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17º ENPULI - 32º SENAPULLI
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Conferência de Abertura

FRICÇÃO NECESSÁRIA

ANTONIO DIMAS
Universidade de São Paulo / CAPES

Quando o comitê local deste congresso da Associação Brasileira de Professores Universitários de Inglês (ABRAPUI), através da Profa. Lêda Tomitch, convidou-me para fazer parte de seus trabalhos, aceitei o convite de pronto, porque razões fortes e desencontradas me impeliam a isso.

Sem ordenamento necessário, lembro aqui que um dos motivos foi o prazer de voltar a esta Ilha de que gosto tanto e onde venho formando um grupo de amigos queridos, dentro e fora do campus de Trindade, ao longo de anos. Depois, tratava-se de ocasião propícia para, como representante de Letras e Lingüística junto à CAPES, ouvir de perto e com mais cuidado as preocupações profissionais de um segmento específico do setor que me atribuiu a representação, hoje em mandato prorrogado até o final de 2004. E, como terceiro motivo, e que até contém um ligeiro traço emocional, é a oportunidade de voltar às origens profissionais, pois que minha anglofilia, fartamente cultivada e treinada no campus de Assis, nos idos de 1960, foi provisoriamente abandonada, quando a opção pela Literatura Brasileira mostrou-se mais forte e mais imperativa, devido ao grosso caldo de cultura política que lá se vivia, naquele momento e do qual muito me beneficiei em termos de formação integral.

Estar com vocês, neste dia, tem certo sabor de volta às raízes, porque me obriga a uma reflexão retrospectiva sobre os caminhos possíveis que os colegas de Inglês têm percorrido nos últimos anos, tarefa que se torna mais factível se se leva em conta a perspectiva abrangente que o mirante de Brasília permite, favorece e estimula.

Comecemos por nos lembrar de que minha geração ainda foi vista e compreendida como depositária passiva de uma cultura estrangeira, cujas virtudes históricas e intelectuais precisavam ser enaltecidas com afinco, como forma subsidiária de vinculação cultural e, eventualmente, política. Os que nasceram durante ou pouco antes da Segunda Grande Guerra não ignoram a forte mudança de nossos paradigmas culturais depois da vitória aliada. Por força do ingresso tardio dos norte-

americanos no conflito, fomos arrancados da francofilia, que atravessava o país de ponta a ponta, e arremessados em um estágio de contemplação embevecida na qual a figura heróica de um Churchill, por exemplo, ganhava proporções descomunais na imaginação juvenil e recolhida de quem se encantava com o tom pomposo de trechos minúsculos de seus discursos, expressamente escolhidos para glorificar a honra de uma Grã-Bretanha ferida muitos anos antes. Alguns livros didáticos destinados a essa geração nascida no fim dos '30 e começo dos '40 não dissimulavam o entusiasmo aberto pelas proezas dos Aliados recentes. Como se esquecer do andamento épico de um discurso que fazia do uso reiterado e insistente de formas verbais enfáticas seu ponto de apoio retórico? Como não se lembrar daquele trechinho perdido no livro de um colegial interiorano, no qual o rotundo primeiro-ministro de Jorge 6º rugia: "... *we shall not flag or fail. We shall go on to the end, we shall fight in France, we shall fight on the seas and oceans, we shall fight with growing confidence and growing strength in the air, we shall defend our Island, whatever the cost may be, we shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing grounds, we shall fight in the fields and in the streets, we shall fight in the hills; we shall never surrender...*"[1]

À informação que esses retalhos literários trouxeram junte-se a do cinema, que muito abundou em valentões como John Wayne, em tipos englostorados como Clark Gable, em magriços voláteis como Fred Astaire ou em serelepes pluviosos como Gene Kelly, todos eles dispostos a estraçalhar corações de figuras banhadas de suposta inocência com o calibre de Leslie Caron, Doris Day ou Cid Charisse. A galeria das fatais como Rita Hayworth, Lana Turner, Ava Gardner e Ronda Fleming não conta, porque essas eram reserva exclusiva de nossos pais. Muito menos as diabólicas como Bette Davis ou Joan Crawford, porque essas eram do Mal. Nem contam também o timbre perfeito e a dicção impecável de alguns cantores que, involuntariamente, nos ensinavam a pronúncia adequada de um idioma longínquo. Não conta, porque as aulas sonoras de um Nat King Cole, de uma Julie London, de um Frank Sinatra ou de uma Ella Fitzgerald eram, literalmente, impagáveis e muito nos calçaram nas primeiras paixões, geralmente desastrosas.

Essa cultura de massa que, lentamente, começava a se imiscuir, a se formar e a se consolidar em território brasileiro produzia uma reviravolta em nossos hábitos culturais e ameaçava a hegemonia francesa naquilo que ela tinha de mais precioso e de mais mítico: sua literatura. O lugar de seus escritores célebres estava ameaçado pelo consumo de bens mais imediatos e menos nobres, como bem alertava um jornalista que viera ao Rio de Janeiro, mal terminada a guerra, em 1946. Para esse jornalista, autor de uma série de crônicas para o *Le Monde*, não era difícil perceber a atração que os Estados Unidos exerciam sobre a população brasileira daquele pós-guerra. Segundo Émile Henriot, que também era membro da Academia Francesa, "*se o coração e o espírito [brasileiros] ainda permanecem voltados para a França, com uma fidelidade e um ardor de que falaremos mais adiante, o cotidiano e a economia do Brasil estão inteiramente orientados em direção aos Estados Unidos, que já cobrem este país com seus filmes, seus automóveis, seus aviões, sem mencionar seus cigarros, seus chicletes e seus drops...*"[2]

O que marcava essa absorção cultural, no entanto, era o embasbacamento e a passividade, viesse ela da francofilia ou da anglofilia. No cerne do ensino da língua

estrangeira, fosse ela qual fosse, aglomeravam-se elementos de um processo de colonização cultural de que ainda não nos livramos inteiramente, de um lado, mas que, de outro lado, vem passando, nas últimas décadas, por um processo de deglutição mais adequado às nossas mais altas necessidades intelectuais e acadêmicas.

Um dia, quando for possível uma historicização mais detalhada dessa virada de perspectiva, que vem nos empurrando para fora da absorção passiva e nos encaminhando rumo à absorção mais ativa, talvez se possa localizar nos anos '60, aquela mesma década que tanto impulsionou e favoreceu a liberalização dos costumes, uma mudança lenta e firme dos parâmetros. Talvez esteja no fim dos anos '60 e no começo dos '70 a tomada de consciência de que já era tempo de nos colocarmos de modo mais ativo perante a informação estrangeira, ainda que nessa mesma década de '70 tivesse ocorrido o fastígio do estruturalismo francês. Talvez esteja nessa passagem de década a mudança de perspectiva, que alia a recepção crítica à divulgação saudável e sistemática.

Permitam-me, neste tempo tão breve, o exemplo concreto desta ampliação do comportamento crítico através de dois nomes que me são muito caros, ainda que ocupem posição diferenciada em nossa galeria de referências. Quero lembrar, de forma sumária, das figuras de Eugênio Gomes e de Cassiano Nunes. Da figura do baiano Eugênio Gomes, que se tornou um dos mais conhecidos críticos da literatura inglesa neste país e da figura do paulista Cassiano Nunes, que sempre esteve criticamente envolvido com a literatura que se produzia nos Estados Unidos.

Nascido no interior da Bahia, em 1897, Eugênio Gomes transferiu-se para Salvador em 1926, de onde sai, definitivamente, para o Rio de Janeiro, em 1940. Na bagagem dessa mudança, Eugênio Gomes já trazia dois livros que haveriam de lhe favorecer a entrada no círculo restrito da intelectualidade carioca: *D. H. Lawrence e outros ensaios*, de 1937, e *Influências inglesas em Machado de Assis*, de 1939.

Há poucos anos, Ívia Alves debruçou-se sobre EG e dedicou-lhe tese extensa, na qual avalia a trajetória profissional de seu conterrâneo e na qual dá os anos '60 como decisivos para uma espécie de *turning point* desse crítico, que se notabilizou em nossa sociedade literária como o autor de *Shakespeare no Brasil* (1961).

Segundo nossa colega da UFBA, o *discurso incorporado do colonizado sem assento no concerto das nações sobreviveu até seu contacto de perto com a Inglaterra, em 1960, quando, inesperadamente, o crítico inverte o olhar. Eugênio Gomes resolve então realizar o caminho inverso e constata que a Inglaterra, tão divulgada por ele, não correspondia com a mesma reciprocidade ao olhar de sua terra.*[3]

Depois dessa descoberta espantada e até certo ponto ingênua, aos olhos de hoje, Eugênio Gomes relativiza sua fidelidade literária às fontes inglesas. Essa mudança de perspectiva fica clara e concreta na alteração tópica do título de um de seus livros famosos: se em 1939, EG havia publicado *Influências inglesas em Machado de Assis*, em 1976 o livro ganha reedição, mas com inversão no título, que passa a ser *Machado de Assis – influências inglesas*.

Em obra preciosa que rastreia a institucionalização da Literatura Comparada na universidade brasileira, Sandra Nitrini recupera a respeitável opinião de Otto Maria Carpeaux sobre Eugênio Gomes. Segundo o crítico austríaco, Eugênio Gomes estaria nas origens mesmas da nossa crítica comparada e foi graças a seu trabalho,

aliado a outros de José Veríssimo, Augusto Meyer, Brito Broca, Sérgio Milliet, Tristão de Ataíde e Álvaro Lins, que se pôde expandir a compreensão da literatura brasileira vista a partir de contribuições externas, sem subalternização necessária.[4]

Esta recusa à *subalternização* é relevante, porque nos força a distinguir entre a absorção passiva e a absorção crítica, escoimada esta de colonialismo, insidioso ou grosseiro.

Um dos primeiros contactos reveladores neste sentido deu-se há anos atrás, quando li, ainda aluno de graduação, um ensaio provocante de um ex-professor de Literatura Norte-Americana, hoje morando na capital deste país, onde lecionou durante anos na Universidade de Brasília.

Com a certeza da permissão de vocês, abro aqui um parágrafo curto em homenagem a Cassiano Nunes, aproveitando-me deste espaço público e do fórum mais que adequado.

Nascido em Santos, no início dos anos '20, Cassiano Nunes trabalhou durante anos como assessor da Editora Saraiva até o dia em que assumiu a disciplina de Literatura Norte-Americana em Assis, no interior de São Paulo. Nessa cidade, em 1958, Antonio Soares Amora criara uma faculdade de letras exemplar, com dedicação integral e pioneira de professores como Vítor Ramos, Joseph van den Besselaar, Antonio Lázaro de Almeida Prado e Antonio Candido, entre outros.

Aquela voz possante e abrangente de Cassiano Nunes, voz quase metálica, ecoava pelos corredores da faculdade, carregando um entusiasmo nunca desmentido e uma crença na literatura como poder de humanização, que jamais conheceu a mínima vacilação. Foi graças a Cassiano Nunes, no comecinho dos anos '60, que pude conhecer *Um estudo comparativo* entre Mark Twain e Monteiro Lobato, cuja separata guardo até hoje com dedicatória e com carinho.[5]

No cotejo entre ambos os escritores, que o *establishment* crítico receia muito em colocar na linha de frente, Cassiano Nunes assinala paralelismos simétricos ou inversos, aproximações e distanciamentos, tanto no plano rigorosamente literário, quanto pessoal. Entram em causa nesse artigo sem preconceito metodológico, itens que compõem a carreira profissional desses dois escritores que enfrentaram o universo caipira com curiosidade antropológica, de forte adesão telúrica. Em seus livros e em suas vidas particulares, para ficarmos apenas nas convergências, vamos encontrar forte atração pela *natureza brusca* (p. 78), a presença central do rio Paraíba e Mississipi como elemento aglutinador da vida social (p. 81), a *marca da infância [...] fortemente visível* (p. 78), uma queda inegável para o pragmatismo (p. 110), uma vida pessoal cheia de sobe-e-desce financeiro (p. 89), uma tentação permanente pela vida empresarial (p. 87).[6]

São escritores, segundo Cassiano Nunes, que se situam de forma estranha em suas literaturas, *porque anunciaram os tempos modernos, prepararam o caminho para certas vitórias da modernidade, sem entretanto nada terem de tipicamente modernista [...]. // Twain e Lobato mostram-se modernos no seu anseio de autenticidade; na sua repugnância pelo bovarismo e sentimentalidade; na sua valorização da terra bárbara e seus rudes filhos; na criação de uma linguagem escrita* **viva**, *baseada na linguagem oral, na fala do quotidiano. Porém tudo isto fizeram empiricamente. Eram criaturas de ação, e que se guiavam principalmente pelo senso comum, sentimentos e intuição. A meditação dos problemas artísticos e o aprendizado da técnica repugnavam a esses escritores espon-tâneos e praticistas, que viam geralmente o artesanato artístico como refinamento esnobista.* (p. 104).

Esse caráter pragmático e cada vez mais distante do diletantismo é o que venho testemunhando nos últimos anos dentro de nossa profissão, o que não quer dizer, em absoluto, que esteja abolido ou deva ser abolido o espaço para o devaneio criador ou para a distensão especulativa sem limites rígidos, sobretudo os de tempo, tão reivindicados, hoje em dia, nas agências de fomento científico, por áreas que não as de Humanidades. Porque é preciso distinguir, antes de mais nada, entre o limite elástico para a reflexão e as contingências temporais que presidem à institucionalização acadêmica, sob pena de perdermos o que já se conquistou em termos de suporte e de fomento. Parodiando Drummond, sejamos docemente claros: a aventura do espírito, se a quisermos fecunda e contínua, não pode menosprezar o custo social da empreitada, a menos que a queiramos inteiramente gratuita e desvinculada da construção cultural, em país periférico e notoriamente carente de recursos.

Deve ser por causa desse pragmatismo que - presencio isso desde o mirante do Planalto - EUA e Inglaterra já não têm sido objeto único de desejo para o aperfeiçoamento acadêmico, embora ainda sejam os favoritos, sobretudo quando se cogita de Lingüística *hard*, Pragmática, práticas identitárias, lingüística aplicada, etc. Ao lado desses dois países de atração histórica, vejo hoje emergir, pouco a pouco, o continente australiano como alternativa sedutora, capaz de despertar o interesse de colegas que se dedicam à variante mais funcional da língua ou à avaliação da emergência de uma literatura em terra mais recente que a do Novo Mundo.

Deve ser por causa desse pragmatismo também que, em meados de '70, a associação que congrega a todos vocês resolveu que já era hora de escapar de tutelas alheias e se firmar como entidade independente, capaz de ditar seus próprios rumos institucionais e políticos. E o gesto que buscava essa auto-determinação não deve ter sido simples, nem indolor, mas resultou, segundo um documento que Carlos Daghlian me cedeu, em profissionalização crescente, porque *os próprios sócios [da ABRAPUI] passaram a escolher, mediante votação, o local e o tema dos seminários, bem como os membros da comissão nacional ou científica, responsável pelo aspecto acadêmico do evento.* ("Associações de Professores de Inglês", p. 3).

Quase trinta anos depois desse gesto de independência conseqüente, o que se vê é a ampla abertura de um leque temático que não deixa de lado interesses diversos, tais como *o teatro inglês moderno* (1978), *a literatura anglo-irlandesa com ênfase em Joyce* (1982), as *tendências da crítica contemporânea* (1986), a *teoria e a prática da literatura comparada* (1990), as *literaturas de língua inglesa hoje* (1995), o *ensaísmo e a biografia* (1998). No terreno do ensino e da aprendizagem sucedem-se inúmeras reuniões desde 1979, mas que começam a abrir espaço, aos poucos, para preocupações legítimas tais como *interdisciplinaridade e trocas de experiências inter-universitárias* (1995), *implicações sociais do ensino de inglês como língua estrangeira* (1997) ou o ensino e a aprendizagem preocupados com as práticas identitárias (1999).

Em princípio, o balanço tem sido a nosso favor, porque não ignoramos a transmissão cultural proveniente de países estrangeiros, nem descuidamos da nossa

perspectiva, hoje beneficiada pelo advento recente dos *Cultural Studies*, em fase de acomodação necessária aos parâmetros sociais, culturais e acadêmicos brasileiros. Sem esse ajustamento delicado das teorias às nossas necessidades acadêmicas, intelectuais e culturais deve-se temer pela nossa autonomia política e pela consolidação de nossa universidade.

Num de seus ensaios culturalistas, Gilberto Freyre detém-se sobre os *aspectos da influência britânica sobre a vida, a paisagem e a cultura no Brasil.* Essa obra pioneira de Gilberto Freyre, publicada em 1948 sob o título de *Ingleses no Brasil*,[7] mergulha fundo no vai-e-vem miúdo do cotidiano, extraído de jornais e de documentos oficiais, ora apontando para os benefícios dos contactos entre brasileiros e ingleses, ora indicando o lado tortuoso desse convívio. Desse modo, o livro pode tanto nos colocar na situação de importadores submissos de bens de consumo que reluzissem sobre nossas mesas de jacarandá (p. 118), como alertar para a conivência entre autoridades brasileiras e ingleses no contrabando de moedas de cobre. (p. 278 e segs.).

Entre o legal e o ilegal, o regular e o irregular, passeia esse texto de GF em sua forte inclinação mais informativa que analítica, à espera de analista agudo. Quando ele surgir, no entanto, uma advertência inicial do próprio Gilberto Freyre não pode ser posta de lado, sob pena de perdermos a perspectiva dialética dos grandes confrontos culturais.

Alerta ele, logo no começo de *Ingleses no Brasil*: *Meu ponto de vista na interpretação da história do homem brasileiro continua o de quem enxerga principalmente nessa formação e nesse homem, ao lado de um processo biológico – o da miscigenação -, mas quase independente dele, a ação, a expansão, o desenvolvimento de um processo social: o da interpenetração de culturas. Processo que tem agido menos no sentido da desintegração ou degradação de qualquer das culturas presentes na nossa formação que no da integração de todos numa sociedade e numa cultura nova e híbrida, múltipla e rica, ainda que confusa, em suas heranças, em suas técnicas de desenvolvimento, em seus valores e estilos de vida moral e intelectual, estética e material.* (p. 4)

Se não perdemos de vista a forçosa interpenetração, viciosa e/ou saudável, da fricção cultural, imagino que já tenhamos ganho o nosso dia.

Notas

1 Apud Isabel Junqueira Schmidt – *English for college*. São Paulo: Companhia Editora Nacional, 1956. pp. 63-65.

2 Émile Henriot – *Lettres du Brésil – Rio-de-Janeiro*. ***Le Monde***, 31 juillet 1946.

3 Eugênio Gomes – *Leituras inglesas. Visões comparatistas*. Org., apres. e sel. dos textos de Ívia Alves. Belo Horizonte: UFMG; Salvador: EDUFBA, 2000. p. 28.

4 Em *Literatura comparada. História, Teoria e Crítica* (São Paulo: EDUSP, 1997), Sandra Nitrini afirma: *José Veríssimo, Augusto Meyer, Brito Broca, Sérgio Milliet, Tristão de Ataíde, Álvaro Lins em diversos momentos de suas obras críticas, Otto Maria Carpeaux em* História da Literatura Ocidental *e em vários ensaios dispersos, Eugênio Gomes, "o primeiro comparatista propriamente dito na crítica brasileira ... sem nenhum liame universitário nem etiqueta profissional" em vários trabalhos na imprensa e em* Machado de Assis - Influências Inglesas *(1939) incorporado a* Espelho contra Espelho *(1949), entre outros, contribuíram de modo especial para a formação de uma tradição crítica direcionada pelo comparatismo. Nesse sentido, mereceriam um capítulo especial numa história da crítica brasileira que levasse em consideração a contribuição de suas visadas comparatistas para a compreensão da literatura brasileira.* (p. 191).

5 Cassiano Nunes – "Mark Twain e Monteiro Lobato: um estudo comparativo". *Revista de Letras*, vol. 1. Faculdade de Filosofia, Ciências e Letras de Assis, 1960. pp. 72-113. Mais tarde, este estudo foi republicado em *Norte-americanos*. São Paulo: Conselho Estadual de Cultura - Comissão de Literatura, 1970. pp. 73-121.

6 As páginas mencionadas referem-se à versão da *Revista de Letras*.

7 Gilberto Freyre – *Ingleses no Brasil*. 2ª ed. Rio de Janeiro, J. Olympio, 1977. p. 4.

THE KEYNOTE SPEECH*
– 33 YEARS OF ABRAPUI: THE JOURNEY THUS FAR AND THE ROAD AHEAD

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ABSTRACT: 33 years of sheer existence is no mean achievement for any academic association. This year, as the ABRAPUI celebrates its 33rd anniversary, I suggest that we pause a little and undertake some stock-taking, by which I mean critically examining our track record so far with due emphasis on our achievements, as well as—why not—possible pitfalls along the way. Such a retrospective glance is particularly opportune this year in view of the fact that we are for the first time in all these years holding a single event, bringing together our colleagues in the language and literature sectors of our association. It strikes me that the present joint session of the ENPULI and the SENAPULLI is an important milestone whose implications ought to be properly examined and appreciated. To begin with, let us remind ourselves that the historic decision, ratified by separate general assemblies, to hold a joint conference was taken more for organizational and logistic reasons than for reasons one would appropriately characterize as academic. But I want to insist that the idea of bringing together under a single roof scholars from the two wings of our association does reflect what is happening in English studies all over the world. Neither language nor literature is being approached in the same way it was when our association was founded. Things have changed a lot since then and there seems to be emerging a consensus concerning the need to break some of our self-imposed barriers. We are, or *were* at least until fairly recently, at a crossroads, but have already made up our minds as to which way we want to proceed and charted our road map accordingly. Simply put, I am optimistic about what awaits us around the corner. The road ahead is, I believe, a lot more promising and indeed exciting, although, no doubt, bumpy and likely to be full of surprises, some pleasant and some ugly (but that's part of the deal, isn't it—imagine how drab and monotonous the whole thing would be, were it not for these minor irritants!).

KEY WORDS: ABRAPUI, ENPULI, SENAPULLI, language teaching, literature, World English

Delivering the keynote address at this important encounter of Brazilian University Teachers of English Language and Literature is for me a matter of great honour indeed. Its supreme significance is highlighted by the fact that, for the first time in the 33 year-long history of our association, we are holding a single event, bringing together under the same roof the 17th meeting of the ENPULI and the 32nd meeting of the SENAPULLI. I not only welcome the decision taken by the general assemblies of the two wings of our association but am also thrilled to have been chosen to perform the task of addressing the first ever joint session. I must nevertheless confess to being a bit apprehensive about what I have been asked to do. For I find the task both daunting and rewarding. Daunting, because there still are, I believe, some pockets of resistance amongst our ranks concerning the advisability of holding a joint conference of specialists on language and literature. Not all of us are perhaps convinced that the two wings of our association have anything more in common than the presence of the English language. I hope to address this issue at some length in the hope of laying to rest at least some of these fears.

