

BETWEEN THE DIVIDED SOUL AND THE HYBRID SOUL: MEMORIES OF IMMIGRATION TO BRAZIL IN MIGUEL TORGA AND ROBERTO LEAL

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ABSTRACT

This article analyses representations of Portuguese immigration to Brazil in the essays of Miguel Torga (1907–1995) and in the autobiography of Roberto Leal (1951–2019). Drawing on a comparative qualitative approach, it examines how two cultural mediators, situated in distinct fields — literature and mass culture — construct migratory memories and divergent forms of transnational belonging. The aim is to understand how these narratives transform individual experiences of displacement into public regimes of representation of the migrant condition, articulating memory, identity, and cultural mediation within the Luso-Brazilian space. Torga, who emigrated to Brazil in his youth, narrates the Brazilian experience as both a process of subject formation and a lasting fracture of subjectivity, configuring a “divided soul”. Leal, who emigrated to Brazil at the age of 11, constructs a narrative of reinvention, cultural mediation, and negotiation of belonging, delineating a “hybrid soul”. In dialogue with Eduardo Lourenço (1992, 2001), Stuart Hall (2003), Homi K. Bhabha (1994/1998), Rogers Brubaker and Frederick Cooper (2000), and Néstor García Canclini (2010, 1989/2015), the article treats autobiographical and essayistic texts as cultural and performative sources in which migrant identity is produced, narrated, and contested. The comparison shows that Lusophony should not be understood as a naturally harmonious space, but rather as a field traversed by fractures, stigmas, symbolic hierarchies, and cultural negotiations, contributing to a critical reading of Portuguese-Brazilian migratory memories.

KEYWORDS

Portuguese immigration, migratory memory, cultural mediation, diaspora, hybridity

ENTRE A ALMA DIVIDIDA E A HÍBRIDA: MEMÓRIAS DE MIGUEL TORGA E DE ROBERTO LEAL SOBRE A IMIGRAÇÃO NO BRASIL

RESUMO

Este artigo analisa representações da imigração portuguesa no Brasil nos ensaios de Miguel Torga (1907–1995) e na autobiografia de Roberto Leal (1951–2019). A partir de uma abordagem qualitativa contrastiva, examina-se como dois mediadores culturais, situados em campos distintos — a literatura e a cultura de massas — elaboram memórias migratórias e formas divergentes de pertença transnacional. O objetivo é compreender de que modo essas narrativas transformam experiências individuais de deslocamento em regimes públicos de representação da condição migrante, articulando memória, identidade e mediação cultural no espaço luso-brasileiro. Torga, emigrante para o Brasil na juventude, narra a experiência brasileira como maturação e fratura durável da subjetividade, configurando uma “alma dividida”. Leal, emigrado para o Brasil aos 11 anos, constrói uma narrativa de reinvenção,

mediação cultural e negociação da pertença, delineando uma “alma híbrida”. Em diálogo com Eduardo Lourenço (1992, 2001), Stuart Hall (2003), Homi K. Bhabha (1994/1998), Rogers Brubaker e Frederick Cooper (2000) e Néstor García Canclini (2010, 1989/2015), o artigo trata textos autobiográficos e ensaísticos como fontes culturais e performativas, nas quais a identidade migrante é produzida, narrada e disputada. A comparação permite compreender que a lusofonia não deve ser entendida como espaço naturalmente harmonioso, mas como campo atravessado por fraturas, estigmas, hierarquias simbólicas e negociações culturais, contribuindo para uma leitura crítica das memórias migratórias luso-brasileiras.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE

imigração portuguesa, memória migratória, mediação cultural, diáspora, hibridismo

1. INTRODUCTION

Portuguese immigration to Brazil, marked by long-standing historical ties and linguistic proximity, has produced a heterogeneous set of subjectivities and forms of belonging. This article examines how this process has been narrated by two emblematic cultural mediators — the writer Miguel Torga (1907–1995) and the singer Roberto Leal (1951–2019) —, whose trajectories, although distinct, condense recurring tensions within the Portuguese migratory experience in twentieth-century Brazil. Starting from the premise that migration does not constitute merely physical displacement but an arena of symbolic contestation over recognition, legitimacy, and belonging, the article analyses how these authors have produced contrasting regimes of representation of transnational identity — understood as culturally situated modes of narrating, organising, and rendering migratory experience intelligible.

