

7 Shadow Talk: Constructing Female Memory of Resistance to Salazar's Dictatorship

In 2004, Margarida Tengarrinha published *Quadros de Memória (Portraits Drawn from Memory)*, an account of her harsh experiences as an underground communist activist and in exile during Salazar's dictatorship. At the age of seventy-six, and thirty years after the 25 April 1974 revolution, Margarida Tengarrinha undertook to write an autobiography, which, since it came out with Avante! Editions, the Publishing house run by the Portuguese Communist Party (PCP), served to publicly acknowledge her militancy. This act of narration allowed Margarida Tengarrinha to partake in the re-making of the epic past of the PCP: through this work of recollection, the party would be able to engage with counter-versions of contemporary collective memory and thereby establish the reasons behind and justification for its current incarnation.

Ultimately, the process of writing history is made up of reinterpretations and reinventions of the past, with a gallery of heroes, and with a ranked selection of episodes. After all, memory is not reduced to a mere function of register: it is a selective mechanism undergoing permanent change, creating versions of the past, according to the knowledge and needs of the present.¹ The autobiographical process draws on the recollection of emotionally significant lived experiences and is highly politicised in its portraits of social and ideological frameworks. This is achieved through the use of a particular kind of language, and through the desire to attribute meaning to one person's life. In a case such as this, engaging as it does with Portuguese collective memory in a complex manner, it is impossible

¹ María Inés Mudrovcic, *Historia, Narración y Memoria. Los Debates Actuales en Filosofía de la Historia* (Madrid: Akal, 2005), 117.

to ignore the link between individual memory and group memory. This link becomes even more significant when considering the heavy symbolism accorded to specific characters and recollected facts, such as the communist resistance to Salazar's dictatorship, evoked at each and every 25 April celebration. Thus, although this activist's testimony was published in 2004, her action can still be seen to have taken place in the wake of the revolution (even three decades later). Since the 1980s this post-revolutionary context has become conspicuous in the form of speeches attempting to whitewash the dictatorship and marginalise the historically symbolic heritage of the anti-fascist resistance, the revolution, the struggle and the protagonists of the cause.²

Tengarrinha's undertaking is unconventional, primarily because the number of female voices (communist or otherwise) that have come forward to narrate their resistance in the past are very few. In so doing, they have won themselves a place in the gallery of anti-fascist fighters, either underground, in prison or in exile. In this chapter, I will underline the uniqueness of her memoir especially when compared to the autobiographies of women hostile towards the PCP, published since the 1980s (Ventura, 1984 and Seabra, 2007), and those whose testimony was collected in a specially organised volume or in edited anthologies published in the midst of the revolutionary process (Paulo, 1974; Melo, 1975 and Freitas, 1975). Furthermore, I have also taken into account recently registered depositions about the methodological frameworks of Anthropology, Sociology and Oral History (Godinho, 2001; Gorjão, 2002; Cruzeiro, 2003; Rodrigues, 2011; Nogueira, 2011; Honório, 2014; Aranha & Ademar, 2014), resulting from the co-authorship between resistant interviewees and social science researchers or journalists.

The first chapter of *Quadros de Memória*, entitled 'Regressos' [Returns], places Margarida Tengarrinha's autobiographical writing in context in terms of specific chronological events. The period from 1954 to 1974 is a time of exhilaration and trauma, taking up most of the retrospective account; it culminates in the murder of her partner, the sculptor José Dias Coelho, killed

2 Paula Godinho, 'Introdução', in Aurora Rodrigues (ed.), *Gente Comum. Uma História na PIDE* (Castro Verde: 100 Luz, 2011), 11–43, 16.

by the PIDE (Salazar's political secret police) in 1961. Added to the harsh condition of her underground activism, then, is her painful and complex situation as the artist's widow. Dias Coelho was himself an underground fighter and became a martyr of the resistance, praised not only for his partisan discourse, but celebrated by writers, painters and musicians equally. Tengarrinha shared the anti-Salazar motivation of artists and scholars committed to the movement for peace with her husband. In 1955, she joined him on the committee of PCP underground militants, carrying out office duties such as document forging and, later, writing and designing for the underground press. The life narrative highlighting these two decades also includes the difficult period of her mourning, and her exile in the Soviet Union and Romania, where she kept herself busy with the Party's radio and press. She mentions her secret return to Portugal and how she remained underground until 25 April, now with a new partner, who is referred to only briefly. This temporal arc is thus viewed from an external timeframe marked by two dates: September to October 1985, during her campaign and her election as a PCP Member of Parliament for the Algarve, and January 1987, when she retired from her national executive duties and returned permanently to her homeland – the Algarve.

