

EARL PARKER HANSON

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February 7, 1974

Subject: Nomination of Jorge Amado for the  
Nobel Prize for Literature

The Swedish Academy  
Stockholm, Sweden

Gentlemen:

Jorge Amado has won wide, and well-deserved, literary acclaim for the gaiety and charm of his stories with their delightful, earthy, and often bawdy characters. He has also -- at least once in the pages of the Denver Post and undoubtedly on other occasions as well -- been recommended to you for a Nobel Prize for Literature. In adding this recommendation to those which preceded it, I do so because of the serious and important human theme which underlies, and shows through, all of his gaiety, joie de vivre, and apparent insouciance.

In these perilous times, when the brotherhood of man is the only force which can extricate man from "the dreadful dilemma into which he has worked himself by permitting his science to outdistance his wisdom for guiding its use," it behooves all of us to give maximum recognition to a sensitive, versatile, and productive writer who constantly applies his superb artistry to the one central theme of human brotherhood -- in contrast to Hemingway's unvarying theme, dismal and dangerous, of frustration and impotence.

To a greater extent than any other living writer, Amado displays love and deep compassion for humanity as such, its aspirations, foibles, frustrations, and martyrdom, regardless of race, religion, and other divisive classifications. To that compassion, as it always must for true validity, is added an abiding, incisive, sense of humor. The wit with which the Brazilian, in defense of his beloved "people" dissects the pompous pretensions of their ruling "establishment" is actually aimed at the entire modern world with its dangerous habit of equating mere erudition (of one or another kind or degree) with the wisdom on which power should be based. Too many years ago, but with cause which is even more valid today, Archibald MacLeish castigated virtually all of us modern writers and scholars as "The Irresponsibles." The Brazilian novelist is unique in that he can in no way be included in that category.

For and with his beloved State of Bahia, the universalist, Amado does what Halldór Laxness does for and with the rural population of his



beloved Iceland: he holds it up as a mirror for the rest of the world, often in well-deserved rebuke. And the writings of both display the stark, unsentimental honesty which characterizes the ancient Icelandic sagas but is rare today.

The fact that Amado has been published in several dozen languages shows the wide -- and spreading -- range of his influence. By awarding him the Nobel laureateship your committee will itself win ubiquitous acclaim while also striking a blow at the pretensions which threaten today's uneasy societies.

As a worried and bewildered member of humanity I therefore repeat my most urgent plea for a Nobel Prize for Jorge Amado. Such an award will elate millions throughout the world.

With expressions of highest esteem

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Earl P. Hanson". The signature is fluid and elegant, with the first name "Earl" and last name "Hanson" clearly legible.

Earl Parker Hanson