But as I said I also find the task entrusted to me profoundly rewarding. Rewarding, I would say, in a personal sense. My own trajectory in the world of academia has seen, as many of you who have long known me know for sure, somewhat chequered, full of ups and downs, with surprising twists and turns along the way. Language and literature have long fascinated me in equal measure and they continue to do so. But it is not always easy to reconcile the two passions. And, as anyone who has taken the trouble to review the developments during the past half-century or so in the area of English teaching will readily recognise, language (or literacy, as it is more commonly called in some countries, especially the United States) and literature have been strange bedfellows all these years. Those who were interested in language believed they were looking for facts, hard facts; literature, they felt, had to do largely with fiction. To mix language and literature was therefore, in the eyes of many, to mix fact and fiction. Having somehow been involved on both sides of the Great Divide and being still interested in both, I am delighted at the very idea that I need no longer be troubled by fear of being accused of academic dilettantism—which is nothing but a gentle euphemism for the nagging suspicion that occasionally troubles a number of us, namely, that we may be transforming ourselves into inveterate jacks of all trades.

Our globalised world has probably already given the lie to Kipling's wild guess about the possibility of the East and the West ever finding a common ground, but despite all the rapid changes that have taken place in the wake of reader-response criticism, critical pedagogy, deconstruction, cultural studies, poststructuralsim, postmodernism, post colonialism and all the rest of it, that slogan stills seems to hold good in many quarters whenever language and literature are pitted against each other. But in theory at least we have shown that the twain can be made to meet. Facts are sometimes stranger than fiction. And fiction often assumes an air of factuality and, in our age of virtual reality, it is frequently difficult to tell where the one ends and the other begins. Many scholars therefore are no longer as convinced as they were before about the advisability of separating language and literature into such water-tight compartments. All the same, the nagging suspicion I just referred to still lingers. The logic that currently informs our professional lives and prescribes norms

of productivity and excellence is such that we are constantly being exhorted to specialize more and more. Having a finger in too many pies is not the kind of thing that can get you a lot of mileage with funding agencies and members of the board who sit in judgment over your case for tenure or promotion. Along with a number of my friends and colleagues—whose presence in this auditorium I notice with great affection and enthusiasm and who, I am sure, are with me on this — I welcome the decision to turn over a new leaf.

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The themes chosen by both SENAPULLI and ENPULLI this year for their respective conferences — visions and revisions in respect of the literatures (*n.b.*: in the plural) of the English speaking peoples in the case of the former, and the intercultural dimension of the teaching of the English language (perhaps the need for the plural is even more urgent here) — underscore clear awareness on the part of all of us of rapid developments in these fields. It is perhaps too early to predict where all this will eventually take us. But one thing is by all means certain: the present moment is a far cry from what things were like when our association was founded in 1970. The decision taken at that time to hold the two conferences separately reflected what was the prevailing mainstream view — namely, that language and literature were completely different domains. Work done in either area had little to do with what went on in the other.

I remember presenting a paper in the year 1983 at the 5th ENPULI in São Paulo, urging for a certain mutual understanding between the two concerns. But, true to the dominant view then, my point of view hinged on the crucial assumption that research in these areas only stood to gain by a neat and well-demarcated division of labour. Perhaps more to the point, I was primarily concerned in that paper to express some unease over a certain view of literature that was being discussed in Applied Linguistics circles.

The view in question was at that time being championed by, among others, Prof. Henry Widdowson, one of the founding editors of the prestigious *Journal of Applied Linguistics* and a voice of considerable clout in academia. In a text which was at that time available only as an unpublished mimeo of limited circulation, Widdowson (by the way, my former teacher at the University of Edinburgh, Scotland, way back in the early 1970s) was making an apology for poetry (any similarity to Sir Philip Sidney's famous essay with the same title is more than coincidental) on the grounds that "Poetry is useful language because it represents language in use; textual display is not because it doesn't."

The reason why this and other similar remarks by linguists in the 1970s and 1980s are worth going back to is that they display a certain point of view typical of a field of enquiry in great demand jockeying for position in the world of academia. In the 1970s through mid-1980s, in the U.S. and Great Britain (as well as many other academic centres across the world), linguistics was the cynosure of all eyes, attracting every year droves of overseas students, filling their coffers with much needed cash. There was, in other words, some sort of euphoria around what linguistics

could do for the betterment of the human condition. From finally getting to grips with the essence of human nature to resolving long-standing disputes amongst nations and peoples (the Cold War, for instance) through a careful and patient parsing of their grammar, linguistics was being touted as a miracle solution. Indeed, the close link between language and war, or rather the importance of language in war, was recently underscored by James Woolsey, a former director of the C.I.A. and a senior advisor to the U.S. President, when he referred to the war in Iraq currently under way as the beginning of World War IV — the implication being that, unnoticed by most of us, World War III did take place, albeit mostly as a "war of words".

It was in this climate of widespread euphoria that the idea of literature being just language in use gained a fresh lease of life. Literature was interesting because it was language in use at its spontaneous best. In Widdowson's words, literature "is only one of the strange and mysterious ways in which human beings manage to communicate with each other" (Widdowson 1975; 124). To put matters simply: those literary types, they are a strange lot, aren't they? What makes them different from Joe Public is their penchant for calling a spade a trowel, rake, hoe or maybe even a lawnmower — anything, well, but a spade. In other words, literature too was, in the final analysis, fact-stating; only that simple, straightforward facts are stated in incredibly convoluted ways. But once you have seen through their play of words, you know that what they really have to say is just as humdrum and run-of-the-mill as what anybody else might wish to say. Except for the additional point that they rejoice in saying things in roundabout ways!!

> Scintillate, scintillate, diminutive asteroid
>
> How I speculate as to your identity!

is just another way of saying the same thing (well, you guessed it) — only somewhat cleverer and lexically more demanding. And if your metier happens to be ELT, you instinctively know that the revised version of the old kids' rhyme ("Twinkle, twinkle little star/ How I wonder what you are") is for your advanced learners. So what's all this fuss about poetry being something so mysterious, so enigmatic? All we need is some elementary linguistics and we know how to bust the literary bubble.

Up until the mid 1980s (with all the risks involved in pinning precise dates onto constantly evolving intellectual tendencies), the linguists called all the shots and the study of literature was unceremoniously pushed aside to the margins. As Ihwe (1975: 132) put it:

> One can say, somewhat exaggeratedly, that the theory of literature is to be viewed more or less as an appendage of linguistics that preserves a certain independence solely because of a special refinement of the techniques of description.

Widdowson's and Ihwe's exhortation to treat literature as just plain language is anticipated by Hill for whom — to quote from a scholar picked up randomly — "[...] poems are a sub-class of utterances, included within the larger class of all instances of language use." (Hill 1955: 968) "In linguistics," he added, "it has been

found fruitful to work from observable, external, and formal characteristics, to the admittedly more important but certainly vaguer resultant qualities of meaning. In literary analysis, likewise, might it not be well to work from formal and observable characteristics toward meanings?" (*ibid.*, p. 969)

It was, as I said earlier, jockeying for position in academia, pure and simple. Inebriated by their huge success and capacity to enrol more and more graduate students to their ever-swelling ranks, the linguists were telling their literarily inclined colleagues and erstwhile contenders for a pride of place in the podium that, from now on, it was they who were going to dictate the rules of the game. None of this hullabaloo about literature being an exclusive domain for the chosen few, with the right kind of sensibility and sensuous disposition and all the rest of it.

All this seemed a done deal in the 1970s and 1980s. Indeed so well-entrenched was the mainstream view that, in his preface to his *Pragmatics of Language and Literature*, Teun van Dijk (1976) could proclaim with an air of complacence and self-confidence that many will today find somewhat disconcerting: "Literary scholarship or poetics has at last become a serious discipline because of the application of linguistic models to the description of literary texts." The message was clear to all and sundry: the study of literature has a fresh lease of life from now on, thanks to linguistics. From now on too, the study of literature was to be considered, under the new orthodoxy, a branch of linguistics. There was in other words, nothing more exciting to literature than the linguistics of it. And linguistics, it was tacitly assumed, had a special claim to literature (or to "literary discourse" as many preferred to call it) for the simple reason that it was language all right, albeit language specifically moulded to suit certain aesthetic interests. In Mary Louise Pratt's words:

> Theoretically, there is no reason to expect that the body of utterances we call "literature" should be systematically distinguishable from other utterances on the basis of intrinsic grammatical or textual properties. Nevertheless, the belief that such a distinction could be made and could give rise to an interesting and adequate definition of literature underlies nearly all of the language-based intrinsic or formalist criticism of this century, from Russian formalism through Prague School Poetics and Anglo-American structuralism to present-day French literary semiotics. The origin of the poetic/non-poetic language opposition in its modern form goes back at least to Romanticism and probably to the rise of scientific language in the 17th century. (Pratt, 1977: xi)

Pratt belonged to the new generation of linguistically oriented literary scholars who were expressing increasing dissatisfaction with the formalist attempts to explain the essential literariness of literature. The way out of the near stalemate was, in their view, the newly burgeoning Theory of Speech Acts, especially in the form in which it had been re-interpreted and popularised by John Searle (1969). The gist of the new trend could be captured in the following aphorism: if literature is not a matter of form, it must be a matter of function, i.e., not *what* language is used, but *how* it is used. Thus Richard Ohmann took the discussion a step further from Pratt when he said:

> Our readiness to discover and dwell on the implicit meaning in literary works — and to judge them important — is a consequence of our knowing them to *be* literary works, rather than that which tells us they are such. (Ohmann 1971: 6)

For Ohmann then, literature was all a matter of pretence and a literary work consisted of 'quasi-speech acts'. In his own words,

> The writer *pretends* to report discourse and the reader accepts the pretence. Specifically the reader constructs (imagines) a speaker and a set of circumstances to accompany the quasi-speech act. (Ohmann 1971: 14)

In his influential *Act of Reading*, Wolfgang Iser (1978), a voice of considerable critical clout, chimed in with the remark:

> Fictional texts constitute their own objects and do not copy something already in existence [....] everyday pragmatic language [...] presupposes reference to a given object. (Iser 1978: 24)

In her turn, Barbara Herrnstein-Smith wrote:

> A poem does not reflect, but creates the context in which its meanings are located. (Herrnstein-Smith 1978: 35)

Meanwhile, Ohmann's position had already been endorsed by Searle himself some three years later (Searle 1974-5), although the latter did take pains to distinguish literature itself from fiction, adding that the new theoretical apparatus worked for fiction rather than literature which he thought was a "family-resemblance notion" (Searle 1974-5: 319), à la Wittgenstein (see Rajagopalan 2000b).

Thanks to the growing disenchantment with the linguistically oriented formalist approaches to literature, the theory of speech acts became the golden key to unravelling the innermost mysteries of literature. And, as the self-appointed champion of the theory, Searle was all too eager to lend a helping shoulder to the wheel already set in motion (Rajagopalan 2000a). So the new trend caught on. Hot on the heels of his complacent remark about the capacity of linguistics to handle literature (cited earlier), van Dijk thought it prudent to enter the following caveat: "[possible] inadequacies of the linguistic description can be remedied, thanks to pragmatics."

It must be reasonably clear from the discussion thus far that the dominant tendency in the 1950s through as recently as the late 1980s was to treat literature as just discourse, albeit somewhat 'weird' and 'unnatural' in that it preferred circumlocution to plain speaking (One can of course invoke some of Grice's maxims to explain the odd behaviour). After all, the basic motivation had already been laid bare by Saussure's famous remark:

> By literary language, I mean not only the language of literature but also, in a more general sense, any kind of cultivated language, official or otherwise that serves the whole community (Saussure 1915: 267, cited in Pratt 1977: xi))

Care must be taken, though, not to overlook the fact that there were dissident voices crying out every now and then. For example, Florence Howe wrote:

> The gulf between the teacher of literacy and the professor of literature measures the ill-health of [our] profession (Howe 1974: 436)

And she went on to note that

> [...] literacy must necessarily be taught through literature rather than through the study of history or other "disciplines" (ibid. p. 438)

A few years later, Walter Ong warned:

> Among the humanities, the study of modern languages and literatures stands out as particularly plagued by problems of self-definition (Ong 1979: 386)

On his part, Perkins was pleading for a complete overhaul of the scholarly approach to literature when he claimed:

> For the arts and literature, imagination is basic; logic and facts serve as checks but not as guidelines. Literary critics cannot rely entirely on logical deduction or empirical induction to analyze what is *essentially* a product of the imagination; without some imaginative empathy they will never be able to penetrate the dense linguistic texture of a literary work. (emphasis added) (Perkins 1980: 316)

In other words, it was all a mater of deciding which of the two should be awarded primacy — language or literature? Devotees of language argued that without language to begin with most of what we call literature wouldn't be possible either. Apologists for literature were equally adamant in their plea that literature is just what language in its mundane, lackadaisical plainness cannot aspire to be. It was, once again, facts versus fiction. The idea of virtual reality had not yet captured popular imagination.

To recapitulate the point developed thus far, then. The ABRAPUI was founded at a time when the prevailing intellectual climate in the so-called humanities was marked by a stand-off between those who saw literature as art and as such, as being outside the scope of scientific approaches such as the one afforded by linguistics and those who simply wanted to subsume literature as a sub-field (perhaps a none-too-exciting one at that) of scientific linguistics. Writing in 1987, Allan Bloom could still exclaim:

[....] within social science [...] a kind of continuous guerrilla war goes on between those who are primarily devotees of science and those who are primarily attached to their particular subject matter.

In my own academic trajectory, I have had the opportunity of watching from a close distance both ends of this academic tug of war. I can, for instance, still recall with great clarity an episode from my undergraduate days that made me wonder whether the study of English literature — in the way it was characteristically pursued in those days — made much sense in the tropics. At the risk of tiring your patience with a somewhat protracted first-person narrative, I will attempt to give you an idea of what happens when literature is approached in the single-minded spirit of "Art for art's sake" — i.e., literature as a realm unto itself, with no room for facts. "No irritable reaching after facts and reason," as poet Keats once famously remarked, in a letter to Fanny Brown.

It was a blistering summer's day in the city of Trivandrum, a city located at the southernmost tip of India where the present speaker happened to be doing his B.A. Honours in English literature. This was in the mid-1960s. The semester was in full swing. I had been late by a few minutes for the afternoon class and had to content myself with one of the few vacant seats near the window which nobody would normally take unless they were looking for the masochistic excitement of watching their skins catch fire under the merciless heat of the sun shining upon them through the window. It was a Shakespeare II class and the lecturer, enthralled by the mellifluous elegance of pure poetry from *Antony and Cleopatra* — "[...] The barge she sat in, like a burnished throne, burned on the water; the poop was beaten gold [...] " and so it went in the sinuous rhythm of iambic pentameter, imitating the flow of the Nile — wouldn't even bother to look at the class, let alone care to observe who was coming in and who was going out. As I sat watching him cite the lines straight from memory, I was particularly struck by the words "Phoebus's amorous pinches" giving Cleopatra's skin the rare hue that was, in the Bard's own words from another play, to play havoc with the fate of the Roman Empire — by transforming its emissary, "the triple pillar of the world" into a "strumpet's fool". What I found most intriguing of all was the idea of anyone feeling so great about the punishing heat from the tropical sun — Cleopatra's Egypt, I imagined, couldn't have been all that different from my own Trivandrum. It was only years later that I resolved the puzzle. As it happened, I was on a sightseeing tour of Stratford-upon-Avon. It was deep winter and the knee-deep snow and patches of slush that we had to walk through as we made our way to Anne Hathaway's cottage made me see the logic of it all. Surely, I said to myself, Anne must have had a way to charm all hearts. Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?

But the stand-off between language and literature which, in the ultimate analysis, dates back to Plato's distrust of art in general and poetry in particular, lost much of its appeal with developments that began in the field of philosophy itself, slowly but steadily percolating through to linguistics. Postructuralism, I believe, has played an important role in this development. Derrida's early work showed not only how important it was to bridge the proverbial gap but also that the gap itself remained unbridged for such a long time for reasons having to do with certain deep-rooted

beliefs ingrained in Western Metaphysics. His grammatology opened the way for what is often referred to as the "writerly" approach to texts in general. More importantly, Derrida's enduring contribution to the field of humanities, indeed to academia as a whole, is his central claim that language and literature are tied up and implicated in each other in ways that could no longer be ignored. To Derrida too goes the merit of bringing to centre-stage the idea that epistemology and ethics are mutually implicated in each other and, furthermore, that each is tied, in separate but equally intricate ways, to aesthetics — no mean achievement for someone who was interrogating a tradition set in motion by Kant before him.

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As we celebrate the 33th anniversary of our association this year, we can be sure of the fact that the decision to hold the two conferences under a single roof is a promising step in the right direction. If nothing else it should lay to rest any lurking suspicions concerning the advisability letting scholars from the two traditions freely exchange their views on topics that interest both.

But there is a stronger reason for applauding the historic decision. Gone are the years of mistrust between linguists and literary scholars. The very idea that their respective areas of interest rigorously exclude each other no longer appeals to many researchers on either side. Instead, the study of literature and the study of linguistics have both witnessed an interdisciplinary turn in the last few years. Among other things, this has meant the continuing quest for new forms of conceptualising the phenomena they have traditionally been concerned with.

One clearly discernible trend in both areas is the interest in looking at each, not as an isolated or self-contained phenomenon but as embedded in wider, historically meaningful contexts. The Arnoldian precept of looking at a poem "as in itself it really is", pursued with single-minded tenacity during the hey-day of New Criticism, is already a thing of the past. So too is the Saussurean injunction to look at language as an object "*in* and *for* itself". More and more scholars are today persuaded that neither language nor literature exists for its own sake. To understand the nature and the workings of either, we need to look at the specific socio-historical contexts in which they arose.

Under the influence of Rortyan pragmatism and Derridean deconstruction, literary scholars have seriously begun to question the literature versus philosophy divide which was a mainstay of Western thought from Plato on. Even some philosophers have decided that the time has come to climb down from the Olympian heights of 'pure', navel-gazing philosophising to rub shoulders with scholars in other intellectual pursuits. Rorty's deliberately provocative reference to "that literary genre we call 'philosophy' — a genre founded by Plato" (Rorty 1982: xiv) no longer raises as many eyebrows as it used to until fairly recently.

As for linguistics, the signs of the sea change currently sweeping across the field are perhaps even starker. There is a growing questioning of practically every one of the discipline's time-honoured and sacrosanct axioms. More and more scholars have come out into the open clamouring for sweeping changes in the way language

is studied. Among other things, there is a growing demand for theorising about languages in socially more responsible ways.

In both linguistics and the study of literature, there is a clear perception that their respective subject matters can no longer be studied in isolation from each other. Language is no longer considered simply the medium through which literature expresses itself; nor is literature any longer regarded as simply one of the ways in which language is put to use. Such recent and contemporary trends as postcolonialism, feminist criticism and queer theory have shown that language and literature are both deeply implicated in the struggles of marginalised peoples across the globe.

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As we meet today on the 7th of April 2003, the world is in the grip of a war whose ultimate consequences and log-term spin-offs no one is in a position to predict, not even those who act as if they knew what the outcome is going to be. And let us make no mistakes about it. This war is being fought in English. It is English versus Arabic, CNN versus Al Jazeera. It is all a war of words, one might say. But words hurt. Especially when they come in the form of chemical weapons or suicide attacks, or for that matter, carpet bombings by B-52s.

War thus brings together the worlds of language and literature in uncanny ways; indeed war is — in a profoundly disturbing sense — the very epitome of what happens when language and literature cross each other's ways. Fact and fiction get hopelessly muddled up. So do truth and falsehood. So by looking at war, we can learn a lot about how language and literature work in their separate yet convergent ways. In any war, as we have been repeatedly told, it is the truth that is the first casualty. But in this case, it is not just the truth, it is also the English language that is among the first victims (Just as much as, I should think, the Arabic language also is). The English language is being stretched to its limits as the propaganda war gathers momentum. The English language is under siege. It is being systematically assaulted and plundered by those who manipulate its semantics in ways that best suit their interests.

The bad guys, we are told, brutalise their own people. The good guys are there to liberate them. The bad guys will not hesitate to use their WMDs (Weapons of Mass Destruction); the good guys, when they raze enemy positions to rubble with their helicopter gunships and B-52 bombers, dropping their 100, 200, 500 ton payload during each sortie, are performing 'surgical operations' on specific targets. The bad guys fire indiscriminately; the good guys only obliterate pockets of resistance in rightful self-defence. The bad guys fire to kill; the good guys fire only because they are fired upon — and if, in the process, some unfortunate bystanders do get killed, it is 'collateral damage'. The bad guys use lethal weapons and 'dirty bombs' designed to inflict the maximum damage; the good guys use 'smart weapons' with 'pinpoint accuracy'. The bad guys prevaricate; the good guys only withhold vital information for strategic reasons. The bad guys lie outright; the good guys disinform as part of what are called 'psi-ops' or 'psychological operations' (I love this one !!). The bad guys are a bunch of thugs and religious fanatics; the good guys are from among the finest groups of boys and girls from the entire Christendom. The bad guys behave

badly (as indeed befits the script) because they are bad — "evil". The good guys behave compassionately, because they are moved by the noblest sentiments of self-righteousness and fairness. The bad guys behave the way they do because they are so despicably uncivilised, primitive, libertine, lascivious, and lecherous — and treacherous, to boot. The good guys are pious men and women willing to sacrifice their lives for the betterment of humanity and in order to uphold the highest virtues of human conduct.

All this linguistic engineering is taking place right under our very noses. And, as I said, it is the English language that is continually and systematically being assaulted. Incidentally, the very same language in which Spencer exhorted sweet Thames to run softly till he would end his song, in which Walt Whitman called upon the eagle of liberty to soar, in which Martin Luther King confessed to having nursed a dream, in which Pundit Jawaharlal Nehru announced a "tryst with destiny", in which Nelson Mandela pronounced the magic words "The struggle is my life". And also the language in which millions of ordinary people all over this terrestrial globe live out their daily lives or have important decisions made for them, with or without their consent. As professionals involved in one way or another in the propagation of the English language far and wide, we — by which I specifically mean the 500-or-so of people assembled in this auditorium, as well as the millions of our colleagues spread right across the world — we have a stake in this. The English language is just as much ours as it is anybody else's. If that sounds a wee bit too cheeky, let us remind ourselves that the so-called 'native speakers' no longer call the shots when it comes deciding current standards as well as future developments of the English language. In our postcolonial times, it is the turn of Caliban to answer back and Prospero no longer has the monopoly over his language.

> Caliban: You taught me language; and my profit on't
> Is, I know how to curse; the red plague rid you,
> For learning me your language!

Let us also not forget that what we are talking about is World English — which, as I have argued elsewhere (Rajagopalan, forthcoming), belongs to everyone who uses it, yet is nobody's mother tongue. World English is like a trans-national corporation with thousands, nay, millions of shareholders scattered across the entire planet. We all have stakes in it. If anyone misuses its assets for purposes of self-aggrandisement, it is a contravention of very serious proportion. It is a veritable corporate scandal!

And it is this language — which belongs to all of us and in which each and every one of us has a stake — which is currently under siege by media moguls and their lackeys, the spin-doctors. As the linguist Norman Fairclough says, "The public relations industry [...] is at the heart of [modern politics], which calculatively manipulates language. The phenomenon is not new, but the scale and intensity certainly are." (Fairclough 2000: vii). That it is certainly not new is evidenced by the following quote from an all-time classic which we will be wise not to consign to the dustbin of memory:

> Newspeak was the official language of Oceania and had been revised to meet the ideological needs of Ingsoc, or English Socialism. In the year 1984 there was not as yet anyone who used Newspeak as his sole means of communication, either in speech or in writing. The leading articles in *The Times* were written in it, but this was a *tour de force* which could only be carried out by a specialist. It was expected that Newspeak would have finally superseded Oldspeak (or Standard English, as we should call it) by about the year 2050. Meanwhile it gained ground steadily, all party members tending to use Newspeak words and grammatical constructions more and more in their everyday speech. The version in use in 1984, and embodied in the Ninth and Tenth Editions of the Newspeak Dictionary, was a provisional one, and contained many superfluous words and archaic formations which were due to be suppressed later. It is with the final, perfected version, as embodied in the Eleventh Edition of the Dictionary, that we are concerned here.

