

On Plautinisms and Suassunisms in *The Saint and the Sow*⁹⁶

Sobre Plautinismos e Suassunismos em O Santo e a Porca

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Abstract:

Pointing out some of the commonalities between the comedy *O Santo e a Porca* and its Plautine model, the *Aulularia*, this paper intends to call attention to particular effects resulting from the blending of Brazilian and Roman motifs. More specifically, our goal is to explore whether certain textual and performative features that contemporary scholarship on the Roman playwright has pointed out are also present in the Brazilian play. This intertextual investigation casts light on Suassuna's own blend of erudite and folk arts, which characterizes his "Northeastern" poetics in the *Saint and the Sow*.

Keywords: Plautus; Ariano Suassuna; *The Saint and the Sow*; Dramatic illusion

Resumo:

Apontando algumas das semelhanças entre a comédia *O Santo e a Porca* e seu modelo plautino, a *Aulularia*, este artigo pretende chamar a atenção para efeitos particulares resultantes da mescla de temas brasileiros e romanos. Mais especificamente, nosso objetivo é observar se certas características textuais e performáticas apontadas por estudiosos contemporâneos do dramaturgo romano também estão presentes na peça brasileira. Essa investigação intertextual lança luz sobre a mescla de artes eruditas e folclóricas de Suassuna, a qual caracteriza sua poética "nordestina" n' *O Santo e a Porca*.

Palavras-chave: Plauto; Ariano Suassuna; *O Santo e a Porca*; Ilusão Dramática

Written in 1957 by Ariano Vilar Suassuna, the comedy *O Santo e a Porca* (literally "The Saint and the Sow") proclaims the influence of Plautine comedy already in its subtitle: "uma *Imitação Nordestina de Plauto*" ("A Northeastern Imitation of Plautus"). This text was not intended as a translation, but as a creative reworking designed specifically for the Brazilian stage. Over half a century

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⁹⁶ This text retains the content and general format of the oral presentations in the APA in Seattle (January 2013), University of São Paulo (August 2013) and University of Minas Gerais (December 2013); an extended version, which explores cultural and socio-economic aspects of the context of the Brazilian play, is in preparation. For help with the various English versions of this text, the authors would like to thank Linda El-Dash, José Luis Burghi Filho, Tom Zancker, Carlos Magno Gonzaga Cardoso, Rita de Cássia D. Tardin and Ben Young. For helpful discussions we are obliged to the audiences of the aforementioned events and especially to Konstantinos Nikoloutsos and Rodrigo Gonçalves, as well as Anastasia Bakogianni for her comments and suggestions. In the meantime, a Portuguese version of the text has been published in a Brazilian journal (CARDOSO; dos SANTOS, 2016).

later, this rewriting — whether in its theatrical, literary or, more recently, televisual form⁹⁷ — is widely known throughout the country and its acclaim extends way beyond the approximately 18% of the Brazilian territory covered by the Northeast region.

This paper seeks to read Suassuna's comedy through a Plautine lens.⁹⁸ Our intention is not to point out all the commonalities between *O Santo e a Porca* and its Plautine model, the *Aulularia*,⁹⁹ but to discuss some of the most important ones and thus call attention to particular theatrical effects resulting from the blending of Brazilian and Roman motifs. More specifically, our goal is to explore whether certain textual and performative features that contemporary scholarship on the Roman playwright has pointed out are also present in the Brazilian play and if so, to what effect. Our hope is that this intertextual investigation, which takes into account how Suassuna underlines or masks his Plautine inspiration, can cast light on his own “Northeastern” poetics.¹⁰⁰

1. Introduction

Ariano Suassuna (1927-2014), who was born and spent his life in the Northeast, is nowadays considered one of Brazil's greatest playwrights. He was the cofounder of several important cultural movements, namely the “Teatro do Estudante de Pernambuco” (founded in 1946), the “Teatro Popular do Nordeste” (1959), and the “Movimento Armorial” (1970). All these initiatives sought to educate the public and bridge the gap between popular/low and elite/high forms of art, ultimately aiming to legitimize the former.¹⁰¹ When *O Santo e a Porca* was written, Suassuna was already a well-known playwright. At least ten of his plays had been staged by that time, and some had received awards

⁹⁷ Directed by Maurício Faria, the TV series *O santo e a porca* was adapted in 2000 by Adriana Falcão from the original theatrical play by Ariano Suassuna for the leading Brazilian television network Rede Globo.