The selection of Torga and Leal is analytical and deliberate. Both operated as cultural mediators with broad public circulation — one within literature, the other within mass culture. For this reason, their memories function as privileged avenues for observing how migration is narrated and signified within the Lusophone space. The juxtaposition of these cases offers an opportunity to problematise distinct modes of constructing belonging: Torga’s introspective, melancholic reflexivity, grounded in the “divided soul”, and Leal’s performative, negotiated outward orientation, which delineates the “hybrid soul”. Taken together, these regimes of representation illuminate complementary facets of migration. The analysed representations, present in Torga’s essays (1955/2016) and Leal’s autobiography (2012), are treated as privileged materials for understanding the formation of memories, identities, and narrative disputes surrounding immigration to Brazil.

The article is guided by the following research question: how do Miguel Torga and Roberto Leal narrate the Portuguese migratory experience in Brazil, and what regimes of representation of transnational belonging emerge from these memories? To address this question, the analysis prioritises memories and self-representations, while maintaining awareness of the historical context of Portuguese immigration to Brazil. The originality of the study lies in comparing a canonical figure of Portuguese literature with a figure

of Portuguese-Brazilian mass culture, thereby enabling an examination of how different positions within the cultural field generate distinct ways of narrating migration.

Born in northern Portugal, in rural areas of the districts of Vila Real and Bragança, Torga and Leal offered contrasting perspectives on migration shaped by their respective historical contexts. Having lived in Minas Gerais between 1920 and 1925, the writer understood migration as a long process of maturation that culminated in the formation of a profound inner duality, a “divided soul”, marked by unease and melancholic longing. Leal, who settled with his family in São Paulo at the age of 11, constructed a narrative of reinvention shaped by music and articulated what is here termed a “hybrid soul”: “Brazil taught me *samba*, and I taught Brazilians how to dance the *vira*” (“Obrigado Brasil!”: Os grandes sambas na voz de Roberto Leal, 2014).

As with other foreigners, Portuguese immigrants developed plural, sometimes conflicting, memories of their migratory experiences in Brazil. The analysis of autobiographical accounts by artists, therefore, provides access not only to individual experiences but also to publicly circulating cultural repertoires that contribute to the production of shared meanings about immigration (Abadia et al., 2016). The emphasis on memory as a record of immaterial dimensions of migration extends this research agenda beyond official documents, statistics, and institutional sources.

The article articulates three theoretical axes. First, it draws on Eduardo Lourenço (1992, 2001) to understand longing (*saudade*) and emigration as central operators within the Portuguese imaginary. Second, it engages with Stuart Hall (2003) and Homi K. Bhabha (1994/1998) to analyse diasporic identity and hybridity as processes of negotiation and cultural enunciation. Third, it builds on the critiques of Rogers Brubaker and Frederick Cooper (2000) regarding identity as substance, as well as the reflections of Néstor García Canclini (2010, 1989/2015) on hybridity, mediation, and power relations. This articulation frames migration not as a homogeneous experience, but as a discursive practice situated within fields of prestige, recognition, and cultural circulation.

The main *corpus* consists of *Traço de União: Temas Portugueses e Brasileiros* (Bond of Union: Portuguese and Brazilian Themes; Torga, 1955/2016) and *As Minhas Montanhas: A Grande Viagem* (My Mountains: The Great Journey; Leal, 2012). *A Criação do Mundo* (The Creation of the World; Torga, 1996) is used as a complementary source to contextualise Torga’s experience in Brazil during his youth, while biographical and phonographic materials relating to Leal are employed in an auxiliary manner to understand the public and performative dimension of his cultural mediation. The parallel reading of these sources enables mapping distinct modes of remembering, representing Portugal and Brazil, and constructing strategies of migrant self-representation. Within their respective fields of circulation, both produced distinct symbolic responses to migration: Torga articulated it as a subjective fracture under the sign of longing, whereas Leal framed it as a possibility of hybridity and reinvention. The selection is justified by their role as cultural mediators: they not only recounted individual experiences but also participated in the construction of collective imaginaries of Lusophone migration. Their memories are subsequently analysed as discursive constructions that bring into view the tensions and negotiations of transnational identity.