Here, again, the unique nature of the book is evident, insofar as it attempts a balance between what we as readers expect it to be and what the author hopes to reveal. On the one hand, it is part of a collection called 'Resistance', containing essays, autobiographical reports and pieces of fictional texts written by communist leaders who relate their personal experiences of resistance to fascism. As a rule, they enacted their beliefs with a sense of collective value brought about by the Party's Leninist ideology, reinforced by the harsh reality of underground existence, and by the class status (working class) of the majority of its militants and leaders. On the other hand, Margarida Tengarrinha chose for the epigraph of her book an excerpt from *My Invented Country: a Memoir* (2003) by Isabel Allende, which interweaves the history of her native Chile and her own individual journey, under a cloak of nostalgia and humour:

Apercebo-me que ao descrever estes factos [o Golpe Militar de 1973] sou subjectiva. Deveria contá-los desapaixonadamente, mas se o fizesse estaria a traír as minhas convicções e sentimentos. Este livro não pretende ser uma crónica política ou histórica,

mas uma série de recordações, que são sempre selectivas e marcadas pela experiência e ideologia próprias.

[I realise how subjective I am in describing these facts [the Military *Coup d'État* in 1973]. I should recount them dispassionately, but if I did so I would be betraying my convictions and feelings. This book does not aim at being a political or historical chronicle, but rather a series of recollections, which are always selective and marked by personal experiences and ideologies.]³

By quoting Allende, Tengarrinha refuses to write what could be considered 'a political or historical chronicle' of an official nature, and instead asserts the ambivalence of a retrospective report that obeys and transgresses the predictable, in the form of the memoir of a woman who is an artist, a bourgeois and a communist.

It is unsurprising that *Quadros da Memória* should accentuate its hallmark of individuality without erasing the author's desire to render herself an example when recounting the collective experience and praising the heroic moments of resistance. The same thing happens when she chooses to focus almost exclusively on her time as an undercover activist, leaving out her childhood, her youth and her experiences from 1974 to the present day;⁴ when she includes short biographical notes about companion fighters alongside her own story; or when, at the end of the book, she anticipates the distrust of potential readers whom she considers may be unwilling to accept the intimate shadows the book has created along its pages by stating:

Receio que quem ler estes Quadros da Memória conclua que na nossa vida imperou a tristeza. Não é assim. Se alguém o pensou é porque transmiti uma impressão errada. Escrever estas recordações permitiu-me fazer um balanço e sentir vivamente como a minha vida foi tão cheia e eu uma mulher realizada plenamente na multiplicidade de

3 Margarida Tengarrinha, *Quadros da Memória* (Lisboa: Avante!, 2004), 176. Henceforth quotations from the book will be indicated with the respective page numbers. Passages in italics represent retrospective comments by the author. The translations are by Conceição Bravo. All other translations are my own.

4 She briefly described these phases of her life in 2005, in a statement published in the weekly newspaper *Expresso*: Valdemar Cruz, 'Margarida Tengarrinha: "O que a vida me ensinou"', *Expresso*. Única 21/05 (2005), 44–6.

coisas que fiz, através de experiências enriquecedoras e de pessoas magníficas que conheci, amei e que me amaram. (179)

[I fear that whoever reads these Memory Portraits might conclude that sadness reigned in our lives. That is not so. If anyone thought that, then it is because I conveyed the wrong impression. Writing these memories has allowed me to take stock and feel how full my life was and what a totally fulfilled woman I was in the multiplicity of things I did, through enriching experiences and through the magnificent people I met, loved and who loved me.]

