Baudelaire in Portuguese

Maria Gabriela Llansol as Translator of *Les Fleurs du mal*

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Charles Baudelaire's *Les Fleurs du mal* and Translation/ Writing Experiments

Important European critics, such as Walter Benjamin, Jean Starobinski, or Hugo Friedrich, have produced extensive research on *Les Fleurs du mal*, the lyrical collection that is said to have started off literary modernity. The same can be said for the Brazilian context: There are few texts that have had an effect on Brazilian and Portuguese literature comparable to that of Charles Baudelaire's lyrical collection. Antonio Candido, for instance, commented on the influence of the French poet in his essay "Os primeiros baudelairianos" ("The First Successors of Baudelaire"), where he explores the early reception of Baudelaire in the work of devoted, but lesser-known poets in nineteenth-century Brazil. Despite its poetical and critical influence, the first complete translation of Baudelaire was not published until 1958, by the Brazilian-Lebanese poet and literary critic Jamil Almansur Haddad (Faleiros, "Retraduções" 27).[1] However, the belated translation is not a surprise, given that most members of the Brazilian elite were fluent in French.

My article will shed light upon a lesser-known translation that was neglected by the public due to its experimental nature. It was produced by Maria Gabriela Llansol (1931–2008), a Portuguese writer, critic, and translator who lived for many years in exile in Belgium during the Portuguese dictatorship, the so-called Estado Novo (1933–74). As is commonly known, the peaceful Carnation Revolution ended the dictatorship in 1974—eleven years after that, in 1985, Llansol returned to Portugal. She spent her last years in Sintra, where

1 This article panoramically addresses the influence of Baudelaire on Brazil's and Portugal's literary landscape (Faleiros, "Retraduções" 27–28).

her translation of Baudelaire's *Les Fleurs du mal* was published in 2003, five years before her death. According to scholarship, the public's reaction to Llansol's translation was defined by "distress," "shock," and "anger" ("en désarroi, en choc, voire en colère"; Coelho, "Les Fleurs").[2] According to Faleiros, critics felt confusion when reading the translation and acknowledged her to be the "boldest" of those who have translated Baudelaire into Portuguese ("a tradutora mais audaz," "mais ousada"; "Llansol retradutora" 113, 114, 121).[3] Therefore, I consider Llansol's translation as another example of a scandal of translation, as Lawrence Venuti has famously portrayed in his book *The Scandals of Translation*. But could this translation really surprise anyone familiar with Llansol's writing? Her writing style per se is experimental and characterized by transgression of form and genre. Criticism outside of Portugal has completely neglected Llansol, which might be symptomatic of the way Portuguese literature is generally treated, since it still remains poorly translated, as well as little read and studied. It was only in the context of the Leipzig Book Fair that some parts of her oeuvre were brought into German (Llansol, *Lissabonleipzig*; Llansol, *Ein Falke*), although most of her books remain hard to access. Llansol is not one of the most renowned authors within national Portuguese literary historiography either—this is certainly due to her writing style, which does not intend to please a mass audience (Moser).

Contrary to most existing scholarship on Llansol's translations, I will approach her Portuguese version of *Les Fleurs du mal* primarily from the point of view of Baudelairean research. This, I argue, is consistent with Llansol's translations: Firstly, because they do not follow a unique clear line (Faleiros, "Llansol retradutora" 120; "Tradução poética" 20); secondly, because Llansol's translations are the result of an intense reading and interpretation of Baudelaire. Following this line of thought, I will argue that the present translation tells us more about a certain reading of Baudelaire than it tells us about Llansol's own aesthetic. Of course, this is not to deny that her translations are deeply connected to and embedded in her own literary work as well. Situating the translation in the context of Llansol's own oeuvre has been

2 I am citing the open access edition of this essay without pagination. All translations into English are my own. I will mostly provide translations of primary sources and theory directly in the text; in some instances, when larger passages are cited, I will use footnotes.

3 Faleiros has published several essays on Llansol as a translator. I am citing three of his essays but not alluding to the recurrence of some ideas and interpretations.

the predominant approach taken by scholarship thus far (see, for example, Coelho, "Les Fleurs"). For instance, the concept "imposture" repeatedly appears in the translations of Baudelaire and is connected to Llansol's own writing, in which the impostor syndrome of language is recurrently discussed (Coelho, "Les Fleurs").[4] However, when her translation work is connected solely to her own written work, the relationality that Llansol exposes in her translations is completely neglected. The translations are not—only or primarily—about her "own" "writing"; they reveal her intense engagement with another text.

My article will concentrate on two poems translated by Llansol, namely "La Beauté" and "Hymne à la beauté." I will argue that these two highly self-referential poems of Baudelaire contain many aspects that characterize Llansol's experimental approach to translation. My thesis will be that this experimental approach is not a contrast to the often-proclaimed attribute of "fidelity," which is frequently applied to (judging) translations. The experimental character of Llansol's translation is simply consistent with Baudelaire's own approach to writing and aesthetics. It is the result of her own reading and interpretation of Baudelaire and is a consistent transposition of the French lyrical collection into the Portuguese realities of the early 2000s— in the sense that it re-enacts an aesthetic experience.[5] The experimental character therefore does not (solely) consist in gaining and reclaiming authorship in translation, but primarily in serving the original and giving it a new form in the new millennium. Therefore, my contribution shows how the notion of fidelity can interact differently

4 Llansol's application of this concept—which is not evoked in Baudelaire's own text—can be observed in poems such as Baudelaire and Llansol, "Au lecteur / Ao leitor" (29) or Baudelaire and Llansol, "LXXXIX Le Cygne / LXXXIX O cisne" (195). See also the reference to "língua de imposture" in Baudelaire and Llansol, "XCIV Le Squelette laboureur / XCIV O esqueleto jornaleiro" (217).

5 In the same year that Maria Gabriela Llansol published her translation of Baudelaire, on the other side of the Atlantic another Portuguese translation came to light, produced by Juremir Machado da Silva. Interestingly, he wrote a preface to his translation, called "Reescandalizar Baudelaire ou como ser fielmente infiel," in which he already alludes, through the title, to the ambivalence between free, experimental translation and a more precise philological approach. Faleiros states that this project has similarities to Llansol's approach, while also stressing the importance of "scandal" for Baudelaire's own aesthetics (Silva; Faleiros, "Llansol retradutora" 121). In his foreword, Silva describes how he paradoxically translated in an unfaithful way in order to act faithfully towards Baudelaire: "Fui terrivelmente infiel em nome da mais absoluta fidelidade" (17).

with the concept of experimental translation, which was also an idea presented by Robert-Foley in "The Politics of Experimental Translation" (417–18).

One could argue that taking an experimental approach to translating Baudelaire is not a new phenomenon. Indeed, the German-speaking tradition of Baudelaire translation shows that two of the most renowned early translators, Walter Benjamin and Stefan George, already used the Baudelairean lyrical collection as a playground for their own experimental approach to translation, and probably no other translation was more experimental than Oskar Pastior's.[6] Even in the most recent translation, from 2017, Simon Werle makes bold decisions in his German version of Baudelaire.[7] In a way, Baudelaire himself was an experimental writer.[8] He broke new ground with his lyrical collection, which founded modernity through the combination of old literary traditions and forms with new subjects—cadavers, beggars, and lesbian women, as well as Satan, were declared to be subjects of aesthetical reflection.

