

On the paths of a novelist's pen in the 19th century: the Rio de Janeiro of *Diva*, *Lucíola* and *Senhora*

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RESUMO

O presente artigo busca entender as relações entre os espaços urbanos do Rio de Janeiro oitocentista e as relações de gênero expressas na narrativa de José de Alencar em seus romances urbanos femininos: *Diva*, *Lucíola* e *Senhora*. As mudanças na capital do Império no século XIX geravam novas expectativas sobre as normatizações de circulação expressas nesses romances. José de Alencar foi romancista, dramaturgo, cronista, parlamentar e estadista do Império brasileiro. Em todas essas atividades a dimensão do político, entendido como o espaço de articulação do social e sua representação, esteve fortemente presente. Palavras-chave: José de Alencar; romances urbanos; Rio de Janeiro.

ABSTRACT

This article seeks to understand the relations between urban spaces in nineteenth century Rio de Janeiro and the gender relations expressed in José de Alencar's narrative in his urban feminine novels: *Diva*, *Lucíola* and *Senhora*. Changes in the capital of the Empire in the nineteenth century provoked new expectations about the normatization of circulation expressed in these novels. José de Alencar was a novelist, playwright, chronicler, parliamentarian and statesman of the Brazilian Empire. In all these activities the political dimension, understood as the space for the articulation of the social and its representation, was strongly present.

Keywords: José de Alencar; urban novels; Rio de Janeiro.

This paper¹ seeks to analyze the urban feminine novels *Diva*, *Lucíola* and *Senhora* as sources for the understanding of certain constructions of representations of women, starting from the idea that this fictional production of José de Alencar² contains, in its various plots, a pedagogical attempt to instruct his readers through the intermediation of exemplary models expressed by the characters. The novels are thus a form of writing aimed at the construction of knowledge about relations between genders to the extent that

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they express the social rules of an epoch in relation to amorous experiences and morally acceptable practices. As Ribeiro puts it, “literature is the expression of the temperament, character, and social intelligence of a people or an epoch.”³

To better comprehend José de Alencar’s texts, I believe it is necessary to understand the historic time and the urban space in which the author lived. Changes in urban space generated expectations about the rules of circulation and the understanding of these new places. And the normatization of behavior can be perceived by the narratives of the feminine novels of Alencar.

Using the theoretical reference of Roger Chartier⁴ in relation to the production of books and that of Michel de Certeau⁵ in relation to intellectual production, I have traced a direct relationship between José de Alencar’s novels and his life trajectory. To better understand this figure, it was necessary to understand the ‘spirit’ of the nineteenth century and that of the so-called ‘good society,’ of which not only was Alencar part, but so also were the heroines of these three romances. Specifically it was necessary to know nineteenth century Rio de Janeiro, the scenario of the plots and the city where the author lived for most of his life.

I believe that the intellectual literary work of José de Alencar is an expression of his beliefs and political postures. He was a man who lived intensely; he defended his ideas with vehemence and was convinced, like many intellectuals at that historical moment, that his work assisted the progress of Brazilian civilization. The concern with the civilizatory paths of Brazil was characteristic of a historic Brazilian intellectual generation in the post-independence period, which felt responsible for the creation of a moral basis for the new citizens.

It was at this moment that various nationalist works emerge, including in Alencar’s own texts. Nevertheless – leaving aside the national question, which is not directly presented in these novels –, since they are imbued with this ‘atmosphere’ in which everything is new and has to be learned, the production of the novels *Diva*, *Lucíola* and *Senhora* also contains some intentional messages which Alencar believed can help in the formation of new citizens. The novels portray urban women from high society in an idealized manner and forge a fictitious reality, instructing readers with exemplary models.

Alencar’s urban novels are an invitation to understanding the behavior of men and women in the nineteenth century. Reading books such as *Diva*, *Lucíola* and *Senhora* helps us to understand how people were supposed to relate or, at least, how it was expected that they would relate in a civilized manner in Rio de Janeiro.

Alencar was an extremely prolific author, and his novels set in urban scenarios in Rio de Janeiro functioned as models for the genders so that desires, motivations and behavior could comply with the expectations and aspirations of the elite of a 'truly' civilized country.

From the author's perspective men and women were very easily corrupted in the city, and literature had to redeem natural virtues and feminine and masculine ideas.

