hierarchical confines of the Brazilian monarchy (Barman 285). Along the way, he met political leaders, most notably President Ulysses S. Grant, and intellectual and cultural elites, including scientist and Harvard professor Louis Agassiz and writer Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. The emperor accessed privileged realms reserved for nineteenth-century elites whose political status, wealth, and education allowed them to intermingle within cosmopolitan circles. His interactions when discussing literature with Longfellow or marveling at the industrial capacity of new technologies at the Centennial Exhibition alongside Grant unfolded in a learned language of English, rather than his native Portuguese. Pedro II’s mobility across the United States and adeptness among accomplished scientists, artists, politicians, and business leaders depended upon his linguistic abilities and intellectual curiosity.

The emperor expressed in his diary an affinity for his encounters with Longfellow by describing the writer as an “excelente amigo em todo o sentido” (excellent friend in the complete sense; Pedro vol. 17, 49).² One evening, after a dinner at Longfellow’s house, the two men retired to the patio for a more intimate conversation that built on their knowledge of

the other's work and shared interests in the literatures and cultures of the Americas. Before physically traveling to the United States, Pedro II journeyed metaphorically among its peoples and geography by reading Longfellow's verses, specifically his 1847 epic *Evangeline*. Pedro commissioned Franklin Dória to translate the poem into Portuguese, which was published in Brazil in 1870. The poem connected with readers throughout the Americas with its tale of a young woman searching for her lost love and longing to return to the primeval forest of Acadia. With frequent translations into Spanish and Portuguese, the epic modeled how to craft a national poem by celebrating the distinct nature of the Americas.³ On that June evening at Longfellow's Cambridge home, the writer gave the emperor two books and asked various questions about Brazil in an exchange indicative of the emerging inter-American project that has foregrounded literary and political ties between the United States and Brazil since the nineteenth century. The encounter between the Brazilian emperor and the North American poet exemplifies the dynamics of hemispheric travel and translation at stake in this study. On his figurative and physical travels throughout the United States, Pedro II explored cultures and geographies that differed from those of his native Brazil and thus generated feelings of displacement. From his privileged position, the emperor navigated unfamiliar political and cultural realms with relative ease given his aptitude as a linguistic and cultural translator.

A renowned polymath and autodidact coronated as emperor at the age of fourteen, Pedro II had long engaged in processes of travel and translation when adapting and combining elements from European monarchies and the industrializing United States in order to build a modern Brazilian nation. For historian and anthropologist Lilia Moritz Schwarcz, Dom Pedro crafted Brazil as "an 'original copy': a culture constructed on continual borrowing that it incorporated, adapted, and redefined" (*The Emperor's Beard* xx). Her vision of Brazil as an "original copy," whereby it modeled itself on other nations' systems and practices but adapted them to local specificities, resonates with how the Brazilian artists and intellectuals that I study in this book approach translation as a theoretical concept and a necessary practice. Rather than dismiss it as derivative, they showcase translation's creative potential and utility in communicating across languages and cultures, even when efforts at cross-cultural exchange generate misunderstanding. Translation, I argue, is essential to negotiating the contradictory impulses that shape Brazil's position in the Americas. By translation, I refer to literal translations unfolding in spoken and written

language in multiple directions between Portuguese, English, Spanish, and indigenous languages and to the associated cultural encounters and exchanges. In a broader sense, translation also denotes processes of interpretation, explication, and transformation critical to navigating Brazil's place within the hemispheric Americas and, in particular, in relationship to the United States. Since the 1870s, when Dom Pedro II traversed the United States and journalist José Carlos Rodrigues (1844–1922) published the Portuguese-language periodical *O Novo Mundo* (The new world) from New York, Brazilians traveling to and living in the United States have felt displacements that demand personal acts of translation to facilitate movement within circles of North American elites and to render foreign ideas and experiences for their compatriots living in Brazil.

Move forward nearly 150 years to 2018, a moment when migration in the Americas has emerged as a humanitarian crisis further instigated by the inflammatory rhetoric and actions of far-right politicians Donald Trump and Jair Bolsonaro. Whereas Brazilian intellectual and artistic elites, whose works I study in the following chapters, continue to travel with relative ease throughout the hemisphere and beyond, other migrants and refugees embark on arduous journeys from Central America and, to a lesser extent, Brazil and other South American nations through Mexico to the United States or from Venezuela to neighboring Colombia and Brazil. They attempt to migrate without the required visas and other documentation that allow contemporary Brazilian writers like Silviano Santiago and Adriana Lisboa to study, work, and live in the United States. Disparities in education, socioeconomic backgrounds, and linguistic abilities contribute to these differentiated experiences of travel and migration as undocumented migrants and refugees confront draconian policies that close borders and authorize the separation of children from their parents.⁴ Language further marginalizes these migrants, especially when their native tongue is Portuguese or an indigenous language rather than the Spanish more frequently spoken by translators and authorities at the border.