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6 On Walter Benjamin's translations of *Les Fleurs du mal*, see Sauter, and on the experimental character of Oskar Pastior's translation, see Strässle.

7 In his translations, Simon Werle recurrently opts in favor of estranging his German text, and this lexical decision makes him sound more French. For instance, his translation of "Pour moi, poëte chétif, / Ton jeune corps maladif" contains the outdated and French-sounding word "malad": "Für mich, Poet von eigener Gnad, / Besitzt dein Leib, jung und malad" (Baudelaire and Werle vv. 5–6, 239).

8 The concept of experimental writing was not new to French literature in the nineteenth century. As was explored in the Introduction, it was strongly associated with Baudelaire's contemporary, Emile Zola. In his manifesto *Le Roman expérimental*, he alluded to the writings of the doctor Claude Bernard. In his own novels, Zola sought to demonstrate the effect of certain human conditions (see Zola, *Thérèse Raquin*; on the historical dimension of the concept, see Schwerte). My use of the concept "experimental" is therefore anachronistic. It relies on an understanding of the way that the vanguardist movement, due to its exploration of new aesthetic grounds, was declared experimental (Berg 143). In my book, *Poetik des Kolibris*, I give a detailed analysis of the meaning of experimentalism in nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century literature (Jöhnk 211–18). In this context, it is also interesting to note that Hugo Friedrich defined "Überraschung" ("surprise") and "Befremdung" ("disconcertment") as common characteristics of modern poetry. The experimental character of Llansol and Baudelaire might therefore also be consistent with the modernity of both texts (Friedrich 18). Westerwelle (511) also mentions how Baudelaire experiments with rhymes and meter. In her analysis, Robert-Foley describes an example that questions in a similar vein the distinction between "experimental translation" and "the translation of experimental and untranslatable texts" (*Experimental Translation* 164).

The experimental character of Llansol's translation is thus intrinsically linked to the translated poems.

Re-Enacting *Les Fleurs du mal*

Apart from her literary work and her contribution to theory, Llansol was a prolific translator from French to Portuguese. Among her translated works one can find authors such as Paul Verlaine, Rainer Maria Rilke, Arthur Rimbaud, Guillaume Apollinaire, Paul Éluard, and Pierre Louÿs, as well as the mystic Thérèse de Lisieux. This shows Llansol's preference for poetry and the literature of France's belle époque. Baudelaire does not stand out in this collection. On the contrary, his lyrical collection is—apart from that of Thérèse de Lisieux—the oldest among these works, and it influenced poets such as Rimbaud and Verlaine and founded, as the already cited book by Friedrich has argued, modern European poetry. For all of her translations, Llansol chose the Lisbon-based and vanguardist publishing house Relógio D'Água, which, according to their own portrayal on their website, sees itself as a "cultural project" that "does not limit itself to works that it assumes the reader wants to read" ("Perguntas Frequentes").[9] In other words, this publishing house is open to vanguardist and experimental literature that seeks new paths and thus was probably the ideal choice for Llansol. However, this translation project is not elitist either, bearing in mind that Llansol's *Fleurs du mal* was included in a governmental campaign promoting reading in Portugal (the so-called "Plano Nacional de Leitura") and therefore addressed and still addresses a broad audience.[10]

Llansol was not a writer who aimed for a big stage and public appearances (Moser). In this sense, her literary persona does not differ from Baudelaire's. His self-fashioning as *poète maudit* is consistently reflected in *Les Fleurs du mal*. He was comfortable playing *l'enfant terrible* of French literary scenes and he depicted in his writing many figures considered outsiders of French nineteenth-century society, such as sex workers, beggars, and chiffoniers, amongst others. When Baudelaire tried to apply for membership in the Académie Française, the

9 The original wording is: "É também um projecto cultural, não se limitando a publicar as obras que pensa que o leitor quer ler."

10 This detail is included in the publishing house's 2021 catalogue. All translations by Llansol published with Relógio D'Água can be seen in this catalogue ("Catálogo 2021").

literary scene was shocked that a marginal poet dared to claim his place in this elitist institution (Westerwelle 37). Throughout his poetic collection, Baudelaire fashions the poet as exiled and marginalized, for instance in "Le Cygne" or "Le Vin des chiffoniers." Baudelaire lived in poverty and precarity, and he was never appreciated in his lifetime, but he remains one of France's most recognized authors (Westerwelle 37, 304). Nowadays, one can hardly think of a more canonical writer, as he is celebrated by later generations of poets, both in France and abroad.

Llansol was literally exiled and writing from a marginal position. She is said to have "cultivated her own isolation, by her scant public appearances and interviews, and by her dense, erudite, and impenetrable text, which did not encounter a popular readership in Portugal" (Ribeiro). In "Llansol, Poet of the Posthumous," the writer and translator Benjamin Moser admired her courage to write the way she did, consciously opting for a style that would not attract a wide readership. Research has stated that Llansol chose for her translations authors who could be seen in the same line of outcast writing (Coelho, "Baudelaire" 72).[11]

When I depict Llansol's translations as experimental in what follows, I will repeatedly consider the element of aesthetic and moral transgression.[12] In this sense, her translations are consistent with Baudelaire's conception of beauty and re-enact the aesthetic effect his lyrical collection had on his contemporaries. I will use the concept of "re-enactment," since the much more frequently applied term "actualization" does not seem extensive enough to characterize Llansol's translation practice and the performative character it possesses. As is commonly known, Baudelaire, unlike Gustave Flaubert, did not win when he was put on trial for obscenity charges, and several poems were excluded from

11 Coelho writes in "Baudelaire, Pierre Louÿs e Mallarmé": "Não estranhei esta escolha da autora porutguesa, tratando-se de uma linhagem de marginais, de rebeldes, a que afirma pertencer a mais que rebelde Maria Gabriela" (72). Coelho also remarks in the mentioned essay that in Llansol's own writing, there are several allusions and references to Baudelaire (73).

12 The concept of "transgression" was used by Michel Foucault in order to describe the aesthetic characteristic of the work of Georges Bataille ("Préface à la transgression"). Coelho has also expressively alluded to the transgressive character of Llansol's translations of Mallarmé alongside her appropriation, which I will also consider an important characteristic ("Baudelaire" 81). On transgression as element of Baudelaire's poetry, see Jamison.

the poetic collection. They were published separately in Belgium in his collection *L'Épave*. Baudelaire lived two years in Belgium, where he tried to earn more money with his writing, but he did not succeed and had to return to Paris in a miserable state of health (Westerwelle 304–05, 317). Brussels was the place where many exiled French authors lived (319), and, interestingly enough, Belgium was also the country Llansol chose for her exile.

I have no knowledge of Llansol's role in editorial decisions, such as those concerning the cover of the lyrical collection. However, it is curious that the publishing house used Paul Rodin's illustrations of *Les Fleurs du mal*, and particularly his illustration of one of the most discussed poems, namely the poem literally addressed to carrion (Baudelaire and Llansol, "XXIX Une charogne / XXIX Corpo que apodrece"), which Llansol translated in an unconventional manner as well (a point to which I will return later). In this morbid poem, the lyrical voice describes a dead body he sees while walking with its (still alive) lover, who is then reminded of her own mortality. The poem is an example of the shocking and transgressive character of Baudelaire's lyrical collection, to which Karin Westerwelle (8, 42, 44, 140) also alludes repeatedly in her study on Baudelaire. This transgressive character is re-enacted by Llansol, but it goes without saying that the provocative elements in *Les Fleurs du mal* are specific to its historical moment. In her re-enactment of Baudelaire, Llansol searched for other means to re-enact Baudelaire's transgression—it is this transgressive re-enactment in Llansol's translations that I will define as experimental.

