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*OPISANIE ŚWIATA:*  
A MULTIMODAL TIME-TELLING JOURNEY\*

What is fiction about? We could say art deals with delving into the intricacies of life in all its complexity, from the moment of birth to the pathway to death. Literature, therefore, can be understood as a long journey without end, since from the onset of that first story in Genesis, we continue to come into the world. Instead of narrating, however, the painter Roman Opałka, decided to paint this story. In turn, the Brazilian writer Veronica Stigger took the painting as a reference. However, the reference to this synthesis about life extended further, since it seems only fitting that we understand that all art is a continuum of human stories quoting each other. Or as Stigger states, “literature is intertextuality”. Hence, in times in which intertextuality is also intermediality and multimodality, this is the theme of our paper.

The Brazilian novel *Opisanie świata* (2013), by Veronica Stigger, strongly engages with the performative nature of storytelling and its relationship with writing process through the insertion of multimodal elements. This “narrative experiment”, as defined in the book jacket flap by literary critic Flora Sussekind, explores the work of Polish painter Roman Opałka, who created the eponymous series of etchings. The novel ends with the words

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\* The writing of this paper was supported by the Brazilian Council for Scientific and Technological Development, CNPq—Conselho Nacional de Desenvolvimento Científico e Tecnológico (process numbers: 309678/2021-8 and 304566/2021-7).

“Para Natanael, meu filho” (“For Natanael, my son”), while the epigraph reads “Para Ivo, meu pai” (“For Ivo, my father”). In an act of creation that blends media production stemming from two cultures that are not usually related, oscillating between first- and third-person points of view, the allusion to the Polish painter’s oeuvre is molded to the perspective of a journey fictionalized by the author, both converging into the discovery of the world.

Stigger is a Brazilian writer, journalist, professor, and art critic. Born in Porto Alegre, Brazil, in 1973, she is known for her innovative and thought-provoking works. In a peculiar experimental nature and exploration of unconventional narrative structures, Stigger often incorporates art, philosophy, and cultural references into her fictional works, inviting readers to engage with complex ideas and themes. Stigger’s work stands out for its intellectual depth, innovative approach to storytelling, and its ability to provoke pro-

found reflections on the nature of the human experience and art. *Opisanie świata* (2013) was nominated to quite a few literary prizes and has won three important ones: Prêmio Machado de Assis da Biblioteca Nacional (2013), Prêmio Açorianos de Literatura (2014), and Prêmio São Paulo de Literatura (2014), solidifying Stigger’s reputation as a talented and innovative writer.

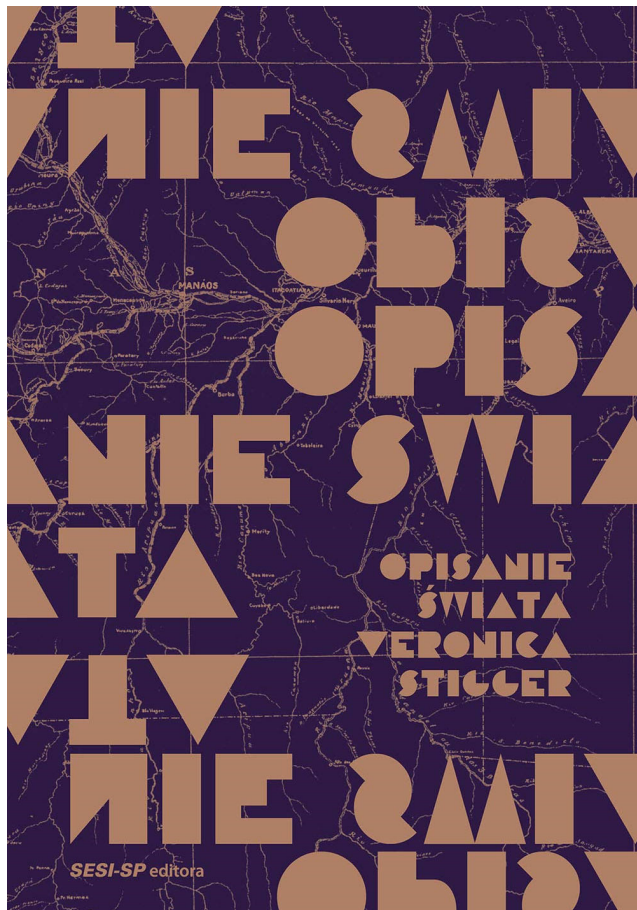
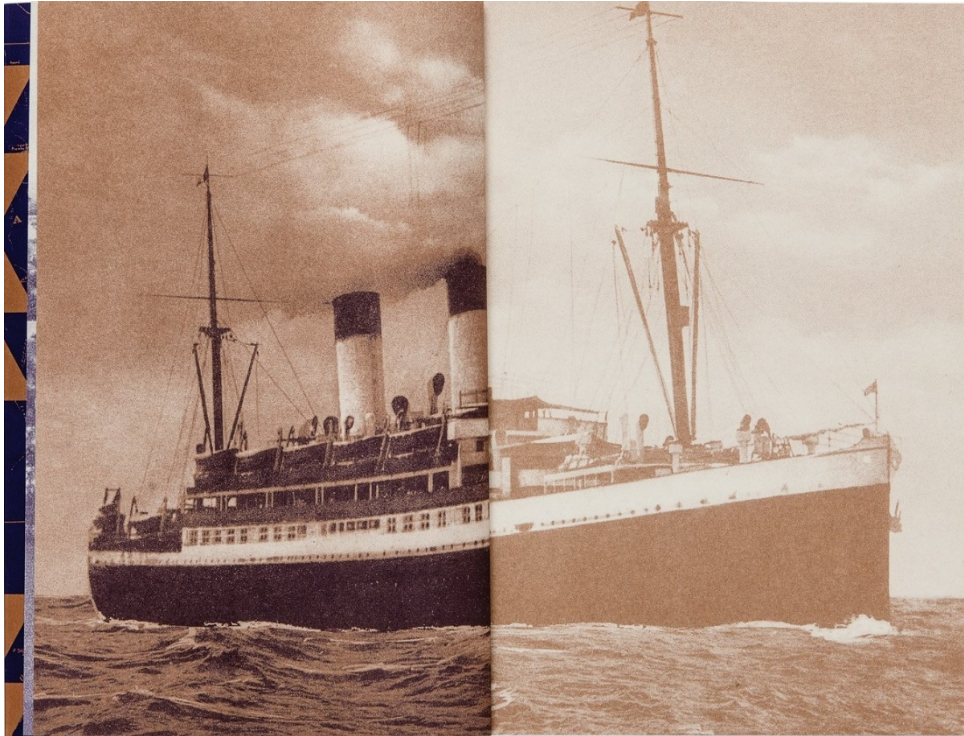


