

## Issues of sexuality in the elderly as represented in Brazilian literature

*A problemática da sexualidade do indivíduo idoso representada na literatura brasileira*

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**ABSTRACT:** This article aims to analyze how sexuality in elderly is represented in Brazilian literature, drawing a picture of it at different times. It seeks to identify the silencing of sexuality dramatic effects impacting on old age in the societies the elderly come from, as well as the way such societies use to expose the hypocrisy of human relationships.

**Keywords:** Sexuality; Aging; Brazilian Literature.

**RESUMO:** *Este artigo tem como objetivo analisar como a sexualidade na velhice é representada na literatura brasileira, fazendo um recorte da mesma em diferentes épocas. Procura-se identificar as marcas do drama do silenciamento da sexualidade na velhice nas sociedades de que são oriundas, bem como a forma que utilizam para denunciar a hipocrisia das relações humanas.*

**Palavras-chave:** *Sexualidade; Velhice; Literatura Brasileira.*

## Introduction

The social perception of the elderly undergoes a stigmatization of worthlessness that functions as a potentiality reduction factor in the aging process. When an old person, because of his/her physical limitations, is considered useless for the social environment, he/she no longer has his/her own choices and wills and begins to live other people`s wishes and choices whether relatives, children, friends or strangers. And among these, in almost all parts of the world, sexuality in the elderly has been treated with indifference.

The representation of the elderly in society is growing increasingly in the social environment, but when it comes to sexuality, there are still traces of the old Western religious culture in treating the elderly as an asexual, angelic being, what becomes a hindrance to the achievement of free sexuality by older individuals. This myth of asexuality is reinforced when sex is directly related to young people and, in contemporary society, attraction is still connected only to youth.

The elderly, no longer seen as the bearer of wisdom and memory, but as an obsolete and disposable person, must be understood in his/her entirety: advanced age is not only a biological factor but also a cultural factor. Thus, the question of linking sexuality in a senescent individual to society in which he/she is inserted becomes a crucial point in the study of sexuality in the elderly.

The current research aimed to examine the different contexts of sexuality in the elderly shown in Brazilian Literature, according to the time of the narratives.

## Material and Methods

This study uses the exploratory method, query databases, dissertations, theses, books and literary works, using the following keywords: "elderly", "aging", "sexuality" and "literary art".

## Results

In Brazilian narratives, the relationship between elderly characters and sexuality is always tense.

Elderly men, overwhelmed by the need to prove to themselves and to others the existence of desire and sexual practice and, at the same time, beset by an adverse reality that imposes restrictions on such practice mainly through diseases – chooses the paths of nonconformity, non-resignation and search, trying to preserve his sexual activity at any cost. Thereby, there is a group consisting of protagonists who are disavowed old, looking for masturbation as a way of replacing sexual activity. The second group comprises of elderly characters who try to exercise sexuality establishing a relationship with a lover, being apparently successful or, at the other extreme, consolidating abysmal failure. And finally, a group of elderly characters who abandoned the search, resulting in distinct feelings – resignation, discontent and anger.

Elder men, associating machismo with conservatism, preconceives the search for the stereotype of "Amélia" (*the perfect housewife*), framing the relationship in the commonplace, in which affection is absent and women are interested in a man's money. In some writings, visual pleasure acts as a substitute for bodily pleasure, indicating that the existence of sexual contact between them is unlikely.

Concerning sexuality in elderly women, it is necessary to understand the distance between the path of socio-cultural integration and a woman's life project. The construction of the feminine role should persist through aging with its construction being organized during the life cycle. Modernity brought difficulties for the adaptation of aged women who lived in a context of major changes between family obligations and professional work. Maturity is based on family values with the ideal of marriage and the constitution of their own families consecrated through the birth of children.