⁹⁸ More specifically, the authors recognize that here we adopt the point of view of a public that is (considering a broader scale than the average spectators of Suassuna) familiar with the specific texts: not only those transmitted as having been written by a certain Titus Maccius/Maccus Plautus between the third and second centuries B.C.E (GRATWICK 1983, p. 1-6), but also the scholarly literature on the subject. Dramatic readings of Portuguese translations of Plautus (XXXX 2006, COSTA 2013, ROCHA 2013) made by actors at the Instituto Capobianco in São Paulo in 2013 and of Suassuna's play by students in Brazilian schools in 2014 have also contributed to our perception of the dramatic qualities of the respective texts by contemporary spectators.

⁹⁹ Commonalities between Suassuna's play and its classical model, and also with Molière's *L'Avare* (not considered here), have been addressed in previous studies, albeit not exhaustively (among the Classicists, see BOLDRINI 1985, POCINA LOPÉZ 1996, TREVIZAM 2013).

¹⁰⁰ A future paper, also taking *O Santo e a Porca* as a case study, shall further explore the relationship between Suassuna's poetics and its contemporary Brazilian cultural politics, as well as other questions pertaining to some of the current debates in the performance and reception of the classics in Latin America.

¹⁰¹ The dilettante or semi-professional theatrical groups that comprised the aforementioned Northeast cultural movements in the 1940s and 50s were (like their forerunners in the Southeast capitals of Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo) indebted to artists of the “Semana de Arte Moderna de 1922”, whose experimentalism (based on their critique of conventional and colonialist theater; see LEVIN 2012) was not immediately adopted by the professional theater of the time (see FERNANDES 2012). On the state of Brazilian theatre in this period in general, see also other important contributions in the second volume of the *História do Teatro Brasileiro* recently edited by Faria (2012).

(SANTOS 2009, p. 328). Particularly after winning a national award for the play *Auto da Compadecida* (1955, translated as “The Rogue’s Trial” in 1963), his work was staged by famous theatrical groups in the Southeastern capitals in addition to the Northeastern ones, and indeed translated and performed in other countries.¹⁰²

Thus, it is not a surprise that, when in 1958 *O Santo e a Porca* made its debut in Rio de Janeiro, the then capital of the country, the comedy was performed by a very prestigious theatrical group, the “Teatro Cacilda Becker” (SUASSUNA 2013, p. 19). The group included certain prominent names in the history of the dramatic arts in Brazil, such as the Polish director Zbigniew Marian Ziembinsky (1908-1978). Among the spectators and critics were important Brazilian journalists and poets, such as Carlos Drummond de Andrade (1902-1987), to whom the play was dedicated (SUASSUNA 2013, p. 19), and Manuel Bandeira (1886-1968). The play itself achieved great success with the theatre-going public and received the critics’ highest award (Medalha de ouro da Associação Paulista de Críticos Teatrais; SANTOS 2009, p. 328).¹⁰³

Suassuna’s theatrical activities tend to be considered as a seminal phase in the evolution of the highly influential “Movimento Armorial” (SANTOS 2009, p. 221-268), a project which strongly supported the production of art drawing on Northeastern folk culture, be it music, visual arts or literature. This cultural movement helps explain the setting of Suassuna’s Plautine “imitation.” *O Santo e a Porca* is set not in ancient Athens or Rome, but, as the subtitle indicates, in the Northeast region, a place that the author repeatedly depicts in his work. More specifically, the setting is Suassuna’s admittedly mythicized vision of the largely dry and dusty semi-arid region of Brazil called *sertão* (backcountry, backland) (SUASSUNA 2013, p. 27; cf. IBGE 2009; SANTOS 2009, p. 63-71). For a long time, hard climatic and economic conditions kept the region in (economic, administrative, and cultural) isolation, which, in the end, contributed to the preservation of artistic traditions inherited from Brazil’s colonial era. Such traditions — sometimes described as having, generally speaking, a “medieval” flavour (VASSALO 1993; but see SANTOS 2009, p. 74-75) — were defended by Suassuna as the most genuine type of Brazilian culture.