Figure 1. Book cover.

Although the story supposedly starts on page 23, the book's journey departs from its cover (figure 1) in which there is a re-mediation (Elleström) of a fragment taken from the Brazilian cartographic map that is a part of the Exhibition to Commemorate the Centenary of Brazil's Independence in 1922. When turning the book cover, we find a photo of the Holy Cross Church (*Bazylika Świętego Krzyża*), Warsaw (fig. 2), followed by reproductions of postcards depicting the port of Hamburg and a ship on the sea (fig. 3).



Figure 2. Holy Cross Church (*Bazylika Świętego Krzyża*) (1).



**Figure 3.** Postcards of a ship on the sea (4–5).

Next there is a written note (fig. 4) from Doctor Amado Silva to Mr. Opalka<sup>1</sup> informing him that his terminally ill young Brazilian son, Natanael Martins, requested that a letter be sent to him. The doctor's note is succeeded by Natanael's letter in which he asks his father to visit him before he dies in Manaus, the capital city of the state of Amazonas, Brazil, where the namesake rainforest is located. Although unaware of the existence of this Brazilian son, the protagonist is touched by the young man's wish and decides to embark on a journey to the country he visited in his youth. Few elements of this past journey are brought to the story, transforming it into an imaginary journey for the reader. That is, the first journey resulted in Natanael's birth, while the second has death as its destiny.

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<sup>1</sup> The painter's name is spelled "Opalka", but since the letter "P" is not part of the Portuguese alphabet, the character's name is spelled as Opalka. Thus, for this paper, we will use Opalka for the historical figure and Opalka for the novel's character.