The research adopts a comparative qualitative approach centred on the interpretative analysis of autobiographical and essayistic texts. The investigation was conducted in three stages: (a) identification of thematic recurrences associated with displacement, stigma, longing, recognition, and belonging; (b) examination of enunciative strategies, self-representation, and cultural mediation employed by each author; and (c) construction of the two analytical regimes — “divided soul” and “hybrid soul” — in articulation with debates on diaspora, hybridity, and identity as practice. This strategy does not aim to establish formal equivalence between essayistic literature and autobiography, but rather to explore the contrast between two modes of producing migratory memory and symbolic intervention within the Lusophone space. It is important to emphasise that the expressions “divided soul” and “hybrid soul” are analytical categories constructed for this study, and not psychological descriptions of the authors. They designate regimes of representation: modes of converting migratory experience into public narrative, cultural memory, and symbolic intervention. The proposal for a critical reading of Portuguese immigration to Brazil, grounded in two cultural mediators originating from distinct fields, seeks to contribute to an understanding of transnational identity, challenging harmonising narratives of Lusophony and highlighting migration as a site of symbolic struggle and negotiation.

The article’s structure reflects this trajectory. Section 2 contextualises the migratory flow between Portugal and Brazil between 1890 and 1960. Section 3 analyses the “divided soul” in Miguel Torga, while section 4 examines the “hybrid soul” in Roberto Leal. Section 5 discusses how these narratives articulate with the migratory imaginary, incorporating contemporary debates on identity, diaspora, and cultural mediation. Section 6 systematically compares the regimes of representation, identifying tensions and convergences. Section 7 presents the final remarks, outlining contributions, limitations, and future directions for cultural studies and debates on Lusophony.

2. PORTUGUESE-BRAZILIAN MIGRATORY FLOWS, 1890–1960

Portuguese migration to Brazil constitutes a long-term historical phenomenon, marked by different cycles and motivations, yet traversed by structural continuities that help contextualise the narratives analysed in this article. Since the nineteenth century, Brazil has stood out as the principal destination of Portuguese emigration (Costa Leite, 2000), attracting mainly populations from northern and central Portugal, often from rural backgrounds and with low levels of schooling. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, this flow intensified, driven by structural factors such as the agricultural crisis, the lack of economic opportunities in Portugal, and the perception of Brazil as a space of social mobility (Lobo, 2001). Emigration assumed both economic and symbolic dimensions, frequently represented as a project of individual advancement, albeit one marked by uncertainty and precariousness.

Despite the heterogeneity of trajectories, certain patterns become recurrent. Many immigrants engaged in urban commercial activities, particularly small-scale retail trade (Serrão, 1972), developing networks that combined solidarity among compatriots with

strategies of integration into the Brazilian context. At the same time, the condition of the emigrant implied an ambivalent position, situated between maintaining ties with the place of origin and adapting to the host society. From the 1930s onwards, economic and political reconfigurations in both countries altered migratory patterns. While the 1929 crisis and new restrictions in Brazil limited the entry of foreigners, the Portuguese Estado Novo (authoritarian regime) tightened control over departures. Although the status of Portuguese immigrants in Brazil remained ambivalent — oscillating between integration, facilitated by historical and cultural affinities, and social stigmatisation — the picture changed significantly in the 1960s. From then onwards, Portuguese emigration shifted towards the European labour market, driven by demand for labour in industrialised Europe. As Baganha (2003) shows, Europe absorbed 68% of Portuguese emigrants in the 1960s, leading to a contraction in flows to Brazil.

Rather than offering an exhaustive overview, this brief contextualisation situates the narratives analysed within a historical framework in which migration is configured as a simultaneously material and symbolic experience. Within this framework, the different modes of articulating belonging observed in the cases under study become intelligible in relation to the memory of loss and the negotiation of new cultural ties. The trajectories of Miguel Torga and Roberto Leal reveal precisely this ambivalence: linguistic and cultural proximity between Portugal and Brazil facilitated forms of circulation and recognition, yet did not eliminate the stigma associated with rural origin, accent, class position, and the collective representation of the Portuguese immigrant. At this intersection between symbolic affinity and social devaluation, their memories become particularly productive for thinking migration as a simultaneously material, affective, and cultural experience.