Contemporary literature illustrates social changes over the years, particularly as to the condition of women. The context of repression determines the shy and teen behavior of some elderly characters who, with a background permanently marked by repression, found themselves in a crisis in advanced age. Reiterating repression, they are unable to follow the macho model and search for a "solution" in the streets, turning into

themselves, isolating themselves. This insight would gain an aura of spirituality if accompanied by sexual abstinence. However, protagonists, educated in a conventional and repressive context, see desire as a torment, making any search for inner balance artificial. As a result, in appearance repression generates an extremely conservative speech and an attitude of disgust with sexuality, but the essence is reflected by unconformity as for the cessation of sexuality and the underground manifestation of desire.

In the Baroque poetry of Gregório de Matos (1636-1695), in his lyrical phase, the sonnet "*Terceira vez impaciente muda o poeta o seu soneto na forma seguinte*" ("*Third time impatient the poet changes his sonnet in the following manner*"), in which it is declared love to a beautiful girl, shows in its last verses the exact idea of sexuality being associated only with youth. The poet, quoting old age, characterizes it pejoratively, where the self-lyrical advises the character to enjoy his youth. In the first triplet, he insists on the destructive power of time and "mature age" represents the elderly, being compared to the winter that has the power to strip away what is "greenery", which in this context represents freshness, youth. In the second triplet, the poet mentions "past the zenith of youth", which represents the pinnacle of youth, the time when death does not come to the girl, resulting in the loss of beauty.

*Discreet and extremely beautiful Maria,  
While we are clearly seeing  
In your burning view the burning sun,  
And in the rosy face the cold dawn:*

*While it produces, while it creates  
This gentle sphere, excellent mine,  
In the hair the shiniest metal,  
And in the mouth the finest precious stones:*

*Enjoy, enjoy the flower of beauty,  
Before the cold of mature age  
Trunk turn naked, what is greenery.*

*Past the zenith of youth,  
Without the night finding the grave,  
Each day is the sunset of beauty* (Gregório de Matos Guerra, 2010, p.339).

Representing Brazilian realism, Machado de Assis (1839-1908), in *Memórias Póstumas de Brás Cubas* (*Brás Cubas Posthumous Memoirs*), (1880), describes the deceased author who considers himself old, telling adventures that he lived before senility, when passion was unrestrained, but that, after 20 years, did not survive as if time were the destroyer of the desire that existed between the couple.

*"He left; Virgilia was allowed to stand; for some time we looked at each other without articulating a word. Who would say? Two great boyfriends, two unrestrained passions, nothing else was there, twenty years later; there were only two shriveled hearts, torn and filled by life, I do not know if in the same dose, but ultimately satisfied."*  
(Machado de Assis, 1994, p.07).

In another excerpt from the book *Memórias Póstumas de Brás Cubas* (*Brás Cubas Posthumous Memoirs*), unlike Gregório de Matos who does not see beauty in the elderly, Machado de Assis shows that the deceased author, who was 50 years old, features the beloved in a different way, without the youth desire, in a more angelic way, in which Virgilia's elderly beauty had "an air of severeness, motherliness". He observed that she was still very beautiful, even though it was a different beauty. Thereby, we can see the beginning of the evolution of the loving side representation of the elderly, although still far from the representation of sexuality and cultural difference between a man and a woman aging process.

*"Virgilia now had the beauty of old age, an air of severeness, motherliness; she was less lean than when I saw her for the last time at a St. John's party in Tijuca, and because she was one of those who withstands, only now her dark hair started to interlay with a few silver strands."* (Machado de Assis, 1994, p.07).

Elsewhere in the same novel, the character Virgília stops worrying about the opinion of society because she was "old", i.e. because of her advanced age, it was no longer considered possible to have a sexual relationship by the judgment of the rigid society of the time. For elderly women, there was only repression because sexual desire was considered nonexistent.

