

International Journal of Human Sciences Research

“MOTHER OF CHILDREN WHO GO AND CHILDREN WHO COME”: AFFECTIVE RESTRUCTURING IN THE TRAJECTORY OF A FAITH HEALER

Maralice Maschio

Post-doctorate in History of Religiosities
and the Environment from UEPG/
Research Professor at FAMA/ QPM
Professor of History from SEED
<http://lattes.cnpq.br/6501338935906040>

All content in this magazine is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution License. Attribution-Non-Commercial-Non-Derivatives 4.0 International (CC BY-NC-ND 4.0).



Abstract: Through an oral interview, produced with a healer from Cleveland, we problematized issues such as motherhood, gender, family, inheritance, donation-adoption, protection-unprotection, careless care. We dealt with identity constructions that permeate the narrative, transiting between secrets and violence, roles assumed in sociocultural, economic and political dimensions. The learning and practice of blessing intertwined meanings that, in the narrative, constituted tangles that cross temporally. The narrative reveals lives in movement, whose affections-disaffections were observed from the act of remembering, justifying the choice for such an interview, among the 14 of the post-doctoral research set.

Keywords: Faith healer. affections. disaffected. Donation. Adoption.

CONTEXTUALIZING THE CRAFT OF BLESSING

In the field of oral history, an individual trajectory makes it possible to identify and also sensitize subjects in the face of vulnerabilities, sociocultural, economic, intergenerational, family and gender aspects, in the composition of identity aspects. In the same way, feelings of welcome, care, protection, but also abandonment, violence and lack of protection, can emerge, as is the case of the interview that we will address. At the same time, in this case, they are permeated by traditional and popular knowledge, conceptions and practices of religions and religiosities, health issues, public policies and human rights.

The most varied representations can be seen through feelings affected and assumed by subjects, within different layers of the city of Clevelândia/PR, narrated/revealed, by the trajectory of a faith healer, whose practice crosses many other dimensions. These allow us to value the themes of “adoption - donation”,

in a family trajectory between grandmothers, daughters, mothers and granddaughters.

Contrary to what numerous studies on healers, healers, and faith healers in the south of the country, from the end of the first decade of the 21st century, point out that such crafts, even those related to tradition, are on the way to extinction, and in a society, each increasingly individualized in the face of technological and modern acceleration (GILL; SILVA, 2019), the municipality of Clevelândia and region are and are marked by the historical presence of such practices. These sometimes compete with medicine, sometimes complement them. Therefore, we do not necessarily speak of an opposition between biomedicine, bioculture and biomemory. In fact, we refer to the *ecological importance of traditional wisdoms* (TOLEDO; BARRERA-BASSOLS, 2015).

The memory of faith healers in the Southwest region of Paraná, therefore, is being thought from CANDAU (2011, p. 44): strong, dense, resistant, deep. Thus, we made it explicit that, in a year and a half of research, we had a set of 14 interviews, mostly with women, as well as, we started from the notion of craft, making use of the concept of Joel Candau (2011, p. 119), of “professional identity”, linked to powers and knowledge, not only of memorization and technical mastery of skills, but of inscription, in most cases, in the individual’s own body.

THE TRAJECTORY OF A HEALER FROM CLEVELAND: AFFECTIVE RESTRUCTURING IN MOTHERHOOD

The interview was produced on June 7, 2019, at the home of 60-year-old Dona Saleta Guerreiro Ramos. A healer since the age of 10, she believes she received a “gift” from God and Our Lady of Aparecida to bless. In addition to this heritage, of Catholic Christian tradition, it is possible to observe the awakening of his

craft, in practice, as in his speech he comments that, since he was a child, he accompanied his adoptive mother practicing blessings. At the same time, after the arrival at the house of a child like her, with respiratory problems, she felt the urge to help, take care, feeling the desire to “bless” for the first time. As there was a cure, she adopted the profession and, from then on, the two, she and her adoptive mother, occupied the same space in the house distinctly: one advising couples, the other blessing children.

The interview with Dona Saleta can provoke multiple feelings, whether in the interviewer, in the person who transcribes the interview, or in the reader of the final text. The pun that we chose, therefore, “mothers of children who go” and “of children who come”, was a cordial way of presenting a little of the story of a lady, who is the grandmother of a student in our pedagogy course, of the Municipal Faculty of Education and Environment, Clevelândia/PR. At the same time, if it were not for the affectionate discussions between us, authors, who accumulate experiences in the profession of historians, social scientist, biologist and social worker at the Maternity Hospital in Ponta Grossa/PR, this text would not have been written with determination and facing emotions, as well as the need to respect the interview as a whole.