This contextualisation avoids an idealised reading of the Portuguese-Brazilian relationship, emphasising that shared language and historical ties did not erase social inequalities, symbolic hierarchies, or forms of ridicule directed at poor and rural Portuguese immigrants in urban Brazil. This tension is decisive, as will be shown: both authors narrate migration through experiences of estrangement, although they convert them into different regimes of memory.

3. “DIVIDED SOUL”: MIGRATION AS FRACTURE IN MIGUEL TORGA

The migratory experience is central in the work of Miguel Torga, the pseudonym of Adolfo Correia da Rocha (1907–1995). It is not evoked as a circumscribed biographical episode, but rather as a process of subject formation and a lasting fracture of subjectivity. Between 1920 and 1925, while still young, Torga worked on his uncle’s farm in Leopoldina (Minas Gerais). This experience, later narrated in the autobiographical novel *A Criação do Mundo* (Torga, 1996) and in the essays of *Traço de União* (Torga, 1955/2016), assumes the status of an existential condition marked by tension between displacement and belonging.

In *A Criação do Mundo*, the initial encounter with Brazil is described as radical estrangement. The narrator recalls the shock of a child who realises that “nothing I had learned in Agarez was of any use there. Not even the nests were the same” (Torga, 1996,

p. 92). Emigration is portrayed as an experience of hardship and discovery, shaped by the hostility of nativist insult that animalises the immigrant: “the misfortunes of Brazil/ were two, now they are three:/the big-headed ant,/the Italian and the Portuguese” (p. 152). Upon returning to Portugal after five years, the inner rupture proves irreversible; the “innocent young boy” who had left had died, giving way to a subject marked by discontinuity. This imprint is reactivated decades later, in 1954, during a trip to São Paulo. Torga then states that “Brazil had indeed tattooed itself on my soul like an indelible ink” (Torga, 1996, p. 596). The image of the tattoo encapsulates his conception of assimilation: not as harmonious integration, but as sensory and affective impregnation, incorporated almost involuntarily. Within this context, the representation of the “divided soul” becomes clearer. For Torga, the migrant lives “straddling the ocean”, with subjectivity divided between past and present:

the migrant’s soul was being split, divided between past and present, straddling the ocean. The New World was now a new homeland embedded in the senses. Nothing deliberate, rational, or constructed. Only assimilation. An indelible impregnation, like a tattoo. (Torga, 1955/2016, pp. 39–40)

This split is simultaneously spatial (Portugal and Brazil), temporal, and sensory. Brazil appears as a space of intensity, improvisation, and vital exuberance; Portugal, as a place of restraint, discipline, and reflective sedimentation. “This internal dualism torments my heart. It makes me insecure and vulnerable” (Torga, 1955/2016, p. 89).

Torga addresses this fracture through juxtaposed images: Ursa Major and the Cruzeiro do Sul, *ipê* (Brazilian trumpet tree) and rosemary, the Douro and the Paraíba. In the migrant, “two opposing beings coexist within the same body. One, European, of Greco-Latin measure; the other, American, anarchic and overflowing” (Torga, 1955/2016, p. 89). Neither prevails definitively. This impossibility of synthesis brings the narrative closer to what Stuart Hall (2003) describes as “diasporic identity”: not a stable essence, but a position constructed through difference and discontinuity, in which the subject never fully coincides with itself. In Torga’s case, this non-coincidence is reinforced by a poetics of foreignness and displacement already noted in critical readings of his diary and memoirs (Gago, 2008). Identity, in this framework, does not resolve the fracture — it incorporates it as a constitutive condition. In Torga, however, this condition is not only analytical but also ethical: division is not negotiated, it is preserved.

In the lecture “O Drama do Emigrante Português” (The Drama of the Portuguese Emigrant, Torga, 1955/2016), Miguel Torga lamented that the “drama of the emigrant” had yet to be properly written and criticised nineteenth-century authors such as Eça de Queirós and Camilo Castelo Branco for failing to grasp its core, remaining confined to the picturesque or the caricature. Speaking as a former migrant, he described a trajectory marked by “contradictory sensations”: first, the shock of hostile nature and social tensions; later, an incurable longing for the intense life left behind.