Experimental translations contradict normative concepts of translations and common expectations the reader might have (Robert-Foley, "Politics" 401; *Experimental Translation* 11; Luhn, *Spiel* 119).[13] They can be considered as a "form of research," as they question the "theoretical substrate of translation" itself (Robert-Foley, "Politics" 405); they possess an epistemic drive and "Begehren" ("desire"), and they often understand themselves as providing a critical engagement with and reading of the original (Luhn, "'Dieses Spiel'"). Throughout this collected volume, contributions have shown that the notion of "experimental" translation contrasts with the notion of fidelity.[14] In my article, however, I will

13 The Introduction of this volume contains an extensive definition and history of the concept of experimental translation. In this article, I will only include references that strengthen my argument. While Robert-Foley reiterates some ideas from "The Politics of Experimental Translation" in *Experimental Translation*, I will avoid excess references by referring only to one source.

14 This is also explored by Robert-Foley: "It [experimental translation] poses a threat to the mainstream dogma of translation, in particular, the place of fidelity, equivalence,

show how in the case of Llansol, experimentalism is compatible with the idea of fidelity in the sense of continuity.

Although the notion of "fidelity" is criticizable and by no means a value I wish to perpetuate, it becomes more difficult to define a translation as experimental when the translated text itself contains an experimental character (on this point, see Robert-Foley, *Experimental Translation* 164, 215). Fidelity is a concept that has strongly limited translation's value as a *sui generis* textual genre. It is, apart from that, connected to a gendered notion of possession, which was, decades ago, famously explored by Lori Chamberlain. The connection between translation and marriage is power. Chamberlain explains: "I would further argue that the reason translation is so overcoded, so overregulated, is that it threatens to erase the difference between production and reproduction which is essential to the establishment of power" (466). In this sense, my aim is neither to show how experimental translation is a counter term to "fidelity," nor to use the term simply to suggest that a free translation possesses authorship in contrast to a conventional, "faithful" translation. Such a point of view would only affirm the power relation between original and translation, instead of questioning aesthetical hierarchies, authorship in the sense of possession, and the allegedly secondary and subordinate character of translation. The case of Maria Gabriela Llansol will therefore be helpful in developing a more nuanced concept of experimental translation.

"Hymne à la beauté" and "La Beauté": Experiments with Beauty

The highly experimental character of Llansol's translation can easily be discerned in a couple of poems that Llansol translated in two versions. This applies for instance to "Correspondances" (Baudelaire and Llansol, "IV Correspondances / IV Correspondências") and to the "Litanies de Satan" (Baudelaire and Llansol, "CXX Les Litanies de Satan / CXX Prece a Satã").[15] In the case of "Correspondances," Llansol created two versions, one literal ("versão literal") and

accuracy, transparency, smoothness, and legibility" ("Politics" 405; see also *Experimental Translation* 13). However, as shown in the Introduction, faithfulness to a marginal text can subvert power relations (Robert-Foley, "Politics" 417)

15 In former versions of this lyrical collection, it also applies to "XCIII A une passante / XCIII A uma transeunte." This is suggested by research that repeatedly treats the two versions of this sonnet; this translation seems to have been changed into a single version in the present edition of Llansol.

one that she called "outra versão" ("another version"; 39). It is no surprise that precisely those poems have been of interest for the few researchers who dived into Llansol's universe (Faleiros, "Llansol retradutora" 115; "Tradução poética" 20). As I have argued in the Introduction, when a translation is more experimental, it receives more attention from scholarship and less attention from broad readership. One could also argue that Llansol is acting experimentally in a literal sense, since she is taking her object—Baudelaire's poem—and creating a setting in which she can contemplate this poem in Portuguese in two versions.[16] This experimental approach in the literal sense also contradicts one of the golden rules of translation: It is necessary to make decisions. Llansol refuses to make decisions when offering two versions of the same poem. She thus subverts the norm, and this is, according to recent definitions, a decisive characteristic of experimental translation (Robert-Foley, "Politics" 401).[17]

In "Spleen et idéal" ("Spleen and Ideal"), the first section of his lyrical collection, Baudelaire dedicated a hymn to beauty. While the poem "Hymne à la beauté" is not as renowned as other poems in the collection, such as "Le Cygne" ("The Swan"), "À une passante" ("To the Passing Lady"), and "Rêve parisien" ("Parisian Dream"), the question of beauty is inherent to the lyrical collection and was excessively important to Baudelaire, who is often considered as one of the representatives of "l'art pour l'art" (Benjamin, *Baudelaire* 10). The allegorical depiction of beauty is as ambivalent as humankind itself. Baudelaire depicts this ambivalence of humanity, torn between Satan and God, on several occasions, such as in the theoretical reflections on laughter and the comic that

16 In this sense, Max Bense understood experimental writing in his essay on the essay, where he wrote: "Essayistisch schreibt, wer experimentierend verfaßt, wer seinen Gegenstand nicht nur hin und her wendet, sondern diesen Gegenstand während des Schreibens, während der Bildung und während der Mitteilung seiner Gedanken findet, oder erfindet, befragt, betastet, prüft, durchreflektiert und zeigt, was unter den ästhetischen und ethischen manuellen und intellektuellen Bedingungen des Autors überhaupt sichtbar werden kann" ("One who writes in an essayistic manner is one who produces experimentally, who does not only simply turn their object back and forth, but finds this object during the writing, the formation, and the communication of their thought, or invents, questions, touches, verifies, reflects, and shows what can become visible under the aesthetic and ethical manual and intellectual conditions of the author"; 28).

17 This experimental character is also in line with Anna Luhn's recently offered definition of experimental translation in terms of systematicity ("'Dieses Spiel").

are found in his essay "On the Essence of Laughter" ("De l'essence du rire" 532, 534, 543).

Referring to his verses in terms of "hymn" in "Hymne à la beauté" is characteristic for Baudelaire's aesthetics, which have famously been described by Friedrich as "ruinöses Christentum" ("ruinous Christianity"; 45). This description refers to the way that Baudelaire's approach to aesthetics exposes the remnants, traces, ruins, and shards of Christianity while being aware of its own Christian ground.[18] The poetical voice addresses beauty directly in the poem. The same dialogical structure can be seen in poems such as the already mentioned "Les Litanies de Satan" or "Le Reniément de Saint Pierre" ("The Denial of St. Peter), which provoked religious feelings through the liturgical praise of Satan and the praise of Saint Peter's denial of Jesus Christ. Striking, however, is the abundance of questions:

XXI
Hymne à la beauté

Viens-tu du ciel profond ou sors-tu de l'abîme,
Ô Beauté? ton regard, infernal et divin,
Verse confusément le bienfait et le crime,
Et l'on peut pour cela te comparer au vin.

Tu contiens dans ton œil le couchant et l'aurore;
Tu répands des parfums comme un soir orageux;
Tes baisers sont un philtre et ta bouche une amphore
Qui font le héros lâche et l'enfant courageux.