Dona Saleta, along with two more brothers, are the children of a mother who has passed away. It suffered abandonment, it was donated, but it was also welcomed. She narrates part of this process as follows:

SALETA: I grew up without a father and without a mother, right? I was raised, right? Because my parents died, but she was also a widow, right? I suffered a lot, but thank God I'm there!

MARA: And what was the reason the parents left you? death? abandonment?

SALETE: It was the following: I met her

mother later, right? I had what? About twenty years, I think! That she gave us to other people so we wouldn't see us starve to death; because the father was a womanizer, right? I was not even a month old when he left home and left her alone! And she doesn't see us starves to death, then she tied knots! There were three of us, right? She gave one to each couple. Gave all three! [Silence]

The interviewee is narrating a reality she experienced in the city of São Lourenço D'Oeste/SC /BR, near Clevelândia, where she lived her childhood and adolescence. In this locality, his trajectory was marked by poverty, misery, machismo, violence and abandonment. At the same time, it expresses the moment of reunion with the biological mother, twenty years after the donation. As she tells herself, her mother had three children, who, in order not to see them starve, donated to the couple who raised her, with this mother from whom she learned one of the ways of the craft of blessing: by observation.

Dona Saleta's narrative is interspersed with arrivals and departures, losses and gains, abandonment and acceptance. In the midst of life's difficulties, which justified the delivery of the biological mother for adoption by another family, Dona Saleta also did not generate any children, all were adopted. However, his story is not just about “the children who go”, as part of our title suggests, but “the children who come”, complementing our pun. In the words of Saleta:

ROOM: Mine, I don't have any, right? They are all created. Adopted! But they are all from my heart!

MARA: And how did you get it? Was it the same as it was with you? Was it donated? How was it?

SALETA: The oldest, we lived in São Lourenço. Then it was the 11th of August. A cold, a cold. So, we got up early in the morning, I made a fire, that new puppy was Knocking at the door, then I opened

the door, she was wrapped in a newspaper, black, purple from the cold, even the umbilical cord hadn't even been cut yet. Then I took her there quickly, wrapped the sheets. My late husband had arrived at about three o'clock in the morning, drunk, so I went, I woke him up, he came stumbling, he went on the street like this, so I went after him, right? And there was a woman coming down! Then she just hid back and said: your daughter is there! If you want to create create because I will not create! And he swore the girl was not his daughter! But the girl is just like him. Vortemo there at the hospital with my father-in-law, who at that time was easier to adopt, there was no such bureaucracy, right? We talk to him and he says: let's go do the paper you won her at home. Then he made the paper all right, we registered and created it!

Saleta's narrative is referring to a time of approximately thirty years ago, still in São Lourenço D'Oeste/SC /BR, before migrating to the city of Clevelândia/PR. Not only at this moment of the interview, she makes a point of mentioning the apparent better relationship with male figures, who had, like her first father-in-law, a kind of "father". He was the one who made the decision, together with her, to adopt and help take care of the first daughter, given the delivery of the newborn by the biological mother, at the door of the house, even in the face of the first husband's denial that the alleged daughter, generated out of wedlock, were yours.

Another interesting aspect in Dona Saleta's speech, with regard to all adopted children, is the form of adoption. About her first daughter, she comments on the bureaucratic issue of the hospital, that she was instructed to fill out the documentation as if she had given birth to the child at home, as a biological mother, raising her as a legitimate daughter. Her daughters are aware of adoptions, according to our interviewee: "they are all from my heart", "they are a gift, because I was also adopted".