The story of Jaene Silva de Miranda, a Brazilian mother separated from her three children at the US-Mexico border in June 2018, exemplifies how inabilities to translate between national languages and, thus, to navigate distinct cultural contexts hinder the mobility of travelers and migrants in the Americas.⁵ Miranda and her children traveled from the interior of Minas Gerais for five days, with four flights and a three-hour walk in the desert, to reach the southern border of the United States in a trajectory that parallels the journey of other undocumented Brazilian

immigrants, including the character Luiz in Lisboa's 2013 novel *Hanói*. In the fictional narrative, Luiz crossed illegally into the United States without apprehension by border patrol. In real life, Miranda did not encounter the same good fortune as Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents arrested her and separated her from her children. Negotiating the labyrinths of US immigration law without knowing Spanish and English further isolated Miranda and complicated her situation. After forty-four days, she was reunited with her children, thanks to the help of relatives living in the United States who hired a Brazilian immigration attorney.

The absence of Portuguese-language translators at the border and in the judicial system indicates that demands for linguistic and cultural translation, even when unfulfilled, continue to structure the lives of Brazilians who circulate with varying ease throughout the Americas. Undocumented migrants like Jaene Silva de Miranda and the fictional Luiz confront linguistic, legal, socioeconomic, and cultural barriers that impede their mobility between nations. After traversing these obstacles to arrive in the United States, they suffer a more radical sense of displacement than their elite counterparts in earlier eras and the current moment. Attempting to understand the experiences of Brazilians in the United States requires hearing the stories of both the privileged artists and intellectuals who document their own journeys and the struggling migrants who often lack the educational and financial resources to narrate their life stories. While my analysis in the subsequent chapters focuses on works by Brazilian elites who have lived in the United States or traveled metaphorically through the Americas, I recognize the critical need to include voices of undocumented migrants and other underrepresented peoples often elided in efforts to write and translate Brazil. Their stories tend to reach reading publics in Brazil and throughout the Americas via processes of translation that first occur between different socioeconomic and cultural milieus within the shared language of Brazilian Portuguese and, subsequently, between national languages. Writers like Santiago and Lisboa serve as these intralingual translators who convey tales of a migrant underclass in the United States to an educated readership in Brazil.

Since the nineteenth century, Brazilian intellectuals and artists who have spent time in the United States have integrated personal encounters and societal observations from abroad into their creative works. In doing so, they have facilitated the transfer and exchange of ideas, images, and experiences in both directions between Brazil and the United States. To complement these hemispheric journeys, other Brazilians, including mod-

ernist Mário de Andrade, traveled within their native country to discover popular, Amerindian, and Afro-descendant oralities, cultural practices, and folkloric traditions, which they translated for educated Brazilians by integrating and transforming them into their writings. For the Brazilian artists and intellectuals that I study here, travels generate dislocations and discoveries, which they process through linguistic and cultural translations that serve to communicate their knowledge and experiences to others. These travelers, whether privileged writers or the marginalized migrants that they represent, share a desire for the world, which Mariano Siskind identifies as the epistemological structure at the heart of cosmopolitan discourses (1). Whereas nineteenth-century journalists, twentieth-century modernists, and twenty-first-century global novelists exude an elite cosmopolitanism, the migrants and refugees that appear in select contemporary literature point to what Silviano Santiago terms the cosmopolitanism of the poor.⁶ Across this temporal span, the hemispheric travels of Brazilians reveal cross-cultural conflicts, connections, and contradictions that necessitate translation in its multiple meanings.

Creative Transformations: Travels and Translations of Brazil in the Americas contends that translation is essential to Brazil's standing in the Americas, even when it does not seem like translation is explicitly or directly at stake. The book asks: To what extent is it possible to "translate Brazil"? What are the political implications of such a project? Who are these translators of Brazil, and how do they contribute to representations and interpretations of the nation? How does a focus on translation's role in hemispheric exchanges contribute to our understanding of Brazil's place in the Americas? *Creative Transformations* argues that travels of Brazilian artists and intellectuals since the nineteenth century have resulted in displacements and encounters that demand linguistic, cultural, and epistemological translations. Travels unfold both geographically, as Brazilians leave their homes for the United States or distant regions of Brazil, and intellectually, as they read travel narratives and dialogue intertextually with Spanish American writers and theoretical concepts from abroad. During their journeys, these Brazilians comprehend foreign ideas and expressions via forms of creative translation that, in turn, shape Brazil's image abroad, especially in the Americas, as a nation of contradictions.

My approach to the topic of Brazil in the Americas is, by necessity, limited in its scope. I foreground the relationship between Brazil and the United States that develops through creative and critical works primarily in Portuguese and English. At times, intersections with Spanish American

texts and the Spanish language emerge within the Portuguese-language writings of Brazilians who have lived and studied in the United States. With allusions to Spanish American writers and multilingual conversations in Portuguese, Spanish, and English, these Brazilian texts establish connections to Spanish America that are often triangulated through the United States. In other instances, intertextual dialogues develop between narratives in Portuguese from Brazil and in English from Guyana and their inspirations in the languages and oral cultures of Amazonian Amerindians. The languages, nations, and cultures that I privilege in this book account for only a portion of the diverse linguistic and literary traditions of the Americas. To understand more fully the literatures of the Americas, it is necessary to consider texts from throughout the “New World” written in Spanish, Portuguese, and French, as well as indigenous and creole languages. With his 1991 study *Rediscovering the New World: Inter-American Literature in a Comparative Context*, Earl Fitz argued for such a comprehensive vision of inter-American literature.⁷ This method establishes inter-relations between literatures of the Americas on the basis of historical, geographic, and cultural affinities, most notably encounters between indigenous peoples and European colonial forces, histories of slavery, myths of national origin and expansion, and ongoing experiences of immigration.