Sors-tu du gouffre noir ou descends-tu des astres?
Le Destin charmé suit tes jupons comme un chien;
Tu sèmes au hasard la joie et les désastres,
Et tu gouvernes tout et ne réponds de rien.

Tu marches sur des morts, Beauté, dont tu te moques;
De tes bijoux l'Horreur n'est pas le moins charmant,
Et le Meurtre, parmi tes plus chères breloques,
Sur ton ventre orgueilleux danse amoureusement.

18 Bernhard Teuber depicted how Baudelaire used "sacred hypotexts" (in the original: "sakralen Hypotext"; 627) in order to forge his own poetic universe and decompose sacred and Christian forms.

L'éphémère ébloui vole vers toi, chandelle,
Crépite, flambe et dit: Bénissons ce flambeau!
L'amoureux pantelant incliné sur sa belle
A l'air d'un moribond caressant son tombeau.

Que tu viennes du ciel ou de l'enfer, qu'importe,
Ô Beauté! monstre énorme, effrayant, ingénu!
Si ton œil, ton souris, ton pied, m'ouvrent la porte
D'un Infini que j'aime et n'ai jamais connu?

De Satan ou de Dieu, qu'importe? Ange ou Sirène,
Qu'importe, si tu rends, — fée aux yeux de velours,
Rythme, parfum, lueur, ô mon unique reine! —
L'univers moins hideux et les instants moins lourds?

(Baudelaire, "XXI Hymne à la beauté")

The poem is translated by Llansol in the following way:

XXI
Hagiográfica beleza

Vens de um buraco negro ou do céu profundo _____?
Ignoro mas sei-te Hermafrodita e Extrema
Lanças à toa no mundo ricos e mendigos
Tal um vinho que abre ao aberto, embora ao perigo

O sol nasce nas tuas pupilas e nelas falece Vórtice intempestivo
difundes perfumes
Teu beijo feitiço torna os homens frágeis Tua boca cornucópia
faz as crianças nuas

És fruto da lixeira cósmica ou fragmento estelar _____?
Ignoro mais sei que o Destino fascinado te caiu nos braços
Fortuna e desaire semeias improvável
Não és democrática, tudo reges a teu bel' modo

Espezinhas os mortos e vem-te o riso O Horror é uma das tuas jóias
mais famosas
Matas com quem agita guizos e a morte dança sobre teu pénis-clítoris

langorosa

O efémero é para ti que corre em febre
Surge brama breve e exclama extinto 'bendita chama'
É ver o amanta palpitante inclinado sobre a sua dama
Um moribundo que beijasse seu esquife fá-lo-ia exactamente

Venhas de onde venhas _____ é indiferente
Monstro potente terrível e ingénuo És belo ó beleza
Se olhando e sorrindo com esse teu jeito
Me abres a porta do Infinito que amo e desconheço
Que mais me importa?

Anjo ou Sereia _____ vens de Um ou de Outro?
Pergunta inócua Fada com olhos de veludo
Trazes-me ritmo perfume vislumbre
Um menos de fealdade no todo
E mais leveza no resto.
A teus pés me lanço.

(Baudelaire and Llansol, "XXI Hymne à la beauté / XXI Hagiográfia beleza")

My argument will repeatedly connect this poem to another one on beauty, "La Beauté," and analyze both Llansol's and Baudelaire's poetic reflection on aesthetics:

XVII
La Beauté

Je suis belle, ô mortels! comme un rêve de pierre,
Et mon sein, où chacun s'est meurtri tour à tour,
Est fait pour inspirer au poète un amour
Éternel et muet ainsi que la matière.

Je trône dans l'azur comme un sphinx incompris;
J'unis un cœur de neige à la blancheur des cygnes;
Je hais le mouvement qui déplace les lignes,
Et jamais je ne pleure et jamais je ne ris.

Les poëtes, devant mes grandes attitudes,

Que j'ai l'air d'emprunter aux plus fiers monuments,
Consumeront leurs jours en d'austères études;

Car j'ai, pour fasciner ces dociles amants,
De purs miroirs qui font toutes choses plus belles:
Mes yeux, mes larges yeux aux clartés éternelles!

(Baudelaire, "La Beauté")

Llansol translates:

XVII
A beleza

Bela sou ___ mortais __ como um sonho de pedra
E meu seio __ onde todos enfim se ferem ___
Inspira ao poeta um amor vero ____
Tão Eterno e mudo como a matéria --
Híbrida sou ___ coração de neve num alvor

De cisne ___ num empíreo de azur ___
Odeio o movimento que o linear reduz ___
Nem denso, nem leve ___ por puro ardor ___

Os poetas __ fascinados pela minha pose
Com que pareço imitar __ o mármore mais altivo ___
Consumirão seus dias em áridas gnoses __

Meus dóceis amantes ___ quero-os seduzidos
Por olhos meus __ seu ver claro feito de Certeza
Porque espehlo sou __ sem fim geram beleza

(Baudelaire and Llansol, "XVII La Beauté / XVII A beleza")

Beauty is one of the often-encountered allegories in *Les Fleurs du mal*. As previously stated, "Hymn to Beauty" is not amongst the most widely read and discussed poems of the collection. However, it is often discussed in relation to "La Beauté," where beauty speaks for herself. This poem appears before the hymn, in the same cycle, namely "Spleen et idéal." In "La Beauté," beauty defines herself, relying on multiple images encountered in *Les Fleurs du mal*, such

as the swan, the Azur, or the sphynx, metaphors that can be found in "LXXXIX Le Cygne," "II L'Albatros" (vv. 6, 9), and "Spleen LXXVI" (vv. 22, 73). "Hymne à la beauté" was first published in 1860 in order to replace one of the condemned poems (Zimmermann 239). In the poem, the lyrical voice itself is questioning beauty about its character. Here lies the profoundly self-referential worth of this poem, given that the idea that beauty can be "extracted not only from horror but from evil itself" (Hyslop 207) is at the core of this poetical collection: "le meutre parmi tes plus chères breloques / Sur ton ventre orgueilleux danse amoureusement" ("the murder amongst your most dear charms / Dances vividly in love on your proud belly"). This idea is expressed not only by the title *Fleurs du mal*, but also by drafts of the preface, in which Baudelaire wrote (Hyslop 207): "Il m'a paru plaisaint, et d'autant plus agréable que la tâche était plus difficile, d'extraire la *beauté* du Mal" (Baudelaire, "[Projets de préfaces]" 181).[19]

My analysis will begin with "Hagiográphica beleza" before returning to "A beleza." I have decided to interpret Llansol's Baudelaire translation by focusing on these two poems because, as I will argue, they contain many characteristics of her experimental approach to translation. This is consistent with Baudelaire himself, given that his poetic collection is a complex construction, in which one poem could not be interpreted without reference to another poem. Friedrich has called attention to this characteristic of Baudelaire's lyric collection, which he considers a systematic composition, divergent from a loose anthology.[20]

The title of Llansol's translation already indicates her interest in theory. The "hymn to beauty" becomes "hagiographic beauty." The title "hymn" could be interpreted in a Christian or an antique sense: On the one hand, a hymn is an ancient poetic form, epitomized in one of the most famous poems of world literature, Sappho's hymn to Aphrodite. On the other hand, the term "hymn" refers to a musical praise of God as part of Christian liturgy. But Llansol does not maintain the "hymn"; she switches to the meta-category of "hagiography." This title is hence provocative, as it elevates beauty into the position of a saint and worships art as religion. Llansol shows that her reading is a meta-reading, a translation that expressively designates itself as an interpretation, since the

19 On this quote, see Hyslop (207) and Teuber (615). My translation: "It has appeared to me enjoyable, and even more pleasing since the task was more difficult, to extract the *beauty* from the Evil."