Poor George Orwell! He must have by now turned several times in his grave, taken aback by how the events on the earth he left behind have anticipated his prognostications by almost half a century (Orwell [1949] 1977). In particular, the opening sentence of his famous essay 'Politics and the English language' strikes us today as being so topical and relevant to the kind of developments currently unfolding. Here it is:

> Most people who bother with the matter at all would admit that the English language is in a bad way, but it is generally assumed that we cannot by conscious action do anything about it.

Now, I confess I am a great admirer of Orwell. But he is by no means my favourite linguist. Nor do I share his view of language in all its details, especially where it appears tinged with a heavy dose of nostalgia and faith in the possibility of ridding language of all its 'corrupting' influences and of finally restoring its 'rational' basis. Without lapsing into what the Germans call a state of *Weltschmerz*, we do nonetheless need to address the issue of languages being taken hostage by politicians and media mavericks. George Steiner, an extraordinarily gifted purveyor of the linguistic scene, has made the thought-provoking claim that the German language did suffer enormously under the Nazis. Much to the disbelief of many a professional linguist who is given to believing that languages only function as media for the expression of thought, he points to the need of placing the language so craftily misused by Adolph Hitler in a quarantine, before reclaiming it for business as usual.

Indeed one of Hitler's favourite expressions was *Gleichschaltung*, a word which the Oxford philosopher J.L. Austin once appropriated to make what I believe is a pungent political statement, alongside what many readers recognise as an important statement concerning philosophical enquiry. Austin's words "to abandon old habits of *Gleichschaltung*, the deeply ingrained worship of tidy-looking dichotomies" have an important bearing on what we are looking at here. Hitler's deft use of *Gleichschaltung* resulted in tidy-looking dichotomies such as "us — the good guys,

the chosen children of God" and "them — the bad guys, the scum of the earth — hence fully deserving of being exterminated". Here I want to enter an important disclaimer: any resemblance to what might be going on in the case of English is purely a matter of coincidence; or, at any rate, I leave the final decision to your better judgment. Yet, one would do well to ponder the following prohetic warning by W.H. Auden: "... Let mortals beware of words, for with words we lie, can say peace when we mean war." As the supreme irony of it all would have it, these words are from a poem entitled 'A Hymn to the United Nations' (Auden 1971).

Language to me is more than words and words are more than mere clusters of phonemes and graphemes. If that weren't the case, one might as well conclude that Prince Hamlet had just been consulting the latest edition of the O.E.D. when he entered the stage, saying "Words, words, words ....". Language, to me, is an arena where political battles are fought and won (or lost). As persons with a stake in what I earlier referred to as World English, we need to address the enormous challenges ahead and not shy away from them. Please note that I am by no means seeking to deliberately politicise the English language; it already is. It has always already been. It is no use pretending otherwise. Pretending otherwise amounts to burying one's head in the sand like an ostrich.

It is important not to lose sight of the political underpinnings of violence done to language because a more convenient and less bothersome posture is, as we have seen, to pretend they don't exist or imagine that they are a figment of imagination. This latter inadvertent step is sometimes taken by persons who are otherwise well intentioned. Thus at this year's Oscar Awards ceremony, millions of television viewers saw actor and film maker Michael Moore denounce from the podium what in his view was a fictitious war declared by a fictitious president. True, fact and fiction tend to get irremediably muddled up at a time when hype has displaced hope. And if your frame of reference is the Tinseltown, then the temptation is even stronger to think that all this may be part of a virtual reality. But the suffering is real. And equally real is the damage being done to the English language even as we speak. "Metaphors can kill," says the Berkeley professor and linguist George Lakoff and he is dead right (pardon the pun) about his observation.

In a paper published on the Internet shortly before the current conflict in the Middle East flared up, Lakoff (2003) writes as follows:

> I think it is crucially important to understand the cognitive dimensions of politics – especially when most of our conceptual framing is unconscious and we may not be aware of our own metaphorical thought. I have been referred to as a "cognitive activist" and I think the label fits me well. As a professor, I do analyses of linguistic and conceptual issues in politics, and I do them as accurately as I can. But that analytic act is a political act: Awareness matters. Being able to articulate what is going on can change what is going on - at least in the long run.

Nor is there any fleeing from our classroom responsibilities. For we are all teachers and teaching is what we do. With bell hooks (1994: 207) we need to repeat as many times as it is necessary:

> The academy is not paradise. But learning is a place where paradise can be created. The classroom, with all its limitations, remains a location of possibility. In that field of possibility we have the opportunity to labor for freedom, to demand of ourselves and our comrades, an openness of mind and heart that allows us to face reality even as we collectively imagine ways to move beyond boundaries, to transgress. This is education as the practice of freedom.

And on that sanguine note I will bring my talk to a close. Ladies and Gentlemen, thank you very much indeed for your patience.

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Notes

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TEXTO E INTERAÇÃO: SUBSÍDIOS PARA UMA PEDAGOGIA CRÍTICA DE LEITURA EM LÍNGUA INGLESA

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RESUMO: Este trabalho tem como objetivo apresentar os resultados de uma investigação realizada através de um estudo de auto-observação em sala de aula, de cunho etnográfico, orientado por reflexões teóricas sobre concepções de letramento e leitura crítica e tipos de interação pedagógica. Pretendeu-se avaliar neste estudo os efeitos de vários tipos de estratégias pedagógicas interacionais para a concretização de uma pedagogia crítica de leitura em língua inglesa e, principalmente, investigar e descrever as características da interação professor-alunos-texto que melhor promovem a co-construção da reflexão crítica e a conscientização dialógica. Para isso, o estudo foi teoricamente embasado por tendências interacionistas neo-vygotskianas que serviram de subsídios centrais para as análises as quais mostraram que – contrariamente ao que determinadas visões pós-estruturalistas da sala de aula de leitura defenderiam - a intervenção do professor na aula de leitura crítica não é sempre negativa nem autoritária; pode se dar de maneira monológica ou de maneira dialógica.

SUMMARY: This research has as a main goal to show an investigation – and ethnographic, self-observation study carried out in an English language classroom – which was supported by theories of literacy and critical reading and by views of pedagogical interaction. The main study objectives were to evaluate the effects of different kinds of interactional strategies on the teaching of critical reading, and to investigate and describe the characteristics of the teacher-students-text interaction that most promote the co-construction of critical reflection and dialogical consciousness-raising. To this end, the study drew on Neo-Vygotskian theories of social interactionism, which provided the principal instruments of analysis that showed – contrary to what certain post-structuralist views of the reading classroom would predict - the teacher's intervention in the critical reading classroom is not always negative and authoritarian. It can take place in either a monological or in a dialogical way.

1. INTRODUÇÃO

Apesar do grande volume de produção científica nos estudos da linguagem, muitos pesquisadores[1] têm observado que as pedagogias tradicionais de ensino de línguas não têm dado conta de proporcionar ao aprendiz aquisição de competência lingüístico-comunicativa[2], mas também e, principalmente, o favoreça no sentido de tornar-lo autônomo para interpretar as ideologias políticas e culturais que subjazem os discursos (tanto falados quanto escritos), os quais fazem parte do cotidiano econômico, político e social (Busnardo e Braga, 2000:03) da humanidade em tempos de globalização.

Neste sentido, este estudo teve como preocupação proporcionar um trabalho de reflexão crítica, através de uma prática pedagógica que se constituiu da utilização atividades de interpretação de textos que refletem tanto discursos contra-hegemônicos quanto hegemônicos. Partindo do pressuposto de que existem discursos ou "vozes" dentro da língua-cultura alvo com as quais o professor crítico de inglês pode se sentir solidário, houve no estudo realizado uma tentativa de concretizar uma pedagogia que visa desenvolver no aluno o discernimento entre vozes mais e menos hegemônicas dentro do universo cultural anglo-americano. Este discernimento seria parte fundamental da visão crítica almejada para o público adolescente brasileiro participante da pesquisa – adolescentes entre 15 e 17 anos do Ensino Médio. De maneira geral, o estudo objetivou investigar a interação entre professor, alunos e textos em aulas de leitura crítica em língua inglesa, visando providenciar subsídios, através de uma base teórica interacionista neo-vygotskiana, para uma reflexão mais profunda sobre a natureza da pedagogia crítica no Brasil, em uma época na qual a leitura crítica de textos vindos do universo anglo-americano se torna fundamental dentro do âmbito da educação brasileira, em todos os níveis.

2. PEDAGOGIA CRÍTICA, LETRAMENTO CRÍTICO E LEITURA CRÍTICA

Para Pennycook (1994), a pedagogia crítica é a educação que possui um desejo de mudança social e de "empowerment" (o fortalecimento do mais fraco), que objetiva promover mudança na escola e na sociedade para o benefício mútuo de ambas.

> Considerando a escola não como um lugar onde um corpo neutro de conhecimento que faz parte do currículo é passado aos alunos com vários níveis de sucesso, a pedagogia crítica vê a escola como arenas culturais e políticas onde formas culturais, ideológicas e sociais diferentes estão constantemente em luta. O questionamento acontece ao redor de como construir uma teoria e prática de educação que possa então, por um lado, explicar porque alguns alunos desprivilegiados falham na escola e, por outro, desenvolver modos de ensinar que ofereçam maiores possibilidades para pessoas de cor, minorias étnicas, estudantes da classe trabalhadora, mulheres, homossexuais e lésbicas, e outros, não só para que eles possam ter uma melhor chance de "sucesso" nos modos tradicionalmente definidos pela educação mas também para que estas definições possam ser mudadas tanto dentro quanto fora da escola. (op. cit.: 297).

Moraes (1996) se inspira em Freire e nos estudos bakhtinianos para formular o seu conceito de pedagogia dialógico-crítica para um público bilíngüe de minorias

sociais e étnicas nos Estados Unidos. Para a autora, a pedagogia crítica é a pedagogia que afirma a voz do aprendiz e o torna cidadão melhor preparado para atuar no processo democrático de transformação da sociedade. O principal objetivo desta pedagogia é situar a aprendizagem nas experiências, culturas, entendimentos atuais, aspirações e no cotidiano dos alunos.

> *O projeto político e social da pedagogia crítica é a transformação da sociedade através do desafio das relações de poder dominantes e das ideologias que as apóiam*[3]. *(op. cit.:107)*

Para Moraes (op. cit.), a pedagogia dialógico-crítica é a pedagogia que traz a possibilidade para as vozes serem ouvidas em uma consciência social dialógica na qual a voz do oprimido alcança a do opressor – sendo que este último é também um outro oprimido – e ambos se tornam agentes engajados na direção de uma liberdade social recíproca (p. 116).

Já Freire e Macedo (1987) definem a pedagogia crítica como forma de política cultural. Para os autores a pedagogia crítica trata da experiência do aprendiz, considerando os problemas e necessidades dos alunos como ponto de partida.

Observa-se que a proposta de pedagogia crítica de Freire e Macedo se constitui essencialmente da valorização do contexto do aluno e da concepção do papel do professor como desvelador ou desmistificador do outro poderoso, em outras palavras, vê o professor como conscientizador.

Para Gee (apud Lankshear, 1997), com o seu conceito de "Discourse"[4] e "coordinations"[5], letramento crítico é a habilidade de justapor Discursos, e verificar como Discursos competitivos formulam e reformulam elementos variados, que dão origem a perguntas e questões sobre os interesses, objetivos e relações de poder entre e dentro de discursos. Para o autor, devido à nova ordem global na qual vigora a diferença[6], o letramento crítico requer a criação de um novo Discurso, com uma nova comunidade de elementos humanos, que tenha como seu objetivo a reformulação de elementos, em nome da justiça social proporcionando um tratamento mais humano para todos. (Gee, op. cit.: xviii)

Para Baynham (1995), o letramento crítico pode ser uma ferramenta poderosa para desenvolver o pensamento crítico simplesmente porque a língua é poderosa como prática social. Nas palavras do autor, as instituições e organizações sociais são mantidas e reproduzidas através da linguagem, sendo a mesma o veículo que apresenta o ser humano nas ordens sociais. Em outras palavras, Baynham defende a ênfase em fatores sócio-políticos, *através de um processo de crítica cultural* que pode ser concretizada pela forma de refletir, negociar e transformar a relação entre o ensino em sala de aula, produção de conhecimento, estruturas institucionais da escola e as relações sociais e materiais presentes na macro-comunidade, sociedade e Estado Nação, que contribuirão para a autonomia dos aprendizes. Esta autonomia os oportuniza a afirmar e celebrar os efeitos de diferentes vozes e experiências, enquanto reconhecem que tais vozes devem ser questionadas por vários interesses ontológicos, epistemológicos, éticos, ideológicos e políticos.

Fairclough (1992) afirma que um texto é supostamente um produto de práticas discursivas, incluindo produção, distribuição, e interpretação que acontecem num complexo mosaico de práticas sociais. Ou seja, o significado de um texto é construído não apenas a partir das palavras impressas no papel, mas também de como estas palavras são usadas em um contexto social particular. Baseando-se nestes conceitos, o autor criou a sua *concepção tri-dimensional de discurso,* conforme esquema representado abaixo:

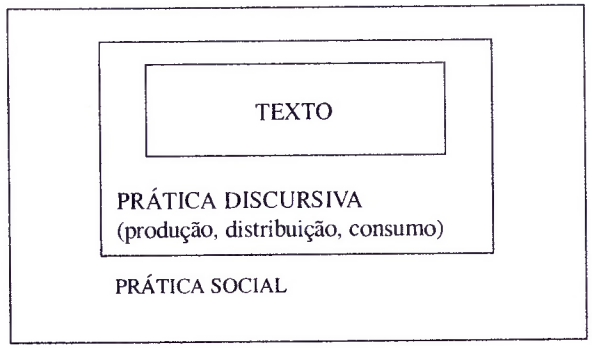

Figura 1. Three-dimensional conception of discourse
(Fairclough, *Discourse and Social Change, 1992:73)*

Ainda segundo Fairclough, as pessoas interagem dentro de convenções sociolingüísticas, recheadas de idéias baseadas em "senso comum". Cabe à consciência crítica da linguagem esmiuçar o discurso, trazer à tona as convenções sociais e revelar idéias do "senso comum" que produzem as interações lingüísticas e criam o caráter das relações sociais, mantendo poderes conquistados ou rebelando-se contra eles. Esta é a consciência crítica da linguagem que não apenas desvenda o que está por trás do discurso, mas também habilita o falante/ouvinte e escritor/leitor a escolher o seu próprio discurso. Esta é a consciência crítica da linguagem, que possibilita às pessoas se apoiarem na reflexão crítica para contestar as práticas que as subjugam, como também a utilizarem a linguagem para não subjugar outros; sendo assim, a consciência crítica da linguagem pode contribuir para a conquista da emancipação humana[1]. Como argumenta Fairclough (op. cit.), através da conscientização, os aprendizes podem se tornar mais cientes das coações exercidas sobre as suas próprias práticas, e das possibilidades, riscos e custos de se desafiar, individual ou coletivamente, essas coações e se engajar em uma prática "emancipatória" da linguagem.

O modelo tri-dimensional de análise crítica do discurso de Fairclough (conforme figura 1) se assemelha ao modelo de leitura como prática social de Baynham (conforme figura 2). Para Baynham, uma teoria adequada de leitura deve

também dar espaço para diferentes aspectos de organização lingüístico-textual e vários tipos de conhecimento prévio do leitor. Assim, na leitura como prática social, os processos interpretativos nascem a partir da interação entre o texto e os recursos (conhecimentos) que o leitor traz para a tarefa de ler.

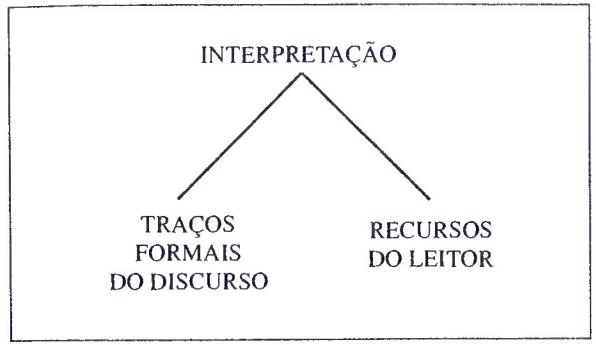

Figura 2. Modelo de leitura como prática social.
(Baynham, *Literacy practices: Investigating literacy in social contexts,* 1995).

Busnardo e Braga (2000,2001) focalizam na teorização da postura do leitor frente ao texto ao qual é exposto. Para estas autoras, a insistência sobre a não-passividade do leitor crítico se traduz pelos conceitos neo-gramscianos de *agência e resistência.* Colocando-se contra a idéia pós-estruturalista e pós-modernista do sujeito como sendo completamente determinado pela linguagem, pelo discurso e pela ideologia, as autoras defendem a existência do sujeito-como-agente como pré-condição da própria crítica ideológica. Nesta visão, o sujeito leitor possui liberdade suficiente para o discernimento: pode escolher resistir aos textos ou formar uma aliança[1] com eles. O leitor não-livre é quase condenado a uma leitura submissa do texto que veicula uma ideologia hegemônica.

Através das reflexões apresentadas acima, pode-se dizer que o papel do professor que possui práticas de leitura coerentes com a pedagogia crítica, teria duas funções: o de desvelador da realidade ou, em outras palavras, o professor teria o papel de conscientizador da ideologia dos discursos hegemônicos; e, também o professor teria o papel de ajudar os alunos a se aliar a outros discursos, na busca da justiça e igualdade.

Neste sentido há críticas pós-estruturalistas (Coracini, 1995) em relação à posição do professor como elemento de dominação e dos alunos como sujeitos passivos. A concepção pós-estruturalista de sujeito parece não dar espaço para a agência (sendo sujeito determinado pela linguagem e pelos discursos) ou para a interação em sala de aula. A interpretação imposta seria a do professor, uma vez que o mesmo possui papel de dominante dos elementos que constituem a heteroglossia da sala de aula. Não caberia aqui a figura do professor como revelador, desvelador ou conscientizador da ideologia, pois tal figura seria tida como manipuladora, dominadora e opressora.

Kumaravadivelu (1999) traz uma posição pós-modernista menos radical. Em seu trabalho parece ficar evidente que há pontos convergentes entre a pedagogia crítica e as pedagogias pós-estruturalistas. Para o autor, ambas as teorias abordam a questão do poder e da ideologia que subjazem os discursos, e ambas parecem defender o questionamento em relação aos modos pelos quais o poder funciona através de práticas discursivas.

Busnardo e Braga (2000) também apontam pontos de convergência entre a pedagogia crítica e o pós-estruturalismo, através do conceito de hegemonia em Gramsci e em Foucault. Para as autoras, o impasse da não agência do sujeito, defendida por posições extremistas do pós-estruturalismo, pode ser solucionado através de uma abordagem que as autoras chamam de Neo-Gramsciana, que incorpora alguns pontos do pós-estruturalismo para a leitura crítica. Em outras palavras, a concepção Neo-Gramsciana tenta um diálogo[2] entre o conceito de hegemonia em Gramsci e certas posições pós-estruturalistas sobre o poder, a ideologia e a resistência:

O conceito de hegemonia em Gramsci que, conforme Busnardo e Braga, poderia resultar em uma pedagogia crítico-dialógica, dá espaço para a interação em vários níveis (no nível intercultural, no nível texto/leitor e no nível da escola), uma vez que entende que existem "brechas" na malha do poder – inclusive na sala de aula – a partir das quais uma verdadeira interação pode-se dar. É a partir desta crença, na possibilidade da interação, que as pesquisas neo-vygotskianas sobre a interação se tornam relevantes.

Atrelado a um conceito de ensino de leitura que defende a possibilidade da conscientização como diálogo e negociação, se faz necessária a adoção de um conceito de leitura que privilegie a negociação e a construção de interpretações "situadas". Em outras palavras, se faz necessário um conceito de leitura como prática social, que dê conta dos vários tipos de conhecimento que interagem nos processos interpretativos: conhecimento lingüístico-textual, conhecimento prévio do mundo, de práticas sociais gerais e discursivas (Fairclough, 1992; Baynham, 1995; ver também Moita Lopes, 1996). Parte-se do pressuposto que o professor necessariamente lançará mão desses vários tipos de conhecimento nas suas tentativas de "desvelar" os discursos/ideologias dos textos, e engajar os alunos no processo.

3. INTERAÇÃO EM SALA DE AULA E A PEDAGOGIA CRÍTICA DE LEITURA

Van Lier (1997) afirma que a interação social é a *máquina que dirige o processo de aprendizagem* (p. 145), cujas condições são engajadas, sustentadas e aumentadas pelo trabalho de interação, via linguagem, dos aprendizes com os outros e com o mundo em geral. Na investigação realizada, houve um enfoque no papel da pergunta do professor na interação e na constituição da aula de leitura crítica, uma vez que é justamente o caráter coercivo da pergunta do professor que é alvo das críticas pós-estruturalistas (Coracini, 1995).

Nesse sentido o trabalho de Van Lier foi muito importante para subsidiar as análises feitas, pois o autor apresenta uma tentativa de combinar o interacionismo vygotskiano (visível na tentativa do autor de elaborar os conceitos de Zona de Desenvolvimento Proximal e "andaime" ou suporte) com as visões de Bakhtin e Paulo Freire. O autor explora a natureza das seqüências interacionais (sobretudo o

IRF: Iniciação-Resposta-Feedback/Reação) utilizadas nas análises e, através de uma categorização de diferentes tipos de interação pedagógica, apresenta o seu ideal da "contingência", ou prática descentralizadora de sala de aula. Outros trabalhos de interacionistas neo-vygotskianos – Wells (1999), McCormick e Donato (2000) e Dixon-Krauss (1996) – subsidiaram as análises no que diz respeito à questões de interação.

Wells (1999) faz uma reflexão baseada em vários autores que possuem diferentes posicionamentos frente à estrutura discursiva IRF. Wells (op. cit.), influenciado por Vygotsky e Halliday, defende uma visão positiva do IRF, considerando-o, em muitas de suas manifestações, como ferramenta discursiva multifuncional e imprescindível para a prática pedagógica.

A função da pergunta do professor como "scaffolding" ("andaime" ou suporte) na interação, segundo McCormick e Donato (2000), juntamente com o modelo de mediação de Dixon-Krauss (1996) que enfatiza o papel mediador do professor na interação e aponta para uma definição do conceito de "co-construção", foram conceitos também importantes para a investigação realizada.

4. METODOLOGIA DE PESQUISA E PROCEDIMENTOS DE ANÁLISE

O trabalho proposto tomou por base a abordagem qualitativa interpretativista, e por procedimento básico a auto-observação, já que a pesquisadora foi ao mesmo tempo instrumento e objeto de pesquisa.