In the intervening decades, Inter-American studies has emerged as a discrete field closely connected to Comparative Literature, Hemispheric American studies, and Latin American studies.⁸ Fitz addresses the current state of Inter-American literary studies and related disciplines in his 2017 tome *Inter-American Literary History: Six Critical Periods*. He recognizes advances in Americanist scholarship that emphasize comparisons between the United States, Spanish America, and the Caribbean yet fail to account for Canada and Brazil.⁹ “Giant, Portuguese-speaking Brazil,” Fitz laments, “so unique, as an American nation, in so many ways, is routinely ignored, rendered invisible” (*Inter-American* 382). This commentary on Brazil’s relative obscurity within comparative inter-American approaches points to ideas of Brazilian exceptionalism on the basis of its language and size. Linguistic, cultural, and intellectual barriers between Latin American nations tended to reinforce the divisions that the Treaty of Tordesillas established in 1494 as it split the Americas between Spain and Portugal. With his 1993 essay “Abaixo Tordesilhas!” (Down with Tordesillas), Jorge Schwartz joined Fitz and other scholars of Latin America in a call for

more comparative work between the literatures, cultures, and intellectual histories of Brazil and Spanish America.¹⁰

Studies comparing Brazil to Spanish-speaking Latin American and Caribbean nations, most notably Cuba, Mexico, and Argentina, have become more common in the last two decades.¹¹ These scholars examine similarities and inter-relations between literary and cultural works from different languages and contexts in order to reveal affinities across Latin American aesthetic grammars, thematic interests, and historical contexts. Other recent books advance a more explicitly inter-American perspective in comparisons between Brazil, Spanish America, and the United States. With their focus on poetry and poetics, Justin Read's *Modern Poetics and Hemispheric American Cultural Studies* (2009), Charles Perrone's *Brazil, Lyric, and the Americas* (2010), and Harris Feinsod's *The Poetry of the Americas: From Good Neighbors to Countercultures* (2017) recognize that hemispheric dialogues and creativity flourish in literary genres other than narrative. Perrone identifies a "transamerican verse" as an inextricable trait of poetic works that travel in the Americas (36). Read further elaborates on hemispheric links between travel, translation, and poetry: "The foundation of American culture is migration. The original language of the Americas is only ever translation. The poem is the process by which the language of migration—*translation*—materializes in its own right" (xxvii). I similarly regard translation and migration as central to the experiences of the Americas but do so without confining their literary and artistic expressions to poetry.

Within this burgeoning corpus of inter-American literary and cultural studies, I must acknowledge the contributions of Zita Nunes's *Cannibal Democracy: Race and Representation in the Literature of the Americas* (2008) and Antonio Luciano Andrade de Tosta's *Confluence Narratives: Ethnicity, History, and Nation-Making in the Americas* (2016). Their comparative readings prioritize the critical role of Brazil within hemispheric histories, artistic movements, and racial and ethnic constructs. Nunes analyzes discursive and artistic representations of race with a focus on Brazilian modernism and the Harlem Renaissance. In addition to stressing affinities and inter-relations between Brazil and the United States, she draws parallels to contemporary literary works from other parts of the Americas. Tosta likewise privileges Brazil in his analysis of contemporary narratives of historical confluence, which pairs a Brazilian novel with one from Mexico, the United States, Argentina, or Canada per chapter to

illuminate Amerindian, Afro-descendant, Jewish, and Asian experiences in the Americas. In thinking of Brazil in the Americas, I look toward works by Perrone, Nunes, and Tosta as examples of how to recognize hemispheric inter-relations of languages, literatures, and cultures and, at the same time, emphasize the prominence of Brazil as a territorial giant comparable to the United States. Rather than restrict my analysis to a specific literary genre or to a schematic comparative framework, I examine a varied archive that elucidates how travels of Brazilian artists and intellectuals inflect their creative and critical works with an ethos of translation. While my study favors narrative and the relationship of Brazil and the United States, I acknowledge that the hemispheric Americas constitutes a more encompassing idea.

The following chapters bring together periodicals, material and visual culture, essays, short stories, and novels from the late nineteenth through the early twenty-first centuries to reveal how linguistic, cultural, and epistemological translations shape Brazil's profile in the Americas. Exploring the hemispheric exchanges of Brazilian artists and intellectuals across this temporal span illuminates the critical role of translation in uncovering how politics and economics shape intersections of language, culture, and belonging. Translation serves as a fruitful theoretical and methodological approach to question Brazil's assumed marginality vis-à-vis the United States. My study suggests that ideas and examples from Brazil can enrich discussions of translation and cosmopolitanism in the US-based disciplines of Comparative Literature and Inter-American studies.¹² By drawing attention to the oft-overlooked presence of Brazilians among Latin American communities in the United States since the nineteenth century, the book proposes a more expansive and nuanced vision of Latinx identities and hemispheric connections.

