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## A Very Dangerous Game: On Literature and Philosophy

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### Initial Considerations

This text originates from a certainty: the centrality of Literature in my life. Even before I got to where I am and being what I would be in the professional field – teacher and in higher education – at the intersection between Pedagogy and Philosophy. That's because, for as long as I *can remember*, Literature has been there. Since the most tense age, my life has been pierced by Literature and books.

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At the time of writing this text, the expression may sound strange, *old-fashioned*, anachronistic... but Adalgisa has always been a "card-carrying reader": when I didn't have the financial resources to buy books, I used to go to the State Public Library, in the center of the city of Recife, next to Parque Treze de Maio. This preamble to say that the theme is very dear to me! Of relevance and importance for the processes of subjectivation, to which I can currently contribute as a professional.

### **Literature as a beautiful danger**

I initially thought of naming this intervention "The Beautiful Danger", stealing – or it would be better, more polite, to say *appropriating* – shamelessly a very famous text by the French philosopher Michel Foucault, which speaks precisely of Literature.

More precisely, Foucault will make it explicit that he has, towards writing, "an almost moral distrust" (2016, p. 36). And, in an unusual gesture, he operates his method of research against himself, that is, instead of the *epoché* of biographical factors, of the social and cultural context, he invests in narrating his own relationship with writing. And he reveals to us that one of his oldest memories on this subject is precisely the difficulty he had to *write well*! Writing well in the sense of basic education – I, as a Pedagogue, am very interested – that is, filling the pages with legible letters. Here, a parenthesis would be

interesting about the French educational system, but I will spare ourselves that part. Foucault continues his digression:

I think – in fact, I'm sure – that I was the most illegible in my classroom and in my school. This lasted a long time, until the last years of elementary school. [...] And then, therefore, a relationship with writing that is a little complicated, a little overloaded. But there is another, more recent memory. It's the fact that, deep down, I never took writing, the act of writing, very seriously. I only felt the urge to write around the age of 30. [...] To discover the possible pleasure of writing, I had to be abroad (2016, p. 38).

For an entire generation of French philosophical thought, there is a close relationship between reading and writing, and, more conceptually, between Literature and Writing. As well as the relationship with the *outside*. Thus, in my argument, I take Literature as a salutary trickery, an avoidance, an ability to work with the language *outside of power*.

By Literature, with an "L" always capital letter – even when I am dealing with a Minor Literature, as Deleuze would say – I do not mean a canonical body or a sequence of works, not even an academic and/or teaching sector, but the complex graphics of the footprints – like that of an animal – of a practice: the practice of writing (Barthes, 2007). I have as a support for my understanding, essentially, the text, which allows me to say indifferently *Literature*, *Scripture* or *Text*. What can be inferred from this concept is the force of freedom that resides in Literature.

Literature assumes a lot of knowledge and I argue here that all sciences are present in the literary monument, whatever the schools in whose name it can declare itself. Literature makes knowledge rotate (Barthes, 2016) and this is quite dangerous. Wouldn't this also be the task of Philosophy?

## The Adilian Game

As I have frequented many libraries and, as in their interiors full of bookshelves, poetry books and philosophical treatises, critical essays and historical texts coexist, I consider that I have in common with Michel Foucault an experience of *reading without barriers*. In the library – not exactly Jorge *Luís Borges' Library of Babel*, but perhaps also in it – the order of discourses can be deconstructed, so that Literature comes to our eyes. How long has it been since you entered a physical library?

It was then that I decided to name my speech *A Very Dangerous Game*. I decided to steal from someone else! Whose own, after all? Note that, as in a suspense tale or even in a novelistic text, I am from the beginning delaying to officially enter the theme I proposed. And, more than that, without providing an outcome. And this gesture is a narrative technique. Foucault would say "literary device", "fictional device". This is a *writing strategy*, which I am putting into operation here.

But I do it to pay homage to my author. Finally, a clue: a woman! Very mysterious. *A Very Dangerous Game* is the title of Adília

Lopes' inaugural work. But Adília, Adília really, does not exist! And that's what delights me.

Adília Lopes is the literary pseudonym of Maria José da Silva Viana Fidalgo de Oliveira, who was born in Lisbon in April 1960. I was interested in bringing her because, in addition to my idiosyncrasy, she is an interesting figure for us: she studied for a degree in Physics (University of Lisbon) but abandoned the course, on medical advice, when she was about to conclude: she had schizo-affective psychosis, an episode probably generated by philosophical questions within the study of Physics. He then went to study Literature in 1983, more specifically "Portuguese and French Literature and Linguistics" and it was then that he began to write. He began the publication of his poetry in the *Yearbook of Unpublished Poets* of the publisher Assírio & Alvim (1984) and in 1985 came this book, quite dangerous!

The newborn poet quickly understood that much is at stake when one enters the game of writing. When poetry is written. The title of this book is, therefore, something impressive: because writing is just that: *a very dangerous game*. It is a very dangerous game when we propose to exercise the experience of philosophical thought through and with Literature, because it is an exposition of the subject who throws himself into the blank of the page. Literature, like Philosophy, takes us to unimaginable places, unforeseen, not given in advance and not safe.

Adília Lopes' poetic work of writing has much to incite us. If we look at "The Present", a poem that is part of this book, we can

describe it as a thesis in close relation to the propositions about Schrödinger's cat! Adília is a philosophical gift.

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