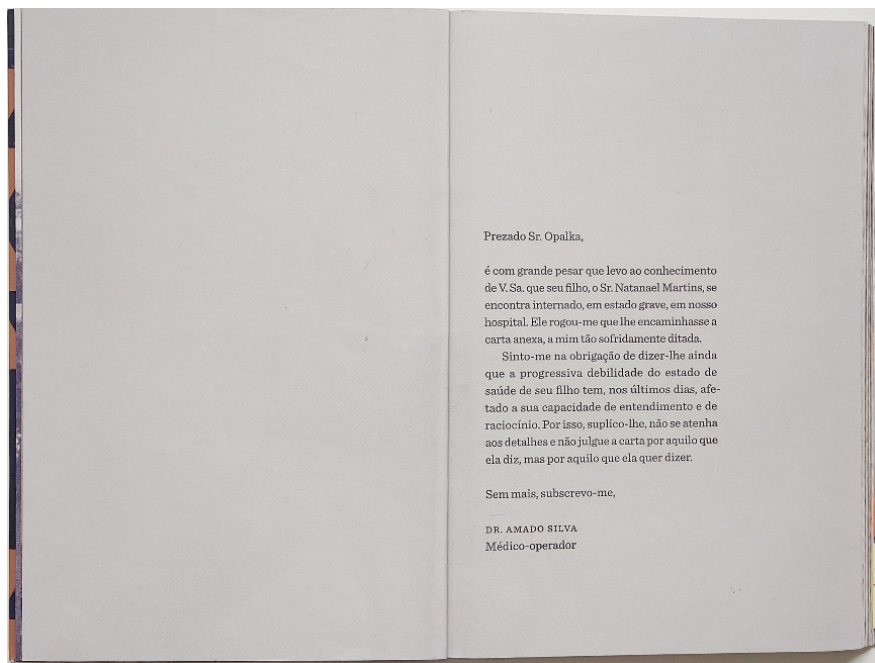


Figure 4. Note from Dr. Amado Silva to Opalka (6–7).

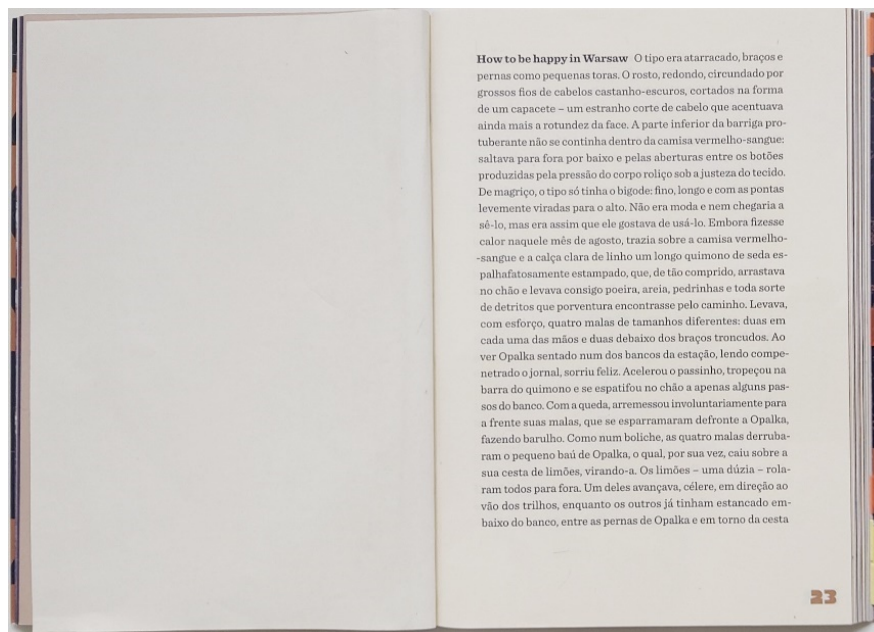


Figure 5. First chapter “How to Be Happy in Warsaw” (22–23).

These initial paratexts<sup>2</sup> come in gray pages with purple typography (fig. 4), a recurrent editorial choice to point out that the information is supplementary to the main plot (fig. 5) presented in creamy-colored pages with black typography. In between the two, there are also purple pages with camel letters as well as camel pages in different colors of typography with verbal and visual citations (fig. 6).