My examination of Brazilians in the United States begins by situating *O Novo Mundo* as the creation of Brazilians living in New York in the 1870s. The periodical's cautious interest in establishing hemispheric connections resonates with the dual impulses of intrigue and disdain that Spanish American writers, most notably José Martí, expressed toward the United States while living in the country in the late nineteenth century.¹³ Encounters between Brazilians and Spanish Americans in the United States continue in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, as Silvano Santiago and Adriana Lisboa depict in their contemporary fictions. Their interactions pose a challenge to ideas of Brazilian exceptionalism on the basis of language, history, and culture. To a certain extent, they

point to the potential for a more inclusive form of *Latinidad* that accounts for Portuguese-speaking Brazilians and Spanish-speaking Caribbean and Latin American residents of the United States. Intellectual and artistic dialogues between Brazilians and Spanish Americans facilitate the construction of a hemispheric project that US geopolitical and socioeconomic interests in Pan-Americanism do not govern.¹⁴

Creative Transformations proposes a genealogy of key moments in the translation of Brazil within the hemispheric Americas since the late nineteenth century. A genealogy, as Lisa Lowe reminds us in her reading of Michel Foucault's concept, is a mode of creating a history of the present that uncovers how categories are established as given (3). To craft this history of the present, I trace how travel and translation have intersected to result in transcreation as a practice critical to the experiences and representations of Brazil in the Americas. By transcreation, I refer to the neologism that Haroldo de Campos developed for processes of experimental poetic and literary translation that require creative transposition. I employ the term more capaciously to characterize how languages, cultures, and ideas creatively transform as people and texts travel. My study begins with the second half of the nineteenth century as a moment when literal and figurative forms of translation emerged as key to elite constructs of Brazil. In particular, the 1870s marked a period of transition for Brazil and the United States as these two hemispheric giants attempted to define and project their nations on a global stage.¹⁵ Translation allowed Brazilian elites to embrace the nation's contradictions as an emerging modern nation whose place in the global system of early industrial capitalism depended upon its tropical resources. They argued for creatively adapting North American and European forms of modernity and modernization to Brazil's geographic, political, economic, and sociocultural specificities. Throughout the twentieth century and into the twenty-first, translation as a linguistic, cultural, and epistemological endeavor has facilitated negotiations and critiques of apparent binaries of local and global, national and cosmopolitan, and tropical and modern.

Crafting this genealogy reveals how acts of translation render transnational experiences of Brazilian travelers and migrants into national literary works. This approach also underscores continuities from the late nineteenth century through the early twenty-first, including a continued presence of Brazilians in the United States and a persistent desire for global recognition and prominence of a modern Brazil. My readings of a nineteenth-century periodical *O Novo Mundo* and its depictions of the

Centennial Exhibition, Mário de Andrade's modernist *Macunaíma* and its afterlives in film and fiction, Silviano Santiago's idea of the space in-between and its manifestations in fiction, and Adriana Lisboa's contemporary hemispheric Brazilian novels underscore how translation fosters cross-cultural exchanges yet generates misunderstandings. I examine translation as a thematic thread and a theoretical concern that weaves together these varied works. In this sense, I am not primarily addressing translation as literal textual rendering of a literary work from one national language to another. My analysis instead considers the personal forms of linguistic, cultural, and epistemological translation that develop as these writers and their characters travel and migrate. Translation facilitates linguistic and cultural dialogues, but it also confronts limitations as misinterpretations and other errors point to the potential of a politics of untranslatability that allows for the circulation of diverse voices and texts without flattening them into a homogeneous aesthetic.

Brazilian artists and intellectuals have often commented on their travels throughout the Americas in periodicals, diaries, essays, and fictional tales that reach mainly a readership in Brazil. These traveling peoples, ideas, and texts have contributed to the transnational process of constructing Brazil as a modern nation, seemingly despite its unruly tropical nature but actually due to its natural resources. Understanding Brazil as, in Benedict Anderson's concept, an "imagined community" draws attention to how periodicals, literary texts, and visual and material cultures craft the nation as a task of imagination that involves translations. In studying works since the late nineteenth century, I concentrate on periods of what Ottmar Ette terms "accelerated globalization" that also represent key moments in Brazil's negotiation of its global position. Ette outlines four phases of accelerated globalization: first, Spanish and Portuguese colonial expansion in the early modern era; second, British and French scientific explorations of the mid-eighteenth to early nineteenth centuries; third, neocolonial ambitions of the United States and Europe in the late nineteenth to early twentieth centuries; and, finally, the current phase of rapidly globalizing financial networks and communication systems. My book's first two chapters examine an 1870s periodical of "progress" and a 1928 modernist novel to coincide with what Ette identifies as the third phase of accelerated globalization. The other two chapters analyze essays, short stories, and novels from the 1970s through the 2010s, which roughly correspond to the final phase of heightened globalization.