20 Friedrich (38, see also 39) repeatedly alludes to the systematic composition of *Les Fleurs du mal*.

"hymn" becomes "hagiography" and thus the teaching, knowledge, or theory of the lives of Saints.

This meta-level is also expressed by the fact that Llansol—contrary to other translations she made—did not include a preface to her writing. She rather relied on a preface written by Paul Valéry, who, in many ways, embodies the opposite of Baudelaire. As a very recognized public figure and the president of the Académie Française, Valéry was well-established and couldn't be further away from the image of *poète maudit* that Baudelaire cultivated. In his essay, Valéry positions Baudelaire in the literary field of his own time. He describes Baudelaire's role as translator and reader of Edgar Allan Poe, and it is ironic that Valéry compares him to Victor Hugo (359, 366). This comparison seems almost sarcastic from today's perspective, considering that Hugo was significantly more successful than Baudelaire and was appreciated in his own time (Westerwelle 38). One might wonder if the dialogue between Valéry and Baudelaire does not reflect Llansol's own position in the literary field and the poor appreciation of her texts throughout her lifetime. The foreword possesses allegorical value in that it shows that this translation does not hide the time that has passed or the developments in literary and human history.

The form of the translated poem instantly reminds readers of the way that the poems of Stéphane Mallarmé used space. Mallarmé was deeply indebted to Baudelaire and is considered another milestone in the development of modern European poetry (Friedrich 95–139). Presenting a translation of Baudelaire that incorporates elements of his literary successors, such as Mallarmé or Valéry, produces a translation that exhibits the afterlife of *Les Fleurs du mal*. This could be seen as an interesting perspective on the temporality of translation, since it questions the linear progression of time. The formal conception of Llansol's translations is the key to comprehending this temporal dimension.

Experimentation with Form

Many of Llansol's translations experiment with form: in addition to her punctuation, Llansol decomposes the very strict poetical forms Baudelaire uses, such as the sonnet or the Alexandrine-meter, which are characteristic of his poetic universe. On many occasions, the decentering of the graphic structure creates new narratives, as for instance in a poem on lighthouses, "VI Les Phares / VI Os luminares," where, through the alternation of the verses, the importance of the names and historical figures is highlighted. The dashes,

which are also prominent in the present poem, are typical for Llansol's aesthetic, and Moser has connected them to Emily Dickinson, who, like Llansol, also wrote for the sake of writing, without having a broad audience in mind (Moser).

The experimental approach to form also characterizes Llansol's poetic reflections on beauty. At first sight, the punctuation employed by Llansol characterizes the predominant aesthetic effect of the poem. The dashes expressing an omission are generally employed in every verse that articulates a question (one exception is verse 21, although in this case the expression "[v]enhas de onde venhas" ("wherever you might come from") also implies a lack of knowledge and an indirect question: where do you come from?). The dashes therefore illustrate the dialogical structure of her translation, which, on a meta-level, also expresses the dialogue between Llansol, Baudelaire, and the reader. This dialogical structure is by no means foreign to Baudelaire, who begins his poetic collection with a poem addressed to the readers, reminding them of the similarities to the author while also applying dashes: "– Hypocrite lecteur, – mon semblable, – mon frère!" ("Au lecteur" 6, vv. 40).[21] With this dialogical structure, Llansol illustrates her idea of translation as a polyphonic process.

This is already hinted at through the inclusion of the original poems by Baudelaire and the extensiveness of her volume of *Les Fleurs du mal*. There is nothing left to be covered in Llansol's complete and thorough translation of Baudelaire: All the different versions of the foreword are included, all the condemned poems, the three most iconic pictures of Baudelaire (photographs by Nadar and Étienne Carjat as well as a painting by Émile Deroy), even drafts of the poems in Baudelaire's own handwriting ("XXXVII Le Possédé / XXXVII O possesso"). Nothing is left out—except the foreword of the translator (Faleiros, "Llansol retradutora" 113). As is often the case, this absence becomes very present. In such an experimental translation, the reader probably expects a foreword—an explanation, an interpretation—and thus this omission leads to a sense of loneliness and disorientation.

Another striking element in Llansol's translation is her divergent use of capitalization. As is commonly known, Baudelaire applied capitalization to ex-

21 However, Westerwelle (162–63) shows how this communicative dimension is subverted. The reinforcement of the dialogical structure in Llansol's translation can be observed in numerous examples. See, for instance, Baudelaire and Llansol, "LV Causerie / LV Diálogo," or "LIX Sisina / LIX Sisina." My translation: "Hypocrite reader—my kind—my brother!"

press the importance of selected substantives and characterize their allegorical meaning (Benjamin, *Baudelaire* 99). While Baudelaire highlights the substantives "Beauté," "Horreur," "Meurtre," "Satan," "Dieu," "Ange," and "Sirène," Llansol opts for "Hermafrodita," "Extrema," "Vórtice," "Tua," "Destino," "Horror," "És," "Sereia," "Um," "Outro," "Fada." Her capitalization is not only divergent, but also without pattern and, quite frankly, sense. Llansol does not use capitalization to give the reader orientation or direction. Rather, she tries to confuse through her use of capitalization: as is apparent in the following poem, the use of capital letters does not help in the reading process, it rather confuses and goes against any hermeneutic value. Its resistance to interpretation is similar to what Susan Sontag, in "Against Interpretation," describes with regard to modern art: "In fact, a great deal of today's art may be understood as motivated by a flight from interpretation" (10). It is the same flight from interpretation, meaning, and hermeneutics that the reader encounters in Llansol's Portuguese Baudelaire. Translation has repeatedly been defined as a hermeneutic act (Schleiermacher 72–73). Llansol is an intense and precise reader of Baudelaire, but, following Sontag's critique of hermeneutics, she does not serve as an interpreter. As is known, Sontag criticized the hermeneutic drive to explain a work through interpretation; she characterized this movement as a usurpation and a power struggle. Instead of hermeneutics, she pleads in favor of an "erotics of art" (14).

When I characterize Llansol's translation as experimental, I am mostly referring to form (recalling that Benjamin declared translation as a form per se in "Die Aufgabe des Übersetzers," 9). Llansol was not primarily a poet; most of her work is prose, although its density is strongly associated with poetry. Llansol completely decomposes the lyrical form of Baudelaire, which is an inherent characteristic of *Les Fleurs du mal*. The rhythm and meter in themselves contain semantic value for the interpretation of each poem. In "À une passante," Baudelaire evokes the form of the sonnet, which is deeply connected to European love lyric (Westerwelle 509–11); on the other hand, "Le Cygne," like so many other poems, is written in Alexandrine, and it contrasts the classical poetic form with the new urban content. "Rêve parisien" is written in a much shorter metric, creating a different setting for the dreamlike landscape. This dimension is completely neglected by Llansol—again, this can be regarded as a way of adapting the poetic collection to the twenty-first century, where free verses are predominant in poetry. As research has highlighted, Llansol's play with form can also be observed in her translation of "XXIX Une charogne / XXIX Corpo que apodrece," where the poetic form decomposes in the same way as the dead body

(Faleiros, "Llansol retradutora" 114). In Llansol's translation there is nothing left of Baudelaire's lyrical composition: no meter, no verse, no rhyme.