The modern Rio de Janeiro in the middle of the nineteenth century is portrayed as a potential stage for the staging of mundane vices, such as gambling, prostitution, and the moral corruption of family values.

In other words, José de Alencar wrote feminine novels aimed at a target public who were also female, seeking within his stories to teach his readers ways of thinking and behaving that were appropriate to the new social and political context of the mid-nineteenth century. His novels portrayed women understanding both the world and themselves through sensations and feelings, classifying their attitudes and behavior on a quantitative scale of happiness. The risk of inadequacy was always the unhappiness of the character.

The 1850s can be considered the apogee of Pedro II's Empire. As noted by Capistrano de Abreu,⁶ it was a time marked above all by political stability and various urban improvements. An example of this are the striking investments that resulted in the construction of railways and the regularization of steam communications with the European continent, allowing "new works, coming by packet" from "beyond the Tagus and even beyond the Seine" (Abreu, 1976, p.81) to reach the lands of this American empire, demonstrating the advances of civilization and progress.

The panorama exposed by Capistrano is sufficiently illustrative for an understanding of the public – and especially the political – universe of the period. Nevertheless, intending to scrutinize a little further the content of these so-called 'urban improvements', I found a work which, allied to the descriptions of the author, seals a harmonious partnership that can define the 'climate inhaled' during the 1850s. This is the work of Delso Renault (1978) suggestively entitled *Rio de Janeiro: a vida da cidade refletida nos jornais (1850-1870)*.

Alencar lived in Rio de Janeiro, where between the 1850s and the 1870s he produced the greatest part of his work. Therefore, understanding the transformations of this city, its neighborhoods and daily life are fundamental elements for the analysis of these three novels.

A majority of the places and neighborhoods cited relate to the Court can be found in *Lucíola*, but they also appear in the novel *Diva*. Something

particularly interesting can be found in *Senhora*: the Court appears principally when references are made to the location of addresses, but Aurélia – the central character – does not circulate in it. The place of the ideal wife is within the house. Her entertainment is restricted to the home, since she could and should offer meals and dances, but her space of circulation is restricted to the private sphere, where most of the work takes place, whose central foundation is the psychological and behavioral questions of the couple.

The impressions of news reported collected by Renault create the atmosphere of the epoch. Her work starts with the abolition of the slave trade and ends with an intense discussion of the Paraguay War, an event that intensely mobilized the country. In the 1850s and 1860s life in the city of Rio de Janeiro underwent numerous changes, since the municipal administration was concerned with works that resulted in considerable social evolution, such as the laying of pipes for the city's water supply, the start of the construction of a sewage and piped water network for private residencies, as well as the necessary paving which until then had not been provided for some streets in the city center.

From 1854 onwards gas lighting slowly replaced the lamps that used olive oil in the urban center. The electric telegraph was installed the same year, initially linking Paço de São Cristóvão and the Ministry of War, the building immediately beside it and its surroundings. Urban cleanliness was one of the most important subjects, since the lack of this was associated with the worsening of the yellow fever epidemics which periodically ravaged the city.

In *Lucíola*, for example, this question was a fundamental part of the plot, since the heroine reports that as a result of the 1850 epidemic of yellow fever, her parents fell sick, which led her to a life of prostitution in an attempt to save her family. Her mother, father, brother and aunt were dying, her younger sister began to present the symptoms of the disease. Not having any money to look after her family, the desperate young woman lets herself be seduced by a neighbor, a character who had already appeared in the plot and who had been presented as “Sr. Couto, a capitalist”.

Her parents and her sister are saved with the money, but her shame about confessing her sins makes her father think that she has a lover, and for this reason he throws her out of the house. Lúcia, whose baptismal name was Maria da Glória, did not have the courage to confess how she had obtained the money to treat her loved ones. So as not to embarrass her family, she changes her name and forges her own death. Without knowing how to survive, she

prostitutes herself, but all the money she obtains is kept for the dowry of Ana, described by Lúcia as “the little angel who God gave me as a sister.”

Marking the ultimate twist in the plot, the woman who calls herself after the fallen angel Lucifer who had already been in paradise and wallowed in a mundane hell, is called Maria da Glória! A name related to Holy Mary, mother of God, who through loving her family too much is capable of doing anything to assure their welfare.

