

**FAT BEARDS
LONG CHINS
CARRANCAS' TITS SCRATCHING ON THE FLOOR**

All the words I think about.¹⁾
But I don't speak.
I also don't swallow.

I avoid bad digestion. My grandmother died of stomach cancer. Diagnosis: difficulty of digesting words. So, I accumulate words in my mouth. I take them all in under my tongue. Under my sanguine pelican tongue.

She used to save words under her tongue as well. When she saw words-falling-letters, she would run and eat them in the air, even before they hit the ground. She used to take in every word she saw, whatever she found. She had running letters through her ears. She also picked letters eaten by others and saved them. Pieces by pieces, she organized broken letters, missing words, badly done, badly spoken, all under her running tongue. She never swallowed, she also was afraid of bad digestion. Acid letters in the belly were not her specialty. Ruminating didn't fit her species.

All the words she thought, but didn't speak, she also didn't swallow. Sometimes she chewed a bit on them, sometimes she swallowed parts of letters-whole by mistake. Some other languages she couldn't speak, she ate them too. She didn't care: sounds were sounds, letters were letters. She ate everything. Empty stomach, full tongue.

Deep throat under the tongue. That, she had lots of. The papada skin under the chin widened, grew, expanded, molded itself to each and every eaten word.

Eat it. Eat it all.
Round or broken or squared words always fit in.
The papada swallowed everything that came in.

Her fat beard would hide her totem throat.
During the day eating other people's words,
during the night making totems out of herself.
Thousands of totems all around.
Silence, no word sounds.

1)

For the words specific to the Brazilian Portuguese and/or Brazilian context, see the glossary at the end of this text.

I keep looking, staring at red mouths moving, making words in their tongues. When a word-crumb falls, I run. Mouth open. Lick the wind. It goes straight under my tongue.

I eat other people's words too.

I eat high-pitched
grave
soft
whispered words
I eat them all

I don't mind it. I liked it.
Always thought it was fun having many tongues eating each other all together.

palavras pelicanas baiacu
bóia nado baiacu
papo papa baiacu
saco sapo baiacu do mar
flies in the water pelicanamente

pelicano bird of the sea
bate o bico com som de arma canhão, pelicão
pesca baiacu e vira canhão, pelicão
som canhão do tipo viola caymmi

palavra viola
palavra caxumba
das coisas não ditas
não não escritas
guardadas debaixo da língua

What to save under the tongue?

She had letters dripping from her mouth.

Everyday she looked through the water mirror, turning herself into her own image. She no longer noticed the papa-sapa-pelicana growing. Being a puffer fish had become a routine. She inflated at the slightest blow. So many words from so many licked languages.

I feel lumps under my tongue,
growing lumps,
growing mumps.

So many words became totems.
I weighed, molded, trans-molded.
Every night I made a new one.
Mute, deep, pulsing, pendant.
She would swing on pendulum pins to pass the hours,
playing, swinging, clinging to her own drop of skin.

drop
gota
I gotta skin
under the water

sing
songs
water on words
sounds on words
water sounds on words

water bubbles on words saved under my tongue
sing songs, speak them in water bottles

I drink it
I drink it through and become baiacu

thousands of liters of words under my tongue
words sang by fished mermaids in southern waters

they ran into water when the eater-danger came
they breathed the water in, dying in mermaids
mermaids-big-throats full of water words

spells

bring it out what brought them in

// Glossary

Carranca is a sculpture with an exaggerated physiognomy, mixing features of human faces and animal elements. In order to guard against attacks from monsters and evil spirits the carranca used to be placed on the front part of boats, which navigated on the São Francisco River in Brazil. Today the carranca is seen as an amulet of protection. Similar figures are also found as symbols in Afro-Brazilian religions.

Papada is a Brazilian Portuguese word, which in the context of the text, means ‚jowl‘. In grammar, it can also be the passive form of the verb ‚papar‘, a specific word for ‚to eat‘, which is commonly used referring to babies, children, animals, or for eating soft foods like porridge.

Baiacu is a puffer fish species found in the Brazilian coast.

Papo means ‚crawl‘ or ‚maw‘, but commonly can also mean a chat between communicating beings (humans or non-humans). Papa stands for ‚papada‘ (‚jowl‘) in the context of the text, but, in grammar, is the conjugations of the third person of the verb ‚papar‘, a specific word for ‚to eat‘, which commonly used referring to babies, children, animals, or for eating some soft foods like porridge.

Pelicanamente is an officially nonexistent word in Brazilian Portuguese, which in English would correspond to ‚pelicanlike‘.

Pelicão is an officially nonexistent superlative version of the word ‚pelicano‘ (‚pelican‘), which could be easily used in the context of song lyrics or informal talk. In the context of the text, it is interesting to know that the sound of peli is similar to ‚pele‘, which means ‚skin‘; and cão means ‚dog‘.

Caymmi, Dorival is a Brazilian popular music singer and composer, who was born in Salvador, Bahia in 1914. He is an important and strong figure for Brazilian music and is known for his deep voice and bass-toned guitar. One of the most common thematic in Caymmi’s songs is the life on the shore area. A song reference for the text is *O Vento*

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uGnMmW1nX3I> (09.08.2022)).

Caxumba (mumps) is a viral infection in the saliva producing glands.

papa-sapa-pelicana is a compound of Brazilian Portuguese words, where *papa* stands for ‚papada‘ (‚jowl‘) in the context of the text, but, in grammar, is the conjugations of the third person of the verb ‚papar‘, a specific word for ‚to eat‘, which commonly used referring to babies, children, animals, or for eating some soft foods like porridge. *Sapa* is a commonly spoken feminine version of the word ‚sapo‘, which means ‚frog‘. *Pelicana* is an officially nonexistent feminine version of the word ‚pelicano‘, which means pelican, the bird.

Gota means ‚drop‘. But it is also the name of a specific kind of Arthritis disease.

// About the Author

Ludgi Porto is an artist and intellectual who was born in São Paulo, Brazil and who is currently living and working in Germany. In her work, she stands on the friction between performance and space when looking for more complex and intertwined ways of perceiving agency and relation.

<https://ludmilaporto.com/>

// FKW is supported by the Mariann Steegmann Institute and Cultural Critique / Cultural Analysis in the Arts ZHdK

Sigrid Adorf / Kerstin Brandes / Edith Futscher / Kathrin Heinz / Marietta Kesting /
Julia Noah Munier / Mona Schieren / Rosanna Umbach / Kea Wienand / Anja Zimmermann
// www.fkw-journal.de

// License

This work is licensed under the CC-BY-NC-ND License 4.0. To view a copy of this license, visit:

<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/legalcode>