Misogyny in Llansol and Baudelaire

Llansol provokes not only through her rejection of any hermeneutic value, but also through the misogynistic and, above all, pornographic dimension of her translation: "a morte dança sobre teu pénis clitoris / langorosa" (on these pornographic elements, see Coelho, "Baudelaire" 78).[22] Again, this characteristic does not draw Llansol away from Baudelaire but instead brings her closer to his poetic universe and aesthetic experimentalism. Baudelaire provoked through his depiction of lesbianism in "II Lesbos," which in consequence had to be excluded from the collection. The misogynistic portrayal of women has repeatedly been the subject of research (Chatterjee). Baudelaire's relation to women is complex and ambiguous (Chatterjee 18).[23] It is known that Baudelaire remained dependent on his mother (or to be precise, his legal guardian, a lawyer) throughout his life, despised his stepfather, and was amorously attached to Jean Duval (Westerwelle 31–34). There are many female figures in Baudelaire's poetic universe, from poor, old women, to lesbian lovers, sex workers, and beggars, to allegorical figures and adored women. In "A une mendiante rousse," a red-haired beggar becomes subjected to the flâneur's male gaze and objectification: "Que des nœuds mal attachés / Dévoilent pour nos péchés / Tes deux beaux seins, radieux / Comme des yeux" (Baudelaire, "LXXXVII A une mendiante rousse" vv. 21–24, 84).[24] In his reflection, Baudelaire was even clearer in his stand on women: "La femme est *naturelle*, c'est-à-dire abominable. Aussi est-elle toujours vulgaire, c'est-à-dire le contraire du Dandy" ("Journaux intimes" 677).[25] But although Baudelaire's depiction of women is misogynistic, it is also, from the aesthetic point of view, complex. Benjamin has called attention to the interconnection of lesbianism, amongst

22 My translation: "and death dances on your penis-clitoris / languorous."

23 This essay consists of a thorough analysis of the importance of femininity in *Les Fleurs du mal*.

24 My translation: "Let the poorly knitted knots / Reveal for our sins / Your two beautiful shining breast / Like eyes."

25 My translation: "The woman is *natural*, which is to say abominable. She is also always vulgar, which is to say the contrary of the Dandy."

other traits, and allegory, which hints at a more complex interrelation of images and rhetorical figures that escapes quick conclusions.[26]

Although she is a woman, Llansol remains faithful to the misogynistic original. The depiction of sex workers cannot shock the public in the early millennium, but its importance in Baudelaire's poetic universe cannot be overestimated and is connected to the social conditions and poverty in nineteenth-century Paris (Pfeiffer 32). Benjamin has repeatedly alluded to the importance of prostitution in Baudelaire's writing (*Baudelaire* 55), and Baudelaire himself commented suggestively in his personal annotations: "Qu'est-ce que l'art? Prostitution" ("Journaux intimes" 649).[27] Llansol must create a vulgar and sexist vocabulary to be able to attain the same level of linguistic violence and provocation in today's world. After Baudelaire, innumerous artists sought to provoke through the exposure of sex, drugs, and rock' n' roll, from Charles Bukowski to Vladimir Nabokov and Arthur Schnitzler. Llansol searched for new means of provocation, which inevitably had to be different. The fact that she is a woman translator and refers to this sexist vocabulary might be considered an essential part of her provocation. I can imagine that her aim is to call attention to the sexist double standards of language, without perpetuating them—that is, to dwell on how curses and swear words are judged differently according to the gender of the person speaking and are often, falsely, attributed to male speech (research has shown that women do not swear less than men).[28]

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26 Benjamin writes: "Das Motiv der Androgyne, der Lesbischen, der unfruchtbaren Frau ist im Zusammenhang mit der destruktiven Gewalt der allegorischen Intention zu behandeln" ("The motif of androgynous, lesbian, infertile woman has to be regarded in connection to the destructive violence of allegorical intention"; *Baudelaire* 157). Baudelaire notes: "La femme ne sait pas séparer l'âme du corps. Elle est simpliste, comme les animaux." ("The woman does not know how to separate the soul from the body. She is simplistic, just like the animals"; "Journaux intimes" 694). See also the critical research on this subject, such as Chatterjee.

27 My translation: "What is art? Prostitution."

28 I have found many studies that dwell on the gendered perception and use of vulgar language (see, for instance, Gauthier and Guille). The present study alludes to the common perception that men use more curse words. However, different linguistic inquiries have shown that at least in very specific linguistic contexts the use of curse words for men and women is not so different.

Llansol repeatedly speaks of "puta" ("whore") and does not shy away from inserting more sexist language on other occasions.[29] Again, this is a pattern, and not an isolated occasion of integrating vulgar vocabulary into her own poetic, Portuguese Baudelairean universe. Llansol, for instance, also vulgarly translates the admiration of Death in "Danse macabre" into "A morte gosta do cu que ofereces" ("XCVII Danse macabre / XCVII Dança macabra" 227), which means quite literally "Death is pleased by the asshole you offer." In other poems, one could argue that Llansol reinforces misogynistic description, for instance in "CVI Le Vin de l'assassin / CVI O vinho do assassino," where a "still pretty / Albeit very tired" woman ("encore jolie, / Quoique bien fatigue") turns into "a pretty women, albeit already very used" ("uma mulher bonita, apesar de já muito usada") and a simple woman ("femme") turns into the pejorative word for woman, "gaja" (247, 245).

Intersexuality and Ambiguity

A famous instance—perhaps the most famous one—of literary resistance to Portuguese dictatorship was the feminist collective oeuvre *Novas cartas portuguesas*, in which the three Marias, as they are called, opposed the dictatorship through their rewriting of the seventeenth-century classic *Lettres portugaises*. Following the tradition of the three Marias—Maria Isabel Barreno, Maria Teresa Horta, and Maria Velho da Costa—, Llansol continues to provoke in her translation. This provocation takes place through vulgarity, pornography, and a refusal of hermeneutics. In a culture shaped by centuries of heteronormativity and anti-feminism, gender ambivalence is a provocative element and today obviously still shakes people's personal beliefs about themselves and their sense of identity (not just in Portugal, of course).

29 For instance, she describes "La Muse vénale" as "A musa venal [uma puta de musa]" ("VIII La Muse vénale / VIII A musa venal [uma puta de musa]" 47) and refers to "putas finas" ("fine whores"; "XCI Les Petites vieilles / XCI As velhotas" 209). Llansol inserts more references to prostitution—and makes the connection to this shadowy part of Paris's economy more visible—in poems such as "CVI Le Vin de l'assassin / CVI O vinho do assassino" (247); see also "XLV Confession / XLV Confissão" (111). It is important to note that Baudelaire himself also mixed linguistic registers in his poetry (on this aspect, see Westerwelle 27; Coelho "Baudelaire" 78). See, for instance, the poem "Au Lecteur" (5–6), where Baudelaire uses colloquial terms such as "catin" (vv. 18), another pejorative and abusive term for a sex worker.