A modalidade de pesquisa interpretativista mostrou-se adequada, pois a partir da observação da atuação da professora, autora da pesquisa, foi possível, através de análise, levantar hipóteses sobre a natureza dos eventos pedagógico-comunicativos encontrados nas aulas de leitura examinadas, e sobre a natureza da interação no interior desses eventos. Acredita-se que este tipo de pesquisa também proporcionou, durante o processo, um trabalho de adequação e reformulação das práticas futuras que se concretizaram como parte do trabalho de pesquisa. Entretanto, a pesquisadora não se viu apenas como alguém que almeja melhorar a prática futura através da auto-observação, como na *pesquisa-ação*, mas também como alguém que se esforça para interpretar suas próprias ações no contexto da sala de aula – ou seja, como etnógrafa da sua própria prática.

4.1. Sujeitos de pesquisa

Os sujeitos da pesquisa foram alunos, entre os 15 e 18 anos, de uma turma de segundo ano do ensino médio, de uma escola da rede pública. O grupo era formado de 50 alunos de classe social baixa/média, de nível inicial de aprendizagem de inglês como LE. Neste grupo, nenhum aluno freqüentava um curso de inglês em escola particular de idiomas; o contato que tinham com a língua se dava nas aulas de inglês ou através televisão, revistas, músicas, computador e internet.

4.2. Instrumentos de pesquisa e coleta de dados

No processo de coleta dos dados, os instrumentos utilizados para esta pesquisa foram, além da professora/pesquisadora (principal fonte de coleta e análise dos dados), gravações de dezesseis aulas em áudio e vídeo (durante o segundo bimestre do primeiro semestre letivo de 2001) e análises pré-pedagógicas de vários textos

(propagandas, tiras de quadrinhos, entre outros) utilizados nas aulas dadas pela professora/pesquisadora. Os dados obtidos através das aulas gravadas, análises pré-pedagógicas e textos selecionados para a prática pedagógica, forneceram a base para a interpretação das trocas interacionais.

4.3.A atuação da professora/pesquisadora

A pesquisadora atuou como professora ficando, então, diretamente envolvido no processo de ensino-aprendizagem. O trabalho de observação não seguiu um roteiro fixo, mas sim flexível para possíveis adaptações durante processo de coleta. A professora-pesquisadora elaborou questionamentos sobre os textos autênticos – tirados principalmente da revista "Reader´s Digest" e de revistas em quadrinhos do "Snoopy" e da "Monica´s Gang" - e análises pré-pedagógicas destes textos para o trabalho de sala de aula.

As análises pré-pedagógicas contribuíram para um entendimento da *agenda* pedagógica da professora antes de entrar em sala de aula. Objetivou-se com todos estes procedimentos, coletar dados que foram analisados para se levantar hipóteses sobre os tipos de interação em sala de aula e eventos de leitura crítica sob a perspectiva da pedagogia crítica e assim verificar se a prática pedagógica da professora/pesquisadora levava os alunos a problematizarem determinados temas que surgiram na aula e até que ponto o comportamento interacional da professora/pesquisadora contribui para a *contingência* ou a *não-contingência* em sala de aula.

4.4. O corpus representativo

De posse dos dados coletados, o primeiro passo foi assistir todas as fitas várias vezes para selecionar as aulas que seriam analisadas. Este processo de escolha foi sendo realizado gradativamente à medida que se foram percebendo que determinados aspectos de duas aulas, a 5ª e a 6ª, permitiriam melhor representar e discutir os aspectos levantados nas perguntas de pesquisa. Outros aspectos também contribuíram para a seleção da 5ª e 6ª aula: 1) ficou muito claro como a professora conduziu a aula: se pode observar como procedeu à sua agenda, se houve contingência e retomada ("uptake"); 2) ocorreram várias falas e interrupções dos alunos, que mostravam se eles estavam tentando entender os textos, se eles mostram uma interpretação semelhante ou diferente daquela que a professora/pesquisadora havia previsto na sua agenda.

Depois de feitas as transcrições destas aulas e a organização do material coletado, se passou a um processo de leitura exaustiva e repetida das transcrições, estabelecendo interrogações para se identificar o que surgiria de relevante. A última etapa foi a análise final do corpus realizada através de um trabalho minucioso de leitura, observação e interpretação dos procedimentos e estratégias utilizadas pela professora-pesquisadora, bem como as interações da mesma com os alunos durante as aulas filmadas, relacionando-os aos referenciais teóricos da pesquisa visando se chegar aos objetivos da pesquisa, tomando por base as perguntas que foram previamente levantadas. Levou-se em consideração, também, o peso das análises pré-pedagógicas dos textos na formulação da *agenda* de aula da professora que poderia - ou não - ser seguido durante o andamento da aula.

4.4.1 Um evento complexo da 6ª aula

Foi escolhida aqui, a título de exemplo, a análise de uma unidade pedagógica da 6ª aula, que se poderia classificar como um evento de conscientização do Funcionamento Discursivo, já que todas as perguntas da professora/pesquisadora (doravante P) pareciam ter a mesma função de levar os alunos a perceberem como se dá o efeito discursivo de manipulação ideológica.

Esta aula se deu em torno de um texto publicitário no qual algumas características que compõem um certo ideal masculino ("rich, impecable taste and not an ounce of fat") são utilizadas, a partir de uma brincadeira verbal em forma de uma frase de duplo sentido, para vender um doce típico americano (brownie). No trecho escolhido para a análise, P (professora/pesquisadora) tenta provocar reações dos alunos, incentivando-os a imaginar outro texto possível: um homem que vende chocolate se referindo a atributos ideais femininos. Todo o projeto de conscientização de P neste momento parece se ancorar na necessidade de levar os alunos a imaginarem este texto, no qual ficaria evidente o estereótipo de mulher exigido por muitos homens, conforme transcrição do trecho abaixo[3]:

167. P	Tá... E se no caso fosse a figura de um homem aqui na propaganda, e não de uma mulher, o texto seria o mesmo?
168. As	Não
169. A3	Seria pior...
170. P	Mudaria o que?
171. A4	Chocolate anabolizante! (menino)
172. P	Chocolate anabolizante... (risos) Tá, mas por exemplo... um homem falaria que quer uma mulher assim: rich, impecable taste?
173. As	Sim!
174. P	Falaria? ... sem nada de gordura, é? (os alunos confirmam com gestos)
175.P	Os homens procuram mulheres ricas?
176. A1	Não! Magrelinhas assim! (menino)
177.P	Ou será que as mulheres procuram mais homens ricos...
178. As	(somente os meninos) é!
179. A1	É isso aí! (menino)
180. P	Deixem as meninas da sala se manifestarem (há muita motivação neste momento, muitos alunos falam ao mesmo tempo)
181.P	Ah gente deixa ela falar! (P se refere a uma aluna que está no fundo da sala).
182. As	(incomp)
183. P	Ãh... o que ela falou? (P pergunta para uma aluna que está sentada próximo a ela) deixa eu tentar organizar aqui... se todo mundo falar ao mesmo tempo gente, eu não consigo pegar a idéia de vocês... é alguém lá ... uma colega do fundo disse: "ah mas se for rico... tem que ser rico sim..." (tumulto generalizado na sala).
184. A7	Não é que tem que ser, é melhor se for... (menina, risos das meninas)
185. P	Ah... é melhor se for... (P diz com ironia; A3 diz alguma coisa mas P e alguns alunos não entendem, os que entenderam dão muita risada)
186. A8	Olha o que ele disse aqui professora! (menino)

187. P	O que é? Fala...
188. A3	A minha mãe sempre dizia: amor é lorota, o que manda é a nota! (A3 é menino, risos de todos)
189. P	Amor é lorota, o que manda é a nota... essa eu não conhecia!
190. A1	É isso aí! (menino)
191. P	Tá... mas o que ia perguntar para vocês é o seguinte... presta atenção ... geralmente é mais a mulher que procura um homem rico ou é o homem que procura mais mulher rica?
192. Aa	(incomp)
193. A1	Sempre a mulher assim procura um homem de 70 anos cheio da grana... aí mata o cara na cama pra ficar com a grana dele... (fala de um menino, risos de todos)
194. A9	O forte da mulher é ter dinheiro pra gastar nas compras... (fala de um menino); (incomp)
195. P	Ah... ela tem que ter a figura masculina para pagar as contas para ela...
196. As	É... (Pode se observar que somente os meninos respondem)
197. P	Gente voltando aqui... então o texto provavelmente seria diferente se tivesse um, então provavelmente um homen usaria que qualidades para uma mulher ideal?
198. A2	Avantajada! (faz gesto demonstrando)
199. As	(incomp)
200. P	Você quer dizer big breast? (P faz gestos para os alunos entenderem e funciona)
201. As	É!
202. P	O que mais?
203. A1	Bunda durinha
204. A10	Alta...
205. A2	É... bunda durinha... sem barriga...
206. P	Vocês estão querendo me dizer que este "not an ounce of fat" ficaria né? (P quis dizer que esta seria uma característica exigida pelos homens)
207. A2	Sim...
208. P	Mas vocês acrescentariam mais o quê? "big butts"?
209. A2	Não big...
210. A1	Não tão grande...
211. A3	Estilo feiticeira!
212. As	(incomp)
213. P	Vocês sabem o que é butts né?
214. As	(incomp)
215. P	(incomp) (risos)

No trecho acima, no qual P tem a obvia intenção de levar os alunos a explicitarem um estereótipo feminino para contraporem ao ideal masculino no qual o apelo do texto original se baseia, é evidente a tensão entre a ação discursiva principal de P – a Manutenção da Direção, através de perguntas e comentários variados – e as contribuições dos alunos. P aparece aqui levada por forças conflitantes: seu desejo de providenciar suporte aos alunos, por um lado, e a sua tendência ao apagamento e ao re-estabelecimento de sua agenda, por outro.

Na primeira seqüência do trecho (falas 167 à 172) P inicia, com uma pergunta que ela considera útil para a reflexão crítica. Vê-se que uma das Respostas ("Chocolate anabolizante") é aceita e repetida por P no seu Feedback ("Chocolate anabolizante (risos)"). Entretanto, em seguida P marca sua intenção de retomar a Direção anterior ("Tá, mas por exemplo, um homem falaria que quer uma mulher assim: rich, impecable taste?") e abandona o tópico do "chocolate anabolizante". Com certeza este apagamento aqui aconteceu com a função de corrigir o aluno, que aparentemente não entendeu que um texto publicitário com um homem vendendo "brownies" teria que funcionar através da manipulação de alguns atributos ideais femininos. Neste caso, o rápido apagamento seguido pela retomada da Direção poderia ser visto até como uma tentativa de "salvar a face" do aluno, evitando assim uma explicação detalhada do erro frente a todos os outros alunos.

A seguir, P prossegue na sua tentativa de extrair dos alunos a sua visão de um ideal feminino para contrapor ao estereótipo do texto, visando, talvez, engajar tanto os meninos quanto as meninas na reflexão. Pode-se deduzir da interação transcrita que P duvidava que o homem procurasse mulheres ricas:

172. P	(...) Tá, mas por exemplo, um homem falaria que quer uma mulher assim: rich, impecable taste?
173. As	Sim!
174.P	Falaria?... sem nada de gordura, é? (os alunos confirmam com gestos)
175. P	Os homens procuram mulheres ricas?
176. A1	Não! Magrelinhas assim! (fala de menino)

Observa-se claramente que P está tentando direcionar os alunos – através de estratégias de *scaffolding* bastante controladoras – a compartilharem a crença dela sobre uma certa "prática social" que caracteriza as relações entre homem e mulher: a mulher procura homens ricos, mas não é comum o homem procurar mulheres ricas. A primeira pergunta de P ("Tá, mas por exemplo, um homem falaria que quer uma mulher assim: rich, impecable taste?") tem, como citado anteriormente, a função geral de Manutenção da Direção (nos termos de McCormick e Donato, 2000) que ao mesmo tempo apaga o tópico anterior de um dos alunos. O "mas" de P marca a sua intenção de retomar a discussão anterior sobre os atributos femininos desejados pelo homem e esclarecer a verdadeira natureza da sua pergunta original ("Tá... se no caso fosse a figura de um homem aqui na propaganda, e não de uma mulher, o texto seria o mesmo?"). Entretanto, os alunos parecem não compartilhar a percepção da prática social que esta por trás da pergunta de P (de que um homem não falaria que quer uma mulher rica) e, por isso, respondem afirmativamente a sua pergunta. P insiste no seu objetivo com outra pergunta do tipo Manutenção da Direção ("Falaria?") e, de novo, os alunos afirmam através de gestos que aparecem na filmagem da aula, que um homem apreciaria numa mulher as mesmas características: "rich, impecable

taste and not an ounce of fat". P, incrédula, faz uma terceira tentativa de fazer com que os alunos compartilhem da sua percepção da prática social através de uma pergunta adicional do tipo Manutenção da Direção, articulada num tom duvidoso que deve ter aumentado bastante o impacto da ação discursiva de P sobre os alunos ("Os homens procuram mulheres ricas?"). P consegue com isso, finalmente, que pelo menos um dos alunos compartilhe sua crença ("Não! Magrelinhas assim!").

Na seqüência, P reitera ainda mais a Direção tomada com uma pergunta que parece também ter a função de instigar a participação das meninas na discussão ("Ou será que as mulheres procuram mais homens ricos?"), cuja resposta é um estridente "É!", dada por todos os meninos da sala. Sem ter percebido, P instigou nos meninos uma crença deles sobre as práticas sociais que visam as relações entre homens e mulheres: que as mulheres não apenas preferem homens ricos, mas que os homens se ressentem deste fato, sentindo-se quase "usados" economicamente.

De repente, a partir da própria estratégia de *scaffolding* de P, surge uma mudança no enfoque sobre o tópico "mulheres preferem homens ricos". Os meninos interpretam o direcionamento de P como uma aprovação da superioridade moral do homem que não procura mulheres ricas, mas que é explorado economicamente pelas mulheres: "E isso ai!". A partir deste momento explode uma reação na sala de aula com todos os alunos – mas principalmente com os meninos – falando ao mesmo tempo. Em outras palavras, P perde o controle da Direção do discurso, que fica sendo disputada pelos meninos, os quais acabam apagando as vozes das meninas ("Deixem as meninas da sala se manifestarem."). P agora procura mais uma vez voltar à discussão das práticas sociais envolvidas no texto lido: percebendo que uma das meninas tinha feito referências à essas práticas, P dá um suporte para que sua voz seja ouvida ("Ah gente... deixa ela falar!"). Entretanto, por trás desse suporte houve uma intenção de P de usar a fala da aluna ("Tem que ser rico sim...") para reforçar a sua própria percepção das práticas sociais. A aluna, percebendo talvez que poderia ser atacada por sua opinião, tenta se defender ("Não é que tem que ser... é melhor se for..."). P, interpretando as risadas das colegas da aluna como uma indicação de solidariedade para com ela, revida com um comentário carregado de ironia, que é a primeira indicação em toda a seqüência de que P não concorda com a prática social usada de uma maneira manipuladora no texto lido ("Ah...! É melhor se for...").

Justamente neste momento da interação, P percebe que surge dos meninos uma contribuição completamente inesperada, colocando a interação pedagógica em uma área mais "contingente", e assim mais perto do tipo "transação" (nos termos de Van Lier). Um dos meninos, cuja voz é apoiada pelos outros meninos da sala, "pega carona" no ímpeto do discurso anteriormente direcionado por P para trazer à discussão outro "texto" vindo do seu universo de experiência: um ditado popular que parece ir ao encontro da visão das práticas sociais que foram explicitadas por P ("A minha mãe sempre dizia: amor é lorota, o que manda é a nota!"). Fica evidente, como explicitado acima, que este texto reproduzido pelo aluno, que poderia ser caracterizado como um texto possuidor de um discurso do "senso comum", é um texto que traz um exemplo da mesma prática social usada pelo texto publicitário, (i.e., fato de mulheres preferirem homens ricos). Porém, P parece não entender que este texto trazido pelo aluno poderia ser conduzido para um trabalho de comparação, mostrando aos alunos

que ambos os textos – a propaganda e o ditado popular do aluno – possuíam a mesma ideologia, que por sua vez apóia as mesmas práticas sociais. Em outras palavras, P poderia ter trabalhado a intertextualidade existente na relação entre o texto lido e o texto do universo do aluno para facilitar a percepção deles em relação a quão intimamente estas práticas sociais estão ligadas à vida deles.

O que é interessante marcar nesta passagem da aula que traz o ditado da "lorota", é a falta de *uptake* de P (*uptake* sendo um termo que pode ser traduzido como "retomada" e definido como estratégia discursiva do professor que tem como função "tomar" o discurso do aluno para "expandir" uma idéia ou levar a uma discussão mais profunda), pois ela não aproveitou o texto trazido pelo aluno, em um momento altamente contingente, para tentar, a partir daí, reformular um questionamento que poderia ter caracterizado a verdadeira co-construção de um evento crítico. Ao contrário, não percebendo a possibilidade de aproveitar a fala do aluno como "gancho" para uma reflexão mais profunda, P simplesmente corta este momento ("Tá... mas o que eu ia perguntar para vocês é o seguinte... presta atenção... geralmente é mais a mulher que procura um homem rico ou é o homem que procura mais mulher rica?"). Na verdade, esta fala mostra que P continua tentando construir com os alunos um texto que poderia ser substituído se a foto da propaganda fosse de um homem. Esta tarefa, que parece estar além do alcance dos alunos, aparece já delineada na análise pré-pedagógica do texto e faz parte da agenda explícita de P. O objetivo de P foi simplesmente deixar claro que tanto a mulher quanto o homem sofrem pressões de construções ideológicas estereotipadas.

Porém, ao contrário do esperado por P, as falas dos meninos começam a apresentar um tom muito agressivo em relação às mulheres ("Sempre a mulher assim procura um homem de 70 anos, cheio da grana... aí mata o cara na cama pra ficar com a grana dele..."; "O forte da mulher e ter dinheiro pra gastar nas compras..."). Parece que P, percebendo isso, reformula a fala dos alunos para tentar amenizar a agressividade dos meninos e leva-los à percepção de que a mulher também é vítima de práticas sociais convencionais ("Ah... ela tem que ter a figura masculina para pagar as contas para ela...").

Como P não consegue fazer com que os alunos respondam a sua pergunta original neste trecho – relativa à natureza de um possível texto que teria um modelo homem em vez de uma mulher – ela recorre a uma estratégia mais direta quando tenta retomar a direção: pergunta explicitamente sobre as características de uma mulher ideal do ponto de vista masculino ("Gente, voltando aqui... então o texto provavelmente seria diferente se tivesse um ... então provavelmente um homem usaria que qualidades para uma mulher ideal?"). A partir desta estratégia direta, os alunos passam a entender onde P realmente queria chegar, pois os mesmos respondem às várias perguntas de P com atributos femininos ("Avantajada!", "Bunda durinha", "Alta", "Estilo feiticeira"). Observa-se que a partir dessas respostas dadas pelos alunos, é construída uma imagem feminina que realmente os entusiasma. P apóia esta construção com gestos e palavras em inglês, incentivando os alunos a explicitarem a imagem vendida pela mídia em geral (ie, "estilo feiticeira").

Uma vez engajados os alunos nessa construção de imagem, P pode voltar ao ideal masculino enfatizando o fato dele ser uma construção social ("Então esta

descrição de homem ideal é de homem ideal da nossa sociedade mesmo?"). As perguntas de P agora são obviamente formuladas para que os alunos saiam do ponto afetivo onde estão (entusiasmados com o "estilo feiticeira") diretamente para uma compreensão emocional da manipulação publicitária: se os meninos podem entender como eles podem ser atingidos por ideais do tipo "feiticeira", podem entender melhor como as mulheres caem na sedução do homem perfeito:

222. P	Então esta descrição de homem ideal é de homem ideal da nossa sociedade mesmo?
223. As	É!
224. A1	É verdade!
225. P	...É realmente o homem que toda mulher sonha?
226. As	É...
227. P	E quem ajuda a reforçar esta imagem de homem ideal?
228. A2	A mídia!
229. A1	É... a mídia...
230. P	A mídia? Como?
231. A2	Mostrando os atores bombados lá...
232. P	Os atores bombados, o que quer dizer isso?
233. A1	É... fortinho, definido
234. An	Sarado!
235. A2	Boi! (A2 aponta para um aluno que está no fundo da sala; Boi é apelido)
236. As	Boi!
237. P	Ah... ele seria um bom modelo?
238. A1	Seria! (risos de todos)

Finalizando a análise desses momentos da 6ª aula, é importante destacar a macro-estratégia pedagógica de P: ao invés de explicar, monologicamente, o funcionamento discursivo e ideológico da propaganda desde o começo da aula, P prefere um longo caminho direcionado especificamente para conduzir os alunos à uma percepção íntima das práticas sociais que estão por trás do discurso hegemônico veiculado pelo texto publicitário. A sua insistência em fazer perguntas que levariam à uma conscientização de estereótipos tanto femininos quanto masculinos, revela a sua crença na necessidade de "desvelar" o poder dos dois tipos de estereótipos na força manipuladora do texto. Em outras palavras, P queria mostrar que através do ideal feminino de "ser magra" e do ideal masculino de "ser rico, ter um gosto requintado e não ter nenhuma grama de gordura", o texto publicitário convence o leitor a consumir o produto nele anunciado.

O que é bastante interessante observar neste longo caminho tomado por P para conscientizar os alunos sobre as práticas sociais e ideologias existentes no texto, é a maneira pela qual o mesmo foi trilhado, através de uma estratégia de P: ela instiga os alunos a interpretarem o discurso hegemônico do texto publicitário a partir do próprio universo deles. Conduzindo os alunos por este caminho, através de suporte *scaffolding* para que os alunos percebam o que está por trás do discurso da propaganda, P chega a um momento da interação no qual poderia se dizer que houve reflexão crítica, levando os alunos a entenderem, justamente, o funcionamento de um discurso

persuasivo, como é o caso do discurso publicitário: "Então vocês percebem o que o autor da propaganda tem por trás? Porque... qual é o objetivo de uma propaganda?". Na verdade, este é o grande questionamento crítico da aula.

5. OS RESULTADOS DAS ANÁLISES

No decorrer da realização da investigação, ao estar em contato com diferentes teorias, começou a surgir um desejo por um ideal neo-vygotskiano que pudesse unir ao mesmo tempo uma certa dosagem de contingência e uma certa dosagem de intervenção do professor, o que levou à formulação de uma pergunta: "É possível se construir na interação de sala de aula eventos críticos de leitura através da co-construção?"

Ao iniciar a pesquisa, previu-se algumas possíveis dificuldades que se encontraria para concretizar uma prática pedagógica de leitura crítica para alunos adolescentes. Entre os problemas previstos, estavam a provável falta de proficiência lingüística desses alunos da rede pública, e a sua pouca familiaridade com o tipo de texto que mais se presta para um trabalho crítico – principalmente o texto ligado ao universo cultural anglo-americano.

Em relação a estes dois aspectos (conhecimento lingüístico e conhecimento prévio cultural), o que se pôde perceber através da análise das transcrições, é que os alunos surpreenderam com a extensão de seus conhecimentos. Em outras palavras, se pôde verificar, através das interações, que os alunos já sabiam muito do vocabulário básico para entender o texto e também tinham um grande conhecimento sobre o tema dos textos, que fazem parte da cultura norte-americana. Pode se especular, então, que um trabalho crítico com um material da cultura de massa e da mídia, não estaria fora do alcance do aluno adolescente da rede pública. Pelo contrário, como ficou evidente nas análises feitas durante a investigação, tais alunos, às vezes, possuem uma familiaridade com tal material que vai além do conhecimento do próprio professor.