The temporal framework of this study represents key developments in the history of Brazil and the United States. This overview of historical events from the 1870s to the 2010s serves to contextualize the literary and artistic works that I analyze in the following chapters.¹⁶ For both nations, the 1870s represented a period of transition in the aftermath of Brazil's defeat of Paraguay in the War of the Triple Alliance (1864–1870) and the Union's victory over the Confederacy in the US Civil War (1861–1865).¹⁷ In the post–Civil War years, especially before Reconstruction ended in 1876, the United States provided a potential path for how Brazil could transition from an empire where slavery remained legal to a republic that had abolished slavery. Moreover, with the United States replacing Europe as a center of capital and industrial growth in the late nineteenth century, Brazilian elites looked toward the United States as a new locus of production that could guide their nation's future direction.¹⁸ Following the abolition of slavery in 1888, Brazil became the last nation in the Americas to proclaim itself a republic in 1889. Though its new official name, *Estados Unidos do Brasil*, expressed an affinity with the United States of America, ideas from France inspired the republicanism of Brazil's urban intellectuals, but without a revolution. As historian Leslie Bethell explains, “Like the transition from colony to empire, the transition from empire to republic was marked more by fundamental social and economic continuity than change” (151).

The 1920s represented another period of transition for the young democracy of Brazil as the final decade of the first republic, which ended with the military coup of the Revolution of 1930 that brought Getúlio Vargas to power. Cultural revolutions were under way in São Paulo alongside these political ones as modernists attempted to rethink Brazilian literature and art and to rupture institutional structures with their Week of Modern Art in 1922.¹⁹ Mário de Andrade and his fellow modernists proposed visions of the nation that complicated romantic glorifications of indigenous peoples by recognizing cultural mixtures and slippages as constitutive of Brazilian identities. These years also saw the emergence of “racial democracy” as a construct and a myth central to perceptions of Brazilian national identity.²⁰ In contrast, Jim Crow laws and other forms of institutionalized racism dictated social norms in the southern United States. Different concepts and lived experiences of race in Brazil and the United States led Mário de Andrade to assert in his 1944 poem “*Canção de Dixie*” (Dixieland song), in English, “No, I’ll never be / In Colour

Line Land.²¹ True to his word, the modernist never visited the United States, but he learned via textual travels about the importance of African rhythms and instruments to popular music in the United States and the lack of recognition for African American musicians. During this period, the United States intervened in Latin America by occupying Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Nicaragua, and Honduras prior to implementing the Good Neighbor Policy in 1934. The 1929 stock market crash sent global economies reeling, resulting in the Great Depression in the United States. Against this economic backdrop, *Macunaíma*, as I analyze in the second chapter, struggled to reach an audience in translation given the constriction in the publishing market.

Roughly forty years later, Brazil faced another political crisis with the 1964 military coup and the subsequent dictatorship that lasted until 1985. After the decree of the Fifth Institutional Act (AI-5) in December 1968, which tightened the regime's authoritarian control by suspending indefinitely all legislative bodies, ending habeas corpus, and heightening censorship, Brazilian leftists and dissidents entered into voluntary or forced exile.²² The late 1960s and early 1970s saw Tropicália musicians Caetano Veloso and Gilberto Gil living in London, singer-songwriter Chico Buarque staying in Italy, and visual artist Hélio Oiticica and intellectual Silviano Santiago residing in New York.²³ Santiago's fiction explores migration and exile, while his theory of the space in-between responded to geopolitical hierarchies that marginalized Latin Americans, as I discuss in the third chapter. In the context of the Cold War, the United States exerted influence in Latin America and throughout the Global South via cultural and economic imperialism and, at times, direct political intervention. Cold War cultural politics contributed to the Latin American Boom as an editorial phenomenon of translation in an effort to garner interest in countries deemed politically relevant to the United States through literary and artistic expressions.²⁴ Heightened concern in the United States with Brazil and Spanish America during this period influenced Santiago's professional and personal trajectory as he taught Portuguese at the University of New Mexico and interacted with other Latin American migrants and exiles in the United States.

The first decades of the twenty-first century are emerging as another critical transition for the global position of Brazil and its relationship to the United States. The election of Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva in 2002 inaugurated a period of optimism in Brazil as political and social change seemed

possible under the leadership of the Workers' Party (PT). Increased global prominence as one of the BRIC nations coincided with these domestic developments.²⁵ In 2013, historian Marshall Eakin echoed this enthusiasm by proclaiming, "The time has come to recognize that the country of the future has become the country of the present" ("The Emergence" 230). This assessment of Brazil as a global political and economic leader has proved premature. In the wake of its moment in the international spotlight as the host of the 2014 World Cup and the 2016 Olympic Games, Brazil has entered a deepening crisis, with the impeachment and conviction of Dilma Rousseff, economic instability, increasing inequality and violence, and the rise of the far-right culminating in Bolsonaro's election in October 2018 and his disastrous first year in office. Similar to the case of Trump in the United States, the electoral success of Bolsonaro responds, in part, to frustrations among segments of Brazil with the political and socioeconomic gains of Afro-descendants, women, LGBTQ+ communities, and other underrepresented minorities. In particular, racial animosity and xenophobia have fueled the support of these far-right leaders.