*"– Already; I will come tomorrow or later – I do not if it is a good idea, I replied; the patient is a bachelor and there are no ladies in the house... – Your sister? – She will come to spend a few days here, but not before Saturday. Virgília thought for a moment, shrugged and said gravely:*

*– I am old! No one notices me. But to eliminate any doubts, I will come with Nhonhô." (Machado de Assis, 1994, p.08).*

In the early twentieth century, Brazilian pre-modernism begins to show a new vision of society, lessening morality. In this context, the sexuality in the elderly, before denied, is announced in senior characters who demonstrate sexual desire. Oswald de Andrade (1890-1954) represents, in *"O Rei da Vela"* (*"The King of Sail"*) (1937), the relationship between Abelardo I and his future mother-in-law, Ms. Cesariana. In the following excerpt, Ms. Cesariana seems at first worried about the social issue and with the fact of being deceived by getting involved with her future son-in-law. But, finally, she shows interest in his attempts and reports that she can still be "kindle", being the sexual desire of the elderly clearly demonstrated.

*"Ms. CESARINA – Also. Finishing a friendship of three years. They were like brothers... He and Godofredo lived in the same room. For these and other reasons, I do not like to deceive myself. Your courtships...*

*ABELARDO I – My courtships are sincere ... my future mother-in-law ... Who tells you to dress like this, with this "jararaca" swimsuit! Which saint would resist? Look, it is serious, really serious! D.*

*CESARINA – You want to make me even angrier... Sadder than yesterday. Are you still proceeding improperly?*

*ABELARDO I – But Ms. Cesarina! Believe me! Please! Ms. CESARINA – Liar!*

*ABELARDO I – Shall I blame myself for being weak? Guilt feeling. Ms. CESARINA – It is not that...*

*ABELARDO I – Then what it is...*

*Ms. CESARINA – I got a feeling... The fear of not being understood!*

*ABELARDO I – But what is this! Why don't you smile more and exudes the perfume of withered roses? Looks like a cemetery among cypresses!...*

*Ms. CESARINA – That is where I will end up because of you ...*

*ABELARDO I – I give to Caesar what is Caesar's. Or rather, to Cesarina what is Cesarina's...*

*D. CESARINA – You are pretending! Tell me one thing. Why do you lie so much, huh? And provokes me so much!*

*ABELARDO I – I swear!*

*Ms. CESARINA – You know I can not drink champagne. The other night when we danced foxtrot, you put me in the rain, then started with those graces and that immorality. Don't you know that God does not want us to say things that we do not feel? That it is a mortal sin to covet your neighbor's wife? Go to hell...*

*ABELARDO I – No. I already know I am going to purgatory...*

*Ms. CESARINA - We should never say what we do not feel. It is horrible being cheated!*

*ABELARDO I – And if it were true! If my heart had inflamed with the contagion of your bright summer?*

*Ms. CESARINA – I am the only one who knows my age!*

*ABELARDO I – My Vesuvius!*

*Ms. CESARINA (Laughing and threatening) – Be careful, because I still can kindle..." (Oswald de Andrade, 2008, pp.43-45)*

In this same work, there is still reference to Ms. Poloca whose name alludes to "Polish", hustler, and who has a false moralizing speech, showing that she still values the opinion of society. Since she is not a married lady, she schemes virginity at 62, trying to bear an angelic image accepted by religion.

Finally, in modernism, the sexual desire elderly women gains representativeness. Clarice Lispector (1920-1977), in her short stories "*Ruído de Passos*" ("*Sound of Steps*") and "*Mas Vai Chover*" ("*But It Will Rain*"), in the anthology *A Via Crucis do Corpo* (*The Via Crucis of the Body*), (1998); and "*À Procura de uma Dignidade*" ("*Looking for Dignity*"), and in the anthology *Onde Estiveres de Noite* (*Where Were You at Night*), (1992), shows the repressed sexuality in aged women who face or are subject to the impositions of society that represses them, or who try to seek the lost youth. In fact, it is also the beginning of the representation of the sexuality in common aged women, who are not or were not prostitutes. The author makes room for other