In childhood, an anxious ancestry confronted unfamiliar forms, customs, and behaviours; in maturity, an incurable longing for that rich life of

adventures — vast, warm, generous, without rules or limits! (...) now, this same human being, who has increased their stock of experiences, who has broadened their spiritual horizons, struggles within the old skin in which he no longer fit. (Torga, 1955/2016, p. 89)

By emphasising “incurable longing” — which he defines as a “biological exception” and a “permanent unease” —, Torga radicalises the ambivalence identified by Lourenço (1992). Whereas Eduardo Lourenço highlights the tendency of the Portuguese imaginary to valorise the pain of departure, Torga transforms this pain into an ethical condition. The emigrant in Torga’s work would long for Portugal while in Brazil, and Brazil while in Portugal, condemned to an “irremediable solitude on either side of the sea” (Torga, 1955/2016, p. 97). In this sense, the memory of migration in Torga does not remain a personal testimony; it participates in the construction of a regime of representation centred on fracture. By refusing conciliatory hybridity, his writing transforms displacement into a form of subjective resistance, in which identity is organised around the irreconcilable distance between origin and destination.

For Torga, migration cannot be reduced to a rupture that can be overcome over time. It is enduring, like a vaccine that leaves a permanent mark on the skin, distinct from any form of consolatory nostalgia. In these terms, the writer produces a memory that exceeds individual experience and projects itself as a historical interpretation of the migratory condition. The fracture of identity, melancholic longing, and persistent unease are not merely literary tropes, but modes of rendering the migratory experience in Brazil intelligible.

The conceptual force of this reading lies precisely in transforming biographical experience into a cultural form. Torga does not simply describe what he lived; he produces a grammar of emigration understood as permanent misalignment. Within this grammar, longing ceases to be a private emotion and becomes a narrative operator capable of organising hierarchies between origin and destination, memory and belonging.

4. “HYBRID SOUL”: MIGRATION AS REINVENTION IN ROBERTO LEAL

Migratory experience played a significant role in Roberto Leal’s trajectory, although it was expressed in a distinctly different manner from that of Miguel Torga. Leal was born in Vale da Porca (Trás-os-Montes) and emigrated at the age of 11. In his book *As Minhas Montanhas: A Grande Viagem* (2012), which he co-wrote with his wife Márcia Lúcia Fernandes, he tells a story in which displacement does not result in a lasting fracture but in a process of identity reconfiguration mediated by mass culture.

Upon arriving in São Paulo, Leal experienced adaptation, deprivation, and stigma during the 1960s. The memory of childhood evokes feelings of vulnerability and instances of hostility, including insults and mockery that associated the Portuguese with backwardness and ignorance:

I did not like being the object of laughter. In fact, I hated it when they called us “morruga”, “pois-pois”, or even “codfish”, or mocked us because of our

accent. In reality, I wanted to die every time they made jokes about our people... Many mistook our rural innocence for stupidity. They mistook our purity for naïveté. They mistook our more linear, less deductive way of reasoning — partly out of respect for others' reasoning — for a lack of intelligence. (Leal, 2012, p. 152)

As in Torga, the initial experience is shaped by difference and conflict; unlike the writer, however, Leal redirects this experience towards performance. Family migration served as a central resource for mitigating vulnerability. Trust in his father's decisions and the unity of the family served as strategies for adaptation and survival in an initially hostile environment, highlighting the role of transnational family networks in navigating precariousness.

Leal started his professional music career through the television programme *Portugal no Mundo*, before aspiring to replace traditional Portuguese music with a style combining “the joyfulness of Jovem Guarda and the Beatles, the look of Elvis Presley, and the sound of the Rolling Stones” (Leal, 2012, p. 174). This shift brought him popularity through radio and television, particularly after he reinterpreted the folk song “Arrebita” on Chacrinha's television programme in 1971. The following day, a Portuguese couple approached him in Rio de Janeiro with a phrase that became emblematic of his public reception: “you are our Portugal as we had never seen it on Brazilian television!” (Leal, 2012, p. 251). The comment crystallised an operation of cultural translation central to his career. In his quest to connect with two peoples, he started recording songs that focused on the theme of migration. Notable examples include “Canções do Meu País” (“one never knows what will come/home is never forgotten, not even for a moment”; Leal, 1980), and “Quem Somos Nós” (“And I was a foreigner forever, I never had my own place”; Leal, 2022).