What is curious, and completely intentional, is Alencar's choice of names. Lúcia, the name of the character presented in the plot, means Lúçifer, God's most beautiful angel, though a fallen angel condemned to hell due to his pride and sins. It is by this name that the character seeks to be called when she works as a prostitute.

Lucíola then tells Paulo – her loved one in the plot – her story of suffering, poverty and material needs, which swept her along the path towards vice. It is at this emotional moment that Lúcia/Maria da Glória also says that she will move her residence, freeing herself from the evils of the immorality of her profession, going instead to live in the suburbs of the city in the tranquil neighborhood of Santa Teresa, near the reservoir, in a ground floor house with two windows, with her sister, who was going to leave college.

This part of the novel is especially clarifying of what I think is the set of values that Alencar determines for Brazilian women. He leaves it very clear: vice is doubly degrading, since it exposes women to public execration – preventing them from even living with their families, a precious institution to every good citizen – and to internal conflict, because they are aware that they are acting against nature. However, Alencar also valorizes physical spaces. For Lúcia/Maria da Glória to achieve her regeneration and redemption it was necessary for her not only to modify her behavior, but also that this change be expressed in the elements around her. The urban environment was addictive, for this reason she moved to Santa Teresa, considered a peripheral neighborhood.

Urban improvements can be modestly witnessed from time to time throughout the history of the city of Rio de Janeiro. Nevertheless, there was a considerable acceleration of this process after the arrival of the royal family in 1808, and principally in the period after 1822, “In other words, when the political convulsions of Independence were appeased, the imperial aristocracy was reaffirmed and social refinement was imposed.”⁷

Santa Teresa was one of the neighborhoods which were transformed by urbanistic progress, in which various peaceful residences and good families

were established. A perfect location for physically and externally showing off the new internal conditions on which to base the behavior required for the regeneration of the sinful life of luxuries and the horrors of living with the evils of urbanity and lacking moral norms.

The simplicity of her new home, the rigid manner with which she comes to dress herself, without luxurious jewels or adornments, and the fact that Lúcia started to work in domestic activities meant that she began to find true happiness as a woman. This is brilliant! By showing situations based on a rationality that considers right and wrong within an environment of feelings, Alencar suggests to his readers a model of behavior that is not only decent, but also happy! Therefore, when the happiness of all of one's life is at play, it is better to follow the instructions that prevent disgrace.

Not even the regenerated prostitute can be crowned with the laurels of victory, since her past condemns her and weighs on her like a tomb. At the moment when Lúcia is ready to achieve what would be the consecration of any woman, in other words, to procreate, she falls sick and dies, precisely because her impure body cannot be anointed with the divine blessing of a child. With this outcome, if any reader still thinks that she could give herself up to mundane life and have a further chance of redemption, it can be concluded – as Alencar induces us to believe – that there is no possibility of uniting the concepts of happiness and prostitution.

During the two decades in focus, urban improvements were much commented on, both in relation to the solutions found for the problems of the city, and due to the slowness of the construction works which initially impacted on the streets in the urban center and were very slow (in an optimistic perspective) to reach the furthest neighborhoods and districts. In other words, as in the current days, the administration was concerned with meeting the basic needs of regions where the most privileged parts of the population lived – at that time neighborhoods such as Botafogo, Jardim Botânico, Cosme Velho and Laranjeiras –, and places such as Passeio Público and the streets in the city center, frequented by these people when they were working or for leisure purposes.

Collective transport was organized to try to meet the new needs for circulating through the city. According to the description made by Los Rios Filho (2000), alongside the 'old' vehicles of the nobility – such as litters and chairs – and of other more 'modern' ones, for public and private use – such as *caleches*, *cabs*, *tílburis*, *vitorias*, *timons-balancés*, Berlin carriages and the light *caleças* –, various types of locomotion emerged that were aimed at collective

transport, such as *diligência* carriages, omnibuses (double decked vehicles pulled by four horses) and the gondolas (carriages with only one deck, pulled by horse, with four wheels, side sides and which could carry up to nine people).

