

Relational Dialectics, Interspecific Interactions, and Religious Animus in Jorge Amado's *The War of the Saints* – A Postcolonial Critique

Emmanuel Adeniyi

Abstract:

This article leverages on the Manichean imagination underscoring self-other tensions to indicate relational dialectics between colonialist and anti-colonialist elements in Brazil, as portrayed in Jorge Amado's *The War of the Saints*. The piece is not a holistic study of Brazilian prose literature, but a critique offering a palimpsest of past and present in postcolonial literature. It analyses Amado's novel to validate the claim of rancorous relations between the conquered and the conquerors. In this regard, Brazil's colonial experience serves as a correlate of Senegal's, just as India's colonial conditions parallel Cuba's, Myanmar's or Togo's conditions. The choice of Amado's text for the article is manifold. First, it provides a succinct portrayal of human oppression in any postcolonial space. Second, the text reveals the relational dialectics between European Catholicism and Yorùbá (African) religions, as well as their faithful. Third, it helps to contextualise the current (re)positioning of Brazil by Jair Bolsonaro-led administration which has been accused of minority witch-hunting. It is argued that the struggle for power relations between the colonisers and the colonised has thrown the country into a vortex of wars. The wars are an epic battle that similarly resonates in almost all the postcolonial nations of the world. While major-minor dichotomy prevails in India, especially among the Hindu majority against Muslim minority, this tension also reverberates in Iraq/Syria where minority non-Moslems are prevented from sharing their faith openly. The same is noticed in Africa and South America where religious, racial, ethnic, ideological crosscurrents have escalated postcolonial wars.

Keywords: Jair Bolsonaro, Postcolonial Literature, Candomblé and Afro-Brazilian Religions, Aimé Césaire, Frantz Fanon