In this final paragraph, the narrative voice becomes louder and oversteps the narrow limits of the first person singular, while at the same time Tengarrinha praises personal achievements and the model narrative of 'our life', of which hers is a part: the tenaciously resistant experience of the underground militants who, in the long and repressive dictatorship, forced historical time to accelerate and paved the way for the revolution.⁵

The first chapter of *Quadros da Memória* cites *Regressos* (1935) [*Returns*], one of the last works by M. Teixeira-Gomes (1860–1941), a writer and Republican politician who, in the middle of the Salazar era, died in exile in Algeria, far from his birthplace in the Algarve. This implicit identification with the deceased writer signifies an aesthetic acknowledgement but also an empathy with a shared sense of deprivation of their homeland. Being able to return freely to the beach in Portimão does not, nonetheless, erase the pain of time lost and presents one of the few sensory descriptions of the entire work: 'o contacto com a areia e com o mar, na avidéz de um desejo tão recalcado e tão antigo, foi o verdadeiro reencontro de amor da pele, dos nervos, da carne' [contact with the sand and the sea, in the avidity of a desire so repressed and so distant, was the true reencountering of love on the skin, on the nerve-endings, on the flesh] (12).

5 The photographs chosen to illustrate the opening and the end of the narrative are not accidental; they show Margarida Tengarrinha openly engaged with the public: side by side with workers from fish canning industries in Portimão, who were also her supporters in the election campaign of 1985 (13), or speaking at a committee meeting or conference, with the mobilising motto 'For a Free and Democratic Portugal' in the background (178).

For Tengarrinha, the 1980s were years of militancy in democracy, the consuming activity of an election campaign, and also her subsequent withdrawal from politics, after a life that was in equal parts intense and traumatic. This final change in her life explains the inner perplexity of someone who is a militant and considers herself a fighter, someone who fears frustration and a lack of meaning, in clear opposition to the strength and exaltation of the life she had lived up to then:

terei de admitir que não faço parte da categoria dos fortes, o que não quero aceitar. É esta relutância em reconhecer-me vencida que me faz cerrar os dentes até rangerem, como me aconteceu tantas vezes pela vida fora, sacudir a inércia com que permaneço na cama enrolada sobre mim própria, pegar nos pincéis e trabalhar. (17)

[I will have to admit that I do not fall within the category of the valiant, which I am reluctant to accept. It's this reluctance in accepting my defeat that makes me grind my teeth, as so often happened in the past, and deal with the inertia with which I lie in bed, wrapped up in myself, to take up my paint brushes and start working.]

Tengarrinha's solution was to take up painting again, after having to give it up on going underground in 1955. Returning to the family home and painting 'the old and suffering carob trees' [as *alfarrobeiras velhas e sofridas*] (18) would release her suppressed memory and re-establish the balance this book was intended to produce. Most of the fragments, identified with the 1980s and written in the present simple tense, seem to take the form of a diary and reflect the inner turbulence of that period. It is precisely at that moment that the painted carob trees appear as a twilight metaphor of the author in search of the past. These trees with their twisted, Mediterranean roots, are at both the product of an inner catharsis and the embodiment of her return to creative work. Indeed, the illustration on the cover is an old carob tree painted by the author. This is where Tengarrinha's presentation of her own autographed portfolio starts, at the very threshold of the book.⁶

6 In the chapter 'Regressos' [Returns], Tengarrinha mentions that she was preparing an exhibition at the Gallery in Sociedade Nacional de Belas Artes, for October 1988. She had previously held an exhibition there in 1954. Note that, at this place, between 1946 and 1956, several exhibitions had brought together many anti-fascist artists with various aesthetic inclinations, who had in common the fact that they

Her memoir seems prone to re-unite broken ties in a life that previously flourished so close to the artistic world. In doing so, it provides, to some extent, gender balance to the importance attributed to the couple, previously overshadowed by Dias Coelho's heroic status as a militant artist murdered by the political police. It also helps establish the place of women within the Party's structures, which was partly a product of the underground context, but also a reflection of the Portuguese mentality and social standards of the time. Not by chance, the book is more than a revelation of episodes that the shadow of life underground forced into the domain of secrecy and anonymity. It is a way of revealing and confirming Tengarrinha's authorship of work that, when first produced, had to be anonymous. She therefore transcribes some of her articles published in the undercover press or she signs her name to those written by her in *A Resistência em Portugal* (The Resistance in Portugal). Following an order given by the Party leaders, this book represented the first systematic narrative of the communist struggle against the dictatorship. It was published in the wake of the violent death of José Dias Coelho, and he was, therefore, with Margarida's consent, attributed full authorship in foreign editions published in the 60s and the first Portuguese edition, which came out in 1974.⁷

For this same reason, Tengarrinha signed a series of prints published in *Avante!* between 1955 and 1961 with her partner's name, and only a few

did not collaborate with Salazar's cultural policy. Dias Coelho participated in its organisation and exhibited at almost every event. At the last one, in 1956, when he was underground, his colleagues who organised it made a point of marking his absence by exhibiting one of his sculptures, so that his name would appear in the catalogue 2006. O artista militante. Margarida Tengarrinha, *Jornal da Organização Regional do PCP* 15/12 (2006).

