

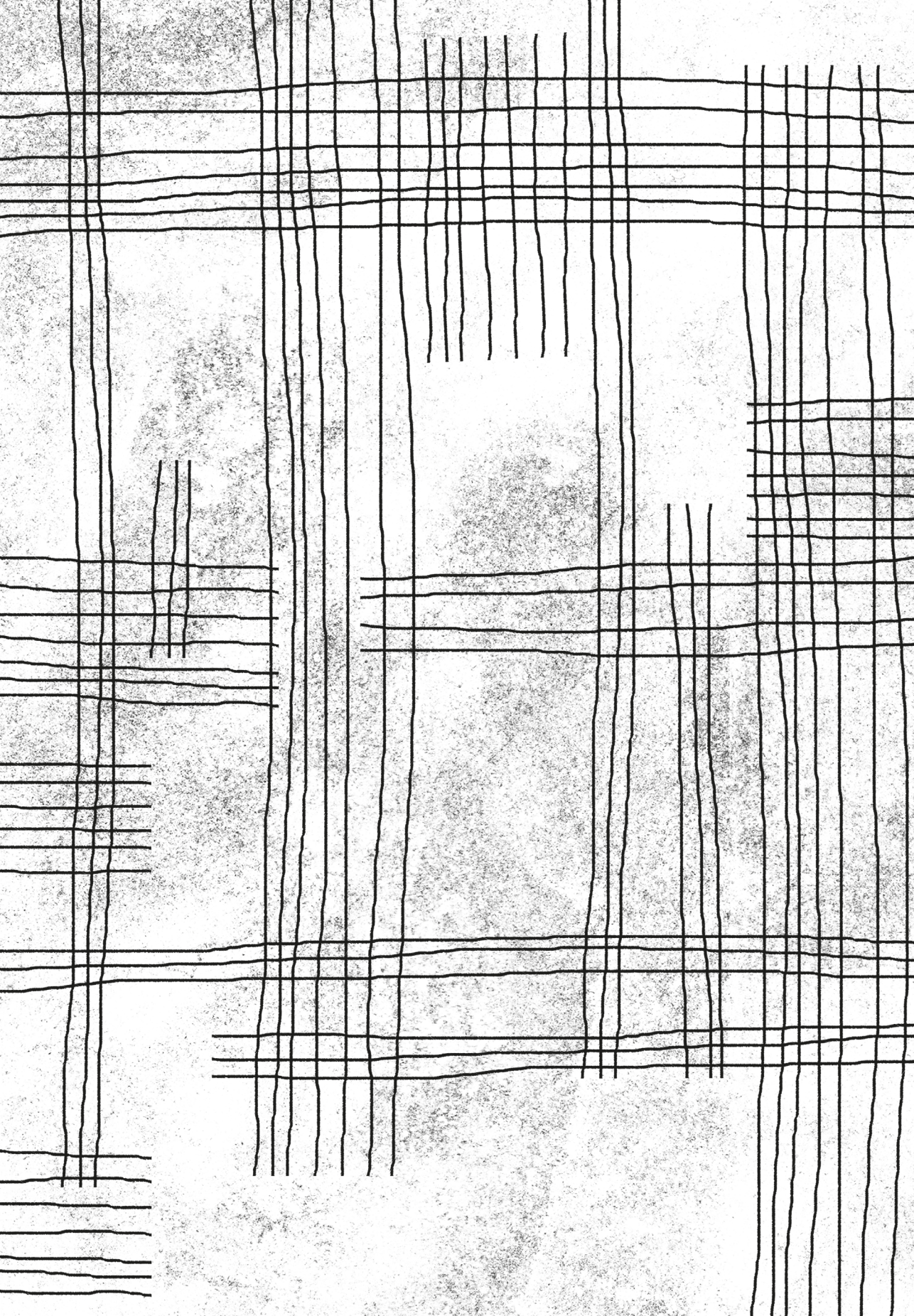
HOW WAY LEADS ON TO WAY

*Como um caminho
leva a outro caminho*

**NARRATIVE IN AN
INTERACTIVE PROCESS**

Narrativa em processo interativo

Maria Luiza Batista Bretas
Vera Maria Tietzmann Silva
ilustrações Santiago Régis





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COMO UM CAMINHO LEVA A OUTRO CAMINHO

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NARRATIVA EM PROCESSO INTERATIVO

MARIA LUIZA BATISTA BRETAS
VERA MARIA TIETZMANN SILVA

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THE ROAD NOT TAKEN*

Robert Frost **

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveler, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth;

Then took the other, as just as fair,
And having perhaps the better claim,
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;
Though as for that, the passing there
Had worn them really about the same.

And both that morning equally lay
In leaves no step had trodden black.
Oh, I kept the first for another day!
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,
I doubted if I should ever come back.

I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood and I
I took the one less travelled by
And that has made all the difference.