The reference to the Northeast in the subtitle of the play may evoke both the singular cultural richness of the region (including its inhabitants’ allegedly famous sense of humor) and, simultaneously, its humble background, resulting from the socio-economic problems which continue to afflict a large part of its population even in the 21st century. Thus, *mutatis mutandis*, the adjective “Northeastern” may

¹⁰² According to Santos (2009, p. 27) the play *O Auto da Compadecida* was translated and performed in France, Germany, Spain and Polony. Translations of this play were published in several languages: in Polish (SUASSUNA 1959), German (SUASSUNA 1962), Spanish (SUASSUNA 1965), Dutsch (SUASSUNA 1966b), French (SUASSUNA 1970), Italian (SUASSUNA 1992) and Breton (SUASSUNA 1996). On translations of other Suassuna’s works, see his homepage at the site of the “Academia Brasileira de Letras”: <http://www.academia.org.br/academicos/ariano-suassuna/bibliografia>.

¹⁰³ *O Santo e a Porca* can be read in Spanish as *El Santo y la Chancha* (SUASSUNA 1966a).

be perceived as the equivalent to the self-ironic label that the Roman playwright used to qualify his own adaptation of Greek plays, while he transferred them into a “barbarian” language and culture (e.g. *uortit barbare*, *Trinummus* 19; PETRONE 1993, p. 33-37; MOORE 1998, p. 54-55; XXXX 2010, p. 102-108).¹⁰⁴ For the modern public familiar with Plautus, the metapoetic expression certainly serves as an *antecipatio*, namely as a prelude to the skillful and witty spectacle that is to come.

2. *Vestigia plautina*

O Santo e a Porca is based on *Aulularia* (lit. “the comedy of the pot”). Both comedies are about a greedy old man who keeps his wealth concealed. Yet in the Brazilian play his coffer is not a pot (the *aula* of *Aulularia*) but a big sow made of wood. Instead of the Roman god Lar, the old man trusts Saint Anthony (“Santo Antônio”) to protect the cash-filled sow. Apart from the old man, there are four people living in his house: his marriageable daughter, his maid, whom he mistreats, his sister, and an ugly employee (who is in fact a young man in disguise who is in love with his daughter). Instead of having a divine prologue, the play opens *in medias res*, with a letter that announces the arrival of a rich farmer. In fact, the prosperous visitor is both the ex-fiancée of the miser’s older sister and the father of the young man in love. Unaware of the current romantic situation (absent as such in *Aulularia*), he is coming to ask for the hand of his son’s beloved.

It is clear that *O Santo e a Porca* makes sense and provokes laughter. This happens even if the public cannot recognize the *auarus Euclio* as the source of the greedy widower “Euricão Engole Cobra” (literally, “Big Eurico, the Snake-Swallower”).¹⁰⁵ However, although Suassuna did not write exclusively for an audience that knew Plautus, the circumstances of the production and performance of *O Santo e a Porca* allowed the Brazilian author to rely on some information about the Roman author and *Aulularia* being known at least by a part of his public. This expectation was confirmed at the time by national and international reviews that mentioned the Plautine model.¹⁰⁶

In fact, although a precise investigation of the frequency of the staging of *Aulularia* in Brazil has yet to be undertaken, in terms of translation this comedy seems to be one of the few Plautine plays

¹⁰⁴ Plautus’ Latin text is quoted from Lindsay’s edition (1955 and 1956).

¹⁰⁵ As with many of Suassuna’s additions designed to appeal to a broader public, the nickname itself has a Northeastern flavour: it refers to Euricão’s previous activities as a so-called “homem da cobra” (snake’s man), i.e. an itinerant seller of folk remedies, who typically uses snakes as a marketing strategy in fairs.