By bringing together sounds from Portuguese tradition and Brazilian music — from Jovem Guarda to *samba* — Leal transformed the migrant condition into an expressive resource. Hence, his already cited statement: “Brazil taught me *samba*, and I taught Brazilians how to dance the *vira*” (“Obrigado Brasil!": Os grandes sambas na voz de Roberto Leal, 2014). This dynamic reflects what Homi K. Bhabha (1994/1998) termed the “third space”: not a site of harmonious synthesis, but of ambivalent negotiation, in which identities are produced through tension between recognition and stereotyping, translation and simplification. Within this space, Leal is neither simply Portuguese nor Brazilian, but a mediator. His identity becomes performative — constructed on stage, in the media, and through cultural circulation. The migrant condition ceases to be merely lived and becomes staged, reinterpreted, and converted into symbolic capital. Here again, Stuart Hall's (2003) work illuminates the process: identity in diaspora is continuously rearticulated. In Leal's case, this rearticulation assumes an affirmative form — difference is not experienced as fracture, but as an expressive resource.

A key moment in the narrative is his return to Portugal in 1978, when he was already an acclaimed artist in Brazil. Unlike Torga, whose return heightened awareness of loss, Leal interpreted it as a symbolic “revenge” for the deprivations of childhood.

Material success and public visibility function as means of reinscribing the migratory past, transforming experiences of exclusion into affirmation.

Sometimes we take revenge for small things that tormented our childhood universe, leaving marks throughout life. We take revenge on life itself, on the lack of prospects that surrounded us and ultimately expelled us from our own land. So, revenge is precisely this: proving — or trying to prove to ourselves — that it was worth leaving behind the most precious thing we ever had or ever will have in our lives: our ground, our home. The greater the longing, the greater the effort required to adapt to the new land, the greater the suffering caused by separation from loved ones, the greater the revenge will be, the more spectacle we will make of it, to justify the madness we once committed... (Leal, 2012, pp. 320–321)

The outward enactment of the migratory trajectory forms the core of the “hybrid soul”: migration is described not as an inner division but as a visible negotiation between forms of belonging. This alternative to melancholic interiorisation transforms migratory experience into public performance and a quest for recognition — even if visibility does not eliminate tension.

The reception of his work illustrates these ambiguities: widely recognised in Brazil, Leal encountered resistance in Portugal, where his image was at times associated with stereotypes regarded as unrepresentative. His trajectory thus reveals the limits and conditions of cultural translation within mass culture, where symbolic valorisation may co-exist with simplification. In this context, identity emerges less as inheritance than as practice, continuously rearticulated at the intersection of cultural codes. By transforming the migrant condition into performance — musical, media-based, and autobiographical — Leal produces a form of belonging constructed through movement. The expression “a foreigner in his own land” condenses this productive dislocation, in which integration and difference do not cancel one another out, but are mutually reconfigured.

In this sense, his migratory memory shapes a regime of representation grounded in interstitial negotiation and performance. Unlike Torga’s interiorisation of fracture, Leal transforms migration into visibility, negotiation, and the public reinvention of belonging — becoming emblematic of the tensions in the twentieth-century Portuguese migratory experience between integration and stigma, as well as recognition and ambivalence. This ambivalence, central to Bhabha’s theory (1994/1998), demonstrates that cultural mediation does not dissolve hierarchies or tensions, but reinscribes them in new forms. Mass culture reveals how migrant Portuguese identity becomes both a cultural product and a space of identity negotiation. Within this framework, the stigma attached to the rural immigrant — historically ridiculed in urban Brazil — is strategically resignified as a marker of popular authenticity. By hyperbolising elements of folklore and accent in his performances, Leal transforms a once devalued origin into commercially viable symbolic capital, responding to market demand for consumable nostalgias. Thus, the cultural industry does not dissolve the hierarchies surrounding

Portuguese immigration in Brazil, but reinserts them within a regime of visibility in which displacement and estrangement become assets of mass entertainment.