*O CAMINHO NÃO ESCOLHIDO: Dois caminhos se bifurcavam num bosque de outono/ e, triste por não poder percorrer os dois, sendo um só viajante,/ ali me quedei, olhando para o primeiro, até onde ele se perdia ao longe, entre folhagens./Então tomei o outro, igualmente belo, e talvez até mais atraente, porque tinha grama e era pouco trilhado,/ embora, quanto a isso, aquele passante os tivesse percorrido o mesmo tanto./E naquela manhã os dois pareciam iguais, sem marcas ou sinais de passos./ Oh, eu deixei o primeiro para um outro dia!/ Contudo, sabendo como um caminho leva a outro caminho,/ eu duvidei se algum dia haveria de voltar ali./ Um dia, num futuro remoto, eu terei de contar isso entre suspiros: dois caminhos se bifurcavam num bosque, e eu, eu escolhi o menos percorrido,/ e isso fez toda a diferença. (Tradução livre em prosa)

** Robert Frost (1874-1963) – um dos mais celebrados poetas norte-americanos do século XX.

How to read this book

This book is different from all the others that you have read until now. It is an interactive book, which means that you, as a reader, can interfere in the course of actions and decide how each chapter will continue. The chapters are very short and, at the end of each, you have two or three options to go on in the reading.

Besides, the main character, the protagonist, is yourself. So it is up to you to decide which way you want to follow – just like in the poem of Robert Frost.

The benefit of such interaction is that the book does not present a nice, linear story, with a beginning, a middle and an end. It may have many stories, many middles, many different narrative rhythms. And this experience can be felt immediately, and not “ages and ages hence”, as the poet said.

In each chapter you will find indications of books or movies related directly or indirectly to the subject of the chapter, in case you want to learn further about the theme.

So, start reading CHAPTER 1 and then decide what will be your next step. Have a good time reading!



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Chapter 1

A letter from Goiás

RELATED READINGS (IN PORTUGUESE):

MARIA, Luzia de. *Minha caixa de sonhar*: histórias de viagens para jovens de qualquer idade. São Paulo: Globo, 2001.

QUEIRÓS. Bartolomeu Campos. *Correspondência*. Illustration by Angela Lago. Belo Horizonte: RHJ, 2004.



Some days ago I got a letter (not exactly a letter, a postcard) from a new friend I made during summer vacations. He lives in the state of Goiás, and when he told me that his name was Leandro, I smiled and said that we should become real friends, since my name was Leonardo. Like Leandro and Leonardo, the famous brothers of country music.

At the end of our stay on the beach, he told me that he would write to me – an e-mail, or a WhatsApp, I thought. I was surprised when some time later the postman rang at my door and said that he had a registered letter to Mr. Leonardo de Oliveira. Heavens! Are there still people who write letters in the XXIst century?!

Then I understood, Leandro decided to send me a postcard (not really a letter) because doing so he didn't have to write much and could send me a picture of where he lived. I thought it was a cool idea, I had never thought about it.

The print of the Post Office said that the card had been posted in Mineiros, a countryside town of Goiás, and it showed a beautiful picture of the town, which seems big. The text said:

"Hi there!

Classes began again and we are once more in the routine of readings, homeworks, classmates, tests etc. Very dull and tiresome, of course, especially getting up very early every morning and doing homework every single day... This is a picture of Mineiros, my hometown, which is in the Southwest of Goiás state, quite far from the capital. In the outskirts of Mineiros there is an old quilombo called Cedro. If you come to visit me sometime, we will go there so that you can know it. What do you think about it?

Please, answer me, we could have a wonderful time!

Leandro"



CHOOSE YOUR WAY:

A. You say “Cool”, put the postcard inside a book, put the book in a shelf, forget it completely and start playing your favorite videogame.

In this case, turn the page and start reading again from CHAPTER 2 on.

B. You look for your friend’s e-mail, but can’t find it. You go to a bookstand, buy a postcard with a view of your own town and send it to your friend saying that you found it strange that story about quilombos, and ask him to tell you more. Tell him that you looked in a map and saw that Mineiros is really very far, and probably you won’t be able to go there personally, so you suggest him to exercise his writing skills (get ready for the ENEM!) and write some more about them.

Continue your reading in CHAPTER 7.

C. You get curious and do what your teacher always suggests: you consult a dictionary to know the meaning of the word quilombo.

In this case, jump to CHAPTER 3.





Chapter 2

First day in school

RELATED READINGS (IN PORTUGUESE):

REYES, Yolanda. *Frida*. Translated by Ruth Rocha. Illustration by Olga Cuellar. São Paulo: FTD, 1997.

GRIBEL, Christiane. *Minhas férias, pula uma linha, parágrafo...* Rio de Janeiro: Salamandra, 2014.



Starting classes again after summer vacations is something good and bad at the same time. It is good to meet old friends, tell them what you did (or didn't do), go to the cafeteria check what is there interesting to eat or drink in the break, play a little soccer or basketball in the court before you return to class, discuss about several topics with your colleagues, check the new faces that appeared this new year. And check the new girls, of course.

On the other hand, it is terrible to sit down very still looking at the teachers' faces, and pretend that you are paying attention while your thoughts fly so far, and suddenly you get a shock when one of them say the famous death sentence: "Take out a sheet from your notebook and let's write a composition".

In truth, I don't know the reason of the shock, because it happens every first day of class. I believe that happens either because the teachers are not so enthusiastic about returning to work, or because they had not prepared their classes, or else because they were hoping for an unexpected holiday just in the first day of the term.