¹⁰⁶ Among the reviews partially reproduced in earlier editions of the play (see SUASSUNA 1964b, p. 15-25), Manuel Bandeira’s brief comments to the *Jornal do Brasil* provide the finest appreciation of Suassuna’s reception of the Plautine comedy. Besides recognizing Plautus’s Euclio as the “classic” model for the greedy character, Bandeira also points out the amplification in the plot and morality as meaningful elements added in the Brazilian play. This, in his opinion, became a classic itself. Aldo Calveti (*Última hora*) also comments on the moral and religious issues, contrasting the final part of both comedies. Other critics, namely Valdemar Cavalcanti (*O Jornal*), Eneida de Moraes (*Diário de Notícias*) and Homero Zirolo (*La Tribuna Popular*, Montevideo) as well as an “Uruguayan critic” (*El Bien Publico*, Montevideo), also mention the *Aulularia* and/or Plautus as a “source” for Suassuna’s comedy.

to have received considerable attention in the country.¹⁰⁷ It seems that the first Brazilian poetic version of this play into Portuguese was made by a noble (the Barão de Paranapiacaba) and published in 1888. The prose translation of Agostinho da Silva published in 1952 is probably the one on which Suassuna's adaptation is based.¹⁰⁸ Since then, at least two other versions of the comedy have been published: a translation by Aída Costa (1967) and a version "based on Plautus" by José Dejalma Dezotti (1996). In 2005 *Ai, Caçarola*, a "free recreation" (*recriação livre*) of *Aulularia*, written and directed by Atilio Bari, was staged in Teatro Ruth Escobar (in the city of São Paulo).

2.1. Beyond the title: Comic techniques

In our comedy, Suassuna underlines the equivalence of his characters to those of the model by retaining correspondences in some of the proper names used in his play (see BOLDRINI 1985, p. 253; POCIÑA LÓPEZ 1996, p. 295; TREVIZAM 2013, p. 146-149). The aural similarities are illustrated in the table below, which follows the order in which the characters appear in the Brazilian play:

<i>O Santo e a Porca</i>	<i>Aulularia (A comédia da panela)</i>
Caroba	<i>Staphyla</i> (Estáfila)
Euricão Árabe	Euclio (Euclião)
Pinhão	<i>Strobilus</i> (Estróbilo)
Margarida	<i>Phaedra</i> (Fedra)
Dodó	<i>Lyconides</i> (Licônides)
Benona	Eunomia (Eunômia)
Eudoro Vicente	Megadorus (Megadoro)
[Santo Antônio]	<i>Lar</i>

There is something definitely Plautine in this naming process, which recalls how in the comedy *Bacchides* some proper names of Menander's *Double-deceiver* are retained (e.g. *Lydos* and *Lydus*) or changed (*Syrus* to *Chrysalus*), while the text alludes to the Greek model (see e.g. the puns in *Bacchides* 170-177, 240; BARSBY 1986, p. 111, 119). In *O Santo e a Porca* as well, it seems that the attribution of names also refers to the respective model. Thus, both plays humorously call attention to the *modus imitandi* of the new text, whether it is "barbarian" or Northeastern. Moreover, verbal and non-verbal comic techniques found in Plautus are present in the three acts of our comedy. For instance, it is amusing to perceive, in the midst of fresh confusions, that some verses of *Aulularia* are translated *uerbatim* in

¹⁰⁷ Understanding the reasons for the preference for *Aulularia* in Brazil would require a wider investigation, including a look at the ways in which Plautine texts have been disseminated in the country and in Portugal. Yet perhaps considering what Suassuna retains in his adaptation of that comedy can already cast light on some of the aspects of the play itself that have been appealing to the Brazilian public.

¹⁰⁸ A comparison between the text of *O Santo e a Porca* and Silva's translation of *Aulularia* leads to this conclusion (VASSALO 1993, p. 100). In the editions of *O Santo e a Porca* we consulted there was no information about the Latin edition or the Portuguese translation of the *Aulularia* that Suassuna used.

Suassuna's prose (see e.g. BOLDRINI 1985, p. 254-263) and are even amplified.