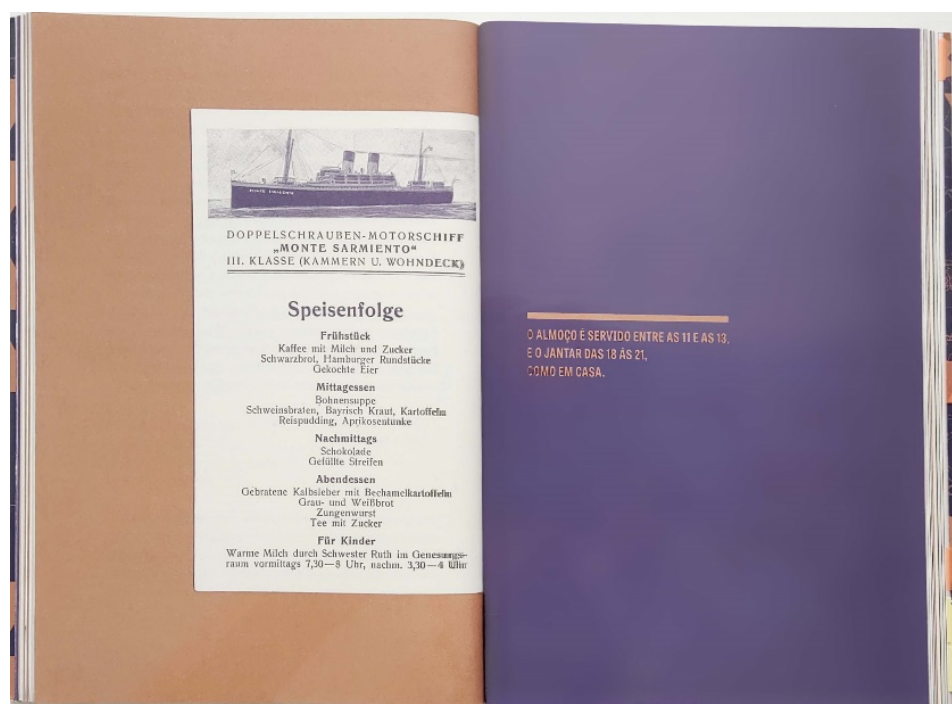


Figure 6. Ship flyer (66) and a note about dinner time (67).

Based on Irina Rajewsky, Marie-France Chambat-Houillon and Claus Cluver, Ana Luiza Ramazzina-Ghirardi (“Citação visual” and *Visual Citation in Intermedial Relations*) outlines the possibilities of the phenomenon she calls “visual citation”. These images that “pretend to be” other works carry their meanings with them, already given in their relationship with the world. In *Opisanie swiata*, the visual citations both bring these meanings, often symbolic, as in the case of colors, and simulate reality, through the indexicality of photography.

<sup>2</sup> The concept of paratextuality, as well as transtextuality and architextuality, is all from Gérard Genette’s theory, proposed in *Palimpsestes: La littérature au second degré* (1982).

As foreshadowed by the initial paratexts, the story is set in the late 1920s. The protagonist, Opalka, leaves Warsaw, Poland, by train to board a ship and head to Manaus, Brazil, in search of his ailing son. Just before embarking on the train, Opalka meets a Brazilian named Bopp who becomes his companion on the ship. In the first chapter, titled “How to be happy in Warsaw” (23), the protagonist’s journey through time and space aligns with the argument that the “*tópos* of travel is an indicator of displacement between spaces separated by time, as well as the estrangement effect experienced by the traveler who distances himself from his own self to have an experience of the other who, to a large extent, he has become”<sup>3</sup> (Miranda 41). Throughout the itinerary, several characters and their life stories emerge, stories that Opalka writes in his travel diary, which resembles a logbook. In other words, on Opalka’s way, there are many lives, and the world does not stop.

Opalka’s storyline is embedded with subplots at a metadiegetic level, with functions such as explanations regarding the narration of past events and the insertion of examples into the main narrative. This strategy reinforces the narrative at an external level of discourse, the space where the narrative process and its different points of view are organized. Most of the characters who compose the many subplots may be related to historical figures. For instance, the Andrade couple, a painter and a poet living in São Paulo, seems to be a clear reference to the influential Brazilian couple Tarsila do Amaral and Oswald de Andrade. At a certain point in the story, the ship on which they travel crosses with another boat, recognized by Mr. Andrade, from the nakedness of the passengers, as being the *El Durazno*. This ship is a reference to the one found in the narrative *Serafim Ponte Grande* (1933, 2011), by the Brazilian writer Oswald de Andrade. In that story, the ship represents a non-place, a moving space that has no fixed destination and from which passengers never disembark, as if to unite departure and arrival. Mr. Andrade’s emotion when recognizing the ship suggests that the character is a reference to the author Oswald de Andrade and that he has found the utopia he imagined in his narrative. *El Durazno*, in Andrade’s work, represents a displacement towards a future that, figured in an autochthonous Brazilianness, also suggests the past. Opalka’s journey towards the past is also one that moves towards the future, to a new world, since Brazil is no longer the same country imagined by Andrade. We should also note that, contrary

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<sup>3</sup> “O *tópos* da viagem é indicador do deslocamento entre espaços separados pelo tempo, bem como do efeito de estranhamento do viajante que se distancia de si para ter experiência do outro que, em larga medida, ele se tornou.” Unless otherwise indicated, all translations are our own.

to the myths of the merger between Europe and colonies, as in the case of the novel *Iracema* (1865), by José de Alencar, the precursor of nationalist Romanticism, the son of this merger is not the future of the merger, due to Natanael's death. That is, the reader can notice that there are many intertextual and intermedial references not only to the characters but also to their oeuvres, corroborating the premise that the "act of affirmation of the literary object's place in contemporary times is always in the search of a distinguished identity", and literature is likely to be a "preliminary form of social representation, internally marked by cultural difference and by new possibilities of meaning and significance"<sup>4</sup> (Miranda, *Nações Literárias* 128). Even the reader who cannot grasp the intermedial references is able to realize the plot is a puzzle to be solved, mainly due to the vivid descriptions.