7 This book was firstly published in 1962, as *The Resistance in Portugal. Chronicles*, under a pseudonym (Amílcar Gomes Duarte), in São Paulo (Brazil). The following editions (Soviet Union, 1963; Romania, 1964; Czechoslovakia, 1965) identify the real name of the author, José Dias Coelho, as we can see in the first Portuguese edition (by Editorial Inova) in June 1974. In this book Margarida Tengarrinha signs two texts: the preface (May 1974) and a biographical note about José Dias Coelho (July 1971), initially written for a Portuguese edition never published. The more recent edition (Coelho 2006) reproduces the version of 1974.

with her own. These prints, either representing political events or permanent illustrations, had the effect of modernising the graphic impact of the newspaper and they became icons of the communist resistance. They are reproduced as facsimiles in the book. In fact, they followed the Latin-American tradition of the graphic print as mass aesthetics linked to political commitment and social transformation. The newspaper is in itself a medium for the large-scale replication of texts and images: it promotes individual authorship a lot less than a book does, because it relies on the collective and polyphonic work of its many authors, especially the journalists. Furthermore, *Avante!* was a newspaper distributed underground, normally of anonymous authorship, which favored the readers' collective appropriation of its contents. Consequently, when Margarida Tengarrinha signs her name to a small number of printed pictures and texts, she highlights the individual mark of her signature. At the same time, she recalls her role in the cultural and artistic environment of Lisbon in the 1950s, where anti-Salazar opposition was significant and from which she had to withdraw in order to engage in political work.

There is another relevant element in the authorial figure that the book constructs: the simultaneous contrast and identification with the majority of the PCP's underground female militants who, in the 1950s, were mostly of working-class origin. In the organisation's codified lexicon, the term 'partners' ('companheiras') referred to militants' wives living underground and who were responsible for household chores and the defence of their homes.⁸ Even when living as political outlaws they suffered the impact of the then prevailing moral standards in Portuguese society. The militants had to take into consideration the increased vulnerability of women to the police and imposed restrictions, such as, for example, their permission to circulate outdoors. These household chores were some of Tengarrinha's duties.

8 In the absence of a romantic relationship between man and woman – although publicly they behaved as a couple – the term for the woman was 'friend' ('amiga') or 'comrade' ('camarada'). The term 'companheira' indicates a willingness to distinguish it from the conventional 'wife' ('mulher') or 'spouse' ('esposa'). It is worthwhile recalling the variety of circumstances and relationships these women experienced, including the wife who had not gone underground and, later on, that of the 'companheira'.

But her intellectual work, writing and sketching, her continuous political responsibility and her 'grumpiness' ['o carácter de "refilona"' (50)] amongst the Party Leaders would distinguish her from the other female militants, who were normally excluded from organisational and management roles. To this end, she remembers her contribution, between 1956 and 1959, towards improving the photocopied newspaper – *A Voz das Camaradas* [The Voice of the (female) Comrades] – whose aim was political and cultural education, as well as moral and practical support for female clandestine activists. She remembers also the ties of friendship she established with the other editors and even with the readers that wrote to her.

Consequently, Tengarrinha wants to become the spokesperson for these women, salvaging from forgetfulness an experience she herself had lived through and which, more often than not, was left out of the memoirs written by men (in the collection 'Resistência'), as she makes a point of stressing (63). She lists several aspects of the female activist's life: the painful daily routine filled with solitude and dangers; the risk of losing one's identity and even one's mental sanity for a life of pretense and constant camouflage; the most distressing, the pain caused by separation from one's children, if not at the time of going underground then when they had to start primary school.