discussions that were absent in other creations, covering topics such as pornography, masturbation and sex in old age, which are considered taboo. "All the stories in this book are compelling. And I was the one who suffered most. I was shocked by reality" (Lispector, 1998, p.10). Supposedly the stories already existed in the real plane, it was only necessary to turn them into fiction. Clarice tried to publish the stories under the pseudonym Claudio Lemos, with only the initials "CL" being revealed, so that her children would not read them as they would be ashamed, but this was not accepted (Oliva & Silva, 2012). In the tales of this narrative, the common thread is the body as a destabilizing element, presenting it connected to feelings of hopelessness, desire, power and revenge. In "*Ruído de Passos*" ("*Sound of Steps*") and "*Mas Vai Chover*" ("*But It Will Rain*"), the characters Ms. Cândida Raposo and Maria Angélica, naturally and realistically, try to find a path to achieve their desires, even in a frustrating way. With femininity being denied in old age – which is seen as the end of life, the end of the reproductive capacity and often as the loss of capacity for sexual pleasure, the only role accepted is as a grandmother, the one who takes care of grandchildren and is dedicated to knitting, a euphemistic way to wait for the "last minute". However, Clarice exposes another side of the female old age, not in a negative sense, but through women considered old who have sexual desires and feel entitled to enjoy and please them.

In "*Ruído de Passos*" ("*Sound of Steps*"), Clarice Lispector clearly shows the representation of sexual desire even at 81 years old, though the patient misunderstands her as she cannot see why pleasure is still present in her life. The protagonist, Ms. Cândida Raposo, had live vertigo understanding these moments as anxiety and distress. Feeling embarrassed about having a desiring body, the protagonist went to the gynecologist to talk about "the thing", the desire for pleasure and the attempt to end her wills. She feels discomfort with the situation and approached the doctor to try to get rid of martyrdom because having desire for pleasure was living in hell. Despite feeling shy to express her libido, she filled herself with courage and faced her inner conflict. She had been raised to be restrained, repressed, a mother, a wife – stereotypes that pushed her away from her current condition. During all her life, she carried in her own name the "weight" of purity because Cândida means innocence, purity. In the following excerpt, we can see how she was shocked when she got the answers from the doctor:



*"Finally she had the great courage to go to a gynecologist. And asked him ashamed, low head: - When does it come to an end? - What, ma'am? - The Thing. - Which thing? - The thing, she repeated. The desire for pleasure, she finally said. - Ma'am, I'm sorry to tell you, but it never ends. She looked at him amazed. But I'm eighty-one years old! - It doesn't matter, ma'am. It will last until you die. - But this is hell! - It's life, Ms. Raposo. So is that life, then? This lack of shame? - And what do I do? Nobody wants me anymore... The doctor looked at her with pity. There is no remedy, ma'am. - And what if I paid? - It would have no effect. You have to remember that you are eighty-one years old. - And what if I take care of myself? Do you understand what I mean? - Yes, said the doctor. It could be a remedy." (Clarice Lispector, 1998, pp. 55-56).*

In the tale *"Mas Vai Chover"* (*"But It Will Rain"*), the character Maria Angélica, who is 60 years old, appears to be more daring and willing to meet the wishes of her sexuality. However, we can note in the text a lack of social understanding even from her lover, a young deliverer of pharmaceuticals, 19 years old, who once again reveals the value given only for the beauty of youth.