The title is always the same: "My vacations". At this time, we almost regret not having saved a copy of what we wrote last year. So, let's go! The first thing to decide is the nature of the text. Should I make a report or a fiction work – what would be better – memory or imagination?



CHOOSE YOUR WAY:

A. You decide to tell “the truth, only the truth and nothing but the truth”, like in the judgements of the TV series. Write about fifteen lines telling where you went, with whom, how was the place, how long you stayed and who you met there. To make it easier, transcribe the letter from your friend of Goiás. It is ready! The famous 20 lines are completed and you can think about other more interesting things.
Go back to CHAPTER 1.

B. You decide that the teacher doesn’t need to know about your life, which, indeed, is quite dull. It’s better to invent. In this case, be creative, describe a trip that you would like to have made (or you hope to do some day): anything goes, from the ancient Egypt to the Moon, from the past time to the future.
Jump to CHAPTER 6.

C. You decide to mix reality and fiction and show yourself off to the teacher proving that you are a well informed student. Tell your (imaginary) adventures at the *Quilombo dos Palmares* and your meeting with the great black leader Zumbi.
Inform yourself about this character in CHAPTER 10.





Chapter 3

Dictionary or google: that is the question

RELATED READINGS (IN PORTUGUESE):

AZEVEDO, Artur. *O plebiscito e outros contos*. Rio de Janeiro: Ediouro, 2000.
VERÍSSIMO, Luís Fernando. *Comédias para se ler na escola*. São Paulo: Objetiva, 2001



My six year old sister arrived from school, and I, wanting to feel superior, asked her:

– Do you know what quilombo means? And who is Zumbi?

She did not even blink, and shot back:

– Of course I know. I think that quilombo is a kind of meat Mom makes for Christmas supper*, and zombi I saw on TV one of these days. It's some guys that die, then undie, get out of their coffins and parade in the streets of New York. Very cool.

– It's not *undie*, you stupid thing. It's revive, or resurrector. But I am talking about Zumbi with capital letter, nothing to do with those silly paraders.

She shrugged and went into the kitchen. Then she turned back and suggested: "Why don't you look it up on Google?"

I preferred to research in the dictionary. The dictionary is a huge and heavy book. You feel tired only looking at it. It took me a lot of time to find, but there it was the entry explaining the meaning of quilombo:

"Hidden place, usually in woods, where runaway negro slaves took refuge [...], fortified settlement of runaway negro slaves". So, nothing to do with Christmas supper.

And do these settlement still exist in Goiás? And what does the dictionary say about Zumbi? *"Tormented spirit, individual that only gets out at night, soul that wanders during the dead hours of the night. [...] Name of the hero of Palmares".*

Well, my little sister was right, after all, or partially right. That is, only in what concerns the zombies (without capital letter), which were not the focus of my research.

*A pun that only makes sense in Portuguese: quilombo / lombo.

CHOOSE YOUR WAY:

A. You conclude that the dictionary did not explain a great deal, and decide to discover more about this quilombo in Goiás which nobody talks about. So, you decide to write a letter to Leandro asking for further information.

Go to CHAPTER 5.

B. You decide to take your sister's advice and ask Google. After all, everybody says that he knows everything.

Proceed to CHAPTER 4.

C. You are in a hurry and want to skip the part of writing letters and making researches. You prefer to wait for the postman bringing the answer from your friend.

In this case, continue your reading in CHAPTER 7.





Chapter 4

The all-knowing Google

RELATED READINGS (IN PORTUGUESE):

MORLEY, Helen. *Minha vida de menina*. São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 1990.
SILVA, Vera Maria Tietzmann. *Baú da memória: crônicas do colégio*. Goiânia: Cânone Editorial, 2010.



I turned on my computer and accessed the internet to enter Google and make a wider research about quilombos, quilombolas, Palmares and Zumbi.

At this very moment, my grandmother Nita entered my room and sat beside me. I must say that Granny and I have a case of mutual passion. I am her eldest grandchild, and she is the only grandparent that I still have. Besides, she lives here with us.

I love to chat with her and listen to her stories of old times, of relatives that I did not even know, or of things that happened when she was a young schoolteacher. These conversations are very cool, instructive, interesting and often funny.

Well, as soon as Granny Nita entered my room, Zumbi flew out of my head. So, I turned the computer off. To my surprise, she declared that students have a very easy life nowadays – that is, provided they have a computer, like I do. Any research can be made in a short time, in some hours or days, in your own home. I asked her how was her student life when she was a girl. At this point, like magic, time stopped, or, better saying, ran backwards, and she told me how was her daily routine back in the 1950's.

Research (ou schoolwork, as it was then said) took weeks, even months, many visits to the public or school library, reading of lots of books, handcopying of many texts, borrowing books from friends or relatives, long talks with the learned ones of the family – usually grandparents, uncles, older cousins, aunts that were teachers and so on.

There was still a rather complicated process of finishing the paper. Some happy few had a typewriting machine at home (even though still fewer could typewrite well), others had fathers with infinite patience that typed their children's works (that was her case, Granny Nita said), but most of the students wrote their schoolworks in handwriting. When the research was long, the handwriting was getting worse and worse at each page and, at the end, the right hand was pretty sore – a very tiresome process.