Embora P pudesse, em muitos casos, contar com esse conhecimento prévio dos alunos, a estruturação das aulas foi determinada quase totalmente pela concepção implícita de P sobre o que vem a ser uma aula de leitura e, sobretudo, uma aula de leitura crítica. O conceito de leitura como um processo que integra conhecimentos de vários tipos – lingüístico, enciclopédico, discursivo – parece ter influenciado muito na formação das perguntas e na conseqüente estruturação da aula. Entretanto, ficou evidente, pelas análises feitas, que P possui um conceito (talvez implícito) de aula de leitura crítica, no qual o processo de conscientização é central. Nas interações melhor sucedidas, houve sempre uma tentativa de engajar o aluno no processo de desvelamento ideológico a partir de aproximações com o universo deles.

As interações que aconteceram no interior dos eventos pedagógico-comunicativos identificados não retrataram uma realidade monolítica na qual existem apenas uma P autoritária e um silenciamento total das vozes dos alunos. Ao contrário, as análises sugeriram uma P e um cenário de sala de aula caracterizado por uma forte tensão entre forças centralizadoras e descentralizadoras.

Não se pode negar que alguns momentos centralizados retrataram uma certa tentativa de P em concretizar o processo de conscientização. Entretanto, observou-

se que nesses momentos, quando P tendia a "orquestrar" as respostas em coro dos alunos, ou a "ditar" interpretações que os alunos eram recrutados a endossar, houve muito pouco espaço para o engajamento dos próprios alunos no processo:

De uma maneira geral, pode-se afirmar que quando P se sentia segura de seus conhecimentos – nos eventos ligados ao conhecimento lingüístico e apreensão de conteúdo, por exemplo – a interação tendia a ser mais centralizadora e não-contingente. Frente à insegurança e à tensão, entretanto, P abandona a interação.

6. MOMENTOS PROPÍCIOS PARA A CO-CONSTRUÇÃO: ADOLESCENTES MADUROS PARA A CRITICA

As análises mostram três grandes momentos nos quais se observa "fugas ao texto", em que P simplesmente fazia interrupções abruptas e não elabora as falas que são trazidas pelos alunos. Apesar de serem casos diferentes, todos esses momentos poderiam ser chamados de "embrionários", no sentido de que poderiam ter gerado discussões que, se tivessem sido desenvolvidas, levariam à reflexão crítica mais aprofundada. Os três momentos mostram que os adolescentes nesta faixa etária (15 à 18 anos) realmente já são pessoas "maduras para a crítica", uma vez que foram os próprios alunos que forneciam o material que refletia a presença, também embrionária, de uma certa reflexão sobre as questões tratadas. Isto indica que o aluno adolescente não é uma "tábua rasa", e que a conscientização dialógica pressupõe uma tentativa de ir à procura das reflexões embrionárias dos alunos para instigá-los à elaboração.

Esse momentos embrionários mostraram que, durante uma aula crítica, várias concepções, tensões e inseguranças estão em jogo, e o professor deve estar preparado para o inesperado e, principalmente, preparado para lidar com o material que os alunos trazem para a sala de aula que pode enriquecer as discussões e abrir caminhos para momentos críticos. Neste sentido, observa-se que muitas vezes o que impede que a reflexão crítica se desenvolva não é necessariamente o excesso de intervenção do professor, mas a falta de uma intervenção feita a partir dos momentos contingentes dos alunos. Ou seja, falta a co-construção.

IMPLICAÇÕES PARA A TEORIA E O ENSINO DA LEITURA CRÍTICA

Observou-se nas análises que as tentativas de se chegar à conscientização ocorreram em vários momentos. A existência desses momentos "embrionários" foi muito importante para mostrar que a sala de aula é constituída de tensões entre discursos que podem contribuir e levar à conscientização crítica. Porém, as análises mostraram que, devido a esta tensão de discursos de ambos professor e alunos na sala de aula, se torna difícil o trabalho com a leitura crítica pois o professor não se mostra preparado para tal realidade, pois o processo de conscientização pode ser concebido de forma **monológica** e também de forma **dialógica**. Neste sentido, se faz necessário investigar mais a fundo no sentido de procurar rever o que realmente se quer com a conscientização e, principalmente, como se pode lidar com esta questão na formação do professor de línguas, que muitas vezes não está preparado para enfrentar os conflitos e inseguranças que podem surgir em um trabalho que tenha como objetivo desenvolver a consciência crítica nos alunos.

O estudo mostrou que um dos caminhos pode ser uma investigação sobre o processo de interação em sala de aula, que traga reflexões sobre como o professor pode desenvolver uma prática que leve à conscientização e que, ao mesmo tempo, o prepare para lidar com os conflitos gerados em uma prática dialógica.

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Notas

1 Ver por exemplo os trabalhos de Busnardo e Braga, (1987, 1993, 2000), Freire e Macedo (1987), Pennycook (1994).

2 Hymes (1972), em oposição ao conceito de competência lingüística de Chomsky (1959, 1965).

3 Tradução da autora da dissertação. Texto original: "The social and political project of critical pedagogy is the transformation of society through challenging dominant power relations and the ideologies that support them."

4 Para o autor, " 'Discurso' é a maneira de 'estar junto no mundo para os humanos', seus modos de pensar e sentir (etc.) e para as coisas não humanas, de modo que tais coordenações de elementos e os elementos em si tenham suas identidades reconhecidas. 'Discurso' nomeia "the patterning" das coordenações, seu reconhecimento, tal como dos seus elementos.

5 O autor define 'coordinations' como uma maneira diferente de olhar para a identidade, devido ao conjunto de diferenças que constituem a nova ordem global, conforme descrito na nota 24. As coordenações são construídas de elementos diferentes, sendo que alguns são pessoas, bem como sua maneira de pensar, agir, sentir, avaliar, interagir, vestir-se, mover-se, gesticular e ser, e outros são outros tipos de coisas como lugares, atividades, instituições, objetos, ferramentas, língua e outros símbolos. Cada elemento tem dois papéis: o de coordenar ativamente outros elementos (em seu próprio interesse) e o de passivamente ser coordenado por outros elementos. (op. cit.)

6 Para o autor, vivemos uma era de diferenças: *pessoas diferentes, lugares e atividades diferentes, objetos e ferramentas diferentes, palavras diferentes, roupas diferentes, todas revelam aspectos diferentes de nós mesmos... nós sentimos, agimos e parecemos pessoas diferentes*. Por isso, imaginando este cenário de diferenças, podemos sentir mudanças de identidade atuando em nosso corpo. (Gee, op. cit).

7 Segundo Freire, "para a educação problematizadora, enquanto um que fazer humanista e libertador, o importante está em que os homens submetidos à dominação lutem por sua emancipação. Por isto é que esta educação, em que educadores e educandos se fazem sujeitos do seu processo, superando o intelectualismo alienante, superando o autoritarismo do educador "bancário", supera também a falsa consciência do mundo". (1987:75).

8 Para Busnardo (1999, mimeo), embora a resistência seja identificada com os discursos contra-hegemônicos, pode também ser ampliada através da aliança, uma vez que, mesmo dentro de grupos de mais poder, existem posturas às quais é possível se aliar, na luta pela justiça e pela igualdade. Este conceito de aliança deve muito à concepção gramsciana de hegemonia (como também de classe e de cultura) não monolítica. Em outras palavras, a cultura dominante não é monolítica; deve ser entendida mais como uma "malha", cujos espaços abertos podem atrair para a aliança.

9 Por isso pode ser chamada de dialética.

10 Os símbolos A representam alunos específicos identificados nas filmagens; As foi o símbolo utilizado para transcrever as falas gerais, quando vários alunos falavam ao mesmo tempo.

"OF COURSE I MAY BE REMEMBERING IT ALL WRONG": MEMORY AND MAPPING IN ELIZABETH BISHOP'S "SANTARÉM"

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When I had looked away I was conscious for a minute of their time, pulsing against and contradicting my own; then it lost its reality and became a fixed feeling, a little section of the past which had changed and become timeless for me because of its escape from my own time pattern. . . . The result is that the time of the book comes really to mean nothing to us, and if we think of it consciously we can only with an effort imagine the characters spaced, spread out, in our own time-scheme.

One of the chief difficulties of Proust for me has always been a Puritanic conviction that so much thought backwards from a sitting posture, no matter what wonders it brought to light, must be a sin against the particular beauties of the passing minute.
Elizabeth Bishop, "Time's Andromedas"

Already a fictitious past has supplanted in men's memories that other past, of which we now know nothing certain—not even that it is false.
Jorge Luis Borges, "Tlön, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius"

Introduction

This article focuses on the poetics and ethics[1] of memory elaborated by the Canadian/U.S.-American poet Elizabeth Bishop, who lived in Brazil for almost two decades.[2] I will analyze one of Bishop's latest Brazilian poems, "Santarém," with the aim to demonstrate that what has been sanctioned as Bishop's painterly eye in her Brazilian writings—her mastery of memory and vision over the travel scenes she depicted, thus her masterful gaze over others—is an issue that remains unsettled among the conflicts instigated by their intercultural context. Indeed, Bishop's writings about her Braz/silian life and experience are often marked by textual moments in which the deeply-rooted cultural categories she uses to make sense of the foreign culture prove to be insufficient. These are textual moments of irresolution, crisis, and silence, in which the poet's original cultural paradigms must give way to an expansion of meaning capable of producing a more satisfactory account of the reality she is experiencing as a writer.

Bishop's recurring experience with shattering cultural categories is analogous to the aural perception of dissonance, as is any process by which well-accommodated value patterns are uprooted by discrepant perceptions of experiential reality. Under the pressure to master her contradictory intercultural perceptions, Bishop's Brazilian texts often com-pose dissonant visual and/or sound imagery, in what she had called (in the context of Gertrude Stein's use of visual and sound perception in her writing) "a direct effort to express one sense in terms of another" (see Bishop 1933: 119). In visual terms, this is necessarily a poetics of *refraction*: the "deflection of a wave in passing obliquely from one transparent medium into a second medium in which its speed is different" (*Columbia Encyclopedia* 1995: 2295). In intercultural terms, it empowers the discrepancy between, on the one hand, dichotomies between self and other that warrant for Bishop a safe position in the encounter with alterity (her own, in the Brazilian culture she lived in; and the foreigner's, in the cultural mindset she shared with her readers), and on the other hand, the qualities of experience that they fail to accommodate.

I refer to dichotomies such as familiar/strange, center/margin, culture/nature, male/female, see-er/seen, progressive present/primitive past, and so on, such that each binary contains a secondary term designating a position of mere *antithesis* bound to confirm the supremacy of the foremost, occupied by the author. This discrepancy empowered by a poetics of dissonance—rather, the contradictions it sustains—enacts a critique of hegemonic perceptions of intercultural conflict: antithesis is not resolved back into the centrality of the author's preliminary thesis; nor is it held as paralysis within incompatible but co-existing frames of cultural reference. Instead, Bishop's Braz/silian writings set off an expandable interplay of deferring conceptions, therefore not subjected to the reassuring demands for resolution within binary frameworks. They engage a process of meaning-making rather than the subjugation of conflict—a complexity rather than an antithesis, an expansion of perception rather than an object to be either co-opted or excludently exoticized.

Bishop does employ such dualities, interpreted by some scholars in ways that imply the reinforcement of her original cultural paradigms (see, for example, Goldensohn 1992: 233-236). My purpose, however, is to demonstrate that although the perception of dualities is explicit in her poems, the impact of their usage is in

that they are double-edged, persistently exceeded *from within* the discourse defining them. Bishop does not pretend there is a way out of the system of binary thinking and language. Her writings foreground rather than obscure the familiar discourse of antithesis. They display the illusory naturalness of its paradigms, and so they undermine their own resolutions. In other words, although Bishop does employ binary concepts in her work, they function as springboards for *exceeding* duality which I find significantly sensitizing in her writings—so that oppositions release, rather than proscribe, meaning-making processes.

Memory and Mapping: Writing Place over Time

In a letter to Ilse and Kit Barker, written sixteen months after her first arrival in Brazil, Bishop expressed her awareness of the ungraspable, dissonant connections between geography and experience: "It is funny to come to Brazil to experience total recall about Nova Scotia—geography must be more mysterious than we realize, even" (Oct. 12 1952, Princeton). In this passage, Bishop seems to sense that even geography, with its emphasis on writing place over time, cannot reduce the way memory intersects and overlaps spatial positions, activating meanings in unexpected ways. She acknowledges, in other words, that the meanings and positions which have marked her experience cannot be made to "sit still," to be contained or mapped within seemingly unrelated cultural contexts.

Sensing that the present cannot be insulated safely away from the unresolved meanings of past experiences—as the past cannot be protected from the conflicts of present experiences—, Bishop looks to a poetics that may resist the hegemonic notion that past meanings either determine or are surpassed (and suppressed) by a present identity. In such a poetics, even geography—*writing* place—is irreducible to stasis, the stasis of interpreting, identifying, or *mapping* place. Thus, a reading of Bishop's geography requires us to listen to a poetics that exceeds the linear notion of time. Bishop's poem "Santarém" is the focus of my discussion, because, as I will demonstrate, it works powerfully with memory to deconstruct the solipsistic ideology of linear time, progress, resolution and resolve. I will argue that this poem recurrently catches Bishop in the realization, expressed in her letter to the Barkers, of the connectedness between seemingly unrelated positions in place and time, and thus of the impossibility to render the other (and her own past) as remote—whether in a chaotic or idyllic time.

If we consider that Bishop's Brazilian writings reveal very little about Brazil as compared to very much about her culture shock (the clash between the anxiety and resistance to produce an interpretive closure on her perceptions of Brazilian and Anglo-American cultural frameworks), we can consider also that they abound with the contradictions of her own mapping of the place. This ongoing conflict emerges every time the poet seeks and fails to interpret her experience of the place (Braz/sil) according to what she calls in "Santarém" her "idea of the place" (Brazil). Bishop's descriptions recurrently raise and frustrate expectations of mapping the foreign place within a remote and manageable position in time: each added detail disturbs the humanist framework of detached contemplation, as description is altered, and contradicted, again and again. We will see that throughout the poem, changing

frameworks of meaning grow increasingly incompatible, and threaten to loosen the functional identity borders that should distinguish the self from cultural others. In order not to shatter, these frames of reference recurrently demand that the other be placed in a periphery—in the periphery of a timeline, i.e., in the past.

The assumption that the foreign culture can be mapped onto a primitive past, or that it can be resolved into the speaker's supposedly evolved, central framework, is effectively shattered in Bishop's Brazilian poem "Santarém" (Bishop 1983: 185-87). Here it is:

Of course I may be remembering it all wrong
after, after—how many years?

That golden evening I really wanted to go no farther;
more than anything else I wanted to stay awhile
in that conflux of two great rivers, Tapajós, Amazon,
grandly, silently flowing, flowing east.
Suddenly there'd been houses, people, and lots of mongrel
riverboats skittering backing and forth
under a sky of gorgeous, under-lit clouds,
with everything gilded, burnished along one side,
and everything bright, cheerful, casual—or so it looked.
I liked the place; I liked the idea of the place.
Two rivers. Hadn't two rivers sprung
from the Garden of Eden? No, that was four
and they'd diverged. Here only two
and coming together. Even if one were tempted
to literary interpretations
such as: life/death, right/wrong, male/female
—such notions would have resolved, dissolved, straight off
in that watery, dazzling dialectic.

In front of the church, the Cathedral, rather,
there was a modest promenade and a belvedere
about to fall into the river,
stubby palms, flamboyants like pans of embers,
buildings one story high, stucco, blue or yellow,
and one house faced with *azulejos*, buttercup yellow.
The street was deep in dark-gold river sand
damp from the ritual afternoon rain,
and teams of zebus plodded, gentle, proud,
and *blue*, with down-curved horns and hanging ears,
pulling carts with solid wheels.
The zebus' hooves, the people's feet
waded in golden sand,
dampered by golden sand,
so that almost the only sounds
were creaks and *shush, shush, shush.*

Two rivers full of crazy shipping—people
all apparently changing their minds, embarking,
disembarking, rowing clumsy dories.
(After the Civil War some Southern families
came here; here they could still own slaves.
They left occasional blue eyes, English names,
and *oars*. No other place, no one
on all the Amazon's four thousand miles
does anything but paddle.)
A dozen or so young nuns, white-habited,
waved gaily from an old stern-wheeler
getting up steam, already hung with hammocks
—off to their mission, days and days away
up God knows what lost tributary.
Side-wheelers, countless wobbling dugouts...
A cow stood up in one, quite calm,
chewing her cud while being ferried,
tipping, wobbling, somewhere, to be married.
A river schooner with raked masts
and violet-colored sails tacked in so close
her bowsprit seemed to touch the church

(Cathedral, rather!). A week or so before
there'd been a thunderstorm and the Cathedral'd
been struck by lightning. One tower had
a widening zigzag crack all the way down.
It was a miracle. The priest's house right next door
had been struck, too, and his brass bed
(the only one in town) galvanized black.
Graças a Deus—he'd been in Belém.

In the blue pharmacy the pharmacist
had hung an empty wasps' nest from a shelf:
small, exquisite, clean matte white,
and hard as stucco. I admired it
so much he gave it to me.
Then – my ship's whistle blew. I couldn't stay.
Back on board, a fellow-passenger, Mr. Swan,
Dutch, the retiring head of Philips Electric,
really a very nice old man,
who wanted to see the Amazon before he died,
asked, "What's that ugly thing?"

Begun most probably in 1962, and finished and published in 1978, this poem is about the interpreter's failing attempt to evade, through selective recollection, the threatening encounter with a reality that resists being reduced to the consonance of a static form or formula. Faced with this disturbing threat, the afflicted persona tries

repeatedly to contain into a received harmony the events that may disturb her habitual patterns of thought. After several frustrated attempts to otherize the place and its people, Bishop chooses to stop the poem precisely when the reader must contrast the speaker against *another foreigner* in Brazil, in their symmetrical responses to what is in either case an exotic souvenir. This difference defers the binary pattern of oppositions constructed so far in the poem. At this point, the reader experiences first-hand the movement of the mind acknowledging that reality must be experienced in the complexity of its dissonant geography rather than controlled by binary reductions of meaning.

This poem starts, as Bishop's Brazilian pieces often do, by projecting the poetic persona's own culture shock onto the other in order to appropriate presence, and presentness, to her own position—a stable position or identity from which to claim centrality. They attempt to produce, therefore, as a defining trait of others, their presumed ineptitude in adapting to a modern (present) perspective (her own). Placing others in the framework of the past is made easier by scenes that are spatially framed, statically portrayed—as in "still-life" photographs, landscape paintings, or film frames. This strategy produces for the poetic persona a position of presence and mastery over the otherwise disturbing incompatibility of simultaneous frameworks of time. In sum, in order to assert her centrality in the cultural encounter, the poetic persona seeks to *map the foreign culture in a remote space, by covertly pinning it down in a backward time.*

Ironically, however, the stasis attempted through cultural stills is betrayed by the intensity of movement which they *contain*, in both meanings: as having *contents*, and as producing *containment*. In other words, *precisely* as in a photograph or film frame, movement is immanent and imminent, irreducible. Thus, descriptions which seemed to be exclusively spatially oriented—often regarded by Bishop scholars as ethnographic and objective—can be read to actually foreground the discourse of containment as such. They trace the conflict that develops in the text to the point of shattering the centrality of her speakers' patronizing gaze over others.

Memory and Other Dissonant Geographies in "Santarém"

"Santarém" begins by addressing the arbitrary and ephemeral nature of meaning—requiring that "the *recognition* itself of what is being written must be kept fluid" (Bishop 1934: 97-100). From the outset, the speaker emphasizes that her necessarily contingent perspective of the present is always already a reduction or distortion rather than a recovery of any original meanings of the past. In other words, despite its power to overwrite the past, memory does not succeed in obliterating the changing resonances of past experiences. This hierarchical conflict between present and past events disturbs the assumption of an evolutionary timeline inexorably containing the past into a present resolution. By bringing past experiences into ever-changing perspectives, memory cannot fix meanings, so that even the mapping or description of the place, supposedly a product of objective observation, unexpectedly becomes an open-ended process instead. This is the sense in which geography cannot be reduced to stasis through mapping: because mapping itself is ephemeral. Even as they are written, places, like meanings, find ways of slipping away from fixity.

Aware of the impossibility of recovering the past, and that mapping, as writing, is inconclusive, Bishop nevertheless realizes the need to remember, to elaborate, to map—even if to compensate for the amnesia or loss of intensity of the meanings brought into the present by past experiences. Thus, in "Santarém" she writes, "Of course I may be remembering it all wrong . . ." and, having said that, actually "remembering it all wrong." As an ephemeral act, mapping allows Bishop to implicate herself in the contradictions and mysteries of geography, emphasizing her poetic search to exceed a linear, hegemonic history. She is aware, as we shall see in "Crusoe in England" too, that remembering reality can only get it "all wrong," as the necessary perspective of the present is always already a reduction of reality. Thus, her recollection of events is disturbed from the outset by the arbitrariness of re-presenting them: "Of course I may be remembering it all wrong . . ."

Recollecting moments when her steamboat stopped for a few hours in the small town of Santarém (where the Tapajós River flows into the Amazon), the speaker seeks to evade cultural diversity by idealizing a resolution of conflict, imposing the consonance of a familiar pattern of meaning on a *geography that insists on remaining dissonant*. The unresolvable confrontation between an irreducible past reality and the desire to represent it "truthfully" is thus the first difficulty the interpreter is afflicted with.

Conflict Unproblematized: Memory and Denial

Aware of the impossibility of recovering the past, the speaker's anxiety to protect her familiar meanings leads her to seek refuge in the undisturbing contemplation of nature. Nature is traditionally presumed to be self-present, universal, and autonomous in relation to all contingencies—in other words, less resistant (less dissonant) to interpretation than culture, because governed by immutable laws that, for example, make rivers always flow in a certain direction ("flowing, flowing east."): "I wanted to go no farther. . . . [but only] to stay awhile in that conflux of two great rivers". (One might note here, in passing, that the desire to have *nature without people* is typical of the colonizer of new lands, as postcolonial studies have shown.) But dissonant cultural geography invades the desired isolation of speaker and nature: silence is disrupted by "houses, people, and lots of mongrel / riverboats" which, unlike the rivers, unpredictably skitter "back and forth."

Though the speaker envisions her contemplation of nature as a resolution, a refuge from a cultural reality that resists representation, and though she thus associates nature with consonance, she gradually learns that this oversimplification of nature and of conflicting cultural perceptions eventually fails (by the end of the poem, nature is neither wholly reassuring, nor wholly threatening). No longer able to take refuge in Nature, the question becomes: How can the interpreter appropriate a dissonant reality that refuses representation? The first temptation is to rely on pre-established categories or, in other words, on replacing the *place* by the *idea of the place* (i.e., its memory or recollection), purifying ("demongrelizing") it into the homogeneity of consonance.

But interpretation does not succeed in evading diversity. To replace the place by the "idea of the place"—its rivers the same that "sprung form the Garden of Eden"—

would mean to destroy it, or to reduce it to the *consonant* stereotype of the new world as paradise. This would be the typical strategy of the colonizer to control the land by making it *consonant* with his previous knowledges, mythologies and desires. The idea must be rejected: "No, that was four / and they'd diverged." In other words, the place rejects (is *dissonant* to) the idea of the place, and, in fact, all easy *binary idealizations* (productions of *comfortable consonances*), because the "watery, dazzling dialectic" of cultural history, a permanent flux and process, cannot be stabilized by the monumental categories of language. Like a river, it cannot be grasped and fit into the idea of the observer.