Llansol inserts a reference to "Hermafrodita," the mythical figure of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. As Benjamin stated (*Baudelaire* 89), the antiquity encountered in *Les Fleurs du mal* is Roman and not Greek. Ovid was an important subject for Baudelaire, who referred to several myths in his poems, such as Proserpine in "Sed non satiata" ("But Not Satisfied"), and openly reflected in "LXXXIX Le Cygne": "Vers le ciel quelquefois, comme l'homme d'Ovide" ("Towards heaven, sometimes, just like mankind in Ovid"; vv. 25, 86). The swan in this poem looks up to heaven, exactly in the way humankind does in Ovid. Inserting Ovid does not move Llansol further from Baudelaire, but once again closer.[30] It shows Llansol's attentive reading of Baudelaire and confirms that she was well aware of how predominant intertextuality was in his work. In this context it is also worth mentioning that there is another recurrent pattern in Llansol's translations. She repeatedly inserts Latin phrases into poems, where Baudelaire, by no means a foreigner to the *sermo patrius*, does not insert them. For instance, she alludes to "[t]urris ebernuea" and "mater" ("ivory tower," "mother"; "XXXVI Le Balcon / XXXVI A veranda" 91, 93), and adds the noun "*quidditas*" ("XLII / XLII" 103) in order to question the "essence."

In Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Hermaphroditus is a young boy who rejects a nymph. He is one of the few masculine figures in this collection of myths who suffers a sexual assault by the nymph Salmacis. Due to his resistance, Salmacis prays for their unification, and in consequence both are transformed into one being, into a lake which feminizes men. It is only after his metamorphosis that Ovid mentions the name of the figure, Hermaphroditus. In referencing "Hermaphrodita" as a female adjective, Llansol is alluding to a historical term used to describe intersexuality. In her study on intersexuality, Anne E. Linton evokes carefully and only in quotation marks the concept "hermaphrodism," which is a term rooted in the context of nineteenth-century Europe.[31] By using this term, Llansol is citing a very specific historical setting and the fascination for intersexuality in nineteenth-century France. Linton has given a portrait of this fascination, for which no other figure is as important as Herculine Barbin, who lived around the same time as Baudelaire and died one year after the poet. Barbin was the first known person to write an autobiographical account of their experience as an intersexual person, and, as is often observed, Michel

30 Again, this is another element that can be observed in different instances; see, for example, the poem "XLIII Le Flambeau vivant / XLIII A chama viva," where Llansol adds a reference to Orpheus (105).

31 See her comments on both terms in Linton (3–5).

Foucault ("Le vrai sexe") took a great interest in them (Linton 122). Honoré de Balzac, Théophile Gautier, Gustave Flaubert, Emile Zola—the list of those who have portrayed intersexual figures is extensive (Linton 22, 124, 127). Baudelaire himself alluded to "hermaphrodism" in his short story "La Fanfarlo," where one of the characters reflects: "Les anges sont hermaphrodites et stériles" (577; Marder 8; Linton 6).[32]

As stated before, Baudelaire's poetic universe is profoundly ambiguous and ambivalent (Westerwelle 28). In his analysis, Friedrich has underlined the importance of "Dissonanzen" ("dissonances") as an aesthetic device (45). In his own theoretical work, Baudelaire constantly repeated this ambiguous and torn characteristic of beauty, for instance in the already mentioned essay "De l'essence du rire," or in "Le Peintre de la vie moderne" ("The Painter of the Modern Life"): "Le beau est fait d'un élément éternel, invariable, dont la quantité est excessivement difficile à déterminer, et d'un élément relatif, circonstanciel, qui sera, si l'on veut, tour à tour ou tout ensemble, l'époque, la mode, la morale, la passion" (685).[33] He gives this definition greater precision:

> C'est ici une belle occasion, en vérité, pour établir une théorie rationnelle et historique du beau, en opposition avec la théorie du beau unique et absolu; pour montrer que le beau est toujours, inévitablement, d'une composition double, bien que l'impression soit une […]. Le beau est fait d'un élément éternel, […] et d'un élément relatif […]. La dualité de l'art est une conséquence fatale de la dualité de l'homme. (685–86)[34]

In this sense, the gender ambivalence of beauty ("Hermafrodita," "pénis-clítoris") that Llansol uses reflects the hybrid character of beauty itself and gives

32 My translation: "The angels are hermaphrodites and sterile."

33 On the morally ambiguous character of beauty, see Hyslop (206, 209). See also Baudelaire, "Journaux intimes" (657–58). My translation: "The beautiful is composed of one eternal, invariable element, whose quantity is excessively difficult to determine, and of a relative element, circumstantial, which will be, if you wish, alternately or altogether, the era, the fashion, the morale, the passion."

34 My translation: "This is truly a wonderful occasion to establish a rational and historical theory of the beautiful, in opposition to the theory of the unique and absolute beauty, in order to show that the beautiful always possesses, inevitably, a double composition, even if it gives the impression of unity […] The beautiful is made by one eternal element […] and by one relative element […]. The duality of art is a fatal consequence of man's duality."

it a modern incorporation. In her translation of the poem "La Beauté" Llansol expressively exclaims: "Híbrida sou" ("Hybrid I am"), which serves as a very free translation of the verses "Je trône dans l'azur comme un sphinx incompris; / J'unis un cœur de neige à la blancheur des cygnes[.]"[35] It is worth mentioning that the ambivalence of gender is also used by Llansol as an aesthetic device in other poems, such as "Sed non satiata," where a "Bizarre déité" ("strange goddess") becomes "Uma *deus morena*" ("XXVI Sed non satiata / XXVI Sed non satiata*" 74–75). The sole application of italics to highlight those words gives them special emphasis and calls attention to the bad sound and deliberate grammatical mistake of applying the feminine uncertain pronoun "uma" to the masculine substantive for god, "deus," which is then paired with the feminine adjective "morena" (in the sense of dark-haired). The same gender ambivalence is also expressed linguistically in the present translation of "Hagiográfica beleza," when beauty, a feminine substantive in Portuguese, is paired with a male adjective: "És belo ó beleza." The odd sound cannot be perpetuated in English, where the grammatical discordance between the male adjective ("belo") and the feminine substantive ("Beleza") results in the simple statement "You are beautiful oh beauty." In my own translation of this poem, I would try to express the uncomfortable sound by inserting another linguistic mistake: "You are beautifully oh beauty." The lyrical voice in Llansol's poem does not follow the gender of Baudelaire's universe: Beauty, which is clearly feminine in both of Baudelaire's poems, cannot be assigned to binary gender codes.

Against Fado, Fátima, Futebol

Baudelaire is considered to be one of the discursive founders of modernity. Research has repeatedly observed that his poetry used ancient and traditional poetic forms in order to express modernity. His already quoted essay "Le Peintre de la vie modern," on Constantin Guys, defined modernity with the following words: "La modernité, c'est le transitoire, le fugitif, le contingent, la moitié de l'art, dont l'autre moitié est l'éternel et l'immuable" (695).[36] Thus, referring to Llansol's own time and contemporariness would be another impor-

35 My translation of Baudelaire: "I am enthroned in the *azur* like a miscomprehended sphinx; / I unite a heart of snow with the whiteness of swans."