With the expansion of collective transport, postal services improved, but communication with the interior was still precarious and the newspapers published the days of the departure of the post. Steamboat transport had existed since the 1820s, with the first regular line being organized in 1843, though it was only in the 1850s that different companies appeared aiming to improve the quality of communication services. Railways were also a product of this period, notably those that were the initiative of Irineu Evangelista de Sousa, Viscount of Mauá, such as the construction of the famous 'Mauá railway,' linking Rio, Minas Gerais and São Paulo: the hardworking businessman was of the opinion that "Brazil needs some industry ... and the iron industry, being the mother of the others, seems to me to be the foundation for this aspiration."⁸

It was a time of hope and of an attempt to construct a prosperous future for the country, in accordance with the rational ideas of Civilization and Progress then in vogue. Mauá, for example, was an important symbol of an entrepreneur whose political trajectory showed that he was concerned with the direction of the nation, taking responsibility to present projects for works that could make these modifications possible.

Mauá and Alencar had in their biographies a past of political trajectories. Nevertheless, both had in common the fact they are remembered in history for their contributions in other professional areas. The former for his achievements as an inventor, the latter for his contribution to the area of literature. However, each of these men, in their way was concerned about the conditions of the country, seeking in accordance with the perspective of their time to give it progressively improved features.

The expansion of commerce on the streets of the city center and the successive reforms of Passeio Público made these places the most frequent spaces of circulation for the population of Rio de Janeiro. Women and men became used to the 'civilizing' habit of frequenting shops, cafés and confectionaries, or left home just to go for walks and to 'look at the new fashions.' According to Renault, in 1850

The city had 23 fashion houses, 77 goldsmith, 33 watchmakers, 66 shoe shops, 25 printers, 24 carriage makers, 8 portrait painters.

Twenty-four confectionaries were spread throughout the urban center, among which *Castelões*, *Francioni*, and *Fournier* were the finest. (Renault, 1978, p.16)

These numbers increased over the years, however, the citation is a good parameter for emphasizing how the arrival of the Imperial Court resulted in a much more hectic social rhythm than in colonial times. Therefore, having the habit of frequenting theaters, civic and religious festivals, regattas, races, horse riding or walking, and even private activities such as soirées, recreational societies and dances, were forms of entertainment, encouraged and extolled by newspapers as good customs of Rio de Janeiro society. As a result the sexes needed to know how to behave in these public situations that were ever more routine.

There is a column by Alencar, published in *Correio Mercantil* on 29 October 1854, in which he dedicated himself to explaining what *flânerie* was, something that was indicated as a healthy habit for good society, and that the adoption of this custom would be propelled by the improvement of the Passeio Público.

The city of Rio de Janeiro, with its beautiful blue sky and such rich nature, with the beauty of its panoramas and its gracious suburbs, offers many of these meeting points, where every afternoon, when the force of the sun breaks, *good society can pass some moments in a pleasant meeting, in a circle of friends and acquaintances, without labels or ceremonies, with all the freedom of the stroll and at the same time with all the enchantment of a great meeting ...* However, amongst us no one esteems this ... Fortunately, I believe that we will shortly have shortly a salutary modification in this way of thinking. Construction works for gas lighting for Passeio Público and some necessary repairs and improvements have begun and will be concluded shortly.⁹

It is clear that the public space needed to be occupied by people as a demonstration of the proper tone of the inhabitants of the Court. Thus, the author highlighted places which he also frequented. *Livraria Fluminense*, owned by Baptiste Louis Garnier, on Rua do Ouvidor, the café *Á Fama do Café com Leite*, known as the *Café do Braguinha*; the front of João Caetano theater in Rocío, and Confeitaria *Carceler*, which initially was on Rua Direita, moving in 1861 to Rua do Ouvidor, are examples of places in which the writer from Ceara liked to spend his time talking and discussing ideas with other intellectuals. It is worth noting that the first contact between Alencar and

Machado de Assis took place on the sofas located at the front of Garnier Bookshop.

It was a time of the dazzling of society with new social and cultural activities, and there are numerous reports about the exalted impressions caused by these opportunities for people in the highest social layers who began to occupy public spaces, having previously only expressed themselves in the private domain. This 'good society' consisted of a restricted circle with subtle gradations within itself, and merged economic powers, politics, culture and knowledge. Numerous social events were held as a pretext for the strengthening of the political or economic ties of the organizers.

The scenario of sociability in the Second Empire was thus a mixture of interests and needs for the so-called 'good society,' who promoted in their social and cultural events, such as in walks to cafés or dances, a real clash of political forces.