The afternoon passed by without our noticing it. I didn't go any further in my knowledge about Zumbi or the quilombo of Palmares, but I learned a lot about my grandmother and the schools of her time. I think that for this kind of information not even Google could do better.



CHOOSE YOUR WAY:

A. Talking with your grandmother gave you some ideas. That composition you had to write in school, in which you intended to describe an imaginary trip could be made to a not so remote past, it could be to the 1950's or 60's, to the time when Granny Nita was young.

If this is your decision, go to CHAPTER 6.

B. You decide to take over your research and learn more about the Brazilian quilombos and their leaders.

In this case, go straight to CHAPTER 11.



Chapter 5

Asking the new friend for information

RELATED READINGS (IN PORTUGUESE):

O nascimento de uma nação (The birth of a nation). A film by Nate Parker, USA, 2016. True story of a black slave named Nate Turner that was the leader of a rebellion in the XIXth century in the United States.

Chico Rei. A film by Walter Lima Jr., Brasil, 1985. With the participation of Cecília Meireles in the script, the film tells the true story of a slave from Minas Gerais that conquered his freedom and was the first former slave to own lands in that state.



I did not lose any time and wrote a letter to Leandro's address in Mineiros, because I wanted to know more about the Cedro:

"Hi, guy, how are you?"

I kept thinking about that story of the quilombo in your town and I became very curious about it, because here in my school everybody – including the History teachers – only mention the quilombo of Palmares, in the North-east, and its hero, Zumbi. By the way, my sister made fun of me thinking that I was interested in those zombies from pictures of terror. Imagine that...

Tell me how this quilombo looks like, how it began, how are its inhabitants, how they live, and the like. Why is it called Cedro? Isn't it the name of a tree?

Please, answer quickly, perhaps I can convince my father to make a trip with me to Goiás in some long holiday. He is a botanist and enjoys walking in woods and fields, and he would like to know the Cerrado.

Hope to hear from you soon,

Leonardo"

I closed the envelope, went to the Post Office and mailed the letter. Now I have to wait for the answer. Then it occurred to me: why didn't I ask for Leandro's e-mail? Communication would be so much faster! Sometimes I really resemble my grandmother in these jurassic attitudes, good heavens, I forget that we are in the XXIst century.



CHOOSE YOUR WAY:

A. You can't forgive yourself for not having asked for your friend's e-mail, and decide to watch a movie in TV to get some leisure. In Netflix there are good options of both American and Brazilian pictures, classic and recent productions on the theme of slavery. Choose one of them to watch while you wait for the letter coming from Goiás, which will arrive in CHAPTER 7.

If this is your decision, go to CHAPTER 6.

B. In the meantime, you decide to get more information about how was life in the Brazilian quilombos.
Proceed to CHAPTER 9.

C. If you also wish to learn more about Zumbi, the hero of Palmares, besides CHAPTER 9, read CHAPTER 12 too.





Chapter 6

An imaginary trip

RELATED READINGS (IN PORTUGUESE):

LOBATO, José B. Monteiro. *Emília no País da Gramática*. Illustration by Paulo Borges. São Paulo: Globinho, 2009.

MACHADO, Ana Maria. *Bisa Bia, Bisa Bel*. Illustration by Regina Yolanda. Rio de Janeiro: Salamandra, 1985.



Talking with my grandmother or with my father always gives me good ideas. Both of them like to read, to watch pictures, to talk about their childhood or their youth. Perhaps that is why I thought about travelling in time in my school composition – to the time when my grandmother was a schoolgirl in a blue and white uniform walking to school. Something like the movie *Back to the future* (I saw the three of them).

COMPOSITION:

FIRST DAY IN SCHOOL

I woke up early with an odd feeling of being late. The house was silent, I put on my uniform, grabbed my bag and a banana to eat on my way, and hurried to school. The streets were strangely calm, no traffic at all. I entered the building and went to my classroom. When I opened the door, everything looked different: there weren't any girls, only boys, all in white shirts and navy blue pants, all had short hair – military haircut – and were neatly combed.

They were sitting two by two in double wooden desks quite oldfashioned. On each table top, in front of every boy, was a small glass with black ink. Pens were different, they should be dipped in ink every time you used them. Granny had told me that these bottles always turned down and spilt ink over your copybooks and sheets of paper – a real nightmare. The students seemed to be deeply concentrated in the assignment they were doing, all of them writing duly with pens that looked like that of Princess Isabel, and they seemed unaware of my presence there.

In front of them was the teacher, a young lady wearing heavy glasses, a stern face and a ruler in her hand. She wore an ample skirt that came almost to her ankles and a long sleeve blouse, buttoned up to her neck. Her hair looked like those of the actresses of black & white movies from the 50's, and she had no jewelry or make up.

I was sitting beside a boy who was alone at his desk, I looked over his shoulder and read the top line of the sheet of paper he had in front of him. It said: Campinas, March 5, 1951. Oh my God! I'm back in Granny's time! Then I looked at the blackboard behind the teacher and there it was in big letters: COMPOSITION – MY VACATIONS...



CHOOSE YOUR WAY:

A. You show your composition to Granny Nita and she gives you more details about stationery and school materials used in those times. Both of you have a good time talking, and finally you managed to get rid of that school task.