The movement of migrants and travelers between Brazil and the United States continues, though not as freely as it once had. In the wake of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, the United States sought greater control over the entry of foreign nationals into the country by increasing border security and tightening visa requirements. The demand for inexpensive, immigrant labor persisted in the United States, even as entering the country and remaining there legally became more difficult. As a result, the population of undocumented immigrants continued to grow until it peaked in 2007.²⁶ Due to the constraints on immigration and the contraction of the US economy following the 2008 financial crisis, Brazilian immigrants in the United States returned to Brazil, where the economy was fairing comparatively well.²⁷ The hemispheric Brazilian novels by Adriana Lisboa that I analyze in the fourth chapter exist in this landscape where political and economic fortunes link Brazil and the United States and shape migratory flows between the nations. With its broad temporal scope, *Creative Transformations* draws parallels and recognizes differences between distinct historical moments. Geopolitical and socioeconomic contexts ground my analysis of textual relationships and intellectual networks that develop as Brazilian artists and intellectuals embark on hemispheric travels. By exploring how their experiences of displacement affect their personal negotiations between distinct languages,

cultures, and ideas, I assert that literal and figurative processes of translation are central to representing and understanding Brazil's place in the Americas.

Toward a Latin American Theory of Translation

My interest in the intersections of travel and translation builds upon two seminal studies from the 1990s: *Routes: Travel and Translation in the Late Twentieth Century*, by James Clifford, and *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*, by Mary Louise Pratt. They interrogate the imperial and colonial practices underlying naturalist and ethnographic travels to document the "otherness" of the non-Western world. For anthropologist Clifford, travel is a "translation term," or, in other words, a comparative concept (11). This figurative understanding emphasizes that movement and transformation structure both travel and translation. Literary scholar Lydia H. Liu similarly notes that "comparative scholarship that aims to cross cultures can do nothing but translate" (1). In framing translation as essential to the critical work of comparison, both Clifford and Liu engage with and build upon Edward Said's 1983 essay on "Traveling Theory." Said identifies four stages in the travel of a particular theory, beginning with the origin; continuing with, second, the distance traversed; third, the conditions that allow for the introduction of the idea to another context; and ending with the incorporation of a transformed version of the idea in this new realm (227). Liu notes, however, that the traveling part of this equation becomes lost as subsequent scholars, including Clifford, take up Said's concept. The idea of traveling theory, Liu argues, tends to prioritize theory by granting it mobility, while it "fails to account for the vehicle of translation" (21). Overlooking translation's role in this process renders travel an abstraction that does not recognize how the movement of theory unfolds in specific directions and languages for distinct purposes and publics. Liu's analysis corrects this oversight by paying attention to how texts and ideas travel to China in the early twentieth century. Though I focus on a different context of Brazil in the Americas, I similarly aim to examine how the spatial and temporal dimensions of travel generate what Liu terms the "condition of translation" (26). Rather than consider translation as a neutral aesthetic act, I stress its enmeshment in geopolitical, socioeconomic, cultural, epistemological, and ideological realms.

As Brazilians have traveled in the Americas, their displacements have resulted in cross-cultural exchanges that invite personal gestures of translation. For Pratt, the contact zone denotes these contentious spaces of encounter. Hierarchical relationships of colonialism, imperialism, and slavery governed the dynamics between European naturalists who traveled to Latin America in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and the indigenous, Afro-descendant, and creole peoples who lived there. Without explicitly linking travel and translation, Pratt proposes transculturation to describe the transfers and transformations between cultures that occur in these contact zones.²⁸ According to Fernando Ortiz in *Cuban Counterpoint: Tobacco and Sugar* (1940), transculturation refers to a reciprocal process whereby cultures transform each other to create a new distinctive form. Ortiz contrasted transculturation with acculturation, which consisted of one culture adapting and assimilating into the more dominant culture. Ángel Rama later adapted this anthropological concept of transculturation to literature to characterize the interactions of autochthonous Latin American cultures and European influences that result in Latin American narratives' distinctive language, literary structures, and cosmovisions. Drawing on Rama's work, Pratt employs transculturation to account for the transformations central to the imperial gaze of European naturalists and the self-fashioning of Latin American creoles. By emphasizing how language and culture change with travel, Pratt constructs a theoretical concept that resembles my vision of translation, in its varied manifestations, as creative transformation.

With translation as my critical lens, I explore how travels and migrations of people and texts produce linguistic and cultural transformations that, in turn, extend the reach of a given work, image, or idea. Circulation emerges as a key concept in recent studies of translation, most notably Ignacio Infante's *After Translation: The Transfer and Circulation of Modern Poetics Across the Atlantic*.²⁹ Infante builds on an anthropological conceptualization of circulation to analyze the role of translation in the creation and transmission of modern transatlantic poetry. For Benjamin Lee and Edward LiPuma, "cultures of circulation" refer to processes of transmission that involve performative and constitutive elements of culture (192–93). Envisioning circulation in this manner invites us to consider how cultures constitute and project themselves within a global capitalist market. In identifying transformation and circulation as critical processes, I draw attention to how travels of peoples, texts, and ideas

create displacements and unexpected encounters that require linguistic, literary, and cultural translations.