Improvements in the infrastructure in the city led to this new configuration. The increase in trade, linked to technological innovations in various urban fields, not only facilitated the expansion towards the suburbs, but also made feasible the experience of 'foreign novelties' – almost always European – of new forms of leisure desired by the so-called aristocratic elite of the Court. I especially highlight Rua do Ouvidor in the city center, since it is a street that is much mentioned in *Lucíola*.

This elite was not exactly composed of a hierarchical nobility, but one that was forged through the provision of services.¹⁰ According to José Murilo de Carvalho (1996) it had a certain homogeneity because the nobility were educated in similar institutions and exercised the same professional functions (public servants, clergy, advocacy, medicine) in the national scenario. Between 1840 and 1870 they found a prosperous path to the installation of the concept of civility which in the perspective of the time accompanied these reforms.

In these dictionaries civility signified 'courtesy,' 'urbanity,' 'politeness,' 'good manners,' 'delicacy,' 'etiquette,'... Civilization also came to express the artistic, technological, scientific and economic development of humanity, or at least a part of it, which considered itself superior. (Vainfas, 2002, p.142)

In this way José de Alencar's novels contextualized in his period of production not only allow greater reflection on the personal desires of a writer in love with Brazil, but they reflect, above all, the historical tendency to establish relations and connections of power through the discipline of customs,

targeted at the intellectual elite of the time. As Gay has stated,¹¹ “Men, not even the craziest, did not simply invent their world. The materials they use to construct it are all from the public domain.”

For this reason, I believe that Alencar meticulously prepared his novels with the purpose with the purpose of captivating the reader’s reception, emotionally provoked by an intimacy with the life of others, whose experience was not invented, but ‘reported’ by the writer. The literary resource drawn on were the letters used as prefaces to the works, which explained what Roger Chartier (2001) called new manners of perceiving reading. The literary genre that best explored this verve of intimacy with the reader was the novel, which was popularized in Europe in the eighteenth century and emerged strongly in the Brazil in the nineteenth century. Women were the principal readers of this new genre.

Lucíola was the first of the three novels studied here, being written in 1862. In the book’s preface the author wrote a text in the form of a letter signed by G. M. and dated November 1861. It was written to Paulo, the central character in the plot, explaining to him that it was on the basis of letters from his friend that he got the idea of adapting his love story to the novel. This resource is also used in the prefaces of the other two novels.

In *Diva*, published for the first time in 1864, the letter of introduction is not written by G. M., but addressed to him by Paulo, the character of *Lucíola* and supposedly a friend of the author. He reports the love story of a friend (*Amaral*, the central character in *Diva*), and asks the writer that he also transform it into a novel.

Senhora was published much later in 1875, and in this the letter is signed by José de Alencar himself and addressed to ‘The Reader,’ but without losing the tone of veracity and confidence that permeated the former novels.

The story is true, and the narration comes from a person who received directly, in circumstances that I ignore, the confidence of the principal actors in this curious drama.

The supposed author is nothing but an editor. Though by assuming responsibility for correcting the format and giving it a literary appearance, in some form he appropriates if not the work, then the book.¹²

Creating an atmosphere of a true account the author makes his reading public assume that the behavior of the characters was not fictitious, but rather true, and therefore, capable of being copied and used. After all, they were true stories which led, despite the mishaps of the characters /people, to happiness which only love and its rules can provide.

I consider that all written work is always intrinsically interlinked with the author, his education and political and literary conceptions. In the analysis of José de Alencar's urban female novels it thus can be noted to what extent fictional production incorporated his historical reality, which often absorbed the real scenario for the 'atmosphere' of the novels – for example, the fact that the scenario of the novels was the capital of the Empire, where not coincidentally the author in question lived. Moreover, I think that the choice of this city for the development of the plot of the three novels analyzed is due to its social and political importance, since despite the idiosyncrasies and particularities of the other regions in the country, Rio de Janeiro "had been transformed into a true resonance for the rest of the Empire."¹³

As a result, civilized women from the Rio de Janeiro elite had to know how to behave in these spaces of sociability in accordance with determined standards whose success would be assured by the repetition of the rules of behavior consecrated by the European elites. To the contrary of the manuals of behavior which began to gain space in the Brazilian literary universe, Alencar's novels work to divulge these exemplary models starting from an argument that I consider brilliant and well articulated: the maintenance of happiness through love.