The countless references throughout the narrative, including significant works from the Brazilian modernism movement, are listed at the end of the book under the title "Deveres" (Duties). Although the "effectiveness of reading does not" depend on "the totalizing recognition of references"<sup>5</sup> (Miranda 125), the sharing of the author's personal archive not only pays homage but also offers an afterlife to the collective memory of Brazilian modernism. By the end of the book, it is possible to relate what the seemingly disconnected elements represent in this (media) combination to make the novel a travel diary. Besides, even if one does not have the cultural background knowledge to recognize some of the (inter)medial references, a chance is given by attentively reading the work and the closing paratext in which the author generously gives away her sources of inspiration: other novels, short stories, visual artworks, songs, as well as informal chats with people in different parts of the world. Among them are more references to the Brazilian Modernist movement, such as *O turista aprendiz* (1943), by Mario de Andrade, and *Cobra Norato* (1931), by Raul Bopp.<sup>6</sup> By grasping that Bopp's character may be a representation of the writer himself, while also suggesting a relationship with the author of *Cobra Norato*, one may realize how his literary work is also used as a reference. The character who gives name to Bopp's book is the son of an indigenous woman and *Boto Cor de Rosa* (Pink River

<sup>4</sup> "Esse ato de afirmação do lugar do objeto literário na contemporaneidade é sempre busca de uma identidade diferenciada. [...] a literatura pode ser considerada como forma liminar de representação social, internamente marcada pela diferença cultural e por novas possibilidades de sentido e significação".

<sup>5</sup> "A eficácia da leitura não depende, contudo, do reconhecimento totalizador dessas referências [...]".

<sup>6</sup> All these works are on the list of duties (152, 153).



Dolphin), a native Brazilian myth, suggesting again the fusion between cultures as well also the search for a reference to Brazilianness, a characteristic of Brazilian Modernism.

Although some of the components of the “Deveres” list refer to media products other than literature—for instance, Wes Anderson’s film *Darjeeling Limited*—at first glance, it is their intertextual component that matters and not necessarily their modality modes. The constructed multimodal process is metafictional because there is a relationship outlined by the title and the name of the protagonist. Nevertheless, the understanding of the whole book as an intermedial phenomenon is likely to provide meaning once scrutinized as an editorial strategy.

To further develop what we said above, consider that the name Opalka is a reference to Roman Opalka, the famous French-born Polish painter, who happens to be the creator of *Opisanie świata*, a series of etchings composed around the biblical theme of Genesis. The work<sup>7</sup> features a canvas made of written numbers, in an increasing count, instead of iconic graphic strokes. Opalka’s idea when painting numbers in sequence, occupying the entire canvas and documenting the painting itself, was to represent time. This series was executed over more than 45 years, while he aged, alternating between the white canvas and black numbers, and also changing the lighting until he painted white numbers on a white canvas, which was concomitant to his hair turning white and his gradual “disappearance”. Time—in that sequence of infinite numbers—evolves toward death, which is also the character Opalka’s journey: he is moving toward his son’s death and, as befits all of us, towards the end of his own life.

Opalka’s series titled *Opisanie świata*, the same as Marco Polo’s travel book, displays canvases that thematize different biblical stories through different colors and, above all, different textures. The best known, *Adam and Eve* (1968), places the couple from whom Christians believe humanity originates at the center of the canvas, almost indiscernible, surrounded by a mass formed by small spots that resemble writing and seem to suggest a crowd of people. Critics of the painter’s work understand that in his painting *Adam and Eve* represent both the beginning of humanity and its end, in overpopulation.

Stigger’s painting-novel is an immense canvas of quotations. That is, the novel is indeed a multimodal media product in which its structure refers to

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<sup>7</sup> Images available at [www.desa.pl/pl/historie/opisanie-swiata-romana-opalki](http://www.desa.pl/pl/historie/opisanie-swiata-romana-opalki) and [www.art.info.pl/dzielo/z-wnetrza-z-cyklu-opisanie-swiata-1969](http://www.art.info.pl/dzielo/z-wnetrza-z-cyklu-opisanie-swiata-1969).

another media product, the painting. It also leads us to think about how literature describes the world using the same twenty-six letters Opalka employed in his creations, weaving an unexpected association between writing and painting. Under intermedial lenses, Stigger's novel is a complex representation of Opalka's series, which is rather metaphorical in its choice of representation and may be understood as a form of imitation, or an "as if" case, as suggested by Irina Rajewsky (2005). However, what matters in this paper are the careful editorial choices, along with cultural references, that turn *Opisania świata* into a multimodal narrative book according to Wolfgang Hallet's understanding:

The multimodal novel is here defined as a genre that integrates nonverbal modes of meaning-making such as, e.g., photographs, cartographic maps, handwritten letters and all sorts of other artefacts into the narrative discourse of the novel and in which such artefacts represent semiotic resources that are produced, circulated or displayed in the fictional world. This definition makes it possible to distinguish the more recent phenomenon of multimodal novelistic narration from other, more traditional forms of multimodality that mainly rely on paratextual or extradiegetic elements that are not part of the novel's diegesis, like additional images or drawings that may illustrate key scenes in the course of narration or a map that is provided in the front matter to facilitate the reader's orientation. (Hallet 26)

Regarding cultural functions in an analysis of semiotic modes, even if "there is always a multiplicity of contexts" due to "processes and practices of making meaning in the fictional world" that are likely to be "related to various 'contexts' in the non-fictional world in which the novel is produced and received", Hallet suggests that they may refer back to a "more general consideration that no single semiotic mode, let alone the manifold ways in which modes may be combined and interrelated can take on meaning regardless of the cultural context and social field in which they occur" (Hallet 36–38). Meanwhile, comparatist scholar Wander Miranda suggests that "the circuit" between "images and signs, in intermittent remission, creates favorable spaces for the confrontation of multiple contents of contemporary knowledge", hence "establishing an intersemiotic process that takes effect through an interlocutory relationship in which the producer and receiver can exercise their critical attention and reflective capacity"<sup>8</sup> (128–29). Therefore,

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<sup>8</sup> "O circuito então instaurado de imagens e signos, em remissão intermitente, cria espaços propícios para o confronto dos múltiplos conteúdos do saber contemporâneo, estabelecendo um

contemporary fiction challenges the connection we maintain with the network of relationships and interfaces that surround and define us in acts of disassembly and reassembly. This search for identity, as already mentioned in the analysis of the El Durazno passage, makes sense in the Brazilian Modernist movement. The ship appears in the chapter “Os antropófagos” (The anthropophagous), also demarcating the Anthropophagic Movement,<sup>9</sup> which suggested that Brazilian nationality would come about in the swallowing of cultural references—indigenous, African, European—which, in turn, would grow into something unique in this process.

The multimodality scholar Grzegorz Maziarczyk states that what the contemporary novel “requires is a new mode of engagement on the reader’s part not only on the haptic but also on the cognitive level” (252) since, as claimed by Cristina Iuli, “the viewer/reader is forced to activate a sort of selective hermeneutics navigating the image-text according to a recombinant logic, assembling, disassembling, and reassembling [of] elements derived from the analogy ... between writing DNA code sequences, [which oscillates] between written aphorism and visual fragments.” Domingos, in turn, when discussing aesthetic and formal changes that can demarcate some of the mentality of our times, especially concerning the way media converge in a reciprocal relationship with reading practices, perceives a tendency for the reader to interrupt the flow, either to establish communication with the reading in focus or to mark their presence in virtual space (16). Domingos’ suggestion is in line with Josefina Ludmer’s proposal for post-autonomous fiction. According to Ludmer, some current writings “do not admit literary readings; this means that it is not known whether they are literature or not. Nor does it really matter whether they are reality or fiction. They install themselves locally in an everyday reality to ‘manufacture a gift’ and this is precisely their meaning.” To think about the diffuse and experimental notion of post-autonomy, Ludmer suggests two principles: (a) “everything cultural (and literary) is economic and everything economic is cultural (and literary)”; (b) “reality is fiction and fiction is reality”<sup>10</sup> (42). Though Domingos’s

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processo intersemiótico que se efetiva por meio de uma relação interlocutória em que o produtor e receptor podem exercitar, em larga medida, sua atenção crítica e capacidade reflexiva”.

<sup>9</sup> For more about the Anthropophagic Movement in Brazil, see A. S. Camati, “Anthropophagic Appropriation and Intermediality,” in *The Palgrave Handbook of Intermediality*, edited by J. Bruhn, A. López-Varela, and M. de Paiva Vieira, Palgrave Macmillan, 2023.

<sup>10</sup> “Las literaturas postautónomas [esas prácticas literarias territoriales de lo cotidiano] se fundarían en dos [repetidos, evidentes] postulados sobre el mundo de hoy. El primero es que todo lo cultural [y literario] es económico y todo lo económico es cultural [y literario]. Y el segundo

proposal is grounded in Intermedial Studies, the premises presented here converge to into the study of *Opisanie świata* as a multimodal project, enhancing the erasure of the contours with which the domain of literature has been delimited. In this sense, in its relationship with the references, *Opisanie świata* is intermedial and, in its novelistic form, it is multimodal.