Literary studies often view translation as a mode of travel in the sense of *translatio* or carrying across that entails spatial and temporal dimensions. This focus on travel has, according to Rebecca Walkowitz, “tended to emphasize the distinction between literature’s beginnings and its afterlives” (29). This comment recalls Walter Benjamin’s view of translation as the afterlife or continuation of a text into another language, place, and time. In his 1923 essay “The Translator’s Task,” Benjamin contends that translation “develops into a linguistic sphere that is both higher and purer” as it proceeds from the original (79). He frames translation as a form determined by a text’s translatability, by which he refers to the distinctiveness and quality of the original’s language. His ideas contrast with commonplace definitions within the publishing market that equate relative ease of translating a text with its translatability. Benjamin’s concept of translatability dialogues with the philosophical construct of the untranslatable.³⁰ For Barbara Cassin and Emily Apter, the untranslatable does not denote the impossibility of rendering a word into another language but rather indicates a word or an idea that, on a conceptual level, demands recurrent interpretations and attempts at translation. Although Walkowitz alludes to Benjamin’s ideas, her comment on differentiating literary origins and afterlives refers specifically to studies by David Damrosch and Pascale Casanova that feature translation as essential to world literature as a category, method, and theory. For Damrosch, positioning translation as an institution of world literature elucidates how a text transcends its linguistic and contextual origins when circulating within global networks and markets (281). Casanova’s Francocentric vision of world literature contends that “critical recognition and translation are weapons in the struggle by and for literary capital” (23). According to Casanova, critics and translators grant cultural capital and prestige to literary and cultural works as they circulate within a global market.

Circulations of literary and cultural texts respond to market demands and depend upon the actions of “agents of translation.” John Milton and Paul Bandia conceive of an “agent” in translation as a producer, editor, patron, writer, or literary agent who mediates between a translator and the final translation (1). These agents function as gatekeepers who determine which works circulate and influence the shape of the resulting translations. The artists and intellectuals that I study in the following chapters serve as agents of translation in a more expansive sense. While at times

they mediate between an individual translator and a final translation, they also navigate more figurative and conceptual realms by rendering ideas of the nation and explicating dense theories. *O Novo Mundo's* editor José Carlos Rodrigues facilitated the publication of a serialized and abridged translation into Portuguese of Harriet Beecher Stowe's *My Wife and I*. In the 1930s and 1940s, Mário de Andrade's correspondence with North American and German translators revealed efforts to enable *Macunaíma's* publication in translation. With their interpretations in *Glossário de Derrida*, Silviano Santiago and his students aimed to make Jacques Derrida's ideas more accessible to readers of Brazilian Portuguese in the 1970s. Adriana Lisboa's background as a literary translator informs how she interacts with the translators of her novels. Recognizing these artists and intellectuals as agents of translation, who also engage in individual acts of linguistic and cultural translation while traveling in and beyond Brazil, draws attention to networks of people and texts that shape Brazil's place in the Americas.

Poets, critics, and translators Haroldo and Augusto de Campos embrace the role of agents of translation by promoting unknown foreign writers and forgotten figures in Brazilian letters, experimenting with ver-bivocovisual poetics in their own verse and translations, and positing new methods of translation.³¹ The *paulista* brothers brought translation to the forefront of literary activity in Brazil with their critical essays and their translations of key literary figures such as James Joyce, e. e. cummings, Ezra Pound, Paul Valéry, Stéphane Mallarmé, Arnaut Daniel, Octavio Paz, Dante, Goethe, and Vladimir Mayakovsky from a range of languages, including English, French, Occitan, Spanish, Italian, German, and Russian.³² They also traveled to the United States as visiting scholars and writers at the University of Texas at Austin in the 1980s, which contributed to their inter-American poetic and intellectual dialogues. In analyzing the Campos brothers as agents of translation, Thelma Médici Nóbrega and John Milton stress that especially Haroldo "has had considerable influence on attitudes towards translation; he has put forward a complex theory of translation that emphasizes the aural and visual aspects of the translation of literature" (258). His 1962 essay "Da tradução como criação e como crítica" ("Translation as Creation and Criticism") proposes a semiotic approach to translation's creative and critical potential without citing a wide range of theoretical works. Rather than assume the impossibility of translating works by experimental writers like Pound, Mayakovsky, and Joyce, Haroldo posits that "every translation of a creative text will

always be a ‘re-creation,’ a parallel and autonomous, although reciprocal, translation—‘transcreation’” (*Novas* 315). This formulation differentiates literal, word-for-word translations from a creative process of re-creation governed by an isomorphic relationship, reminiscent of a Poundian ideogram, between a text and its translation. A translation is one work among a constellation of texts that recreate the sign and the signified in another language to contribute to the overall meaning of the original.

Over the next two decades, Haroldo de Campos read touchstones of translation theory, including “The Translator’s Task” and Roman Jakobson’s 1959 essay “On Linguistic Aspects of Translation,” and refined his theorizing of transcreation. Frustrated with the focus on literalness in translation, he proposed new terms that characterized translation as a creative process, as he outlined in his 1985 essay “Da transcrição: poética e semiótica da operação tradutora” (Transcreation: poetics and semiotics of translative operations). These neologisms include, in addition to the previously cited re-creation (*re-criação*) and transcreation (*transcrição*), reimagination (*reimaginação*), transtextualization (*transtextualização*), transparadization (*transparadisação*), and transluciferation (*transluciferação*). Transcreation has emerged as the term with the most critical weight and staying power. At a semiotic level, transcreation operates as a practice that misconfigures and, at the same time, transfigures (*Transcrição* 101). In Jakobson’s formulation of poetic translation as “creative transposition,” which emphasizes movements within and between languages, Haroldo de Campos identifies a concept primed for further analysis in disciplines of literature, history, and anthropology.