In this way a feeling was created in favor of obeying the rules of civility. Without these rule a woman from the elite would not be able to reach the supreme glory of love, which was marriage - and in this way create a family and be happy. By placing female happiness in play, the logic of novels invented a perfect argument for the learning of adequate behavior and customs, as a type of 'pedagogy of marriage' by José de Alencar. Thus, it is through the meaning of the search for happiness, achieved through love, that romantic fiction justified the adoption of determined types of behavior, guiding readers along the paths of civilization.

From this perspective of historic analysis, urban novels usually classified as merely literary acquired a differentiated character, presenting evidence of the articulation between the historic moment of the beginnings of cultural and economic modernization of the country and the role attributed to literature with a pedagogical element for the dominant layers, when they intended to guide readers in respect to the best form of absorbing these new emergent standards.

The representations of reality instituted in Alencar's novels permeated, above all, the direction of behavior or the ideal posture, which he defines as the best to be adopted. The standardization of the actions and feelings of their

readers helped create a social and cultural unit which in the last instance is one of the primordial conditions for the maintenance of power between the social layers. This is because the education of meanings created a relation of similarity of condition, even among so-called 'political enemies.' In other words, the power of the Empire had to be kept in the hand of the dominant layers, independently of differences in existing political conduct, while this 'dispute between equals' also presupposes a recognition of this equality.

First of all, a fundamental condition is its homogeneity. At least in the short and medium terms, the more homogenous the elite, the greater its capacity to act politically. The reasons are obvious. A homogenous elite possesses a common project and acts in a cohesive manner: "In the absence of clear dominion of class ... the fragmentation of the elite makes almost inevitable the blossoming of political conflicts and the introduction of chronic instability, retarding the consolidation of power."¹⁴

In this manner, the 'pedagogy of novels,' as well as the newspapers dedicated 'to women' or 'to families,' helped the maintenance of order and power, by teaching the forms of acting and feeling in daily life. With the analysis of the plots and the conducting logic of this 'discourse,' initially literary, its relations with the historic moment and the conditions of its productions were unveiled. Thus, the figure of the author is transformed into a relevant point of study, since its historicity is the matrix of its creations. To a certain extent, paraphrasing a well-known phrase by Leonardo da Vinci, if experience is the mother of all certainty, it is also delimiting of the perceptions of the human being about their own reality.

In the case of José de Alencar, his experiences resulted in the creation of ideas that propelled their various activities. The dichotomy between the political Alencar and the writer thus does not exist, to the extent that both of the dimensions compose a set where the central thematic axis was based on preoccupations that permeated the life of men who perceived the changes of their time and which dedicated themselves to the attempt to sculpt the features in the molds considered adequate.

This adaptation to molds was not an exclusive concept of José de Alencar, but a perspective which began to be shared by members of his class, men and women, which appeared in my research in the journals produced in the same period.

In all these discourses the common core was constant: Love. The logical structure formed the explanations of the rules of conduct that had to be adopted was justified by being the right path to obtain love and its immediate

official fruit, marriage. Nevertheless, for this objective to be consumed the new moral rules of etiquette had to be respected or they would miscarry.

These romantic ideas, which were also imported from European patterns, were molded and adapted by Brazilian intellectuals such as José de Alencar, so that there could be an 'education of feelings' in its practical application. This considered literature as an agent that formed and transformed the reality experienced, incessantly dialoguing with the historic processes of its creation.

In other words, the proposal is to historicize the literary work – whether it is a short story, a chronicle, poem or romance –, insert it in the movement of society, investigate its networks of social interlocution, unravel not its supposed autonomy in relation to society, but rather the form in which it constructed or represented its relationship with social reality...¹⁵

The study carried out here is only a first step in a reflection through which it is intended to establish the relationship between the literary texts of José de Alencar and the 'spirit of the age' of his historical period, interconnecting them with the periodicals selected to recreate and interpret the nineteenth century from the perspective of printed letters. But this effort is not exhausted on these pages, since the possibilities of analysis only increases to the extent that it can deepen my readings both of the historical period and literary production at that time.

Understanding literature as artistic expression, the literary art should be something more than a symbolic expression of a determined society at a specific historical moment, surpassing these limits in a constant dialogue with the daily life of this society. Starting from the assumption of Michel de Certeau (1982) in his book *The Writing of History*, it could be perceived that all this production established a dialogue with the 'historic place' of its creation.