The trajectory of "delivery" - "welcome",

"donation" - "adoption" is constant in our interviewee's life narrative. Therefore, at another time, she tells us:

SALETA: We lived down there in Soledade [Neighborhood], paid rent to the late Ingrácia Santana. So, when I got home one day from work, my father-in-law was sitting in the area, then there was a bridge that passed, so a woman went there with a big belly, then I had come from work, I went inside and took a shower. Then he said: come and have some chimarrão first, then go take a shower! Then I took the chair, sat outside, but I was still inside, and he said: bring another chair, people are coming! Okay, so I took the chair, he sat down, she arrived, he told her to sit down, she sat down! Then she talked a little there, then she said: do not you have a plate of food for me? Then the late father-in-law said: go there and make some coffee! Let's go strengthen her life! So, I went in, made some coffee! So, I asked: don't you have a father? Don't have family? She said: I have, but my father and mother are already raising a couple of my children. And I fell and missed again, she said! And now they don't want me to drain the house, then there's my sister, right? And they don't want me to stay in the house, so I go home and just sleep! Then she ate, went out, thanked her, then the other weekend she arrived again, then she said: by chance you do not want take this baby that is going to be born? So, I said: but I don't think so, right? I had to work, so how was I going to take care of it? Then she says: if I don't find it for whoever gives it when you're born, I'll throw it inside the cemetery for the bugs to eat! So that gave me a bad deal for the drain! Then I told her: But I'll think!

At this moment, from the interviewee's speech, there is evidence of the spaces covered in the municipality of Clevelândia. His family lived in numerous neighborhoods until they settled in their current home, acquired in recent years. The aforementioned passage refers to a moment of dialogue between her and her father-in-law, who had already received a teenage girl from the city at the

time, in her third pregnancy, without financial conditions to take care of the child, without a spouse, without support and support. family, because they were already taking care of her first couple of children. Faced with the situation, the young woman was knocking from door to door offering her son for “donation”, “adoption” and that was how she had her first contact with Dona Saleta and her father-in-law. More about this process:

I talked to my husband, because I didn't do anything without talking to him, right? He didn't help, but I also didn't do anything without... Then I was talking to my late father-in-law and I said: it's a pity, right? And he said: it hurts! Then he said: if you want to catch it, I help you create! When you go to work, I stay and take care of her! Then I said: well, if you help me... [pause] then the other day she went there I said: I'll take it! Then I started to save money because I thought: then when she comes, then I would give her money to feed her, right? Then one day her brother arrived there and said: Hey neighbor, you have to go there because my sister wants you! I said: look, I think it's today! Then we get there, we order a taxi, we take her to the hospital, then the baby is born, then she tells Dr. Daniel: I don't even want to see the baby! I already gave it to this lady outside, who brought me! Then her brother came outside and said: it's a girl and she's very pretty! Then the doctor said: only today she won't go home because Dr. Losi has to look at her yet! I said: all right! Then the other day I went there, then Dr. Losi examined it, gave me the papers and signed it!

The excerpt above allows for a series of analyses. First, although Dona Saleta makes clear the problems faced with her husband, in her first marriage, together with the abuse and violence suffered, directly and indirectly, she mentions, at various times, a not total submission, but a certain relationship of dependence with regard to the male figures with whom she lived, whether in the representation of her father-in-law or her first

husband. Therefore, the dialogues, although involving care and help from the father-in-law, indirectly make explicit the strength of male authorization/authority, both for him and for the ex-husband. For example, “he didn't do anything, but I didn't do anything without...”.

The discussion above even suggests inferring the presence of the premise of religious morality followed by the couple. In this case, involving the adoption of the second daughter by the couple, in which Dona Saleta is talking about the possibility, in agreement with her husband, listening to his opinion, given the dynamics of the father-in-law, who would take care of the child so that she could work outside providing financial support of the house. This, since the ex-husband, dependent on the addiction to alcoholism, spent his salary on drinking, not helping with the household expenses, taking care of the children, among other tasks.

Another situation that appears in the interview fragment is the family situation of the baby donor. Indirectly, family members are not only supporting the episode, but also participating in the process, represented in the figure of the brother, who starts to mediate the birth, bridging the gap between monitoring the sister's labor and hearing what she wants, the biological mother., reaching Dona Saleta and her father-in-law, leading them to the hospital and the doctors. The right of the mother/sister not to want to see the child, handing him over directly to the adoptive mother, was respected, as was the right of access to public health with regard to the first care of the baby, coming from the hospital team. and the pediatrician, according to the interviewee.

In the same excerpt from the source, it is also possible to indirectly observe the bureaucratic process of the donation-adoption process. Dona Saleta is pointing out that those involved knew about the situation, as a whole. However, as the adoption process took

place in the documented sense, she silences its progress, unlike what she did when she reported on the adoption of her first daughter, as discussed above. And, if not reported, it is not up to us to make judgments.