Tengarrinha highlights how she was particularly different, not merely because of her artistic and intellectual background, but as a woman without a partner from 1961 onwards, who continued her underground struggle, then consisting of so-called 'street tasks' ('tarefas de rua'). She was also expected to collaborate with the party's adulation of her deceased partner, but 'refused to play the tasteless role of the inconsolable widow' (128). In addition to all these roles, she also composed his epitaphs: everything that was published anonymously in *Avante!* from January 1962, and, later, the signed preface – dated July 1971 – to the first legal edition of *A Resistência em Portugal*, which came out in 1974.⁹

9 In 2006, Tengarrinha wrote several articles about Dias Coelho celebrating the forty-fifth anniversary of his death collected in Lisbon's PCP Regional Organisation newspaper. She also took part in the tribute organised close to the gravestone that

Quadros da Memória constantly reminds us of how intimately connected politics and art were for Dias Coelho and Tengarrinha. Indeed, the book highlights the value of the family unit, made up of the couple, their daughters and one of their sisters-in-law (Dias Coelho's sister who lived far away), who acted as guardian to their eldest daughter. Without going into details of their sexual relationship, the memoir records how the young couple shared 'an unconsciousness of happiness' ('inconsciência da felicidade' (21)) despite living a daily routine radically different from that of their extended family and from their circle of friends.

To illustrate their family life (the members are often referred to by affectionate pet names, such as 'Zé', 'Terezinha' and 'Guida'), there is a set of photographs taken of the couple when they were completely underground, with their daughters, of the daughters on their own, and, in 1974, of the mother with both daughters. They were most likely taken with José Dias Coelho's *Minox* camera, which he used to carry out his duty of compiling the Party's historical archive. These images constitute a personal heritage and take on a double meaning at the core of partisan and family circles. In other words, the small collection of photographs documents a strong family relationship, which was later brutally upset by death and separation. At the same time, it gains exemplary greatness. Firstly, because these are documents from the private sphere, framed by the shadowy scenario of life underground. Secondly, they are brought to light by the autobiographer who writes for a partisan publisher and, as such, partakes in the retelling of the heroic past of the Portuguese Communist Party.

Naturally the report format keeps excessive emotions under control, as Tengarrinha recognises that she was one of many women whose political choice implied 'dangers, sacrifices and renunciations' ('perigos, sacrifícios e renúncias' (81)).¹⁰ But she does not conceal the fact that her deep pain lingers on, until the moment she writes about it.

marks the spot where he was murdered. It consisted of the opening of an exhibition and the launch of the fourth edition of *A Resistência em Portugal*.

¹⁰ Particularly interesting is the poignant scene of the parents and daughter separating: 'Even today it is painful to recall the moment of departure, when Terezinha, sitting on her aunt's lap in the car, turned to face us and knowing we would not accompany

A photograph is an artefact through which the past is experienced, given meaning in the present; a photograph represents memory but also a sense of loss because the moment portrayed is (long) gone. And this is what happens when Tengarrinha contemplates a photograph of her daughter's birthday. The tragic distress of the solitary child sitting at the table, at a ghostly birthday party, locked up in an underground house, is unavoidably visible. The caption itself could be taken from any family album complete with domestic images: 'Teresa, 3rd September 1956':

confrange-me ainda hoje olhar a fotografia que tirámos no dia do seu terceiro aniversário, sentada à cabeceira da mesa em frente do bolo com três velas, dois cálices de vinho do Porto um de cada lado, a marcar o lugar do pai e da mãe, sem outras crianças, sozinha connosco. Vejo-a com o ar um pouco desolado, o mesmo que tinha quando olhava da janela os meninos que brincavam na rua e a quem ela não podia ir juntar-se. (81-2)

[it upsets me, even today, to look at the photograph we took on her third birthday. She was sitting at the head of the table, a cake with three candles in front of her, two glasses of port, one on either side of the cake, places set for father and mother, no other children, alone with just the two of us. I think she looks slightly desolate, the same as when she looked out of the window at other children playing in the street and whom she could not join.]

