

## Three voices of contemporary latin-american poetry

*Anthology - Experiences of peripheral bodies*

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| Brazil | Mexico | Dominican Republic |

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**I**t is always difficult to do an anthology. A narrow cut-off can never account for heterogeneous poetic experiences. From the small space of this anthology - selected, presented, constructed and translated collaboratively by Laboratório da Palavra (PACC.UFRJ) - we intended to maintain and deepen this diversity of dictions without fulfilling the need of representing a geographical diversity. In Latin America, that tends to separate Brasil from Caribbean, or Caribbean from the Southern Cone, the Southern Cone of Latin America from the Mexican Gulf, the challenge was to put those spaces both in contact and in conflict so that it was possible, at the same time, to show diverse poetic voices and, more, voices concealed by inequality. For this reason, we present here three young female Latin-American poets and from each of their poems, and in very different ways, Valeska Torres, Minerva Reynosa and Rita Indiana situate us in very different spaces, both geographical and discursive: the periphery of Rio de Janeiro, the frontier of Mexico and the United States and the streets of Dominican Republic, the ways of inhabiting this island.

Valeska is from Rio de Janeiro and the periphery that is drawn in her poems is made of smells, of animals and of non solving calculations. The periphery is geographical: the favela, Caxias-Méier, but also it is what gets marked in the body and that stays out. The periphery shovels Rio de Janeiro instead of expanding it and lets their most profound cavities uncovered, cavities that open up from the coup that appears in Valeska's poems as a way to originate the world and Rio de Janeiro, a coup that repeats indefinitely and that perpetuates the holes as the bodies that inhabit them.

Minerva Reynosa is Mexican, more specifically from Monterrey, a state in the northern of Mexico in the frontier of the United States. In her poems the periphery appears as this space that is at the same time a periphery and a boundary. It also plays - even with the form - with the possibility of escaping. The first poem by Minerva is a block, closed in its four sides. The periphery which Minerva talks about is in the center of this block and it seems, at the same time, an attracting and repelling center. We get to this periphery through the house, the bed and the couple's problems. Even though this center, this periphery and suburbs denies itself as a vanishing point when tracing again the way to this also closed feminine body: there are no kids, there is no menstruation.

But, Minerva's Monterrey extends through the form of the poem until it touches another space, the frontier, where what is named seems to be exactly this instance of liminality: the passport, the cerberus, another language. The space seems to open up and it is not the bed anymore, not even the second floor, nor the interior of the female body, but there is also no possible escaping. The poem inscribes itself in this limbo, far south of the United States and to the north of Mexico, where language - this accented English - and the subject disfigures themselves.

In Rita's poems, the city is full of crazy people and a body that is only named when it is interpellated. It is a body that acts: cleans, takes care of the backyards, organizes what is from others. But, besides that, the voice of the body repeats and deviates from the possibility of identity. With Rita it also appears an island: coconut, hurricanes, beauty contests, Caribbean clichés, a dream beach and Trujillo. It appears a voice that is a body and is a city that assembles and disassembles, being at once a very particular and a nobody's thing. The history of Dominican Republic and the everyday life of the bodies that emerge

from Rita's poems successively named creating an impossible testimony in which no one gets close to listen.

The periphery that is drawn in the course of these three poets work is not, or is not only, a geographical periphery. It is a periphery's voice that transits over the language in an alternative way, forcing it to say what is normally not said. The alternative experience of periphery, in a city that is at war against the poor, in an island, in a frontier, it is also an experience of the body and the voice. A voice that rises, in its difference, and emancipates itself.