The interview with Dona Saleta was open-ended, and she was invited to tell about her life trajectory. Therefore, we respect the moments when you shared your memories. In the same way, we took care to respect the times and spaces, the silences, the revelations, confrontations, feelings awakened and cherished while revealing part of its history to us. We intervened in moments that, as they appeared indirectly, indicated degrees of violence suffered, if the interviewee wished to speak. In one of these moments, she told us:

MARA: Didn't you have a lot of problems, Dona Saleta, because of the drinking, hitting, violence?

ROOM: With the first husband, yes. [Silence] Ah, he would arrive drunk, right? And then at that time he worked, there were those plates that said, right? So, what he took on duty was just for drinks, right? Oh, I used to live in a canvas shack, paying rent. Oh, I suffered already!

MARA: All this here in Cleveland?

ROOM: Everything! With this other one too [Second husband]. But I led a more peaceful life, thank God! So this one [Daughter] lived in Curitiba. I would go there and stay for a month, two. He stayed here, said he could go, did some carpenter work, right? I went to his service, arrived, prepared his food.

MARA: And did you help around the house too? Was this one quiet?

SALE: Yes. Yup. And I also spent three years taking care of the bed, giving medicine in bed, everything. After he died, it still served two, three of his daughters to say that it was still poorly taken care of! But I thank God I have a clear conscience! Even the nurses at the Post said that they had never seen a

patient so well taken care of! He didn't have a wound on his body.

All the steps involving the interview with Dona Saleta were difficult, given the interviewee's confidence in telling us a story that goes beyond ethical-methodological fields in oral history. These are experiences involving the body and mind of family members, physical and symbolic violence, which demanded sensitivity, respect and responsibility in the process, on our part.

When we noticed some moments in which the interviewee recalled violence, she was indirectly mentioning abuse suffered not only in her first marriage, but also in her second one. The difference is that, with the second partner, the coexistence seemed to be more peaceful. In the words of the interviewee, there is a suggestion that she did not spend most of her time living with her husband, as he lived with his daughter, in the capital Curitiba /PR/ BR. In addition, Dona Saleta built a narrative that, during the last three years of her first husband's life, in which he was bedridden as a result of a stroke, she took care of him directly and exclusively. It was at that moment that she built herself as a masseuse, made use of herbs, healing ointments, incorporated techniques and extended her services to those who seek her, especially with problems of yield, injury, without abandonment of blessings in children.

In Dona Saleta's narrative, feelings such as grief emerged, mainly directed at the daughters of her first husband who, according to her, in addition to not helping in his treatment, accused her of mistreatment. Therefore, she insisted, on several occasions, that despite suffering abuse, attributed to the addiction to alcoholism, she had the disaffection of family members, who did not provide support even when she needed to leave her ex-husband alone to schedule an exam, for example. We hypothesized, here, an also apparent feeling of "revenge", on the part of the interviewee,

towards the family members and their neglect, that she, even suffering with so much violence, insisted on keeping the patient very well taken care of so that everyone to see their care work, especially the health agents, in situations of home visits, going to the Health Center or Hospital. However, it is in these moments of the narrative that other networks of solidarity are being built. In the interviewee's own words:

MARA: And was he [second husband] bedridden most of the time after his stroke?

SALETE: Three years since it started! And they [Daughters] never came to say: Oh Saleta, I'm going to stay with their father today so you can rest! Never! So, when I needed to go to the city, make an appointment, something like that, then this friend of mine who stayed, she who came here to take care! He asked his family: oh, I can't because I have to take care of the children! The other one here also had a small child and was coming!

MARA: And how many children did he have? Do you have Miss Saleta?

SALETA: There is one here, the other who lives in Itajaí and two in Rio Grande do Sul.

In the fragment there is a perspective of geographic distance, which can justify the absence of family members at times when Dona Saleta needed support and help with her late ex-husband. However, the narrative is evolutionary with regard to the expansion of solidarity networks and the city's geospatial mutations.

SALETA: We live there in Bairro São Luiz, in Goitacazes, in Soledade. Here on this street up here, which goes up there, which used to belong to Mister Medeiros. We live down here for two years on this other street, that street over there with Schneider, we live there with Pontio, so we made a house there, we took a piece, right? The land belonged to his sister, right? Then it was just waiting for a place because it wasn't ours, right? Then we came here, which has his eldest [Daughter]

there, right? What do we create? And there was the woman I worked with for her, who then when it was time for the baby to be breastfed, then she took the car, left the car there, then my husband took it and went home.