Go to CHAPTER 7.

B. You also decide to ask your grandmother how was the relationship between white and black people in Brazil in that time, and if she had any idea about the existence of quilombos.

Continue your reading in CHAPTER 7.



Chapter 7

The postman came at last!

RELATED READINGS (IN PORTUGUESE):

BRETAS, Maria Luiza Batista. *Contos cedrinos*. Illustration by Santiago Régis. Goiânia: Câne Editorial, 2016.

_____. *Chico Moleque: um sonho de liberdade*. Illustration by Santiago Régis. Goiânia: Câne Editorial, 2016.



My mother thought I was behaving strangely, because every now and then I checked the mailbox. She asked me if I had a new girlfriend elsewhere, or if I was expecting a prize in some contest. “No, it’s nothing of the kind”, I answered, “I’m expecting a letter from a friend in Goiás, he’ll write me about something I’m interested in”. The “Oh, I see” she said did not sound very convincing, but she stopped asking.

Finally, after a while, the letter arrived, and with it came two brief books, one intended for children, and the other for adults. I handed the first to my sister, and the other to my Dad, both enjoy reading very much. I was much more interested in reading the letter:

“Hi, Leonardo!

Oh my! It would be awesome if you could come to Mineiros one of these days!

My faher told me that he knows the people there and he can go personally to Cedro to schedule a visit whenever you want.

You have to know at least two amazing characers, Dona Neném – who isn’t a baby at all, is an old lady almost a century old, strong and talkative – and Dona Lucely, who knows everything about healing plants.

Since your father also knows a lot about plants, I think that they will get along very well.

Read the two books I am sending you about the Cedro, you will find some interesting things about this community in them.

If you need something, don’t hesitate to contact me, I’m looking forward to your visit. What about Easter holyday?

See you,

Leandro”



CHOOSE YOUR WAY:

A. You look for that old *Guia Quatro Rodas* that has a map of all Brazilian regions, call your Mom and Dad and ask for a family meeting to plan the trip to Goiás.
Proceed to CHAPTER 8.

B. You decide to get more information about Mineiros and Goiás while the Easter Holiday doesn't come. "Saint Google" is very good in doing so.
Go to CHAPTER 8.



Chapter 8

A trip to Mineiros

RELATED READINGS (IN PORTUGUESE):

SILVA, Vera Maria T.; Denófrio, Darcy; Turchi, M. Zaira (Orgs.). *Antologia do conto goiano*. 2 vol. Goiânia: Editora da UFG, 2013.

FREIRE, Gilberto. *Casa grande e senzala em HQ*. Adaptation by Ivan Wasth Rodrigues. São Paulo: Global, 2014.



My Dad is a funny guy. He is serious, polite, professor at the University, always mixed up with heavy books, research in the computer, seminars, academic articles, lectures and essays etc, but there are two things that he loves above all: walking in the woods gathering leaves, seeds and flowers, and lying in a hammock with a book in his lap. What does he teach? Botany, of course.

When I handed him *Contos cedrinós* he immediately explained – “this adjective comes from *cedro*, the tree and the quilombo in Goiás” – and he went in a hurry to the hammock, getting up from it only when the book was finished and Mom called him for lunch.

At lunch, he kept talking enthusiastically about one of the dwellers of Cedro whom he knew very well in account of her botanical researches on medicinal herbs, her name, he said, was Lucely. I stared at him in a kind of disbelief, but my father assured me: “You can check it, she is in the Google!”. Well, if she is in the all-knowing and powerful Google, then it must be true.

Suddenly, he surprised everyone declaring:

– Leonardo, next Easter Holiday you and I are going to Goiás to know the Cedro community. See to that with your friend. We take a plane from Campinas to Goiânia, and there we rent a car to go to Mineiros. What do you think?

Of course I was very happy. Not only because I would meet my friend again, but also because it would be the first time that I would take a plane – not only in dreams, but in reality. I looked at my sister, she was evidently jealous...

This time I decided to make a telephone call to Leandro, letters and mailmen would take too much time. My mother left the table and declared that she was going to internet to see flight prices and get information about the weather in Goiás at Easter time.

My father, then, turned to my sister and said:

– Get over with this reading, I also want to read *Chico Moleque*!



CHOOSE YOUR WAY:

A. You became as enthusiastic as your father and start reading *Contos cedrinos* too in order to prepare your spirit for the trip to the old quilombo in Goiás. There are several kinds of stories and situations in the book, but you, just like your father, pay more attention to the chapters that deal, directly or indirectly, with healing plants.

Go on with your reading to CHAPTER 10, that deals with this subject.

B. The origin of the settlement and the illustration of the book, more than the text itself, emphasise something stronger and more visible in this segregated community: the color of the skin, much darker than that we are used to see in urban population. This detail catches your attention. If so, proceed to CHAPTER 9.





Chapter 9

The colors of the skin

RELATED READINGS (IN PORTUGUESE):

MARTINS, Georgina. *Minha família é colorida*. Illustration by Maria Eugênia. São Paulo: Edições SM, 2015.

STOWE, Harriet Beecher. *A cabana do Pai Tomás*. Translation by Nélia Maria Pinheiro Padilha von Tempski-Silka. Curitiba: Juruá, 2012.