The speaker's desire that consonance could "stay awhile," "grandly, silently," as in epiphany, is thus an artificial respite from conflict—not at all the revelation, through imaginative insight, of a Garden of Eden. The interpreter is right "in the conflux" of two rivers, flowing to the east, in a dissonant "dazzling dialectic" that sets the two rivers in motion, indeed the whole economy and life of the place in motion. Thus, when Bishop argues for the dissolution of oppositions, she is talking about a romantic idealization: after all, if the rivers could dissolve "straight off" into one another, there would be no "dazzling dialectic".[3] The contradictory and arbitrary idealization, though only initially forcing its way into the poem, remains unproblematized by the speaker, who claims to reject binary interpretations while she actually reinscribes them by setting nature and her idea of the place apart from the people and the place. Assuming an opposition between nature and culture, only to pretend to resolve it, the speaker attempts but fails to impose a framework of interpretation (consonance) into which contradictions might be dissolved.

In this "dazzling dialectic" in which containment proves unfeasible—in which dissolution is frustrated by the dissonant geography of "mongrel / riverboats skittering back and forth"—, it is hardly surprising that the speaker's anxiety to efface the shattering of her framework of resolution is intensified. Having failed in her attempt to impose on the place the stereotype of the new world as paradise, where human imperfection might *resolve* into the exotic, idyllic, seemingly unproblematic harmony of nature, the interpreter next seeks to *dissolve* distinctions altogether, so that culture and nature mingle:

> a modest promenade and a belvedere
> about to fall into the river,
> . . .
> The street . . .
> damp from the ritual afternoon rain,
> . . .
> and teams of zebus plodded, gentle, proud,
> . . .
> pulling carts with solid wheels.
> The zebus' hooves, the people's feet
> waded in the golden sand.

This is a strategy to generalize dissonant details, or to homogenize, dissolve them into the consonance of an absolute truth. Thus, *blue* is taken for granted as "coming together" with yellow ("blue or yellow") like other binary "literary interpretations"

that "would have resolved, dissolved, straight off." While defining *blue* as antithetically dissonant, the color *yellow*, prevailing in the poem, indicates the comforts of consonance: "That golden evening I really wanted to go no farther . . . everything gilded, burnished along one side" (notice the suggestion of duality, the other side later filled by "blue"); "the dark-gold river sand"; the blue "zebus' hooves, the people's feet / waded in golden sand, / dampered by golden sand . . ." Bishop stresses the word *blue* in italics showing the speaker's *euphoric fascination with the harmony of its resolution into yellow* in "that golden evening" in Santarém. This moment is one of blindness to dissonance, as in denial. As *azulejos* is constituted by the word *azul* (blue), both colors come together: the yellow tiles *contain* the dissonant color blue, producing an ideal dissolution of conflict. While apparently flexible to difference ("blue or yellow") in coping with dissonant reality and its destabilization of oppositions, the speaker is anxious to co-opt dissonance so as to confirm consonance through its antithesis, imposing yellow as an artificial harmony on an unruly world.

The unruliness of such a world is thus associated with the "occasional blue eyes," the the corruption of paradise by the values of the foreigner. This conflation of the discourses of authenticity and xenophobia apparently redeems Bishop's own foreignness in the place (unlike the other foreigners there, she values the indigenous) by assuming an essential purity which has failed to fulfill the sojourner's expectations of a paradise of consonance—her "immodest demands for a different world / and a better life, and complete comprehension / of both at last, and immediately" ("Arrival at Santos").

Memory as Particularization: Undermining Systemic Perception

The strategy of evading the particularities of blue shades in the consonance of yellow also fails: the proliferation and dissemination of details disable idealized generalizations instead (the place resisting generalizations with details, of course, is a *dissonant place that resists its reduction into consonance*). Each time Bishop "corrects" herself so as not to remember it "all wrong," she does not dismiss her previous perspective, but confronts it. The impossibility to contain such meanings into stasis stems from the fact that details persistently disrupt rather than confirm consonance, disabling any subjugation of content under structure. In the poem, the interpreter's anxiety to impose meanings thus begins to crack open the binary framework underlying the speaker's discourse of a consonant geography.

In this light, the poem confronts rather than dissolves binary and cultural oppositions. Each added perspective, treated as antithetical at first, becomes irreducible or relational, disabling systematic reductions. Such a dissonant reality is no longer what Bishop had called a "circus tent" decades earlier:

> If I stretch my thought to Egypt, to India, downtown, it is in my thought I see them and they are not, at the time, reality for me. If I go to these places it is a different matter. Reality, then, is something like a huge circus tent, folding, adjustable, which we carry around with us and set up wherever we are. It possesses the magical property of being able to take on characteristics of whatever place we are in, in fact it can become identical with it. (qtd. in Costello 1991: 129)

To become identical means to resolve conflict by evading particularities, presuming that they should subsume, as if naturally, under a universal truth—and to reach stasis. But the conceptual suspensions and silences in "Santarém" constantly *delude* the poem from setting itself up as a systematic structure containing dissonance. While in the poem the speaker assumes a "circus-tent reality" of consonance by presuming the dissolution of binary "literary interpretations" into a "yellow" (tent-like) framework, the poem refuses or suspends resolution altogether, through the ambivalences of the word *blue*. Though apparently adapting itself to dissonant geographies, the "circus tent" (in the poem, the systematic construct of an idyllic consonance that dissolves conflict) ironically adapts those dissonant geographies into its framework instead—adapts *them* to *itself*. Unchanging, the tent merely moves from one place to the other, solipsistically, as "we carry [it] around with us and set [it] up wherever we are." It is an equivocation, therefore, to assume that the tent harbors the "magical property of being able to take on characteristics of whatever place we are in, in fact [of becoming] identical with it." Such a property is actually the solipsistic framework by which dissonance is presumed to be dissolved in the poem, by which the "circus tent" passes for a technology recovering (becoming identical with) an original conciliatory harmony, its systematic structure passing for flexibility while imposing the restoration of a pre-set order, a ubiquitous one that can be "carried around" anywhere.

Memory as Generalization: a "Circus-Tent" Reality

In her important discussion of Bishop's excursive sight, Bonnie Costello argues that the construct of reality in the mind is irreducible to a polarity between imagination and reality. However, when she elaborates on the fictionalizing quality of memory in "Santarém," the only way she offers to read the historical implications of a discourse that transforms "facts of oppression" into the "charming oddities" of the "picturesque" is as a creative "disdain of social forces":

> In "Santarém" Bishop sets this inevitable fictionalizing quality of memory against the highly qualified idealism of the town. She entertains a certain nostalgia, that is, while remaining self-conscious about the difference between a memory and a reality, about memory's power to transform what might affront one on arrival of what might be troubling or threatening realities. A lightning storm survived ("*Graças a Deus*—he'd been in Belém") becomes part of a picturesque landscape. What were once facts of oppression are absorbed into charming oddities and local color: "(After the Civil War some Southern families / came here; here they could still own slaves. / They left occasional blue eyes, English names . . .)." (Costello 1991: 174)

This "fictionalizing quality" of a "circus-tent" reality is an attempt to transcend historical reality by imposing meanings, dissolving rather than confronting the conflicts of history. It transfers the "highly qualified idealism of the town" to another kind of idealization, where conflict becomes unproblematized through the exotic and picturesque, dis-implicating the speaker from her discourse of cultural insulation. In other words, it mistakes the imagination—a process of conceiving reality in flexible, unpredictable ways—for an idealized, fixed conception that evades historical

contingency. Though passing solely as the Barthesian "floating signifier," still the tent suits the sojourner's purpose to evade relationality with the place—except, of course, when it comes to feeding on the resources which the place provides for supporting the tent's structure.

The tent must be set up, or assembled. Each time and place, the same structure is assembled differently, according to the resources each place provides. Yet the tent's self-centralizing structure does not change, otherwise it would not be "folding, adjustable, [one] which we carry around with us and set up wherever we are." In the poem, the speaker's discursive "circus tent" is the framework of consonance which supports itself by producing binary distinctions between resolution and conflict, self and other. Passing for a "floating signifier," propounding the dissolution of oppositions, such a conciliatory interpretive stand (the tent) evades the historical reality of cultural conflict, alienating the speaker from the historicity of the place, and of her representation insulating self and other. Evasion and alienation are thus taken for granted as "magical dissolutions" of oppositions through the technology of the traveler's tent.

In the attempt to reduce dissonance into a "circus-tent reality," conflict is initially taken for granted as being already implicitly resolved into consonance. Notice the past perfect tense in "there'd been," suggesting that such a moment was short-lived. Notice also that dissonance is portrayed "under" the (apparent) consonance of the sky ("—or so it looked"):

> Suddenly there'd been houses, people, and lots of mongrel
> riverboats skittering back and forth
> under a sky of gorgeous, under-lit clouds,
> and everything bright, cheerful, casual—or so it looked.

What happens next, according to the speaker, is that visual and aural perceptions converge, resolving dissonant sounds into consonance: ". . . / so that almost the only sounds / were creaks and *shush, shush, shush*" (notice that she poem has left the "creaks" in, while downplaying the word as irrelevant, silenced by "*shush*".) But it is right when silence apparently subdues antithesis that unresolvable, dissonant details disrupt, Dionysian, uncontrolled, "crazy" in the poem, refusing to reduce the place into the interpreter's idea of it.

This scene of human disruption threatens the interpreter's pretension to resolve dissonant perceptions of the history and culture of Santarém by reducing and naturalizing them into a universalized, certain, predicatable pattern. The scene of *nature with people* is thus the third difficulty the interpreter is afflicted with.

The "Fortunate Fall"

In the anxiety to resolve the dissonance of culture shock into consonance, the next strategy is to assume that this "fall from paradise" or from an ideal timelessness (past) is the product of evolution, certain to produce an ideal reality or consonance yet to be developed in the direction of the interpreter's culture. Though still latent in the primitive stage of the chaotic, picturesque, ornamental, or comical, the consonance to which the "fall from paradise" is bound seems certain to ensure the speaker's

position of centrality, statically and comfortably apart from dissonant cultural geographies.

Having failed to represent the new world as a *godly* paradise, the poem imposes its second strategy by representing Santarém as a fallen, *godless* paradise in need of restoration (as an antithetical dissonance, the loss confirms the existence of consonance, or of God). In "Santarém," the new land is fallen from paradise because corrupted by the Latin church and by the blue-eyed U.S. Southerners who, as the interpreter explains, came to Brazil because "here they could still own slaves". Now such a restoration requires the poet's aesthetic labor, a shedding of the artist's internal light to foresee and reveal the dissolution of a "mongrel" reality back into consonance. Such an enlightened interpretation by the speaker pretends to provide the new land with a "fortunate fall," in which comforting products of progress such as *oars* are comically contrasted against the speaker's preferred backwardness of a supposedly original purity: now, corrupted by the *blue* eyes of the colonizer, "no one / on all the Amazon's four thousand miles / does anything but paddle." The interpreter thus seeks to legitimize, by essentializing and dehistoricizing the place, the arbitrary split between her cultural perspective, or her "idea of the place," on the one hand; and the "place" with its people, on the other. Ironically, however, she does this precisely while claiming the dissolution of binary interpretations.

Having created an opposition only to assume its dissolution, the interpreter nonetheless lays down a slash between herself and the people of the place. The unproblematization of this contradiction exposes in the poem the colonizer's anxiety to contain disruption into a systematic structure confirming instead of confronting the artificiality of the binary framework underlying her idealizations of a lost paradise. Thus the poetic persona produces the lightening in the poem, striking what corrupts the nature of the place—striking, that is, the religious structure symbolized by the Cathedral and the priest's house. But there is a problem: at this junction dissonance becomes unresolvable, for here violence comes from nature instead. Destabilized, the distinction between nature and culture is rendered as an arbitrary one.

That nature is portrayed as innocent and harmless in the beginning of the poem and violent and dangerous as the poem develops, signals the interpreter's process of facing nature *alongside* a complex process by which the contradictions of cultural and historical reality cannot be contained into ideal oppositions—nor dissolved, as the speaker had claimed explicitly at the end of the second stanza:

> Even if one were tempted
> to literary interpretations
> such as: life/death, right/wrong, male/female
> — such notions would have resolved, dissolved, straight off
> in that watery, dazzling dialectic.

Bishop might have added "American/foreigner," the binary her poem will not dissolve but rather suspend and question by its end, showing that Bishop's reconstruction of the past has come a long way from her split "us/them" that she evoked in her jacket blurb for Robert Lowell's *Life Studies*:

> Whenever I read a poem by Robert Lowell I have a chilling sensation of here-and-now, of exact contemporaneity: more aware of those ironies of "American history," grimmer about them, and yet hopeful. If more people read poetry, if it were more exportable and translatable, surely his poems would go far towards changing, or at least unsettling, minds made up against us. (Lowell 1959)

In "Santarém" the speaker cannot so easily evade the need to relinquish her xenophobic (us/them) framework naturalized in the passage above as an interpretive harmonization of a foreign aggression ("changing . . . minds made up against us"). Thus, again and again, she seeks to confirm an ideal consonance, while the poem insistently breaks out in dissonant disruption, bringing the interpreter to a struggle "towards changing, or at least unsettling," her *own* discourse of reductionist exoticism or identity imposition. One example is her self-correction, repeatedly remarking "Cathedral, rather," in the struggle with her own discourse of replacing historical contingency (the Cathedral as a changing cultural institution) with a disorderly form that should be controlled (a cracking building): "In front of the church, the Cathedral, rather . . ."

The "widening zigzag crack all the way down" the building is a metaphor of such a struggle: it does not demolish the Cathedral, purifying nature from its corruption by human institutions, but rather deconstructs the discursive structure that attempts to colonize historical processes into products of order and consonance. In other words, by demolishing the speaker's pretension to construct resolution, the crack in the building is a crack *in the interpreter's monument* or discourse, which does not succeed in evading the historicity represented by the cathedral:

> (Cathedral, rather!). A week or so before
> there'd been a thunderstorm and the Cathedral'd
> been struck by lightning. One tower had
> a widening zigzag crack all the way down.

Rather than confirming through mimesis the autonomy of a self, the poetic persona's selfcentric discourse gives away its own anxiety to cover up contingent reality. Bishop thus implicates herself in the very aestheticist discourse she had criticized through her earlier poem "The Monument." The passage below shows Bishop's elaboration on this notion of a discourse (monument) that cannot be discarded but whose faultlines crack open:

> [The monument] is an artifact
> of wood. Wood holds together better
> than sea or cloud or sand could by itself,
> much better than real sea or sand or cloud.
> It chose that way to grow and not to move.
> The monument's an object, yet those decorations,
> carelessly nailed, looking like nothing at all,
> give it away as having life, and wishing;
> wanting to be a monument, to cherish something.

Memory as a Threshold from Product to Process

In "Santarém," the crack in the cathedral is also the crack in the discursive structure which splits the interpreter's dehistoricizing "idea of the place" from the place of

Santarém, and therefore from the changing history and culture of the people there. Frustrated by her attempt to seek refuge in nature, or even in the dissolution of the opposition between nature and culture, the speaker's next step is to *heal* the pain of the absence of a reassuring framework to rely on. Ironically, then, the speaker by now is entering a pharmacy which feels like a nook when compared to the grandness of the initial scene. The compression of the pharmacy suggests a threat closing in, into dangerous closeness, leading to the speaker's encounter with the empty wasps' nest. This compression is reinforced by the ambivalence of the phrase, "in the blue pharmacy." Unresolvable, the word signifies both the color and the mood, *blue*. Weary. Not, as much criticism has it, of the foreign culture, but of the shattering of her own framework of cultural barriers.

Unable to portray a Garden of Eden where all conflicts dissolve in the waters—the romanticism of such an epiphany veiled by a "dark," "underlit" sunlight—, and unable to restore an original reality through intellectual labor or imaginative insight, as the opening line warns us "of course" may not happen, "Santarém" can no longer centralize the figure of the heroic, lone spectator of a fallen ideal. Instead, the poem highlights the disruption and refusal of what McCorkle calls "a failed ideology and one on the threshold of necessary transformation" (n.d.)—the framework of consonance defining binary distinctions between nature and culture, self and other, which cracks toward the end of the poem.

Such a refusal is unexpected. Having entered the "blue pharmacy" (notice that *blue* no longer dissolves into consonance, but decenters it, shifting its ambivalent meanings, indicating both the color and the mood), the speaker sees a wasps' nest, itself an ongoing process of nature and culture that confounds distinctions. The pharmacist gives it to her because she ". . . admired it / so much . . . ." in silence. This moment builds up expectations of resolution of conflict into a conventional, familiar perspective of silence as isolation, or the passive acceptance of a presumed impossibility of contact in the absence of cultural identification. However, once the speaker is "back on board," all expectations that she has finally been restored to some set of cultural values that she need not question, fail. What happens next is not a step that she either takes or relinquishes, but an event, an unpredictable disruption of all expectations: a "fellow passenger" asks her, "What's that ugly thing?" This question ends the poem in the same active silence in which the dramatic persona had looked at the wasps' nest, allowing its materiality to shift and revise rather than petrify her perceptions of the relations between nature and culture—and between culture and culture. This silence is not a resolution, as in epiphany, but a sustained dissonance, challenging the desire for an unchanged, unpopulated "idea of the place". As the poetic persona finally confronts her find of an unpopulated wasps' nest, the ship's whistle blows, disallowing resolution and signaling motion instead.

This final silence is not a withdrawal from language, but a disturbance put to motion. The resonant ending after Mr. Swan's question is indeed intriguing, and destabilizes entirely the "literary interpretations such as . . . right/wrong" which Bishop challenges explicitly in the second stanza. This is a textual moment of relational dissonance which clearly departs from rendering reality as a "circus-tent".

Memory vs. Denial

The resonant silence at the end of the poem no longer imposes dehistoricized, consonant meanings on a dissonant reality, but opens unpredictable meanings instead. When Mr. Swan asks about the nature of what is unknown to him ("What is that ugly thing?"), he naturalizes the binary category beautiful/ugly on his own terms, so that what passes for a question is actually an imposition. But, as Bishop writes of Crusoe's knife, the wasps' nest "reek[s] of meaning, like a crucifix" ("Crusoe in England"). Mr. Swan's phrase cannot reduce those meanings into any familiar category, and so it is left to an absence of words. It is precisely at this moment, "at the point of [its] development where [it is] still incomplete" ("Gerard" 7), that Bishop chooses to stop the poem.

This absence of words is not an absence of meaning, but an expansion: Mr. Swan's need to aestheticize dissonance, projecting his discomfort toward the place which has not fulfilled his expectation of consonance, is analogous to the narrator's need to spatialize dissonance, constructing an all-encompassing consonance without conflict in the opening scene, only to aestheticize it when consonance fails. Indeed, in the pharmacy scene dissonant reality closes in. The poetic persona lingers on, as if in need of a remedy to sustain her effort, still idealizing a shelter from the discomfort of dissonance and projecting it this time onto an intricate object. In other words, she sublimates dissonant reality by transforming an object of basic utility (the nest) into an aesthetic object to be possessed as a souvenir when it no longer serves its purpose.

The narrator's withdrawal is thus spatialized from the opening scene as the word "blue" colors the particularity of detail throughout the poem, as the narrator's process of inwardness gains the interior of the "blue pharmacy," culminating in the intricacy of the wasps' nest. Both foreigners—Mr. Swan and the narrator—must aestheticize the other culture as an expression of their judgmental perceptions, and it is this similarity between them, as much as the difference between her construct of beauty and his construct of ugliness, which surprises the reader. By the end of the poem, the narrator's discourse of consonance with the place foregrounds instead her inability to resolve dissonance, thus her anxiety to aestheticize it. What on the surface discourse of the poem apparently distinguishes the poet from the executive actually provides the thread that makes them alike as well as unlike.

At the same time, the fact that dissonance now comes from a fellow traveler, rather than from the exoticized foreign culture, makes it no longer mappable onto a cultural other. Mr. Swan's interpretation of the place is thus not so different from her own. Her previous attempts to dissolve rather than confront her own binary framework of representation was an effort to evade a reality that disturbed her: a New World is populated by foreigners rather than Edenized.

Whether in the speaker's (covert, via the anxiety for consonance) or in Mr. Swan's (overt) rendering, ugliness is the reinscription of a selfcentric geography imposed on a dissonant reality: the foreign culture is just as uglified by Mr. Swan as it has been made picturesque by the speaker in the attempt to distinguish herself as an innocent foreigner in Santarém. The poem situates aesthetic values in the context of the speakers' own interests in exoticizing the other. In attempting to conclude the impossibility of intercultural contact, Mr. Swan actually cracks open the discourse

of exoticism and decenters his own discourse of consonance, displaying the arbitrariness that naturalizes as certain the unrelatedness between cultures. Unrelatedness and certainty are thus displayed as the *anxiety* for unrelatedness and self-certainty, now revealed as inconclusive.

What follows is a silence that inaugurates the speaker's relationality with Santarém outside her "circus tent"—outside the discourse of a consonant geography that dissolves historical meanings. The speaker is no longer an American sojourner holding an exotic souvenir, but a participant in the discourse of exoticism, and of the historicity of its shattering conceptual framework. Mr. Swan's question is therefore not only rhetorical (he affirms ugliness while apparently only asking about it), but also ironic (he deconstructs consonance in his anxiety to impose it). Resolution through a superior/inferior, outside/inside dichotomy is no longer possible—only intercultural contact without the dissolution of conflict—in other words, only the questioning of any conclusiveness as to the logocentric "unease with situations in which landscape, character, and language do not, for [Bishop], fully cohere" (Doreski 1993: 125).

By confronting instead of dissolving oppositions, "Santarém" disables its own systematic discourse that renders self and other unrelational. What the speaker learns by the end of the poem is the arbitrariness of her assumptions of dissolved conflict, of the anxiety to confirm the binary opposition that might detach or alienate her from the dissonant reality she ascribes—and proscribes—to the other. Though conflicted, Bishop's yearning to produce consonance in this poem is evident. Its recurrent failure to do so, however, can be read as an instance of her break from high modernism's aestheticization of conflict, that sublimates what cannot be resolved by insulating it within the aesthetic realm.

Along this aestheticist line from which I am arguing that Bishop departed is the common understanding of her verse "more delicate than the historians' are the map-makers' colors" ("The Map"). The line is ambivalent, I think, if only because *delicate* does not bear a necessarily positive value here as it would in a poetics of compensatory imagination or aestheticism. I understand the word here to mean fragile, which means vulnerable, which means breakable—which means that it is bound to break. Simply put, there is no natural relation between what in "The Map" Bishop calls, on the one hand, "what suits the character or the native waters best," and on the other, what determines their colors there, as she asks, "Are they assigned, or can the countries pick their colors?"