*Translation: Juliana de Assis*

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## **VALESKA TORRES (BRASIL)**

In a galaxy far far away...

light-years ago

there was a black hole

so black and deep

that it's confounded

with disposals

up in the slums

digging

one more grave one more grave one more grave one more grave one more grave

of a rogue

*translation: Núcleo de Tradução*

## **Pissed**

the stopper blows out against my forehead

in light beige panties piss running down between my

legs the yellow metallic liquid: a dirty woman.  
in secret tries, i stick my fingers  
between the throat when i,  
would stick them between the lips of my pussy if i was allowed  
to cum, if i was allowed to .....  
a bunch of banana with  
granola, it bursts  
my pants zipper when i gobble a banana bunch with granola  
eating banana (silently so that no one hears my tongue soaked in saliva)  
i am ashamed of being a dirty woman that likes eating bananas  
around chewing silently doing a pap underneath the tongue  
i do not want any one to see me  
any one to listen to me  
eating at the frayed seat of caxias x méier  
nor that any one ask me why do i pee my pants when a stopper blows out against my  
forehead  
i don't want any one to see my hair underneath the armpit that  
i shave  
everydayeverydayeveryday  
i shave my armpit  
hair without any rite  
without any failure  
i clean the ugly and dirty hair of the dirty woman i am.

*translation: Juliana de Assis*

## Herd

Six o'clock in the afternoon,  
a sow going to slaughter, a crowd of pigs.  
Uniform: gray and blue, Brazilian flag, public  
educational unity. a well-dressed sow.

Educational public system and a herd of black  
 pigs trying to learn  
 that Jesus has blue eyes  
 he is a whitey,  
 when tanned has to use water paste.  
 Educational public system what is the use of knowing  
 how to count, if in the end of the month there is nothing left  
 for the sow that works to pay bills? To sustain a home?  
 End of a day of work, beginning of  
 a night of grazing the belly next the stove  
 a shotgun with still warm  
 barrel i put the bullet right on the face of the  
 douchebag  
 i live up to my wage.

*translation: Juliana de Assis*

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## **MINERVA REYNOSA (MÉXICO)**

another space dynamics  
 the border  
 with another chico with another  
 habit  
 at cerberus  
 the ship groping through the prairie  
 hill  
 intergalactic young men of light  
 sun  
 incandescent *wet back my* passport  
 I pass by the mount  
 long the distance with another name

another space another subject:  
*who stay in the Grass*  
 disfigured

(trad. Vinícius Fialho)

on the second floor in bed the problem with my ex-boyfriend should be sacred I think about  
 you laughing in a weirdextravagant/garish way in the end with the present of some time  
 together I think I cry on the kitchen floor warming on the pla-nets jamaica spain geographic  
 enlargement to think mountain I think oh lord how would we be now would we love the sofa  
 the lips the passport and then the lovers others hidden from the addicted lovers towards the  
 future the kidnap neither drowsiness nor scream the pavement tessitura trinities trots north  
 peripheries suburbs I cry keloid I think lying down bruised arm burnished gold pray bath  
 relief scabies encephalogram volitional treatment I anonymous mouth anima next to my ex-  
 boyfriend I unable to enjoy the acquitted girl with the red limb adulterated devising the  
 grunt colored juice scarlet colored the sky meekness the girl not the violet cloud violet in  
 parts bipartite exfoliating the matrix with no cervix the childless matrix the matrix  
 burnished in strikes locked altered I thrown on the floor trans-presentiment the skin the girl  
 the violet one how would we be now and I think about you without screams nor dog nor sun  
 without menstruating yet

*translation: Vinícius Fialho*

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## **RITA INDIANA (REPÚBLICA DOMINICANA)**

In name

to me without names

without birthdays

without genetically manipulated chicken

without a kitchen to fix me a coffee

without name

without golden

I

am the one that waits for my brothers under a three-colored coverlet

that isn't the country

it's another alcoholic thing

by the waste and the Discovery Channel

I

am the fervent Toño admire

the star of the dogs that flutter like

cannibals garbage butterflies

the one that plays with the maticueros, without any shame

sonofabitch

that it's not me

the one that sees the quartered city still needs

your old names

how can no one have seen them yet?

why no one rises the phone?