MACHADO, Ana Maria. *Do outro mundo*. Illustration by Lúcia Brandão. São Paulo: Ática, 2002.



Ana Maria Machado tells that once a foreign editor asked her to write a story of horror for children. She considered stories of ghosts, robbers, vampires and similar things, but discarded all of them. Finally she concluded that the most terrifying thing that can happen to anyone is being enslaved. So she wrote *Do outro mundo*, a short novel that deals with slavery in an original and delicate way – a book that you should read.

Brazil had black slaves captured and brought from Africa, and here sold like merchandise, or animals, during centuries. There was a time when this practice was considered normal. The difference in their aspect, mainly in the color of their skin, contributed for the insensibility of people towards them. Prejudice came hand in hand with insensibility, and both result from the situation of deprivation of freedom that the Africans and their descendants lived. In countries that did not have slavery, we notice that black skin is perceived merely as exotic, without the weight of discrimination. More or less the same way you see the orientals and their slant eyes – neither worse nor better than anyone, only different.

In the United States, the novel *Uncle Tom's cabin*, written by a woman, Harriet Beecher Stowe, describing the cruelty and abuse suffered by the slaves, caused a commotion in the country. According to President Lincoln, this book helped to trigger the Civil War in America, a war that lasted six years and divided the country in two: the South that defended the maintenance of slavery, and the North, abolitionist, that wanted to extinguish it. There as here, slavery and abolition had defenders and opposers, those invoking economic reasons, these appealing to humanitarian reasons. Equally, here and there, there were negro leaders and white abolitionists that strived to extinguish slavery. In Brazil, the great negro leader was Zumbi, in the quilombo of Palmares, in Alagoas state. He was hunted, murdered and his body was cut in pieces to serve as an example for those who tried to rebel. This happened in the XVIIth century. The day of his death is celebrated every year as “The Day of Black Conscience”.

Two centuries later, another leader, Chico Moleque, acted the same way as Chico Rei, a slave of Minas Gerais, the first one to own lands, did: he bought his own freedom and that of his family, and founded a community of free negroes, the Cedro, in the Southwest of Goiás State, in lands that he himself bought with his own work. It is this community that my father and I intend to visit.



CHOOSE YOUR WAY:

A. Since you became so interested in this subject, start reading again *Contos cedrinós* and *Chico Moleque* to compare both the quilombo and the black hero from Goiás and Zumbi and his quilombo in Alagoas, called Palmares.

Go on reading CHAPTER 11.

B. Take a sheet of paper, draw two columns, write in each one the name of these heroes and compare them, taking into account their names, origin, background, motivation, places where they lived, year of events, age at death, way of dying, descendants and legacy they left. Continue in CHAPTER 12.





Chapter 10

Medicinal plants

RELATED READINGS (IN PORTUGUESE):

CARAVACA, Hugo de. *Plantas que curam*. Ed. Virtual Books Online M&M Editores. 2000. (disponível em virtualbooks.com.br).

GRANDI, Telma Sueli Mesquita. *Tratado das plantas medicinais mineiras*. E-book available for download or DVD em plantasmedicinaismineiras@gmail.com

KFFURI, Carolina Weber. *Caderno das nossas plantas medicinais: instruções práticas e preparações tradicionais da fitoterapia brasileira*. Universidade Federal de Viçosa, 2011.



Since Chico Moleque founded the Cedro, he also started to cultivate medicinal plants. In that time, more than a hundred years ago, there were not many pharmacies, or “boticas”, where people could buy medicines. So they used the common knowledge that came from their ancestors. Since the time of Chico Moleque, people in Cedro knew the active principles of many plants and prepared the syrups, “garrafadas”, pills, ointments, creams, for themselves and their families and for all the “quilombolas” from the community. This activity with the medicinal plants still continues today in the Community Center of Medicinal Plants, that serves not only their community, but also the society from Mineiros and nearby regions. The people there are well known and respected because of this work. Unfortunately, this activity is in danger, because the young people from the community are not interested in learning and continuing this ancient practice.

For the “cedrinos”, land is the most importante thing in the world, because they can take everything they need to survive from it. Since the foundation of Cedro, they learned that the plants and the animals should be respected as if they were persons, because they are also living beings. The care they have with plants is profound and they respect also the “time of nature”, because they think there is time for everything: to be born, to grow, to flourish, to give fruits and to die, and they regret the way that new techniques are trying to reduce or to harm this time of nature.

This respect is important and relevant because it’s necessary to take care of the biome “Cerrado”. With an area of more than 2 million square quilometres and the second most extensive vegetation formed on the South American continent, this biome is the birthplace of many water flows and of a diversity of medicinal plants – also called medicinal herbs – that have been discovered and used in traditional medicine practices since prehistoric time. From Chico Moleque period until now, the Cerrado has known a great intensity of devastation, and the plants that the “quilombola” families used to pick or grow in their own backyards, nowadays can only be found at great distances. They are needed to supply the Community Center of Medicinal Plants, where the raw material is transformed into phytotherapeutic products.



CHOOSE YOUR WAY:

A. If you became interested in the subject of runaway slaves in Brazil, read the next two chapters, CHAPTER 11 and CHAPTER 12.