The manageable geography that privileges the paradigms within which the map-maker is presumed to immerse herself in a given reality only to posit herself as a superior observer over it from then on—one who "from time to time go[es] back to the United States, returning to [her] linguistic sources, like a diver coming up to the surface," as she said of herself in reply to an interviewer's question (Ribeiro 1996 [1964]: 14-15)[4]—is delicate indeed. It is, as Jim von der Heydt puts it, "an excess, a strange sort of potency in the world that results from focusing intently on its maps and exploring their inadequacy . . . [their] claim to be an immediate image of the world" (2002: 181); an attempt "to bring close by contemplating [this] remoteness" (182)—in reference to Walter Benjamin's conception of translation:

> If, however, these languages continue to grow in this manner until the end of their time, it is translation that catches fire in the eternal life of the works and the perpetual renewal of language. Translation keeps putting the hallowed growth of languages to the test: How far removed is their hidden meaning from revelation, how close can it be brought by knowledge of this remoteness? (1985: 74-75)

Heard in the midst of her more recent reputation for a poetics of estrangement of habitual perceptions of reality, Bishop's reply puts into relief the very delicateness, the very vulnerability of any surface.

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Notes

1 I refer to the notion of *ethics* glossed by Paul de Man as "the structural interference of two distinct value systems" (1979: 205).

2 Bishop lived in Brazil from 1951 to 1970; after that she still remained in the country for intermittent periods, alternating seasons between Harvard and Ouro Preto. It was only in 1974 – therefore 23 years being the span of her period of Brazilian residence – that she moved back to the United States.

3 In a letter to Octavio Paz in which Bishop discusses her translation of his poem, she makes explicit that the word *dazzling* suggests *surface* texture to her:

The word "dazzling" is correct - but somehow "dazzling" has taken on a slightly different meaning, I think - to me it suggests a surface dazzling or scintillation - which is not what I think you mean exactly. "Brilliant" is probably too vague . . . (from Lewis Wharf, Feb 8 1979, Box 37, Vassar, qtd. emphasis)

4 Léo Gilson Ribeiro had asked whether Bishop's "voluntary separation from an English-language community has not caused her difficulties in her poetic development, surrounded as she is now by a language foreign to her" (14).

SOBRE A FICÇÃO SUPREMA: PROLEGÔMENO E CONTRA-EXEMPLO

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Weather is a sense of nature. Poetry is a sense.
Wallace Stevens *Adagia.*

I

Já é um lugar comum amplamente aceito nos Estados Unidos que seu modernismo conteve algo de repressor e paralizante. Implícita na expressão corrente, *high modernism*, está a crença de que o projeto modernista, principalmente em suas manifestações poéticas, tinha como ambição inconfessa estabelecer um império da forma e da canonicidade, da rigidez estrutural e do reformismo político-cultural. Essa concepção da poesia anterior à Segunda Guerra começou a tomar fôlego já na segunda metade dos anos cinqüenta, quando serviu de fundo para os experimentos dos *beats*, e adquiriu novo ímpeto no final dos setenta, funcionando como um trampolim indispensável para a legitimização da lírica pós-moderna. Surge daí a possibilidade de medirmos a centralidade do modernismo das primeiras décadas do século passado: tudo aquilo que lhe sucedeu se viu obrigado, de um jeito ou de outro, a diminuí-lo; só assim os outros movimentos artísticos puderam pôr em prática suas agendas próprias de representação e de *poiesis*.

Seria infrutífero argumentar no sentido meramente contrário, como se a caracterização posterior fosse apenas incorreta. Mais interessante é investigar a mistura do engano com uma configuração de acerto; questionar, em outras palavras, em que medida os estereótipos de super-seriedade e rigor, de absoluta mestria subjetiva sobre o material poético, contêm um momento de verdade. O lugar onde isso aparece mais claramente é paradoxal: na prática crítica dos próprios modernistas.[1] Com efeito, é muito fácil esquecer que a mesma pessoa que escreveu "Tradition and Individual Talent", o ensaio mais citado da história da crítica literária em inglês, também foi o autor de *The Waste Land*; que o inovador da "Love Song of J. Alfred Pufrock" foi o mesmo T.S. Eliot que formulou aquela idéia tão desavergonhadamente conservadora a respeito de uma dissociação da sensibilidade, como característica da modernidade, em oposição à plenitude orgânica dos poetas metafísicos.[2] A ele soma-se uma legião: Pound & Wyndham Lewis com sua teoria do vorticismo; H.D. com o seu *flash*

imagístico; e até mesmo o plurifacetado Joyce, que cedeu à tentação de atribuir lugar privilegiado à epifania em sua prática composicional. Nunca é demais lembrar que o discurso crítico dominante na academia estadudinense até pelo menos a década de setenta, o *New Criticism*, alimentou-se fortemente dessas teorizações modernistas, dividindo com elas valores fundamentais, ainda que com diferentes níveis de clareza a respeito disso.

Tais teorizações, hoje, não se sustentam. Parecem-nos unilaterais e moralizantes, insuficientemente articuladas e filosoficamente ingênuas. Mas se esse diagnóstico não se apresenta como problemático, fortes complicações surgem quando se pretende contundentemente separar a produção crítica e o fazer poético dos modernistas norte-americanos. Em primeiro lugar, o que fazer com escritos de transição como ensaios, manifestos, cartas, palestras onde um autor interpreta sua própria obra? Como não aplicar seus *insights* aos textos sobre os quais deveriam ter toda autoridade? Um exemplo extremo e bem convincente do quão facilmente um projeto poético-cultural (e, por vezes, como em Pound político-econômico) pode interferir no funcionamento imanente de um poema é dado pelas notas de fim a *The Waste Land*. Escritas pelo próprio Eliot, elas encontram sua justificativa no caráter enciclopédico do poema, seu imenso jogo de referências em uma rica trama intertextual; todavia, na nota ao verso 218 da terceira parte ("The Fire Sermon") lemos:

> Tirésias, apesar de ser um mero espectador e de forma alguma um "personagem", é, no entanto, a figura mais importante no poema, que une todo o resto. Da mesma forma que o mercador caolho, vendedor de passas, dissolve-se no Marinheiro Fenício, e este não é de todo distinto de Ferdinand, Príncipe de Nápoles, assim todas as mulheres são apenas uma mulher, e os dois sexos encontram-se em Tirérsias. O que Tirésisas vê, na realidade, é a substância do poema.[3]

Considerar Tirésias como o personagem que unifica *tudo o mais* no poema significa reduzir toda sua multiplicidade – a riqueza cubista de pontos de fuga, a mistura dos diversos tipos de temporalidade, a coexistência de registros lingüísticos contrários – a uma única instância dominadora de sentido: é uma forma eficaz de matar o poema.[4]

Mas há, em segundo lugar, uma outra forma de interferência, similar, porém mais sutil, da poética sobre o poema. Trata-se aqui, não daquilo que determinado autor diz (ou faz dizer[5]) de sua obra, mas do acolhimento, das boas-vindas, que seu texto oferece a determinado arcabouço teórico, muitas vezes apenas esboçado pelo poeta, mas de bom grado continuado e desenvolvido por esta máquina produtora de sentido que é a universidade norte-americana. O resultado final dessa dinâmica de leitura é a criação de uma imagem que acaba merecendo o nome de *high modernism*, uma continuidade perfeita entre projetos poético-culturais, em grande medida com ambições reformistas, e configurações de sentido em textos específicos. Na realidade, é contra *isso* que se revoltaram tanto a *Beat Generation* quanto, mais recentemente, a literatura pós-moderna. O projeto de revitalização do modernismo tem que se mover

na direção oposta: mostrar que os textos, justamente através de seu envelhecimento e pelo distanciamento face à sua intenção fundadora, são mais do que aquilo que se fez deles. Pois se por um lado acolhem o sentido a eles atribuído, seja por seus reflexivos autores, seja por críticos afiliados, por outro, exibem um resto, algo que escapa à teoria, ainda que seja por ela formado. Esta última, em outras palavras, assume a condição, não de verdade de seu objeto, mas de um componente entre outros. E como esse processo de luta contra o tempo é ele mesmo temporal, ocorre uma curiosa reviravolta e a poesia modernista, mais antiga que a sua antagonística pós, torna-se mais nossa con-temporânea do que aquilo que é mais recente. A poesia rigorosamente de hoje ainda não teve tempo de se desprender da intenção e do programático, em suma, da idéia que tem de si própria.[6]

Mas isso não se aplica ao Brasil. Devido à debilidade do nosso sistema acadêmico, nossa recepção do modernismo estadudinense foi incompleta. Longe de representarem figuras de autoridade, famintas de Ordem, e defensores da Forma e da Alta Cultura, Eliot, Pound & Cia. permaneceram como autores ousados e de vanguarda, anti-tradicionalistas por excelência. Daí a triste confusão gerada por uma certa teoria brasileira, pós-moderna ou pós-vanguardista, que se vê forçada a fazer sua apologia da liberdade sem ter um conhecimento exato a respeito daquilo contra o que estaria se libertando. Assim, em um ensaio republicado recentemente, um crítico de jornal coloca como novidade um projeto de condenação de Pound – a postura mais comum nos EUA – sem levar em consideração obras canônicas da crítica, que teriam desfeito, um por um, seus julgamentos equivocados.[7] Existe, no entanto, a possibilidade de um feliz contrário. O que nos Estados Unidos representou um longo e doloroso processo de elaboração vanguardista, academização interpretativa e monumentalização cultural pode entre nós ser apreendido de um só fôlego. Paradoxalmente, o que há de positivo em nossa falta de tradição crítica a respeito do modernismo anglo-americano reside na abertura para uma caracterização precisa daquela zona indistinta entre sentido programático e resistência poética, que em última instância ainda faz da literatura tanto fonte de prazer quanto razão de conhecimento.

II

De todas as poéticas modernistas norte-americanas, a de Wallace Stevens é a mais interessante no que se refere à relação entre teoria e obra. Ela é verdadeiramente singular e de difícil abordagem, em grande parte devido à idiosincrática mistura de elementos românticos, simbolistas e naturalistas que apresenta.[8] Ela preserva algo do romantismo na medida em que se recusa a abrir mão do lugar privilegiado da arte em relação aos outros tipos de práticas discursivas da modernidade;[9] mas em oposição a um Schelling ou mesmo a um Blake, a idéia do absoluto literário já não lhe é mais possível. Entre o poema e o mundo que o cerca não há continuidade, mas sim a presença de uma barreira intransponível. Por outro lado, Stevens toma a concepção da obra como unidade autotélica, um universo fechado em si, do simbolismo francês, que, como é sabido, influenciou fortemente toda uma geração no começo do século XX. E para complicar mais ainda, diferentemente de muitos outros poetas, Stevens lida com uma idéia de objetividade muito devedora à ciência e ao naturalismo. O

fato, a realidade, o *things as they are*, repetido *ad nauseam* em "The Man with the Blue Guitar", são preocupações recorrentes em sua poética. Esta combinação, por si só já bem peculiar, dá origem a uma "teoria" que funde escrita crítica e ficcional de uma maneira única na história da literatura. Se Stevens, por um lado, sempre deixou claro em sua prosa que falava como poeta, por outro, sua poesia está repleta de conceitos, a ponto do pensamento, por vezes, constituir seu principal material. Não é à toa, então, que Wallace Stevens tenha sido tão bem recebido por críticos com ambições filosóficas, que, de um jeito ou de outro, se propuseram a explicar as coordenadas de uma poética que parecia tão segura de si própria e que tão facilmente se deixava corroborar por tantos interessantes poemas.[10] O risco permanente em tais tentativas reside na desertificação do verso, que dá ensejo à pergunta: o que se ganha com pensamentos na métrica? Por que não simplesmente expô-los sob a forma de tratado? O próprio Stevens pronunciou-se quanto a isso; segundo ele, poesia e filosofia teriam muito em comum, a começar pela natureza poética de muitas idéias filosóficas (como a mônada de Leibniz), e incluindo a necessidade da poesia de abarcar o pensamento: "teoricamente, a poesia de pensamento deveria ser a suprema poesia. [...] Um poema no qual o poeta escolhesse como assunto um tema filosófico, resultaria no poema dos poemas." ("A Collect of Philosophy"[11] *CPP* 854) Há, contudo, diferenças fundamentais, a mais importante das quais estando presente nesta passagem:

> O hábito de se investigar uma integração parece ser parte de um desejo geral por ordem. Devemos, conseqüentemente, dar um passo adiante e procurar aquilo que separa o poeta e o filósofo a partir dos tipos de integração que almejam. O filósofo busca uma integração por si só [...] o poeta busca uma integração que seja, não suficiente em si mesma, mas sim suficiente devido a alguma característica que possua, como uma idéia brilhante, seu poder evocativo, ou sua aparência no olho da imaginação. O filosófo pretende que sua integração tenha um caráter de necessidade, o poeta, que a sua seja eficaz." ("A Collect of Philosophy" *CPP* 862)

O centro da concepção poética de Stevens jaz na articulação entre imaginação e realidade, "uma questão, mais ou menos, de um equilíbrio preciso." ("The Noble Rider and the Sound of Words" *CPP* 647)[12] Se uma ficção for adequada ela irá aderir ao mundo, passando a fazer parte dele – por isso Stevens repete várias vezes que Deus foi a maior idéia poética da história da humanidade, e que agora, é claro, não é mais utilizável. Mas a realidade, por sua vez, estabelece uma força, uma pressão, que obriga o poeta a reagir e fundar novos universos. A palavra-chave aqui é "abstração":

> [O poeta] considerará que, apesar de ter, ele mesmo, testemunhado, por toda duração de sua longa vida, uma transição geral para a realidade, sua própria medida como poeta, apesar de todas as paixões dos amantes da verdade, é a medida de seu poder para abstrair-se e retirar-se para a abstração da realidade, sobre a qual os adoradores da verdade insistem. Deve abstrair a si mesmo e assim abstrair a realidade, o que faz ao colocá-la em sua imaginação. [*CCP* 657]

É talvez devido a esta inter-relação entre realidade e imaginação que o clima seja tão importante para Stevens. O tempo circunda a mente, ao mesmo tempo que se oferece como material a ser poetizado; se por um lado se impõe a ponto de não poder ser ignorado (não há como dizer inexistentes o calor ou frio extremos), por outro é uma fonte privilegiada de metáforas, o sol em Stevens sendo sua metáfora última – a metáfora da metáfora. E esta mesma lógica expande-se para o funcionamento das cores na poética stevensiana, pois elas tendem a dar origem a um sistema pictórico onde tonalidade e sentido andam juntos. O azul, por exemplo, é a cor da imaginação, por excelência, como nos é constantemente dito em "The Man with the Blue Guitar".

A construção do grande poema não é, assim, nem um ato delirante, nem fruto do pensamento como intelecção, mas algo que tem que usar o real como ponto de partida, retirar dele tudo o que há petrificado e reduzi-lo a um mínimo, a pobreza contendo o germe do novo. Este primeiro passo, por vezes chamado de descriação (e.g. *CPP* 750), é destruidor e somente considera digno de representação aquilo que não se deixa romper. É somente a partir disso que a imaginação poderá realizar o trabalho seguinte, de re-elaboração e estruturação.[13] A ferramenta principal para tanto é a metáfora, que, nas palavras de Stevens, "cria uma nova realidade, em relação à qual o original aparenta ser irreal." (*Adagia*, *CCP* 908) Ela funciona por meio do estabelecimento de semelhanças e o estudo destas "representa uma abordagem para a compreensão da poesia. A poesia é a satisfação do desejo de semelhança. [...] Sua singularidade é que, no ato de satisfazer o desejo de semelhança, toca o sentido de realidade, realça o sentido de realidade, o fortalece, o intensifica." ("Three Academic Pieces" *CCP* 690).

Algo novo é assim instaurado e uma distância com o universo do dia-a-dia, das metáforas desgastadas e envelhecidas, é estabelecida. É importante observar, contudo, que Stevens, aqui, não deixa de exibir uma preocupação muito comum entre os modernistas norte-americanos, que pregavam a necessidade da criação de um mito moderno para dar forma a um mundo a seu ver caótico[14] – uma atitude anti-burguesa e não raro ligada a posturas autoritárias. Em Stevens, a diferença reside no caráter necessariamente transitório das criações da imaginação, pois a poesia não se encontra acima do tempo. Submetida a ele, perderá algum dia seu frescor, o que levará à necessidade de outra abstração e de sucessiva re-elaboração, iniciando um novo ciclo. No entanto, o poema possui uma arma para defender-se, ao menos temporariamente, do tempo. Esta consiste em mimetizar seu funcionamento: trazer a mudança para dentro do poema e se esforçar para que ele difira ao máximo de si próprio. O telos de tudo isso, a razão última para o processo criador – processo desgastante e que não acontece em ambiente neutro mas necessita lutar contra a pressão da realidade – é dar prazer. O novo universo criado pelo poeta não é exclusivo, mesmo se idiossincrático (ou talvez exatamente por isso), pois os homens podem penetrar nele e lá permanecer por algum tempo. Cumpre-se desta maneira a função da poesia: "ajudar as pessoas a viver suas vidas." ("The Noble Rider", *CCP* 661)

Trata-se acima de tudo de uma póetica que reconhece seus próprios limites: a ficção suprema só atinge este estatuto quando abre mão do absoluto e permanece consciente de sua própria natureza ficcional. Daí o aspecto esclarecido da crença na

poesia: "A crença última é acreditar em uma ficção, que você sabe ser uma ficção, não havendo nada além disso. A verdade sofisticada é sabê-la uma ficção e saber que se acredita nela voluntariamente." (Adagia, *CPP* 903) Tal auto-consciência, o termo complementar a "ficção" e "realidade", dá origem a um tipo de ironia contra si próprio na poesia de Stevens que foi em grande medida responsável pelo continuado prestígio do poeta junto a gerações de críticos. A auto-ironia stevensiana, que foi já chamada de ápice da "tradição ficcionalista conservadora", "cativou a imaginação teórica dos norte-americanos"[15] porque se adaptava muito bem fosse ao existencialismo dos anos 50-60, fosse à desconstrução dos 70-80.

No entanto, a hesitação inerente à auto-consciência corre o risco de ser identificada com uma simples incapacidade de agir, pois "as ficções podem ser entendidas como evasões heróicas, mas também podem ser vistas como mentiras deploravelmente covardes: talvez as projeções de um homem-deus de um humanismo secularizado; ou talvez apenas as fantasias escapistas daqueles desprovidos de coragem suficiente para encarar os fatos."[16] Que Stevens tenha se pronunciado a respeito não o exime de ser criticado como ideologicamente comprometido.[17] O problema com essa crítica é, no entanto, duplo. Em primeiro lugar, é fácil demais. Basta apenas um conhecimento superficial da biografia de Stevens para que se tenha as linhas mestras de um personagem diametricamente oposto ao estereótipo do poeta de vangarda.[18] Pois Stevens era na realidade um muitíssimo bem sucedido corretor de seguros, que passou ileso pela Grande Depressão de 1929 (em 1935 ganhava US$25.000 por ano, o equivalente, hoje, a US$200.000,00). Ele representava um perfeito exemplo da ética protestante do trabalho. Começou sua carreira em 1908, na American Bonding Company, de Baltimore, e em março de 1916 foi contratado pela poderosa Hartford Accident and Indemnity Company, da qual chegou a ser vice-presidente, e onde trabalhou assiduamente até os seus últimos dias, antes de sua morte em agosto de 1955. Homem de poucas companhias, e imerso em um casamento desde cedo infeliz, Stevens foi talvez o maior poeta das horas vagas na história da literatura. Ora, sua poesia não cessa de responder a esse estado de coisas; em suas cartas é possível constantemente averiguar essa mistura única de sofrimento, frustração e resignação. A passagem vale uma citação demorada:

> No entanto, na minha idade não se pode mais perambular pelos círculos da imensidão da mesma forma que se perambulava uma geração atrás. Se Beethoven pudesse olhar para tudo o que fez e dizer que não era senão uma coleção de migalhas, comparada com o que esperava ter realizado, onde então deveria eu achar uma figura de linguagem adequada para medir o pouco que levei a cabo, comparado com o que já esperei fazer. É claro, sempre levei uma vida feliz e confortável. Mas não cheguei sequer a começar a tocar as esferas dentro de esferas do que poderia ter sido possível se, ao invés de dedicar a maior parte de meu tempo para me sustentar, a houvesse dedicado ao pensamento e à poesia. Certamente, continua sendo tão verdadeiro quanto o foi antes, que o que é o mais importante para alguém deveria receber a totalidade de seu tempo, e esse não foi o meu caso. Mas, então, se eu houvesse sido mais determinado a esse respeito, poderia agora estar olhando para trás, não com uma mera sensação de arrependimento, mas para um desastre real. Para alegrar-me com isso, estou agora na feliz posição de poder dizer que não sei o que teria acontecido se tivesse tido mais tempo. Isso é muito melhor do que ter todo o tempo do mundo e descobrir-se inadequado.[19]

É difícil aqui não se deixar tocar pelo *pathos* de alguém que desejaria ter-se feito todo poeta, mas teve que se conformar ao mundo do capital. Frank Lentricchia comenta essa passagem de forma magistral: "temos que dizer que nem mesmo "retórica repressiva" faz jus à consciência lúcida e atormentada que pronuncia "confortável" e "Para alegrar-me com isso" para o homem que não está alegre, sabe que não está, e que está perfeitamente consciente do custo de sua vida porque acredita ("é claro") que a escolheu. E talvez seja essa a mais suprema de todas as ficções norte-americanas de Stevens: o sentimento continuado de que escolheu a vida que tão freqüentemente o fazia sofrer; que a necessidade é, na realidade, liberdade."[20] Os objetos delicados e as mercadorias finas, as referências a lugares distantes e a obsessão com o exótico, a preocupação com a virilidade, a ênfase no desejo realizado, a crença na infinitude do "eu" ou da "mente", a redenção pela imaginação – tudo isso adequa-se muito bem, deixa-se derivar facilmente demais do corpus stevensiano. A frustração de uma vida solitária, resultado final da escolha do capital em prol da letra, é sem sombra de dúvida uma motivação primordial para Stevens, mas devido à sua própria obviedade suscita a pergunta: "e daí?"

Há, contudo, uma outra dificuldade, decorrente do problema do escapismo. A teoria descrita acima, e que deu ensejo a essa acusação – com seu tripé "abstração", "mudança" e "prazer" – é, ela mesma, um componente textual. Ora, o que talvez seja o poema mais importante de Stevens, o "Notes Toward a Supreme Fiction" divide-se em três seções, que levam como títulos nada menos que: "It must be abstract", "It must change", "It must give pleasure". É justamente esse dobrar-se sobre si próprio – uma poesia que é teoria de si mesma, que faz a leitura que o leitor faz de si – que confere à obra de Stevens sua originalidade e em grande medida contribui para seu hermetismo e dificuldade. Quem dispõe-se a penetrá-la não tem como sair. A auto-ironia de uma teoria sobre si própria, em outras palavras, parece inexpugnável contra qualquer ataque imanente contra si. A única saída reside na confrontação do projeto da fição suprema com a concretude de casos específicos, não apenas para mostrar como a ilustram, mas também para vislumbrar como, acolhendo-a, negam-na de dentro, configurando-se como contra-exemplos de si próprios.

III

A teoria da fição suprema apresenta riscos. É muito provável que o funcionamento do conceito poético não seja acompanhado de *poiesis*, e que o leitor se depare, ao invés, com uma fraca poética com muito pouco a oferecer além de um desejo de sentido. Por exemplo:

The Ultimate Poem Is Abstract

This day writhes with what? The lecturer
On This Beautiful World of Ours composes himself
And hems the planet rose and haws it ripe,

And red, and right. The particular question – here
The particular answer to the particular question
Is not in point – the question is in point.