The following sketches exemplify the kind of humor Suassuna develops in his play: the suspicious Euricão desperately examines the servant Pinhão, asking him to show one hand, then another, and then the *third* one (SUASSUNA 2013, p. 104-105). Here Suassuna imitates *ipsis litteris* a scene from *Aulularia* (640-647) (BOLDRINI 1985, p. 256-257; POCIÑA LÓPEZ 1996, p. 297-298). Yet there is an infallibly humorous device at work here. A few scenes earlier, Euricão had inspected the hands and pockets of the maid Caroba and, in a slightly piquant departure from the model, asked her if something is concealed... under her skirt! She reacts strongly... (SUASSUNA 2013, p. 48; without precise parallels in *Aulularia*).

Certain significant jokes of the *Aulularia* are also retained, especially those based on verbal ambiguities involving key words. As with the term *aula* (pot) in the Latin text (*Aulularia* 390-397; KONSTAN 1983, p. 36-37), the word *porca* (sow) is mentioned in the context of a dinner, again alarming the miser (SUASSUNA 2013, p. 85-88). In the Brazilian play, “treasure” often refers to his sweet daughter, though of course understood by her father as a dangerous reference to his money (e.g. SUASSUNA 2013, p. 40). The last double meaning, which is crucial to the development of *Aulularia* (KONSTAN 1983, p. 38-39), is also explored in another passage translated very closely: the moment when Dodó, the young man in love, confesses his responsibility for the violation of Euricão's “patrimony” (SUASSUNA 2013, p. 138; cf. *Aulularia* 731-763; BOLDRINI 1985; TREVIZAM 2013, p. 145).

The examples above are only part of Suassuna's *uortere*, which includes repetition, amplification and dislocation of some of the comic techniques and themes presented in *O Santo e a Porca*. By increasing the ambiguities and misunderstandings already exaggerated in the ancient model, Suassuna's comedy imitates relevant elements of the original plot and comic style. Moreover, while doing so, the play employs important adaptation techniques that, as the comparison between *Bacchides* and *The double-deceiver* (since HANDLEY 1968) illustrates, can be seen as Plautine preferences, or as “Plautinisms” (cf. FRAENKEL 1960, p. 423-424).

3. Differences in the plot

Let us summarize some significant differences in Suassuna's version of the Plautine plot. First, there is an elimination of both the rape (and pregnancy) of Euclio's daughter¹⁰⁹ and of the misogynous

¹⁰⁹ The topos of the rape, so typical of Greek and Roman New Comedy (on which see ROSINVACH 1998), is replaced with another plot and staging device: the very entrance of a man into a virgin's room already carries with it the responsibility for restoring her honour, preferably by marrying her or dying. Such a topos recurs in Suassuna's dramaturgy (e.g. the tragedy *Uma mulher vestida de sol*, written in 1947), emphasizing the religious and morally conservative atmosphere, which makes sense within the logic of his “sertão”.

discourse (e.g. *Aulularia* 120-141; 162-170; 475-535). Moreover, female participation is enhanced (BOLDRINI 1985, p. 253) to the point that the maid turns into a trickster character. Finally, and in a departure from another apparently Plautine tendency,¹¹⁰ there is a gradual humanization of the greedy old man.

The fact that Suassuna strategically alternates Euricão's more caricatural behavior with a presentation of his underlying motivations contributes to the humanization of the character's greed. For instance, we are told about the arduous origin of his wealth and of the previous betrayal of his wife (SUASSUNA 2013, p. 109), which transformed the abandoned husband into a miser who is concerned about nothing but his own safety. Euclio's "paranoid anxiety for his gold" (KONSTAN 1983, p. 35) often leads him to give "stage directions" (*Regieanweisung*, STOCKERT 1983, p. 47, on *Aulularia* 55) to the other characters, abruptly ordering them to enter the stage or to come back, always according to his sudden fears concerning the safety of his gold. The same happens with Euricão in the Brazilian play (see e.g. SUASSUNA 2013, p. 40, 70, 87, 150). Furthermore, also in *O Santo e a Porca*, the greedy character, motivated by this anxiety, successively changes the hiding-place where his treasure is concealed. We can see the parallels with *Aulularia*:

- *Aulularia*: Lar - Fides - grove of Silvanus

- *O Santo e a Porca*: Santo Antonio - basement - Santo Antonio - cemetery

It has been argued that, by such movement, Euclio both progressively exempts himself "from the bonds of community" (KONSTAN 1983, p. 37) and, as the play *Aulularia* unfolds, he loses the initial contact with the audience (MOORE 1998, p. 43-47). However, in *O Santo e a Porca* Euricão's loss of this interaction happens before he loses his sow: the "metatheatrical voice" is stolen by Caroba, the maid who, we may note, is given the first lines in Suassuna's comedy.