5. MEMORY, IDENTITY AND CULTURAL MEDIATION

The comparison between Miguel Torga and Roberto Leal makes it possible to problematise Portuguese immigration to Brazil beyond a linear narrative of integration or Lusophone continuity. Linguistic proximity between Portugal and Brazil did not prevent experiences of estrangement, stigma, and the negotiation of belonging. On the contrary, it is precisely because cultural affinity is often presumed that fractures and ambivalences become more visible in the memories of both authors.

In Eduardo Lourenço (1992, 2001), Portuguese emigration constitutes one of the nation's defining moral images, frequently organised around longing, departure, and loss. Torga's reading confirms this matrix but also radicalises it. Longing does not appear merely as nostalgia for origin; it becomes a symbolic operator that organises migrant subjectivity around the impossibility of synthesis. The "divided soul", therefore, does not describe an essence of the emigrant, but a narrative regime that transforms the Brazilian experience into a lasting mark of discontinuity.

The critique by Brubaker and Cooper (2000) of identity as a substantive category helps avoid an essentialist reading of this division. The "divided soul" should instead be understood as a category of practice and representation: a culturally situated way of narrating migration, claiming a position, and giving form to experience. In Torga, identity is less a resolved form of belonging than a persistent tension between memory, origin, and displacement.

In Leal, migrant belonging is organised differently. His narrative shifts internal fracture into the public space of performance. The singer transforms cultural difference into a mediatised language, combining Portuguese and Brazilian references to become recognisable to diverse audiences. The "hybrid soul" should not, however, be read as a harmonious fusion. In the light of García Canclini (2010, 1989/2015), hybridity also entails asymmetrical negotiation, processes of cultural translation, and responses to markets, stereotypes, and regimes of authenticity.

Bhabha's (1994/1998) notion of the "third space" is useful for understanding this operation. Leal acts in an interstitial place: he is Portuguese in Brazil, yet becomes an interpreter of a Portuguese identity adapted to Brazilian imaginaries. His cultural mediation produces recognition, but does not eliminate ambivalence. The reception of his work, marked by popularity in Brazil and reservations in Portugal, shows that public visibility may coexist with simplification, exoticisation, and disputes over legitimacy.

Thus, Torga and Leal enable us to refine Hall's (2003) concept of "diasporic identity". In both cases, identity is a process and position; in neither case is it a simple inheritance. However, this process takes different forms: in Torga, the non-coincidence of identity is interiorised as fracture; in Leal, it is exteriorised as performance and mediation. The comparison shows that migratory experience is lived, narrated, and produced under specific cultural conditions. In this sense, the Portugal-Brazil migratory

imaginary emerges as a field of symbolic contestation. The memories analysed challenge the idea of a naturally harmonious Lusophony: linguistic commonality does not eliminate class differences, stigma, cultural asymmetries, or tensions between recognition and belonging. On the contrary, these memories reveal Lusophony as a space of circulation but also of hierarchisation, translation, and conflict.

The contribution of this article, therefore, lies at the intersection of memory, culture, and symbolic power. Within this framework, narratives are approached as situated discursive practices in which processes of selection, hierarchisation, and framing of migratory experience can be observed. The comparative reading makes it possible to identify how these accounts organise belonging, construct symbolic boundaries between origin and destination, and render intelligible different forms of social insertion. Thus, rather than individual testimonies, they function as mechanisms for the production and circulation of meanings of migration within the Lusophone space.

6. REGIMES OF REPRESENTATION: A COMPARISON BETWEEN TORGA AND LEAL

Building on the theoretical framework, this section systematises the two identified regimes of representation in comparative terms. The aim is to clarify how the categories of the “divided soul” and the “hybrid soul” organise distinct ways of narrating Portuguese immigration to Brazil and of engaging symbolically within the Lusophone space (see Table 1).

DIMENSION	“DIVIDED SOUL” IN MIGUEL TORGA	“HYBRID SOUL” IN ROBERTO LEAL	INTERPRETATION
Mode of narrative elaboration	Interiorisation/fracture	Performance/hybridity	Identity as practice (Brubaker & Cooper, 2000)
Central affective register	Melancholy and longing	Reinvention and visibility	Diaspora as narrative positioning (Hall, 2003)
Treatment of stigma	Internalised as trauma	Reconfigured as authenticity	Symbolic negotiation of difference (Bhabha, 1994/1998)
Narrative operator	Subjective division	Negotiation of belonging	Hybridity and mediation as unequal processes (García Canclini, 1989/2015)

Table 1. *Regimes of representation of migration in Brazil in Miguel Torga and Roberto Leal*

Note. Author’s own elaboration based on Brubaker and Cooper (2000), Hall (2003), Bhabha (1994/1998), and García Canclini (1989/2015).