The multimodal nature of *Opisanie świata* challenges its status as a novel by incorporating other media representations that interrupt the chronological narrative, such as records and descriptions, labels, images, and period photographs, as well as fragments of diaries and letters, making the work take on the look of a logbook employing editorial choices. In the words of Maziarczyk, “the interplay between metareference, referentiality, materiality, and multi-modality is pushed to yet another level of complexity” (286). Labeled as “Brazilian fiction” in the library catalog record, the carefully designed interruptions enable the volume to be perceived “as if” (Rajewsky) it were a travel diary, as can be seen in the following example:



**Figure 7.** Ship deck (80) and first page of chapter “Não se vá, Margarida” (81).

postulado de esas escrituras sería que la realidad [si se la piensa desde los medios, que la constituirían constantemente] es ficción y que la ficción es la realidad”.

On the right (81), on a cream-colored page with black typography, the narrator enunciates with the chapter title the exclamation: “Não se vá, Margarida” (Don’t go, Margarida!). On the left (80), the camel-colored page—maybe in an attempt to resemble handmade, aged paper—gives support to a black and white reproduction of a ship deck photo with some people sitting on benches and a woman standing by the railing, towards the ocean, but facing the photographers (and the readers), as if she had been called, and “as if” (Rajewsky) the book were the personal diary of someone who keeps memories by placing photos within its pages.

The reproduced diagrammatic representations in the form of photography and collectible travel memoirs in the form of two-dimensional souvenirs are evidence that visually supplement the journey since they are never mentioned by the narrator. Taking up two full pages, the reproduction of visual souvenirs, such as an advertisement for the ship’s voyage, a postcard, a photo of the interior of a ship, and some tickets are all placed by the book’s spine to appear that they are being saved. As if it were a sort of travel instruction, the first-person narrator even included missives exchanged with his son and the warnings of the ship’s commander, as we see in this example:



Figure 8. Commander’s note (98) and business card (99).

Above, on the left, we see the inclusion, on a gray-colored page, of a letter signed by the character Comandante Egon Schild, written in purple typography (98). On the right, on a camel-colored page, there is a sort of business card for a company named after a musical instrument—“Corneta” (bugle)—but that works with cutting devices—switchblades, knives, silverware, scissors (99). Although not directly related to the previous page in terms of content, it “presentifies” the time of the fable by simulating the presence of someone who has inserted a clipping from intradiegetic time.

Although the verbal text itself does not require the presence of images, their inclusion endorses the authenticity of the journey and, to some extent, contributes to the interpretation of the plot through the evoked contextual aspects of the story. Taking into account the semiotic modes of the Peircean triadic, the multimodality lies in the fact that the narrative is told not only through the symbolism of words and the iconicity of colors, but also through the indexicality of the photography and graphic images. These visual citations indexically represent the world outside the narrative, conferring a level of veracity to it. The flirtation established between the narration and the use of multimodal resources, such as the photographs inserted in the introduction and throughout the book, as well as the excerpts from narratives belonging to diaries, news articles, etc., make the architextuality of this work nonspecific. The authorial project was constructed to give writing, in its intermedial aspect, a place of prominence. For instance, as mentioned before, the choices of layout, page, and typography colors all integrate “the semiotic resources of the codex format into a unified whole” (Maziarczyk 282), turning *Opisania świata* into what Maziarczyk calls a “total book”. In this sense, as claimed in an interview, Stigger (2017) not only produced the verbal narrative but also considered the production of the book as a whole, in terms of its word-image relation.

Alison Gibbons claims that although “visual designs of multimodal fiction, their graphic elements and striking compositions, obstruct sustained engagement with the imagined content of the narrative,” this kind of editorial choice “promote[s] bistable reading strategies, whereby the surface and texture of a book’s pages also become a significant dimension of literary meaning” (208). That is, the visual design corroborates the premise that memory fulfills “the operative function of spacing the time, by marking intervals, pauses or suspensions that interrupt chronological linearity and the subject’s identity with themselves, and by placing them in a differentiated

temporal register”<sup>11</sup> (Miranda 40). According to Hallet, “if semiotic artefacts are not authored or created by one of the individual characters in the story-world, they may be identified as belonging to their world or representing an individual choice or preference in case they are collected or archived” (34). The collectibles may be understood as a sort of archive that “is constructed and deconstructed by the gaze of the subject who, by fulfilling an itinerary within it, leaves their footprints, their traces, establishing a certain travel route”<sup>12</sup> (Marques 34). In a few carefully designed words *Opisanie świata* is interrupted by breaks in the text for quotations and insertions of indexes through reproductions of tickets, ship tickets, and photographs, to be perceived “as if” it were a travel diary.