B. If, instead, you do not care too much for History, but prefer to follow the characters of this story, jump directly to CHAPTER 13.



Chapter 11

Brazilian "quilombos"

RELATED READINGS (IN PORTUGUESE):

TANAKA, Béatrice. *A história de Chico Rei*. São Paulo: Edições SM, 2015.

ORTHOF, Sylvia. *O rei preto de Ouro Preto*. Illustration by Tato. São Paulo: Moderna, 1997.



The majority of the Brazilian “quilombos” started in the same way. The slaves, tired of being punished, humiliated and tortured, tried to escape from their terrible life and took refuge in the woods, far from towns and farms. In these remote places they formed little settlements which they called “quilombos”, a word that comes from the African language Quimbundo. In Brazil, it means any community of fugitives slaves. In general, they were situated in mountains and dense woods by a strategic reason: to hinder the access of the so called “capitães do mato”, men that masters payed to recapture the slaves and punish them as an example for the others.

In the quilombos the fugitives lived according to their African origins – with the same religious, social or cultural contexts, and, in some of them, they also had their own law and tribal kings. People there were involved in the subsistence economy, and some of these communities were quite successful. It is relevant to know that the quilombos did not only give shelter to negro slaves, but sometimes also to indians and justice fugitives. There are records of dozens of quilombos throughout the country, mainly in the states of Alagoas, Bahia, Goiás, Mato Grosso, Minas Gerais, Pará, Pernambuco, São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, places where slaves worked either in plantations or mining.

The slavery system was responsible for bringing more than 3,5 millions of men and women from the African continent. In the beginning of the XVIIth century, because of the Dutch invasion in Pernambuco, many of the sugar mill owners abandoned their land opening a great opportunity for the slaves to escape and look for a quilombo where they could find freedom. Nowadays, the existing quilombos remain as symbols of resistance toward the historic injustice that whites inflicted over negroes, and they are a reminder to all of us and a testimony of the role the afrodescendents played (and still play) in our country.



CHOOSE YOUR WAY:

A. If you became interested in this subject, go on to the next chapter to know more about Palmares, the most important quilombo in Brazil, located in the state of Alagoas, in the Northeast region of the country. In this case, read CHAPTER 12.

B. If you are more interested in the meeting of the friends Leandro and Leonardo, go directly to the last chapter of this story, CHAPTER 13.



Chapter 12

At the "quilombo" of Palmares

RELATED READINGS (IN PORTUGUESE):

AMADO, Janaína. *Zumbi, o menino que nasceu e morreu livre*. Illustration by Gilberto Tomé. São Paulo: Formato, 2012.

KOURY, Jussara Rocha. *Liberdade, o sonho dos Palmares*. Recife: Bagaço, 1995.



The Quilombo of Palmares was located in the state of Alagoas and it was the largest one in Brazil. This settlement began to be formed at the end of the XVIth century, and it had more than 20 thousands fugitive slaves. Their inhabitants survived of hunting, fishing, collecting fruit, as well as planting beans, corn, manioc, banana, orange and sugar cane. They also made some kind of handcraft to sell, and all the excedent products were sold to nearby people. This commerce resulted in a great income for their economy.

Our History teacher pointed out that school text books usually only mention Palmares and Zumbi. This black hero is a symbol of struggle and resistance against slavery. According to historical records, he was born in the quilombo in 1655. When he was only six years old, he was captured by soldiers and given to a priest, who taught him Portuguese and Latin. At ten, he was already fluent in these two languages. Some years later, he escaped from his master and went back to the quilombo. Zumbi belonged to an African family of great military tradition. His uncle Ganga Zumba was the leader of Palmares and son of an African princess. When Zumbi was 25, he defied his uncle and took his place as the leader of Palmares, he then started fighting against the Portuguese and organizing the resistance against capture actions.

Zumbi was respected and recognized as a social and spiritual leader of his people. It is said that even the king of Portugal bowed before him and proposed an agreement, but for Zumbi just one idea was important: to fight until the end of slavery. When he was 40, he was betrayed, captured and killed. This happened on the 20th of November of 1695, during a terrible battle. That is why we celebrate the National Day of Black Consciousness in this precise day, a more important celebration than that of May 13, the Abolition of Slavery. As a punishment and an example for other possible rebels, Zumbi's body was beheaded and his head was salted and exposed in public places.

Zumbi is the great hero of his race in Brazil, and he is remembered, more than three centuries afterwards, as a legend, someone that did not give up hope and never stopped dreaming of and fighting for freedom.



CHOOSE YOUR WAY:

A. Since you are so interested about the quilombos, you may propose to your History teacher to ask students to make a research about the other settlements of fugitive slaves existing in Brazil and present the results in some significant date, such as the Day of Black Conscience, which is in November 20. Read CHAPTER 13.

B. According to information you got at Google, in Goiânia there is a replica, or reproduction, of a quilombo, where you can see how they watched people approaching, how their houses and furniture looked like (you can even enter their huts) etc. The place belongs to PUC-Goiás and is part of the Memorial do Cerrado. Finish your Reading in CHAPTER 13.