SALETA: And we always live on rent until my late husband bought it here.

MARA: And in all that period that you told me, from the houses in canvas shacks, were you still a cold worker or were you already working as a day laborer?

SALETA: Daily worker and cold buoy for life!

MARA: And you never had support from the City Hall?

SALETA: When the deceased was sick, the only one who gave me a hand was Father Piva. He took food! And then I needed to work, I asked the neighbors, because sometimes he [Second husband] was alone at home. Then I asked the neighbors when the time came, because I had to work, there was no other way, then they came. Mrs. Nilva, who was Caciporé's wife, came a lot and gave him the medicine! And that was life!

The interviewee, above, is describing the various houses where she lived in the same neighborhood, very close to her current residence, now her own. There are also several other aspects raised by her in this same fragment. For example, in addition to the donated daughters, the daughters he adopted, took care of the second marriage, as the eldest daughter of the partner.

It is at this moment that the mutual support she had in the face of the situations faced was also significantly expanded, such as neighbors giving her ex-husband medicine so that she could work; the co-worker who took the car and delivered it to her current husband so that she could breastfeed the small child during working hours. When asked if she had

any kind of assistance from the municipal government, on the other hand, given her needs and financial difficulties, she replied that it was the Catholic Church, in the figure of the priest, who offered the monthly basic food baskets, who fed the family.

When Dona Saleta narrates her memory in relation to abandonment, delivery and adoption, she is not only talking about herself, but inscribing herself as a historical subject who lives complex structures of meanings and feelings, which surround the family, motherhood and what socially expects. get rid of them. In this sense, his trajectory reveals more than the concepts we study. By telling her past of abandonment and her remission as an adopter, in Dona Saleta, there is the construction of her own memories within a context in which the differences between “delivery” and “abandonment” are discussed, whose legislations bring definitions about the right of woman in giving up the child for adoption, seeking to offer the feeling of psychosocial support to the mother who chooses to give it up.

Such a movement brings a contradiction in itself, since it can generate the feeling of having made the best choice by enabling a better condition for the child, thus allowing the resumption of plans and projects for the life of non-maternity. On the other hand, when it is the result of a social need, it denounces the precariousness of social assistance policies that can support the maintenance of the family.

The set of Dona Saleta’s interview points us, firstly, from the discussions involving affection and violence, the movement here called “giving birth and not being a mother”. After all, “delivery” is a process with very complex psychic and social variables. We do not have concrete data that say the main cause, but socioeconomic issues are some of the possible reasons that prevail in the case of

our interviewee and her family members.

Therefore, adoption emerges as a phenomenon within the narrative, linked to abandonment. This one, which comes from the partner, the family, society and, we cannot forget, the State. Omitted, so often in the role of offering minimum conditions with regard to Maternity in its multiplicity and complexity. That is why we consider the notion of affective restructuring important in the conjunctural analysis of our interviewee’s narrative. Even because, several were the feelings that appeared, permeated, constituted and allowed us to historicize his speech. Faced with a trajectory marked by violence, addictions, disaffections, health problems, neglect, so many other affections, care emerged from friendships, bonds of solidarity, beliefs, religions, religiosities, why not, between family generations.

REFERENCES

CANDAU, Joel. **Memória e identidade**. São Paulo: Contexto, 2011.

Entrevista Oral com Saleta Guerreiro Ramos. Clevelândia/PR, 7 de junho de 2019. [Acervo Maralice Maschio].

GILL, Lorena Almeida; SILVA, Eduarda Borges da. "O cuidado com os outros: a benzedura no Sul do Brasil". In.: **Tempos Históricos**. V. 23. 1o. Semestre de 2019. p. 663-689.

TOLEDO, Víctor M.; BARRERA-BASSOLS, Narciso. **A memória biocultural**: A importância ecológica das sabedorias tradicionais. São Paulo: Expressão Popular, 2015.

WILLIAMS, Raymond. **Cultura e Materialismo**. São Paulo: Unesp, 2011.

WILLIAMS, Raymond. **Marxismo e Literatura**. Rio de Janeiro: Zahar, 1979.

WITKOWSKI, Nicolas. **Uma história sentimental das ciências**. Rio de Janeiro: Jorge Zahar, 2004.