From a memoirist perspective, Stigger exemplifies how literature may be “the place of significance and death”. For Miranda, “the rejection of the classical style of autobiography in favor of fragments and discontinuity expresses this journey of losses and gains, making reminiscence the folding and unfolding of the insignificant, the minuscule, and the particular.” In this sense, “the memorable emerges from cultural residues and articulates with the experience itself: the traveler unfolds into an archaeologist and collector”<sup>13</sup> (Miranda 43). While the archaeologist, as suggested by Michel Foucault, operates through cuts and fragments in the continuum of history—individual, familial, collective—modifying what is fixed and establishing a new correlational order, the collector, as suggested by Walter Benjamin and Aby Warburg, acts against reification, which is a form of forgetting (Miranda 45). As a collector, the graphic design of the book highlights the aforementioned multimodal elements through reproductions and citations. As an archaeologist, among so many suggestive excavations by Stigger, *Opisanie świata* is the title of a collection of engravings by the Polish painter Roman Opalka, meaning “Description of the World”, which in turn is the translation of the title of Marco Polo’s travel book, *Il Milione*. Thus, *Opisanie świata* evokes “another type of journey. Without moving from place, we navigate

<sup>11</sup> “A memória [...] cumpre a função operatória de espaçamento do tempo, por meio da marcação de intervalos, pausas ou suspensões que interrompem a linearidade cronológica e a identidade do sujeito consigo mesmo, inserindo-o num registro temporal diferenciado”.

<sup>12</sup> “[O arquivo] é construído e desconstruído pelo olhar do sujeito, que, ao cumprir nele um itinerário, deixa suas pegadas, seus vestígios, instituindo um certo roteiro de viagem”.

<sup>13</sup> “[O texto é] o lugar da significação e da morte. A recusa do estilo clássico da autobiografia, a favor do fragmento e da descontinuidade, expressa esse percurso de perdas e ganhos, fazendo da reminiscência a dobra e desdobra do insignificante, do minúsculo e do particular. O memorável advém, pois, de resíduos culturais que [...] articula com a própria experiência: o viajante desdobra-se em arqueólogo [e colecionador]”.

through”<sup>14</sup> (Miranda 124) the Atlantic Ocean and the crossing of the Equator, thus simulating imagined realities. Indeed, Stigger, through the perspective of a foreigner on a journey, revitalizes and reminisces on a portion of Brazil’s cultural heritage and collective memory archive, not from historical reality, but from fiction: a memory of culture.

In sum, Stigger’s narrative becomes not what we understand as the textual content found between the front and back covers, considering the other elements as paratextual, but the entire multisemiotic set, the “total book”, as a narrative editorial project: transtextual, intermedial and multimodal. At the same time, as Zoë Perry (2017) summarizes, it is “a love letter to Brazilian modernism”. When readers reach the end of the narrative and find the list of duties, “Deveres”, they realize that it is impossible to discern all the references that the author has sewed together, which not only form part of the work but also compose it, like the stain around the figure of Adam and Eve in Roman Opałka’s etching. And are our stories not precisely like that: scraps that are repeated and intertwined in this infinite series of time that is life?

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<sup>14</sup> “[Hoje a ficção parece convidar-nos para] um outro tipo de viagem. Sem sair do lugar, navegamos pelo [riocorrente]”.



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## OPISANIE ŚWIATA: A MULTIMODAL TIME-TELLING JOURNEY

## Summary

Literary critics have time and again debated Brazilian literature's distinctiveness in its use of referentiality. Looking at the world today, it is not difficult to justify the reasons for this tendency. In this paper, we present some elements that show how the novel *Opisanie świata*, by Veronica Stigger, strengthens this strategy by assembling indistinguishable quotations. Yet, "as if" (Rajewsky) it were a travel guide, the narrative departs from a reference to the eponymous work by Roman Opałka. The story told by Stigger, by taking advantage of the editorial project as a constructor of meaning, turns the narrative into a "total book" (Maziarczyk): transtextual, intermedial, and multimodal.

**Keywords:** *Opisanie świata*; Veronica Stigger; travel diary; multimodality; transtextuality

## OPISANIE ŚWIATA – MULTIMODALNA PODRÓŻ W CZASIE

## Streszczenie

Krytycy literaccy od dłuższego czasu dyskutują o referencyjności współczesnej literatury brazylijskiej. Patrząc na dzisiejszy świat, nietrudno wskazać przyczyny tej tendencji. W artykule przedstawiono elementy, które pokazują, jak powieść *Opisanie świata* autorstwa Veroniki Stigger wzmacnia tę strategię literacką poprzez nagromadzenie niedostrzegalnych na pierwszy rzut oka

cytatów. Jednak, podobnie jak w przewodniku turystycznym (Rajewsky), narracja odchodzi od nawiązania do tytułowej pracy Romana Opalki. Opowiedziana przez Stigger historia, wykorzystując edycję tekstu do konstrukcji znaczeń, zmienia powieść w „księgę totalną” (Maziarczyk): transtekstualną, intermedialną i multimodalną.

**Słowa kluczowe:** *Opisanie świata*; Veronica Stigger; dziennik podróży; multimodalność; transtekstualność