The comparison shows that Torga and Leal do not represent absolute poles, but rather distinct ways of articulating the same structural condition: the experience of living between cultural, affective, and symbolic references. Both register stigma, displacement, and a desire for recognition; they differ, however, in how this experience is translated into public memory. In Torga, migration is preserved as a wound and as a form of inner expansion. Literary writing legitimises fracture as existential depth and as resistance to full integration. In Leal, migration is transformed into performance and symbolic capital. Mass culture makes it possible to turn difference into visibility, even if such visibility remains traversed by stereotypes and hierarchies. This comparison

reinforces the idea that migrant identity is neither a fixed outcome nor a completed synthesis. It is constituted as a narrative practice, situated within specific cultural fields. The “divided soul” and the “hybrid soul” are therefore less psychological descriptions than regimes of representation: ways of rendering migratory experience intelligible and of disputing forms of belonging within the Portuguese-Brazilian space.

Table 1 summarises these analytical differences but should not be read as a rigid opposition. The Torguian fracture contains forms of incorporating Brazil into identity, just as Leal’s hybridity retains traces of suffering and displacement. The contribution of this comparison lies precisely in showing that migration develops different narratives depending on the cultural fields available for its expression: literature favours reflexive interiorisation, whereas popular music and the media favour performative exteriorisation.

7. FINAL REMARKS

The comparative analysis of the memories of Miguel Torga and Roberto Leal demonstrates that Portuguese immigration to Brazil constitutes a field of subjectivity formation shaped by tensions, stigma, and symbolic contestation. By proposing the analytical figures of the “divided soul” and the “hybrid soul”, the article has shown how two cultural mediators, situated in distinct fields, produce divergent ways of narrating transnational belonging.

In Torga, migration appears as a durable fracture organised around longing, memory of origin, and the impossibility of full reconciliation between Portugal and Brazil. In Leal, migration is narrated as public reinvention, cultural mediation, and hybrid performance. This difference does not simply oppose suffering to success, or loss to integration; rather, it reveals two distinct ways of transforming migratory experience into cultural expression.

The articulation of the contributions of Lourenço (1992, 2001), Hall (2003), Bhabha (1994/1998), Brubaker and Cooper (2000), and García Canclini (2010, 1989/2015) enabled the avoidance of essentialist readings of identity. Migrant identity is understood here as a narrative and cultural practice, continuously mobilised to organise experience, claim recognition, and negotiate positions. The Torguian fracture and Leal’s hybridity thus emerge as situated constructions, shaped by historical, affective, media-based, and symbolic conditions.

The article contributes to Lusophone cultural studies by questioning rhetorical constructions of a harmonious Lusophony. The comparison shows that shared language and historical references do not eliminate class hierarchies, stigma, struggles over authenticity, or tensions between recognition and belonging. Lusophony thus appears less as a unified cultural space than as a field of circulation and translation, but also of power and symbolic conflict.

Certain limitations of the study should nevertheless be acknowledged. The analysis focuses on two male, white, publicly visible figures and therefore does not encompass the diversity of Portuguese diasporic experience in Brazil. This delimitation does not undermine the *corpus*’s analytical value. However, it defines its scope: Torga and

Leal are treated as prominent cultural mediators rather than sociological representatives of migration as a whole. Future research could broaden the *corpus* to include female narratives, less visible experiences, and studies of reception to further explore how fracture, hybridity, and mediation operate across different postcolonial contexts¹.

Ultimately, the memories of Torga and Leal show that migratory experience is simultaneously lived, narrated, and performed. Transnational identity does not emerge as a stable inheritance but as an ongoing process of reconstruction, crucial for understanding the negotiations of belonging that continue to shape the Portuguese-Brazilian space.

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¹ It is worth noting that female perspectives on Portuguese immigration to Brazil were previously examined in Grangeia (2019), drawing on the autobiographical accounts of Ruth Escobar and Leonor Xavier.

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