Chapter 13

At the "quilombo" of Cedro



Finally, the expected day arrived! After many months, letters and calls exchanged with Leandro, my father and I decided to go to Mineiros, in Goiás, to visit my friend and the Quilombo of Cedro, in Easter Holiday.

I was so excited with this trip that I couldn't sleep at night. For the first time, Mom didn't have to wake me up when she entered my bedroom very early in the morning. We went to the airport here in Campinas and, in an hour or so, we arrived in Goiânia. Then, Dad rented a car at the airport and we took the road directly to Mineiros. We knew that it would be a long trip, of about five hours, because we had studied all the details of the route.

When we got there, my friend Leandro and all his family – his parents and a couple of twins – were already waiting for us. Then, we went to their house, had a meal and stayed there for hours chatting. They live in a big house with a swimming pool and an orchard. At night, we went downtown. Mineiros is a small town – comparing to cities like Campinas –, but it is prosperous. Some decades ago, many farmers from the South of the country settled there and brought the progress for the countryside and the town with their modern technology.

Dad and I were curious about our visit to the “Quilombo of Cedro”. Leandro's father told us that he went there to talk to the president of the community and they decided to receive us the day after our arrival in Mineiros. The people there, especially the older ones, knew about our visit and were looking forward to receive the “paulistas”.

I didn't know who was more curious and excited about this meeting, my Dad or I. After many readings, researching and many discussions in class about racism, black culture and quilombos, I couldn't wait any longer to know the Cedro. My father was equally curious to meet D. Neném and Lucely. The first is the eldest person in the community and, in fact, she knows many things about the black people there and told us different stories. In her almost centennial life, her simplicity hides the wisdom and the ease of how she takes care of everything around her. She does the cleaning and cooking, feeds the animals, grows vegetables and almost everything she eats, and she doesn't loose any event in the community. Even during the youth marathon, she takes part walking and returning the ten kilometers (five plus five) that separate Cedro from Mineiros. She is so small and so great!



Lucely is a case apart. She learned with her grandmother all the secrets about the medicinal plants. Since she was three years old she went to the “Cerrado” with her grandmom to gather plants and prepare some home remedies that people usually call “garrafadas”. This knowledge gave her many opportunities in her life and today she is a very known and respectable woman, especially when it comes to preserve the “Cerrado” and the use of medicinal plants.

Dad, as a professor of botanics, already knew all about her. They talked all day long about plants and potions, while Lucely was showing them to him in the fields and home gardens, and then took him to the Community Center where medicines of various kinds are prepared. Lucely Moraes Pio is her complete name and the “Mr. Google” has a lot of information about her. Take a look!

While the adults were changing ideas about plants, Leandro and I kept talking with some young boys and girls from the community. At the beginning they were a little bit shy, but after thirty minutes of conversation they were completely at ease. That evening changed a lot the way I saw my life and the lives of black people. It seemed two worlds completely different: the opportunities are not the same, the way how people see us is not the same. Racism, discrimination and prejudice seem almost natural for them. However, they prefer to undergo all these uncomfortable feelings than stay in the community without anything to do and not being able to make their living exclusively from the land like their ancestors did. They feel that it is neither fair, nor democratic, nor acceptable!

That conversation reminded me of a beautiful poem by an American writer that my friend Leandro sent me some time ago. It is called “The road not taken”, and it tells about having to make choices in life, and how many times one choice leads to another one, and changes your life forever. Like the poet Robert Frost said, I may perhaps be telling my experience in Cedro “with a sigh somewhere ages and ages hence”:

Two roads diverged in a wood and I,
I took the one less travelled by
And that has made all the difference.

Indeed, the choice I made to visit the Quilombo of Cedro has really made all the difference in my life!



Sobre as autoras

MARIA LUIZA BATISTA BRETAS tem sua formação acadêmica em Letras – graduação, mestrado e doutorado realizada em Goiás, na UFG (incluindo um estágio na França). Seu pós-doutorado foi realizado em Ciências Agrárias, no Instituto Federal Goiano, onde atualmente atua na docência e na pesquisa.

Este produto didático voltado para alunos de inglês do ensino fundamental e médio, complementa de modo lúdico a pesquisa de campo realizada em 2015 e 2016 no antigo quilombo do Cedro, no Sudoeste goiano, próximo à cidade de Mineiros.

Trata-se de uma narrativa com muitas possibilidades de combinações em torno do tema objeto da pesquisa – o quilombo do Cedro, sua história, organização social e o modo de vida de seus moradores. Uma história do tempo colonial que não pode ser esquecida e que já foi objeto de três livros da autora, *Contos cedrinos*, *Chico Moleque, um sonho de liberdade* e *Tecendo histórias etnobotânicas e culturais na comunidade Quilombola do Cedro de Mineiros, Goiás*, todos editados em 2016 pela Câne Editorial, em Goiânia.

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É autora, entre outros, dos livros: *Literatura infantil brasileira: um guia para professores e promotores de leitura* (Câne, 2008), *Leitura literária & outras leituras: impasses e alternativas no trabalho do professor* (RHJ, 2009), *Dispersos & inéditos: estudos sobre Lygia Fagundes Telles* (Câne, 2009) e *Decifra-me ou te devoro! O mito grego na sala de aula* (Câne, 2017).