the secretel is the mark of the beast

Come on please

free me from this cut face island

that don't remember its abortions

I return being me

the childhood of a cybernetic kitty

the small dirt of a soft catholicism

betting my luck

on the caribbean sky's heart

the last hurricane

that will come through all the doors

the hurricane

that is a metallic spider

with eight golden shovels

I hold it in my hand

and my hand is the island

and, as always,

it's so pretty

(trad. Giulia Benincasa)

## Testimony

I am  
the only one that has seen  
the embryo of the apocalypse  
at the head of the bridge  
like a graffiti  
represents me has anointed me  
and disordered me  
buried the fluorescent sword  
baptized with dead steel  
I'm your mommy flight attendant beauty queen of  
the passion of one christ the king  
the notion of the deepest leisure  
the skinny gum-chewer stork  
the flatfoot strategist  
the one I am and will be para siempre jamás  
the mortality infected by contests  
televised, carnivals of the third world  
searching for the truth  
in the capital's nobles' sewage  
in the little paws of wealthy cockroaches  
of beauty parlours  
finding myself in the night  
solemnly dismantled  
the joints broken from knocking on doors  
and the cranes' borders  
that raise phalluses of the city up to the sky  
the prophecy has announced that I  
would come to fight the carcinoma



of weekly fat and tombstones like suns  
that pull down people's  
heads  
like fruits  
hammering  
the street dogs  
those that are my domain  
filthy like the marquises of naco  
knew about my arrival  
it's been centuries  
I am the mother  
tramps on the trijulinista's unconscious my offspring  
I'm the one that sticks the finger on the wound  
I'm the open wound since the seventies in the white  
face of Ciudad Trujillo  
I'm the stuffed beast  
I'm the plastic bag and the worm that searches  
I'm the lonely flamboyant that welcomes  
the ones in need  
macho men who bottom  
for soft drinks  
this is the truth  
I'm the candle that opens the way  
the bad bitch standing on four cement legs  
the woman I will never be  
I'm something pretty much of my own  
is it possible that no one understands this solitude?  
Come on  
burry all of me on the road  
Where a thousand pale fungi will cover my buttocks  
handehead by magic  
this magic mother of children that like me  
roam in the dominican night rarefied by drugs  
that poo expels in the full moon

come on  
eat from my body  
before time comes bringing it's gillette that is a  
grave  
count for me the brats that would come after me  
looking with their little eyes a faded photograph  
of my present glory in pampers  
Come on  
bring perfume  
fever eskimo i have it housed in the flesh  
of my mirror  
The city will ride in my back  
and we will be as one  
thing pretty much of my own  
Golden holy barbara  
Golden sweet puta  
Golden luck's Knorr car  
Golden fate of the dead  
Golden and holy don Manuel del Cabral, mad walking  
naked chasing a verse  
let's cry like I would do in this case  
and a prayer after  
and a vision after  
san Michael Jordan flying through Del Ensache air  
Ozama  
Come see me come running  
the little motorcycles sabotaging all the luck dices  
the malice's speed  
of a man of the mangrove  
I'm the star of the unveiled dogs  
the magnified Cibao like a storage that stores stones  
to be eaten  
the south only one dog accent  
the east a desert of dead people cooked in a

diamond-shaped pan  
everything under the howl  
of the dog-man  
a mutant that hires in his pockets  
evil fleas  
the death with teeth  
bone-rodent  
raging death que nosotros seremos para siempre jamás  
the dog-man calculates his own weight looking at  
the obelisk  
the lots of cardboard in his back  
anticipating the garden's apocalypse  
that is also a invention of my own  
because all that is over this big city is mine  
I gave it all a name  
it was all  
puppets of the dominican radiotelevision  
missing dominican in a vickiana's show  
beauty contests' loser  
idiot number eight  
desired in the blaguerista sunday  
bitch old  
bitch  
pour golden  
drool  
I  
come to me the power  
of a xangô that is now a Pokémon  
to me without names  
without birthdays  
without genetically manipulated chicken  
without a kitchen to fix me a coffee  
without name  
without golden

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