By working with a determined artist, in the case of this research a writer, the peculiarities and idiosyncrasies of his production are uncovered to be analyzed and explored. In this way the romantic movement has generic characteristics, but the work of José de Alencar particularly intended to meet objectives that were well suited to his personal conviction as a type of qualified 'guide' to lead Brazilians towards the new demands of his country, which took upon itself foreign references.

This function of the creator and transformer of social reality was equally shared with other intellectuals of the period, but each one sought to fulfill this mission through their personal perspective and beliefs. Since the writer is a

man imbued with the spirit of his time, literature, and those who write it, were perceived as the instruments for divulging and ordering all the novelties being experienced.

It was with this perspective that I intended to analyze these literary works. Urban novels which spoke about life and which tell us today not only a story, but a story of rules and behavior of social and daily life, in other words the logical conductor of these men and women on the roads of the city of Rio de Janeiro in the nineteenth century.

NOTES

¹ This article is adapted from the master's thesis written with support from a Capes grant (2001-2003), entitled: *Civilized woman, educated girl, happy wife: relations of gender and the construction of a 'pedagogy of marriage' in the novels Diva, Luciola and Senhora*, by José de Alencar. PPGH, Uerj. Rio de Janeiro, 2003.

² For this article the following sources, which contained the production of the author, were researched: ALENCAR, José de. *Obras completas*. Rio de Janeiro: José Aguilar, 1959, 4v.; *Diário do Rio de Janeiro*, ano de 1865. Biblioteca Nacional, Seção de Periódicos; *Correio Mercantil*, ano de 1854. Biblioteca Nacional, Seção de Periódicos.

³ RIBEIRO, Luis Filipe. *Mulheres de papel: um estudo imaginário de José de Alencar e Machado de Assis*. Rio de Janeiro: Ed. UFF, 1996.

⁴ Among the titles of this author used in this paper are: CHARTIER, Roger (Org.). *Práticas da leitura*. São Paulo: Estação Liberdade, 2001; *A aventura do livro: do leitor ao navegador*. São Paulo: Ed. Unesp, 1999; *A história cultural: entre práticas e representações*. Rio de Janeiro: Bertrand Brasil, 1988; *A ordem dos livros: leitores, autores e bibliotecas*. Brasília: Ed. UnB, 1994; *História da leitura no mundo ocidental*. São Paulo: Ática, 1999, v.2.

⁵ In this paper I have used the following works: CERTEAU, Michel de. *A escrita da História*. Rio de Janeiro: Forense Universitária, 1982; *A invenção do cotidiano: artes de fazer*. Petrópolis (RJ): Vozes, 1994; *A invenção do cotidiano: morar, cozinhar*. Petrópolis (RJ): Vozes, 1996.

⁶ In relation to this, see: ABREU, Capistrano de. *Estudos e ensaios: crítica e História*. 4ª série. Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira; INL, 1976.

⁷ LOS RIOS FILHO, Adolfo Morales de. *O Rio de Janeiro Imperial*. Rio de Janeiro: Topbooks, 2000, p.161.

⁸ Cited in RENAULT, Delso. *Rio de Janeiro: a vida da cidade refletida nos jornais (1850-1870)*. Rio de Janeiro: INL; Civilização Brasileira, 1978, p.15.

⁹ ALENCAR, José de. *Correio Mercantil*, 1854. Biblioteca Nacional, Seção de Periódicos. Grifos nossos.

¹⁰ In relation to this issue, consult the entry 'Nobility' in *Dicionário do Brasil Imperial*. Ronaldo Vainfas (Dir.). Rio de Janeiro: Objetiva, 2002, p.553-555.

¹¹ GAY, Peter. *A educação dos sentidos*. São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 1989, p.21.

¹² ALENCAR, José de. *Obras completas*. Rio de Janeiro: José Aguilar, 1959, p.952.

¹³ NEVES, Lúcia Maria Bastos Pereira das; MACHADO, Humberto Fernandes. *O Império do Brasil*. Rio de Janeiro: Nova Fronteira, 1999, p.294.

¹⁴ CARVALHO, José Murilo de. *A construção da ordem / Teatro de sombras*. Rio de Janeiro: Ed. UFRJ, 1996, p.30.

¹⁵ CHALHOUB, Sidney; PEREIRA, Leonardo Affonso (Org.). *A História contada: capítulos de história social da literatura no Brasil*. Rio de Janeiro: Nova Fronteira, 1998, p.7.