3.1. Caroba, between *serua callida* and "amarelinho" or "quengo"

Just like the domestic slave Staphyla of Euclio, the domestic servant Caroba, although exploited and abused by her boss, retains her complicity with his daughter (cf. *Aulularia* 67-78; e.g. SUASSUNA 2013, p. 79). But her role is enhanced, as the public becomes more familiar with her linguistic skills, which are used in quick, *impromptu* deductions and opportune answers that culminate in improvised plans involving simulation, disguise, and the deception of victims and spectators. With her plays-within-the-play, Caroba recalls the Plautine cunning slave, the *seruus callidus*, a female version of which is

¹¹⁰ Again, for this we rely on general inferences drawn from the more direct comparison of *Bacchides* versus *Dis Exapaton* that has been possible since HANDLEY (1968); see e.g. ANDERSON (1993, p. 11-13).

most notable in the Roman comedy *Casina* (cf. PETRONE 1983, p. 11-12; WILLIAMS 1993; ROCHA 2013, p. 76). As classicists, our first thought is that this Brazilian version of *Aulularia* is, therefore, “contaminated”, mixed by Suassuna with other plays written by the Roman playwright.¹¹¹

Surprisingly, instead of Plautine sources, Suassuna suggests another tradition as the origin of his Caroba: the kind of character that in Northeastern popular literature is called “amarelinho” or “quengo” (a regional term for “smart”). As the author himself recalls,¹¹² João Grilo (in *Auto da Compadecida*, 1955), Cancão (in *O Casamento Suspeitoso*, 1957), Benedito (*A Pena e a Lei*, 1960), and our Caroba are characters of such a type that, in other plays, Suassuna adapts from the so-called “String Literature” (“Literatura de Cordel”). These texts, based on the oral literature produced in the region, are published in the form of booklets or pamphlets, which are traditionally displayed hanging from strings (*cordas*) so that they can be sold in fairs or by street vendors (SANTOS 2009, p. 236-41). Moreover, in the pairing of Caroba and the servant Pinhão, her (apparently) naïve boyfriend, Suassuna utilizes a conventional device of popular culture. According to the author himself, the duo is based on a traditional feature of folk spectacles, found, for instance, in the typical characters “Mateus and Bastião” that take part in the Brazilian folk theatrical festivity “Bumba-Meu-Boi” (SANTOS 2009, p. 246-250).

Nevertheless, despite the allusions already mentioned, largely disclosed by the author in his prefaces, Northeastern popular traditions are more strongly represented in other plays in Suassuna’s repertoire. For instance, no less a figure than a popular poet is the protagonist of *The Farce of Good Laziness* (*A Farsa da Boa Preguiça*). In *Penalty and the Law* (*A Pena e a Lei*), the author explicitly instructs the actors to “perform in the first act as if it were a presentation of ‘mamulengos’” (a type of popular puppet performance) (*A Pena e a Lei* 1971, p. 29; SANTOS 2009: 246). At a certain point in the same play, a “puppet”-character, by asking: “Isn’t god the owner of the ‘mamulengo’?” (*A Pena e a Lei*, 1971, p. 143), equates life with a puppet show.

In *O Santo e a Porca* there is neither a precise identification with a specific folk art nor an identification of this kind of play with dramatic illusion. The use of the topos of *theatrum mundi* is notable in many Plautine plays (see DUCKWORTH 1952, p. 133-134; XXXX 2010, p. 108-115 and 2011, p. 66-70), but not so evident in *Aulularia*. Similarly, the play-within-the-play and the presence of Northeastern spectacles are more diffused in Suassuna’s play as a whole, preserving, almost until the end, the boundaries of the world of Euricão.