36 My translation: "Modernity consists of the transitive, the fugitive, the contingent, the half of art; its other half is eternal and immutable."

tant element in bringing Baudelaire consistently into European realities of the twenty-first century. This contemporary character is achieved by Llansol's references to her own time in "Hagiográphica beleza," such as "lixeira cósmica" ("cosmic waste disposal") or "democrática" ("democratic").[37] The political context is important for Baudelaire, who lived through the end of the Second Republic and the regime of Napoleon II. He famously portrayed the changes of Paris in "LXXXIX Le Cygne" (Westerwelle 226–27), which also give testimony to Napoleon's imperialistic fantasies and the changes of Paris brought about by the architectural reconstructions of the prefect Baron Haussmann, which had a political dimension.

Employing a reference to democracy is a clear allusion to the Portuguese dictatorial past. In contrast to poets such as Sophia de Mello Breyner Andresen (1919–2004), who stayed in Portugal, Llansol never seems to have received much attention for her own—subtle—resistance to the Estado Novo, and she never aimed for it either.[38] Her poetic resistance was more discreet, but it was nevertheless palpable, and it is therefore no surprise that her historical experience should also shape her work as translator.

Following this line of thought, I read Llansol's resistance to Christological images as a way to oppose the dictatorship and its afterlife: In her translation, what Baudelaire calls an angel is repeatedly redescribed as a "*m*ensageiro" or "mensageiro," which means a simple "messenger" ("XLIII Le Flambeau vivant / XLIII A chama viva" 105; "XLIV Réversibilité / XLIV Reversibilidade" 107). Angels are reduced to their mere function and are separated from every religious and mythological implication.[39] This is another recurring pattern. In other poems, one can observe how the angels are simply omitted: "Je suis l'Ange gardien, la

37 Another striking example of this tendency is the translation of "salpêtre" ("saltpeter") as "bombas molotov" ("Molotov bombs") ("CXX Les Litanies de Satan / CXX Prece a Satã" 279). In her essay "Les Fleurs du mal 'traduites' par Maria Gabriela Llansol," Coelho also alludes to another example of contemporary vocabulary in "Au lecteur / Ao leitor," where Llansol refers to "sem abrigos" ("homeless") instead of using the more obvious "mendigos" ("beggars").

38 On the political dimension of the poetry of Sophia de Mello Breyner Andresen, see Ascenso, and on the influence of the Portuguese dictatorship on other works by Llansol, see Moser.

39 However, there are examples of poems where Llansol maintains the reference to angels in Portuguese ("XXIX Une charogne / XXIX Corpo que apodrece" 81). In her discussion of Llansol's translations of Baudelaire, Coelho describes a process of secularization in "Les Fleurs du mal 'traduites' par Maria Gabriela Llansol": "Nous remarquons, tout comme nous l'avons fait à propos du premier poème analysé, la croissante matériali-

Muse et la Madone" is translated into "de que sou Musa e Senhora" ("XLII / XLII" 105; "XLV Confession / XLV Confissão" 111).[40] The Christian concept of "soul" used by Baudelaire is transformed into the Greek concept "daimon" ("CIV L'Âme du vin / CIV O daimon do vinho" 241). And in "CIX La Destruction / CIX A destruição," the word "Dieu" is replaced by the concept of "*aesteticum convivium*" (251).

As in the case of Andresen, the reference to Greek antiquity serves as an opposition to the dictatorial use of *Fado*, *Fátima*, *Futebol*—the state ideology that expresses the importance of Catholic values, family, and national folklore as well as *panem et circenses*.[41] Critical engagement with antiquity can be seen in poems such as "Catarina Eufémia," where Andresen evokes the fate of an agricultural worker in the rural and impoverished region of Alentejo who in 1954 was murdered through police violence. In this poem, Sophia de Mello Breyner Andresen might indirectly refer to Maria through the evocation of themes such as motherhood (the alleged pregnancy of the victim), innocence, and purity. But she expressively rejects a reference to Maria and instead draws attention to Antigone:[42] "Antígona poisou a sua mão sobre o teu ombro no instante em que morreste" (Andresen 164).[43] In "Hagiográphica beleza," Llansol deliberately omits "ciel" ("heaven") and "enfer" ("hell") as well as "Satan" ("Satan") and "Dieu" ("God"). The historical context also becomes a playground for experimenting in translation and inserting a political dimension into a work that is often read purely in its aesthetic and poetic dimension, despite the political references and depictions of poverty and misery. When the allegory of beauty confuses "ricos e mendigos" ("rich and poor people") instead of "le bienfait et le crime" ("righteousness and crime"), Llansol is engaging with the realities of her own

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sation de certains concepts, ici on pourrait même parler de laïcisation, de mise à l'écart du spirituel."

40 My translation of Baudelaire's verse: "I am the Guardian Angel, the Muse, and the Madonna." Translating Llansol's translation: "of which I am Muse and Senhora."

41 See the different close readings of the re-writing of Deus, Pátria, Família within Sophia de Mello Breyner Andresen's poetry in Ascenso (19–90), especially the chapter on Greek antiquity (110–36).

42 For a close reading of this poem, see Ascenso (82–90). In her reading, Ascenso does not contrast Maria with Antigone, as I do in my interpretation. Despite my reading of Llansol, it is important to note that Sophia de Mello Breyner Andresen also relies on mythological Christian figures in order to resist the dictatorship in her poetical world (Ascenso 137–47).

43 My translation: "Antigone put her hand on your shoulder in the moment you died."

time, writing in a country shaped by decades of a dictatorship that kept its population in poverty and misery.

Llansol does not end her translation with a question, as Baudelaire did. Instead, she chooses to add another sentence that clearly expresses the subordination of the poetical voice to beauty: "A teus pés me lanço," which means "To your feet I throw myself." It seems that Maria Gabriela Llansol's commitment to beauty and aesthetics needed a stronger emphasis. It is worth remembering the gender and power dynamics at play: A formerly exiled Portuguese woman writer translates the condemned misogynistic poet Baudelaire and appropriates his poetry into her own universe. In theoretical reflection on experimental translation, there is a constant and latent presence of power. When describing a translation as bold ("ousada") or provocative —power is at play. It is only when one is in the position of the underdog defeating a greater power that one can be bold. In German, the adjective "frech," which I often heard as a descriptive adjective when presenting experimental translations, is most often applied to children who transgress moral and normative behavior roles. While the idea that translation is connected to power and violence is not a new one (Samoyault), it lies, as is also shown by Llansol, at the heart of experimental translation (see also Robert-Foley, *Experimental Translation* 216). The translator usurps the position of the author and, seemingly, leaves behind the position of the unseen—but only seemingly, because, as in every translation, relationality and intense intertextuality (Luhn, "Dieses Spiel") are still at play. Translation and source text are intrinsically linked, in the sense that there might be a "beyond the original" in experimental translations, but certainly never a beyond the source-text. The experimental translations of Baudelaire re-enact *The Flowers of Evil* in the context of the Portuguese realities of the early 2000s. They offer visibility not only to "language difference" (Robert-Foley, *Experimental Translation* 20), but also, and especially, to a difference in historical time and place. Llansol translated boldly, without respect, and transgressively, and hence, ironically, exactly in the way Baudelaire might have wished.

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