The family album helps us to return to the oscillating nature of this fighter's self-portrait, as it swings between the unique and the exemplary. In fact, communist militancy in an underground context led to a blurring of the individual within the collective organisation and forced an abrupt distancing from family and friends. Nevertheless, the photographs of the Dias Coelho family and the narrative they illustrate present an imaginary place where loss appears, at first, to be missing. We can intercept different gazes in these photographs: the author's, those being photographed and the photographer's, certainly those of José Dias Coelho. They appear

her, asked: "Are you coming with me?" She covered her face with her hands and they left' (80). This scene's *pathos* is mitigated through a comment on other militants who had to leave those they most loved for political reasons. Only then does she resume the first person narrative in order to voice her guilt and her need for justification: 'that is how I always felt' (80).

to be normal domestic scenes, without any major concerns, of a typical bourgeois family of the 1950s: not only from their poses but also because the scenario is, in two rather symmetrical cases, that of a child with her mother or father seated by her side, in a country setting, out of sight of the fortified underground house. Therefore, the album holds memories that lead to imagining a pleasant past where the family acts as a shelter. Thus, here we have the confirmation that 'visual representation privileges the nuclear family by naturalizing, romanticizing and idealizing family relations above all others.'¹¹

It is only natural that the question of this fighter's bourgeois origins should receive some considerable attention in her autobiographical text. Tengarrinha chooses to erase the events prior to her childhood and her youth, yet she cannot help recalling her inability to adapt as an idealistic young student who went underground with a head full of political dreams:

Aprender as formas de defesa e as regras do trabalho clandestino andou a par da mais elementar aprendizagem das tarefas de dona de casa e de culinária, de que tinha noções muito rudimentares, como todas as estudantes e raparigas da burguesia naquela época. Para nós, ir para a cozinha significava pôr um bonito avental e ensaiar uma complicada receita do *Pantagruel*,¹² que tínhamos recebido no Natal, mas actuando sempre sob a supervisão da cozinheira. (37)

[Learning self-defence and the rules of underground work were on a par with the most elementary learning of household chores and cooking. I had a very rudimentary knowledge of these chores, typical of all students and girls of the bourgeois social class at the time. For us, going into the kitchen meant putting on a pretty apron and trying out a complicated recipe from *Pantagruel*, which we had received as a Christmas present, but always under the supervision of the maid.]

Looking back, she exposes the clash between the endurance required of someone living underground and the life of the model bourgeois lady-of-the-house of the 1950s, which perfectly matched her profile. The ironic tone in no way jeopardises the comfort of these memories in which, undercover,

11 Jo Spence, *Putting Myself in the Picture: a Political, Personal and Photographic Autobiography* (Seattle, WA: Real Comet Press, 1988), 136.

12 A classic Portuguese cookery book, first published in 1946.

the nuclear family was united and could compensate for the hardship of the circumstances with ties of mutual affection.

It is worth recalling that she was not a typical young bourgeois girl from the Portugal of the time. Her previous experience was not limited to the private sphere or the ideals of marriage and family life, but rather the opposite. She had received a university education, as was beginning to happen with many young girls from her social circle. Whilst a student, her political awakening took place within the pacifist movements and coincided with the democratic mobilisation of the post-war movement. Such movements included a significant, albeit restricted, number of middle-class women. They threw themselves into the arena of political resistance, an area of male dominance par excellence. Female intervention took place almost always backstage, far removed from the positions of leadership and decision-making,¹³ whereas the underground struggle, at the time totally exclusive to the communist militancy, involved above all (but not only) working-class women. They were mobilised for action in labour protests and everyday demands. Their awareness was raised through the stark social injustices and their field of action within their social network.

According to the aforementioned scene describing the young bourgeois housewife in the kitchen of her underground home, for Margarida Tengarrinha the immersion into a life undercover would emancipate her discourse in relation to her social group of origin and to the model of woman associated to it. On the other hand, it would strengthen her integration into a community where class-consciousness and work value were fundamental factors.

As to the issue of class, it is true that she does delve into the implications of adhering to the causes of the working class, since this was not her class of origin. Also, she does not problematise the party's concerns over the feminine condition, which were confined to labour rights and the participation in workers' struggles and partisan recruitment. However, the ironic misfit from the scene in the kitchen denounces her discomfort with

13 Vanda Gorjão, *Mulheres em Tempos Sombrios. Oposição Feminina ao Estado Novo* (Lisboa: ICS, 2002), 187-99.

the way she had lived her life and her class position until then. When I refer to class-consciousness, I have in mind a *leitmotiv* of Marxist thinking: that it is the real process of life that determines consciousness,¹⁴ and that this is an individually and historically situated experience; it presupposes that there is no place for a harmonious co-existence between classes with socially different roles.¹⁵

In *Quadros da Memória*, the conscious awareness of the young clandestine leads her to partially distance herself from the system of values, customs, ideas and institutional forms of life expected of a female bourgeois. She would henceforth play a hybrid role: the bourgeois devoted to revolutionary militancy, in favour of different causes, so as not to say opposite causes, to those that guided her education and upbringing.