*"[...] he was the strength, the youth, the sex abandoned long time ago. [...] She noticed that he had a few pimples on the face. But that did not detract from his beauty and masculinity: the hormones were boiling there. That was a real man." (Lispector, 1998, p.76).*

The contemplation of the young boy's body is a kind of redemption to life, it brought her joy, allowing Angélica to bear old age. The old and frail body would be "forgotten" in favor of life and youth, and it was no longer failed and useless; the character sees in the boy a chance to get out of the void of social relations and increase her self-esteem. It would be a gateway to the social distancing created in relation to the aging body, treated as disgusting, and degenerated. The protagonist, despite being extremely ashamed, insisted with the boy, offered him a car and, after the offer, he "surrenders" to the care of Maria Angélica with his eyes full of lust. The sensuality of the tryst does not suggest beauty, but a constraint, showing discomfort in living that situation. The narrator feels uncomfortable describing the scene and apologizes to the

reader. The bodily experience in old age is viewed with prejudice and suspicion, supposedly only youth has the right to enjoyment.

*"What happened next was horrifying. You do not need to know. Maria Angélica - oh, my God, have mercy on me, forgive me for having to write this! - Maria Angelica shrieked softly at the time of love. And Alexandre having to endure with disgust, revolt. He became a rebellious for the rest of his life." (Clarice Lispector, 1998, p. 77).*

In *"À Procura de uma Dignidade"* (*"Looking for Dignity"*), Clarice Lispector shows another face of the female sexuality in middle age – insecurity. At various moments of the tale, the character is faced with repudiation of her own body, but she does not deny that there is still the desire for pleasure, a sexual fantasy. At the end, she feels stunned by her feelings, wishes and social perception, being unable to see a way out of this confusing situation.

*"But everything that happened to her was still preferable than feeling "that". And suddenly, "that" came with its long dead-end corridors. And shamelessly, "that" was the aching hunger in her womb, hungry to be possessed by the unattainable television idol. She did not miss a single program with him. So since she had not been able to stop thinking about him, the only think to do was to think and remember the face of the young lady of Roberto Carlos, the singer, my love.*

*She washed her dirty hands and saw dust on the mirror above the sink. Then Mrs. Xavier thought: "If I really want, really really want, he will be mine for at least one night". She vaguely believed in willpower. Again she entangled in desire, which was twisted and strangled.*

[ ... ]

*She examined herself in the mirror to see if her face had become bestial under the influence of her feelings. But it was a quiet face that had long ceased to represent what she felt. As a matter of fact, her face had expressed only good education. And now it was only the mask of a 70-year old woman. Her face with little makeup seemed the*

*face of a clown. The lady forced an unwilling smile to see if it would improve. It didn't.*

*Outside - she saw in the mirror - she was a dry thing as a dried fig. But inside she was not arid. On the contrary. Inside, she seemed like wet gums, soft as toothless gums.*

[ .... ]

*Were her lightly made up lips still kissable? Or was it filthy to kiss and old lady's mouth? She examined her lips closely and inexpressively. And still inexpressively, she sang the refrain of the most famous song of Roberto Carlos: "I want you to warm me up this winter and that everything else goes to hell."*

*It was then that Mrs. George B. Xavier sharply bent over the sink as if throwing up the guts and interrupted her life with a shattering dumbness: there! must! be! a door! out!!!!" (Clarice Lispector, 1974, p.20).*

With Hilda Hilst (1930-2004), in "A *Obscena Senhora D*" ("The *Obscene Madame D*") (1982), the focus is the madness of an elderly lady. In the narrative, social criticism is present because the address where Hillé took refuge appears as a castle or cave to protect herself from life. The world of the old lady is an architecture in ruins. Hilst palms the erotic and pornographic present in society as she wants to impose on the false patriarchal morality by which man can have desire and woman is fit to be desired.

Within her questions, the character Hillé (Madame D) ceases to have sex with her husband and he demonstrates indignation, argues, tries to awaken desire and memories in his 60-year-old wife, and questions her. But even so, the character continues to disown him, being obsessed with knowledge. The important thing to highlight in this work is how the image of sexuality in the elderly changes its expression; there is no denial of the body, nor the desire, on the contrary, they are expressed in a spontaneous and natural way like a young couple, i.e. there is no distinction of sexuality due to advanced age, but an understanding that sexual desires still exist in mature age. The time for Hilda Hilst is something that is looking to be understood, present in the process of questioning the world of the character Madame D.