The essay also invokes Benjamin’s metaphysical concept of translation, which serves to liberate pure language through a process of transpoetization (98). Given their approach to theorizing translation as critics, writers, and translators, both Campos and Benjamin tended to valorize the translator’s creative agency and to dismiss readings of translations as mere copies. To illustrate this point, Haroldo de Campos cites Benjamin’s metaphor of a vessel, broken into pieces and then reconstructed. The translator must divide the original text, which the vase represents, into component parts and reconstitute it in another language, resulting in a work that approximates the original but is not a perfect copy. This image of breaking apart and recreating a work in another context underscores the craft involved in processes of translation. Moreover, with his interests in semiotics and the philosophy of language, the Brazilian

poet-critic recognizes the slippages that occur between the sign and the signified in a given language. Translation, therefore, can never function as a mechanical reproduction resulting in an exact duplicate of the original in another language. Literary and cultural translators must embark on a creative practice that involves reading and interpreting the work, breaking it down into structures of meaning, and then reassembling it in a different context.

In line with these theoretical interventions from Brazil, I frame translation as a critical tool for questioning the supposedly peripheral positions of Brazil and the rest of Latin America in the hemisphere and beyond. My approach to theorizing translation with Latin American and, in particular, Brazilian texts expands upon Sergio Waisman's compelling study of how creative infidelities in translation contest established hierarchies and allow writers from peripheries to exert irreverence with respect to dominant North American or European literature. In focusing his analysis on Argentine writer Jorge Luis Borges and translation, Waisman emphasizes the spatial and temporal specificity of translation to posit the distinct role of the translator in Argentine and, more generally, Latin American culture. Waisman astutely places Borges's thoughts on translation in dialogue with prominent twentieth-century theorists Benjamin, Jakobson, and Derrida. He contends that Borges's playful approach to translation questions concepts of the definitive text and fidelity, which anticipates recent trends in translation studies (Waisman 72). Beginning with his 1926 text "Las dos maneras de traducir" ("Two Ways to Translate"), Borges insisted on how spatial and temporal contexts impact the meaning of words, an idea further fleshed out in his renowned 1939 piece "Pierre Menard, autor del *Quijote*" ("Pierre Menard, Author of the *Quixote*"). Comparisons of Miguel de Cervantes's seventeenth-century masterpiece and Pierre Menard's twentieth-century rewriting of the novel emphasize that a text's significance can vary based on the conditions of its creation and reception, even when its contents remain identical. In pieces on the Homeric versions and the translators of *One Thousand and One Nights*, Borges similarly stressed the impossibility of a definitive text and its faithful translation by framing translations as versions that add to the meaning of a given work. Placing the works of Borges and the Campos brothers in dialogue underscores similarities in their visions of translation as creative rewriting that questions ideas of the definitive text and the perfect copy.³³ Comparing Argentine and Brazilian writers and translators

establishes translation theories and practices that contest allocating ideas from Latin America to a peripheral realm.

For modernist Oswald de Andrade, Brazilians needed to engage in *antropofagia*, a form of digesting foreign cultures and ideas and transforming them into original works. In the 1960s, Haroldo and Augusto de Campos evoked a modernist ethos of making it new again to define translation with neologisms transcreation, translation-art, and intranslation. Literary and translation studies scholars, including Else R. P. Vieira, K. David Jackson, and Edwin Gentzler, link modernism's cultural cannibalism to the Campos brothers' translation theory.³⁴ These critics identify in Brazilian thought and culture a recurrent devouring of texts, languages, ideas, and cultural practices in order to create something new. This process involves interpretative analysis and creative transformation, as I illustrate in the following chapters by exploring how Brazilian artists and intellectuals negotiate cross-cultural encounters during hemispheric travels. Akin to Borges's view of translation, transcreations require the creative agency of the translator, who interprets the text and contributes to its meaning by transforming it and reconstituting it in a new context. Latin American theories of literary translation establish a critical grammar to analyze the travels, linguistic encounters, cultural exchanges, and creative transformations that have defined Brazil's position in the Americas since the nineteenth century.

The approach of Brazilian and Spanish American writers to translation invites attention to geopolitical, economic, linguistic, and cultural dynamics of the global production and circulation of literature, which Emily Apter studies with her concepts of the translation zone and the politics of untranslatability. Apter proposes the translation zone as one of "critical engagement that connects the 'l' and 'n' of transLation and trans-Nation" (*The Translation Zone* 5). Literature and art created in this zone do not belong to a single nation, nor do they exist in an amorphous realm of postnationalism. Instead, as I demonstrate in this study, literary and cultural works of translation zones reveal an entanglement of the national and the transnational. The construction of a modern Brazil unfolded in the nineteenth century as a transnational process foregrounding ties to the United States due to emerging networks of capital, industry, and higher education. Throughout the twentieth century and into the twenty-first, the nation persists as an imagined community and as a cultural construct that contributes to how individuals position themselves in the world, even