4. Conclusion: Deceit and illusion in Suassuna

The comedy of the pot provides a dramatic structure — in terms of basic plot and of verbal and

¹¹¹ On the concept of (Plautine and modern) *contaminatio* see Maurice (2013).

¹¹² Cf. Suassuna’s preface to *O casamento suspeito* (1964, p. 86-87).

nonverbal comic devices — that works as a source of inspiration from which Suassuna cleverly develops his own play. In this sense, Plautus' presence contributes positively to the quality of the text and the performance of *O Santo e a Porca*. Through this, the Plautine play inevitably affects even those in the audience who have never heard about *Aulularia* or New Comedy. Yet it is precisely the autonomy of the resulting Northeastern comedy which makes it possible that the Plautine presence (now playing the part of a learned, erudite text) contributes to the legitimization of the folk culture, which Suassuna's work aimed to represent on stage.

Almost until the finale of the last act of *O Santo e a Porca*, any reader of Roman comedy can follow the Plautine traces displayed humorously in Suassuna's comedy. Even though they are hidden beneath the Northeastern costumes and *mores*, and despite the differences to the plot as considered above. It is impressive how the Brazilian playwright, as if playing not only with his model but also in a way similar to how the Roman poet plays with his Greek models, emulates Plautus as imitator (on which see VOGT-SPIRA 1998; GONÇALVES 2009). At the end of the Brazilian comedy, however, we lose sight of the Plautine world.

The prologue of *Aulularia* (25-27), a fragment by the grammarian Nonius (98, 20) and an acrostic argument that precedes the surviving play, lead us to believe that Euclio's gold was, after all, recovered and employed as his daughter's dowry (cf. KONSTAN 1983, p. 40-41 and STOCKERT 1983, p. 6-8). Supplementary verses (after *Aulularia* 832) written in the Renaissance and included in some modern editions of the comedy¹¹³ are in agreement with this interpretation. When compared with this reconstruction of the lost final scenes of *Aulularia*, there is a surprising divergence in the final moments of the *O Santo e a Porca*. When Euricão discovers that his adored money has not survived the country's monetary reforms (SUASSUNA 2013, p. 151), the loss comes as a crack in the rigid boundaries of his own mythical universe, allowing time to enter and corrupt his hopes of a safe future. In the Brazilian play the loss of material goods is not compensated by the richness of human relationships: Euricão does not accept the invitation to take part in the sphere of social relations. Instead, he describes all the happy couples on the stage as "slaves" (SUASSUNA 2013, p. 152) and chooses to devote the rest of his days to Saint Anthony.

Contrary to Lar in the prologue of the Plautine text, and to the talkative deities in other of Suassuna's plays (like the character of the Virgin Mary in *Auto da Compadecida* and of Jesus Christ in *A Pena e a Lei*), Saint Anthony, although very important on the stage (BOLDRINI 1985, p. 263-279), does not utter a word throughout the whole comedy. Therefore, the spectator may wonder whether the old man (maybe suffering a divine punishment?) has gone totally

¹¹³ For example, the translation of *Aulularia* into Portuguese by Aída Costa presents the hypothetical ending reconstructed by Codrus Verceus (1967, p. 125 sq.).

insane, or whether he has received a luminous revelation about the illusion of ephemeral human lives.

Yet in the preface to the published version, Suassuna himself discloses what is, in his opinion, the main subject of *The Saint and the Sow*: deception, not created by a comedic character this time (the Plautine slaves, for example, or the Northeastern “quengos”), but simply by life (SUASSUNA 2013, p. 23). Even if we do not exactly believe in the happy ending proposed by the modern editors, this kind of play with illusion is very different from what happens in all the transmitted works of Plautus. Facing this contrast, instead of a conclusion added *ex machina*, the public may acknowledge in Euricão’s dichotomous (and deeply Christianized) world vision (*Weltanschauung*, POCINA LÓPEZ 1996, p. 295; TREVIZAM 2013, p. 151) an important Suassunism towards which the play has been leading up to.

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At the time when this paper was written and presented, Ariano Suassuna remained one of the most renowned living playwrights in our country. It was with great sadness that we learnt of his death in July 2014. The authors hope that this text will serve as a modest tribute to this amazing Brazilian author, cultural politician, and man.

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