Obviously the emancipation discourse has clear limits considering she writes from within a prudish body to avoid her own sexuality. She proceeds in this way, easily understood as morally motivated, when we consider the generation the author belongs to, but also because of the partisan structure she is linked to. At the same time, the desire for self-representation prevails, managed by means of a mobilising discourse that seeks legitimacy in the eyes of others. In the end, she handles a narrative tool of action and struggle created by men: the resistance epic genre. Although she criticises some memoirs by her comrades that chose to omit the role of women in the resistance, her work does cite as sources of authority some of the resistance narratives from the collection 'Resistência': as well the novel *Até Amanhã, Camaradas* [See you tomorrow, Comrades] (1974) and the book of short stories *Fronteiras* [Frontiers] (1998), both by Manuel Tiago (the pseudonym of Álvaro Cunhal, one of the main resistance leaders and later Secretary-General of the Communist Party), and the prison writings of the Czech journalist, Julius Fučík, *Notes from the Gallows!* (Portuguese ed. *Reportagem sob a Força*, 1975; original ed. 1945).

However, I recognise in *Quadros da Memória* an identifying gesture of autonomy which starts with the initiative taken to write an autobiography.

14 Carlos Marx and Federico Engels, *La Ideología Alemana* (Barcelona/Montevidéo: Ediciones Gijalbo/Ediciones Pueblos Unidos, 1970), 126.

15 Marx and Engels, *La Ideología Alemana*, 60–1.

Along with this autonomy we can also identify diversified forms and less standardised ways of living and retelling the communist underground existence, barely mentioned by historians or even in the Party's own official records. I am well aware of the rules and regulations controlling the smallest details of what must have been life underground, imposed by fears of conspiracy within the party's organisation: clandestineness and secrecy, the prevalence of the collective interest over that of the individual, and the imposition of sacrifice and trauma; all these forced the constraint of any manifestation of individuality and any memory that may have survived. Even so, the testimony offered by *Quadros da Memória* gives us a rare indication of how relevant identity traits of class and gender are in overcoming stereotypes; characterising ways of living; and affirming one's partisan affiliation and undercover militancy. Overall, it tells us that in activating a memory of the communist resistance experience, we cannot ignore the voice of the first person, feminine and singular.

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RAQUEL RIVAS ROJAS¹

8 Promises of Happiness and Unhappy Effects in *Abecedario del estío* by Liliana Lara

Translated by Katie Brown

'Ver a mi hijo a punto de ahogarse en el cloro azul de la piscina me llevó a convertirme en instructora de supervivencia y afines. Sus manos alzadas, su nariz tratando de salir del agua mientras yo corría apartando niños, madres y pelotas. Gritaba en mi lengua, pero nadie me entendía. Nadie se inmota al ver a una madre gritando en la piscina [...]. Por lo demás: ¿qué es eso de gritar en una lengua extranjera?, ¿es que acaso estos extranjeros nunca aprenderán a hablar la lengua local?'

[Seeing my son about to drown in the blue chlorine of the pool turned me into a lifeguard and first-aider. His raised arms, his nose trying to escape the water while I ran, parting children, mothers and balls. I shouted in my language, but no one understood. Nobody was fazed by a mother shouting at the pool [...]. Anyway, what's all this shouting in a foreign language about? Don't foreigners ever learn to speak the local language?]²

- 1 Translator's note: Throughout this chapter Raquel Rivas Rojas uses the terms 'destierro' and 'desterrado'. The dictionary definitions of these words are 'exile' (the condition and the person respectively). However, 'exile' is a very loaded term in Latin America, linked to those who were forced to leave their homeland fleeing dictatorships. Although 'destierro'/'desterrado' imply stronger emotions than 'migration'/'migrant', I have decided to use these terms for lack of a more suitable equivalent in English. The terms 'desarraigo'/'desarraigado' are also often used as synonyms for 'destierro'/'desterrado'. In these cases, I have used the translation 'uprootedness'/'uprooted'.
- 2 'A de Agua' (19 September 2011; 2013: 3). Further references to the text will cite the date of initial publication on the blog and the page number of the final PDF version from 2013.