*"[...] Listen, Madame D, what if instead of these dealings with the divine, those luxuries of thought, you'd make me a coffee, huh? And he touched, ran his fingers on my hip, thighs, touched his mouth in my hair, in my deepest, Ehad's hard mouth, slim, wet and open, it touched me, I'd say look, wait, I really want to talk to you, no, no, not now, Ehad, please, I want to tell you, tell you of the death of Ivan Ilyich, the loneliness of this man, of the voids of everyday life that consume the best part of us, I want to tell you of the burden as we age, of the disappearance, of this thing that does not exist, but that it is raw, and alive, the Time." (Hilda Hilst, 2001, p.18).*

The text of Hilda Hilst addresses existential issues, namely, the body, death, old age and human relations. The author demonstrates how society sees an old character that crawls along the cave of age through an erotic view of her body. In this text, the erotic seeks to dialogue with a literary tradition that uses sexual themes to attract attention to hypocrisy, tyranny, stupidity, mediocrity when speaking of the elderly. The extension of the idea of immorality shows to society that the desire of the elderly does not end with aging; it remains. The (i)logicality of the protagonist Hillé is questioned based on the relations of power in a patriarchal society, where women who have a deviant behavior from what was previously established are branded as insane. This behavior outside the standards set for their sex has its origin in the exacerbation of the erotic force which, being unable to be satisfied physically, is directed to the sacred character in the search for wholeness, for God, for the divine.

The body is an organized and mediator instrument between the subjectivity of the subject and the world this subject relates with, which may serve to imprison or release someone when it is possible to follow one wishes. Eroticism enters the field of sexuality and social interdictions and is expressed by transgression. The sexuality in the elderly is described by Hilst as taboo, as a prison of someone who was petrified by society and no longer can feel desire or pleasure. Hilda Hilst's speech is sometimes hostile and provocative when presenting the sexuality in the elderly, showing a critical look at old age in which the sexuality in the elderly is the key point to talk about the issues related to the female body, to show a stigmatized and prejudiced vision that society has of a senescent person.

Hillé's dialogues with her dead husband Ehud work as a key to understanding the process of aging: the body and flesh as a conjecture to the eternal conflict between man and the certainty of death (over time).

*"[...] don't come, Ehud, I can make coffee, the white robe is here, the breasts did not fall, it is even scary, but don't come, Ehud, I cannot afford of what I do not know, I do not know what the body, hands, mouth, sex are, I do not know anything from you, Ehud, only that you are sitting in the stairwell, and that you tell me words, I never knew anything, that is it, I never knew [sic] that you lie with me, even not knowing."* (Hilda Hilst, 2001, p.23).

Madame D knows that her filth is in old age, in the degraded state of her body, and that showing it is an obscene act, aging is obscene in a society that values the new and what is seen, and that only considers the young beautiful, that creates spaces for this, forgetting to also adapt them to the elderly, giving them continuity of living for themselves with pleasure and joy, and that mainly sees the elderly otherwise, as beings with life and possibilities for love, opening prospects so that they can feel this way.

On the other hand, an elderly man in the fictional universe of Dalton Trevisan, who has his work tuned with the contemporary spirit, points to the same direction: there is no possibility of achieving happiness. Regarding sexuality in elderly men, invariably, in all tales published by the author in the period between 1959 and 1983, there is no way out. The older characters portrayed by Trevisan have in common a rooted sexist world vision, decisive of all their procedures, particularly those adopted in the context of sexuality. Thereby only the way to express this world view varies.

With the evolution of social behaviors, Trevisan records a gradual opening in the characterization of elderly men. Initially shy and repressed, the character extends his action range with a more explicit incorporation of the search for sexuality itself. However, from start to finish, the same elements of the sexist recipe remain: the myth of eternal virility, contempt to the wife and the pursuit of extramarital sexuality. The action in the tales turns to the conflict between the permanence of this recipe and the changes determined by the reality of advancing years. This tension between desire and reality is expressed by a subjective component: nonconformity, a common trait to all characters. Old age contributes to stripping the precarious foundations on which machismo is

based. The practice of extramarital sexuality, through which sexist men underlie the exercise of power and try to preserve their self-esteem, depends on factors that change, increasing the tension. The presence of diseases and the loss of the sexual potency bewilder older male characters.

Another element that disturbs the situation of elderly men is the loss of their wives. In the rigid division of roles, as sexist men like, it is the wife who must provide material dependence and the loss of this structure aggravates their condition. What is left for protagonists is to escape from reality in order to preserve the self-image of virility. However, one of the characters, given the advanced state of degradation in which he is, is not even able to sketch reaction. In the protagonist of “O Baile do Colibri Nu” (“*The Dance of the Naked Hummingbird*”) (1979), the destiny of sexist men is materialized. It is a raw picture of the failure of this patriarchal and dehumanizing cultural model, demonstrating the fragility of its structure and artificiality of its bases.

*"- Did you doctor not know about the naked dance? - Whoa, what's this?*

*- The black guy was already eyeing the girl, who's cute. He got John drunk. The black guy in liquor. João in red wine. And gave the idea for the dance - Barbarity.*

*- He brought Gervásio's daughter to the Hummingbird. And he wanted the girl. - Ah, black bastard.*

*- Do you doctor know John's small radiogram? He turned the volume all the way up. Our Hummingbird, the smallest noisy bird. In the best of the party, the neighbors complained about the noise. And the police ended up with the dance. – Don't tell me. When the sergeant arrived, he saw everybody naked. The black man with João's girl, and him with Gervásio's daughter, twelve years old, who had escaped the asylum.*

*Then Carlito laughs yummy. The doctor gives a step back.*

*- He boasted. Yes, I was arrested. And hit his almost hairless chest. Before that, I knocked two officers out. - Shame on you, João. – It is not his fault, doctor. It was the black guy. The sergeant opened the door, the music was really loud - and everybody naked. - With a twelve-year-old girl – If there were more, doctor, it would be bigger than him.*

- *He did not touch her. The black guy fled through the window. But João was easy. He was carried - naked and screaming in red little boots - on the lap of an officer. Without time to achieve the small gun. - The last of the heroes. He was taken to jail. The girls in the Sergeant's office. And, believe it or not, old Gervásio wanted to place charges against João. The girl, for his luck, was untouched. - The black guy, oh yes, he copulated with João's daughter. A black that big, can you imagine? And the judge married them - with legal separation - And the bandit kept the girl? João fixed up the small shack in the backyard for them. Furious, the Hummingbird flaunts in his belt the dagger and the small gun.*" (Dalton Trevisan, 1979, page 74).

### Final thoughts

The sexuality in the elderly was viewed in different ways according to the context of the time and, more and more, its representation in literature ceases to be angelic and becomes real, as of a human being who is still carrying sexual desire. The presence of tension and conflict of the individual in relation to social structures of the world that surrounds him/her is recurring in bourgeois narrative, from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In it, it stands the drama of the elderly, maladjusted to the world that imposes values that are not matched. In the literature taken as object of reflection and analysis, produced at different times and societies, the relations of sexuality exclusion of the elderly, either by his/her family or by all society, are presented.

It is proposed an optimistic view that points to the hope that lodges in the union of the excluded. There must be a way outside the traditional family, guided to the reconstruction of a new social order that will allow the belief in the future, having the courage to circumvent a hypocrite life, although accepted by society, and try the real life, a life full of meaning and true actions. When discussing sexuality in old age, the biggest challenge to present a proposal is that questions, concerns and deep dimensions of the human being are brought to surface.

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