If the day writhes, it is not with revelations.
One goes on asking questions. That, then, is one
Of the categories. So said, this placid space

Is changed. It is not so blue as we thought. To be blue,
There must be no questions. It is an intellect
Of windings round and dodges to and fro,

Writhings in wrong obliques and distances,
Not an intellect in which we are fleet: present
Everywhere in space at once, cloud-pole

Of communication. It would be enough
If we were ever, just once, at the middle, fixed
In This Beautiful World Of Ours and not as now,

Helplessly at the edge, enough to be
Complete, because at the middle, if only in sense,
And that enormous sense, merely enjoy. (*CPP* 369-70)

Em tradução:

O poema final é abstrato

Este dia contorce-se com o que? O palestrante
Nesse Belo Mundo Nosso se compõe
E hesita o planeta rosa e o pigarreia maduro

E vermelho e correto. A particular questão – aqui
A particular resposta à particular questão
Não é o ponto – a questão é o ponto.

Se o dia contorce-se, não é com revelações.
Continua-se a pôr em questões. Esta, assim, é uma
Das categorias. Assim dito, este plácido espaço

Está mudado. Não é tão azul quanto pensávamos. Para ser azul,
Não pode haver questões. É um intelecto
De enrolações e tomba pra cá e pra lá,

Contorce-se em errados oblíquos e distâncias,
Não um intelecto no qual somos fugazes: presente
Em todo lugar do espaço de uma vez, pilar-de-nuvem

De comunicação. Seria suficiente
Se fôssemos, ao menos uma vez, no meio, fixados
Nesse Belo Mundo Nosso e não como agora,

Desamparadamente na beira, bastante para sermos
Completos, porque no meio, ao menos em sentido,
E nesse enorme sentido, meramente deliciar-nos.

Eis aqui um poema que contém tudo o que se poderia esperar da teoria da fição suprema. O palestrante representa o mundo das coisas como elas são, ironicamente posto em maiúsculas; ele é o resultado de velhas ficções solidificadas, o rosa do belo inóquo e o vermelho da repetição do desejo, convenientemente aliterado com o correto do dia-a-dia. Ele *compõe* a si próprio: sua ficção, como todas as outras, é fruto de sua própria atividade; mas um sentido secundário passa a interferir aqui, pois o palestrante é uma pessoa bem organizada, decente, *composta*. Em um movimento interessante, Stevens decompõe a expressão idiomática "hem and haw" (demostrar hesitação na fala, não estar à vontade, não saber o que fazer) invocando um outro campo semântico, presente nas palavras ao serem tomadas individualmente: "circundar," "envolver," "impedir o desenvolvimento de." Surge assim, já na primeira estrofe, o principal âmbito metafórico do poema, o espaço. O "ponto da questão" é justamente um ponto; o que está em jogo ("in point") é o próprio ponto. Devido à *démarche* científica do palestrante, que faz perguntas, o espaço torna-se plácido e sem sentido, nos dois sentidos da palavra, mas primeiramente na topografia. O intelecto que não abstrai vai de um lado para o outro, de lá pra cá e de cá prá lá, erradamente oblíquo e distante: na borda.

Em oposição a esse mundo de imaginação morta um outro é invocado, no qual o azul da criação se desse por completo. O universo da ficção suprema é central.[21] Ele apresenta-se por inteiro e de uma só vez, permitindo que as pessoas comuniquem-se nele e por ele (há uma notável semelhança com o famoso poema "Anedota do Jarro". Na tradução de Paulo Henriques Britto: "Pousei um jarro em Tennessee,/ E era redondo, sobre um morro./ O jarro fez o mato amorfo,/ Cercar o morro.")[22] A força da crença suscitada pela ficção suprema fica clara com a imagem bíblica do pilar de nuvem; a diferença reside, no entanto, na sua auto-referencialidade, pois como vimos, a ficção suprema discute a si mesma no mesmo movimento em que se instaura. Ainda assim, o enorme sentido criado é capaz de dar prazer – ou ao menos é o que deseja o poema. O mero deleite apresenta a suprema intertextualidade do poema

consigo próprio: em última instância o prazer nesse caso vem com a explicação do texto, o desvelamento de um sentido naquilo que parecia irredutivelmente idiossincrático e hermético. É o *enjoyment* com a elucidação do sentido de um discurso sobre o sentido; é a performatividade da ficção suprema, primeiro obscuramente descrita e depois disseminada para a escrita crítica, que a realiza ao comentá-la.

Sem dúvida, esse é um prazer ao qual estamos, hoje, muito propensos. A poesia de Stevens coaduna-se muito bem com uma época marcada pelo desejo da Teoria,[23] uma ânsia de sentido em um momento em que nunca pareceu tão problemático. Diante disso, a pergunta que se impõe é simples: ao obedecer o próprio impulso da ficção suprema, que por certo se encontra *dentro* do poema, não estaria o crítico dissolvendo-o em teoria – ainda que fosse esta uma teoria suprema? Não estaria a discursividade obtendo a última palavra? Ao prazer de ver o conceito asseverar a metaforicidade do universo – que nunca, é claro, atrapalhará o mundo dos negócios – contrapõe-se um outro, negativo, que advém da recusa do texto, ao mesmo tempo determinada e incondicional, a aceitar o que lhe sugere o discurso crítico, seja como ciência ou ficção suprema. Ao invés de ilustrar a teoria, passa a representar seu contra-exemplo.

Comparemos a discursividade teórica de "The Ultimate Poem Is Abstract" com essa obra prima:

The Snow Man

One must have a mind of winter
To regard the frost and the boughs
Of the pine-trees crusted with snow;

And have been cold a long time
To behold the junipers shagged with ice,
The spruces rough in the distant glitter

Of the January sun; and not to think
Of any misery in the sound of the wind,
In the sound of a few leaves,

Which is the sound of the land
Full of the same wind
That is blowing in the same bare place

For the listener, who listens in the snow,
And, nothing himself, beholds
Nothing that is not there and the nothing that is. (*CPP* 8)

Uma tradução seria:

O Homem de Neve

Tem-se que ter uma mente de inverno
Para ver a congelação e os ramos
Dos pinhais em crostas de neve;

E ter estado há muito frio
Para contemplar os juníperos em bolsas de gelo,
Os brotos duros no brilhar distante

Do sol de janeiro, e não pensar
Em sofrimento algum no som do vento,
No som de umas folhas poucas,

Que é o som da terra
Cheia do mesmo vento
Que sopra no mesmo lugar deserto

Para o ouvinte, que ouve na neve,
E, nada sendo, não contempla
Nada que não está lá e o nada que lá está.

Eis aqui um poema que pratica a abstração sem invocá-la. Formalmente impecável, é composto de uma única sentença, cuja precisão gramatical transmite uma falsa idéia de clareza. Do ponto de vista da ficção suprema, o texto corporifica a redução da realidade ao seu mínimo indestrutível: o frio circundante paraliza tudo com uma beleza de morte (e não uma imaginação morta, como no poema anterior); o sol da objetividade encontra-se distante e os brotos das árvores, congelados. Para lidar com esta cena desolada e desoladora, o espectador tem que se fazer igual a ela e formar uma "mente de inverno", reproduzir em si o mundo vazio que contempla. Também não pode ceder às lamúrias do vento e das poucas folhas, que se queixam da ausência de/o tudo na terra nua. O alguém ("one") do começo tem que se manter impassível para chegar à última estrofe, que une "eu" e "frio": ouvir "na neve" é tanto encontrar-se por ela circundado, quanto fazer dela instrumento para um objeto elíptico, pois não se sabe *o que* se escuta. Segue-se um verso precioso, onde a sintaxe da frase, auxiliada pela ambiguidade de "himself" – tanto pronome oblíquo quanto reflexivo – faz com que o "noth-ing" adquira um eco verbal, como se aquele que vê não fosse nada, o mesmo que "nadeasse." Graças a essa união extrema entre o vazio desolado da paisagem e o da mente é possível contemplar a totalidade da vista, que por fim dá ensejo à visão do nada que resistiu à aridez absoluta. O "nada que lá está" representará, assim, o passo inicial para a remetaforização do mundo em mais uma ficção em vias de se tornar suprema.

No entanto, essa descrição do funcionamento da teoria no poema, ou melhor, do poema como teoria de si próprio, desconsidera duas importantes ambigüidades

no texto. Em primeiro lugar, o "tem-se que ter" do início acumula os sentidos de "é uma precondição" assim como de "é imperativo", dando origem a duas forças ilocucionárias dissimilares. No primeiro caso, o poema descreve tão somente as coordenadas necessárias para a emergência do homem de neve; no segundo, sugere sua natureza desejável, como se correspondesse a um desejo prévio do autor e/ou leitor, ou como se fosse aconselhável para ambos. Trata-se, aqui, de uma injunção, quente, que derrete a impassividade da relação entre homem e neve. Quanto à segunda ambigüidade, ela ocorre no "para" ("for") da última estrofe. Na realidade, a leitura mais stevensiana proporia uma tradução mais ousada, fortalecendo a verbalização de "nothing" e considerando "nothing himself" mais um sintagma gerundivo do que um mero aposto; "for" torna-se "pois", um conectivo verdadeiramente gélido e enganosamente lógico. "Pois", aqui, desempenha uma função mais de preenchimento sintático-rítmico do que propriamente de causalidade, sendo assim dispensável; seu papel é o de introduzir a declaração final do poema, seu clímax.

No entanto, mesmo que se opte por "para", duas possibilidade apresentam-se, dependendo da ênfase subjetiva ou objetiva. No primeiro caso, "para" designa a aptidão do homem de neve: ao se ter os requisitos descritos nas quatro primeiras estrofes está-se capacitado a ver tudo e o nada nele contido. O problema surge com o sentido objetivo, pois agora o "para", toma uma conotação completamente oposta: o vento parece aqui ter o homem de neve como seu objetivo. Um elemento de finalidade, a conjunção passa a significar uma intencionalidade da neve e do vento, um desejo da natureza que inclui em si uma teleologia própria, e que sugere harmonia e comunhão com o humano. Desaparece a estranheza e hostilidade do gelo, e em última instância não é mais necessário que se tenha uma "mente de inverno".

Sem dúvida, uma vírgula teria em grande medida dissipado a ambiguidade entre "pois" e "para", assegurando a primazia da falsa lógica, e fortalecendo assim a teoria da ficção suprema. Que o poema não a insira acaba por configurar uma importante zona de sentido: o branco da página que separa as duas últimas estrofes. É ele que carrega em si a indistinção entre o "pois" e o "para" em seus dois sentidos, um campo de tensão que, por sua vez, entrará em combinação com o "ter que" como condição e obrigatoriedade. "Pois", "para" subjetivo e "condição" correspondem à frieza abstrata da ficção suprema; "para" objetivo e "obrigatoriedade" desmentem-na em um desejo que rompe com o estoicismo, individualista e protestante, subjacente ao homem de neve. Ora, o núcleo dessa tensão está em um vazio determinado, o espaço em branco entre as duas últimas estrofes, um espaço que só aparece quando, na leitura do texto, não se vê "nada que não está lá" para que possa surgir esse espaço, o "nada que lá está". Seguida ao pé de sua letra, a ficção suprema faz nascer o seu oposto; ao ser aplicada ao próprio poema, faz visível aquilo que a desmente e desmonta. Eis porque "The Snow Man" é um contra-exemplo da teoria que impõe a si próprio.

Notas

1 Antoine Compagnon descreve essa disjunção em seu *Les cinq paradoxes de la modernité* (Paris: Seuil, 1990) p.47-78. Ainda que haja uma similaridade de base na formulação desta hipótese de trabalho, as diferenças tornar-se-ão visíveis no decorrer do texto.

2 "The Metaphysical Poets" in Frank Kermode (ed.) *Selected Prose of T.S. Eliot* (New York: Harcourt Brace: 1975). O ensaio é de 1921.

3 *The Waste Land. Norton Critical Edition* Michael North (ed.) New York: Norton, 2001. p.23. Salvo quando indicado todas as traduções são minhas.

4 É bem verdade que Eliot posteriormente renegou as notas que escreveu – o que só faz condenar mais claramente os críticos que continuam a se valer delas. Cito a passagem por completo, devido a seu interesse. Diz Eliot: "Pretendia primeiramente apenas anotar algumas das referências para poder citá-las, de forma a neutralizar os críticos de meus poemas anteriores, que haviam me acusado de plagiarismo. Desta forma, quando *The Waste Land* foi impressa como livro – pois ao ser primeiramente publicado no *The Dial* e no *The Criterion* o poema não tinha nenhuma nota – descobriu-se que era demasiadamente curto; então pus-me a expandir as notas, para produzir algumas páginas impressas a mais, o que gerou como consequência que elas se tornaram a notável exposição de uma erudição fajuta que é ainda hoje levada em consideração." *Critical Edition* op.cit. p. 113.

5 Este foi o caso de Joyce, que se utilizou de Frank Budgen e Stuart Gilbert como fantoches para enunciar aquilo que, como autor, não lhe caberia. Cf. em especial o livro de Gilbert *James Joyce's Ulysses*. 2nd. Ed. (New York: Vintage, 1952) que produz um efeito muito similar ao da nota de fim de Eliot.

6 Diga-se de passagem que isso também vale diante de sua negação, uma vez que a ausência de programa, a apologia da liberdade infinita e infinito jogo do significante muito facilmente adquire uma forte natureza programática.

7 Afonso Romano de Sant' Anna "Que fazer de Ezra Pound" no livro de mesmo título (Rio de Janeiro: Imago, 2003) p. 7-16. Uma leitura de *The Pound Era*, de Hugh Kenner (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971), por exemplo, obrigá-lo-ia a elevar suas críticas a um patamar muito mais elevado.

8 Cf. Frank Lentricchia *The Gaiety of Language: an Essay on the Radical Poetics of W.B. Yeats and Wallace Stevens.* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968. p. 8-38; 119-47). É importante mencionar que há uma outra corrente interpretativa, que lê um Stevens completamente diferente, seguindo a trilha de Harold Bloom, e vê "o lugar de Stevens na companhia dos românticos visionários". *Wallace Stevens; The Poems of Our Climate* (Ithaca: Cornell U.P., 1976, p. 25).

9 Cf. a interessante discussão de Ch. Menke a respeito da oposição entre autonomia e soberania em *Die Souveränität der Kunst: Ästhetische Erfahrung nach Adorno und Derrida* 2nd. Ed. (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1991) p .9-15.

10 Um bom exemplo de como estragar a poesia em filosofia pode ser encontrado em Leonard, J. S. e Wharton, C.E. *The Fluent Mundo: Wallace Stevens and the Structure of Reality* (University of Georgia Press: Athens and London, 1988).

11 In *Wallace Stevens; Collected Poems and Prose* (New York: Library of America, 1997) p. 854. Doravante abreviado no texto como *CPP*.

12 Trata-se do primeiro e mais importante texto do livro de ensaios *The Necessary Angel*, de 1951.

13 Cf. Frank Kermode, *Wallace Stevens*.2a.edição (Londres: Faber & Faber, 1989) p. 102-4.

14 Daí o entusiasmo de Eliot e Pound em relação ao *Ulisses* de Joyce, que deveria exibir um método mítico. Cf "*Ulysses*, Order, and Myth" (1923) in *Selected Prose of T.S. Eliot* op.cit.p. 175-8 e "*Ulysses*" in T.S. Eliot (ed.) *Literary Essays of Ezra Pound* (London: Faber & Faber, 1954) p. 403-9.

15 Frank Lentricchia, *After the New Criticism*. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1980) p.31.

16 ibid. p.33.

17 "O processo poético é, psicologicamente, um processo escapista. Segundo minha forma de pensar, o falatório a respeito do escapismo é tão-somente uma ladainha vulgar. Minhas próprias observações sobre a resistência ou a evasão da pressão da realidade representam um escapismo, se analisados. O escapismo tem um sentido pejorativo, que não se pode supor que seja aquele no qual utilizo a palavra. O sentido pejorativo se aplica onde o poeta não está ligado à realidade, onde a imaginação não adere a ela, o que, de minha parte, considero como fundamental." ("The Noble Rider" *CCP* 662)

18 A biografia canônica é a de Joan Richardson, em dois volumes: *Wallace Stevens* (New York: Beech Tree Books, 1988).

19 Carta de 17 de fevereiro de 1950, a Thomas McGreevy. In Holly Stevens (ed.) *Letters of Wallace Stevens* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966) p. 668.

20 *Modernist Quartet*. (Cambridge: Cambridge U.P., 1996) p.157.

21 Esse é um dos adjetivos mais importantes para Stevens. Na bela introdução a "Notes Toward a Supreme Fiction", por exemplo, ele é agramaticalmente desprovido de substantivo: "For a moment in the central of our being". (*CPP* 329) Pois nenhum termo (parte, lugar, elemento) estaria à altura do desejado.

22 In *Wallace Stevens*. (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 1983) p. 63. No original: "I placed a jar in Tennessee,/ And round it was, upon a hill./ It made the slovenly wilderness/ Surround that hill." (*CPP* 60) Para uma bela leitura desse poema cf. Frank Lentricchia, *Ariel and the Police* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1988).

23 Cf. Fredric Jameson, que explicitamente estabelece a conexão entre Stevens e a Teoria em seu "Periodizando os anos 60", em Heloísa Buarque de Hollanda (ed.) *Pós-Modernismo e Política*. (Rio de Janeiro: Rocco, 1992).

FROM PAGE TO SCREEN: IMAGES OF ENGLISHNESS IN *EMMA*

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Abstract: The use of setting in Jane Austen's novels is intimately associated with issues of women's confinement in pre-Victorian times. Considering the premise that the use of space is a fundamental way of creating significance in films, the present text discusses the relationship between the meanings of setting in Jane Austen's novel *Emma* (1816) and those in the filmic adaptation (1996) of the novel by Douglas McGrath. Special attention is given to the generation of irony derived from an overvaluation of the so-called "England of the English heritage".

Key words: setting/space; mise-en-scène; irony; heritage film

I. The Question of Setting

A first striking aspect of Douglas McGrath's filmic adaptation (1996) of Jane Austen´s *Emma* (1816) is the loss of boundary between the inside, domestic world of the house, and the outside world. The great quantity of scenes that take place outside – in the countryside, in the gardens – clashes with the knowledge that rather than being a novelist of place, Austen is a novelist of manners and ideas. Biographical material informs that "due to her alleged short-sightedness, Austen tended to avoid describing the scenery, and turned her attention, instead, to the elaboration of dialogues, a fact that makes some of her novels be considered as potential screenplays" (*Veja*, 1996, 94-5).

Another consequence of this over-valuation of outer space is that the film also denies the issue of women's confinement in pre-Victorian times. In his reading of Austen's novel, John Wiltshire asserts that "*Emma* is a novel in which circumscribed settings, limited spaces, and confinement (comforting and enabling, but at the same time imprisoning and suffocating) are crucially important" (67). The novel presents several instances that reveal how the apparently simple action of taking a walk in the countryside, or even in the streets of Highbury, is gender-conditioned, thus being considered inappropriate for women. Perhaps the most famous passage is the one when Harriet and Miss Bickerton (in the film Harriet is walking with Emma) are attacked by a group of gypsies:

> About half a mile beyond Highbury, making a sudden turn, and deeply shaded by elms on each side, it became for a considerable stretch very retired; and when the young ladies had advanced some way into it, they had suddenly perceived at a small distance before them, on a broader patch of greensward by the side, a party of gipsies. A child on the watch, came towards them to beg; and Miss Bickerton, excessively frightened, gave a great scream, and calling on Harriet to follow her, ran up a steep bank, cleared a slight hedge at the top, and made the best of her way by a short cut back to Highbury. (*Emma*, 214)

Though Austen does not elaborate further on the presence of the gypsies, by for instance contextualizing their cultural origin and social conditions, so as to justify their attitude, their poverty aligns with other "poverties" or gradations of poverty in the novel, such as that of the Clarks (the poor sick family that Emma and Harriet visit at the beginning of the novel), that of the servants, that of the Bateses, Mrs. Weston (once Emma's governess) and Jane Fairfax. And though the gypsies' appearance is sudden and their presence is not further developed in the narrative, they are described as "trampers," as being "clamorous," "impertinent" and as constituting a "gang" (*Emma*, 214); this description contrasts with the apparent placidity and harmonic balance of the English countryside, and with the notion of a romantic, idyllic, pre-industrial England. Actually, the contrast allows one to see the gypsies as bearing the function of a stain, a *social stain*, in the exuberant and verdant surroundings of the Highbury village. The 'incident' also shows that they constitute a menace to women's vulnerability, thus attesting to the fact that women were not so free to walk wherever and whenever they wanted, even if the place was symbolic of a peaceful haven (or heaven). But perhaps this reading could not have been possible if one had seen McGrath's film – with the camera travelling so often in the English gardens and countryside – in isolation from a wider contextualization of Austen, the Austen industry, and the question of irony. In fact, this specific scene seems to emphasize the presence of Frank Churchill as Harriet's 'saviour' from the attack of the gypsies, thus giving rise to Emma's conjectures about a possible love relationship between him and Harriet. For an inattentive viewer, the most visible reading of the 'gypsies incident' is its consonance with McGrath's choice to highlight the romantic and comic relationships in the novel.

The apparent freedom promised by what McGrath's film constructs as a vast, open, safe and 'fairy-tale' landscape is embodied in the many scenes that take place outside. For instance, when Harriet first tells Emma about Mr. Martin, they are walking in a beautiful countryside, with a river nearby, and their talk is punctuated by the singing of birds; revealingly, while they walk and talk, we listen to their voices in the background, as the camera moves away from them and *chooses to show* the natural beauties of their surroundings. Other examples include Emma and Harriet embroidering in the garden, while Emma tries to persuade Harriet to forget about Robert Martin. The sequence in which Emma draws Harriet's portrait also takes place outside, in the gardens of Hartfield. There is also a scene when Emma and Mr. Knightley practice bow archery at Donwell Abbey (actually an added scene, not present in the novel) while they argue about their different opinions concerning Robert

Martin; after the archery session, Emma and Mr. Knightley have tea, not inside Donwell Abbey, but in the Donwell gardens. Emma and Harriet read Mr. Elton's charade (a substantial passage in the novel, which takes place inside Hartfield) also in the open air. Emma and Harriet play with the puppies (another added scene) outside Emma's house. Mrs. Weston, Emma and Mr. Knightley talk in the garden when Mrs. Weston mentions her suspicions of Mr. Knightley's interest in Jane Fairfax; while they talk, we also listen to birds singing; and several others. The frequency with which characters (and their dialogues) are placed outside is highly representative of McGrath's adaptation, and characterizes the film pattern since the very beginning, an aspect that goes against the way setting is used by Austen, thus diluting, or even erasing, many of the effects created in the novel. To quote John Wiltshire again,

> Confined to Hartfield for most of the first volume, the narrative then gradually expands its horizons with an increasingly far-flung series of outings, visits, and the ball at the Crown, until it climaxes in the two excursions, one a day after the other, to Donwell and to Box Hill (69).

Thus, the way setting is used in the novel serves to dramatize its relationship with the issue of female poverty and domestic confinement. Following John Wiltshire again, "in *Emma* women's imprisonment is associated with deprivation, with energies and powers perverted in their application, and events, balls, and outings are linked with the arousal and satisfaction of desire" (69). It is not by chance that the "events, balls, and outings" are all promoted by the most prominent families in Highbury, or by those that have risen to gentility, as the Westons and the Coles; for instance, Christmas dinner takes place at the Westons, and the event culminates in Mr. Elton's sudden love declaration to Emma; the Crown ball is organized by Emma and Frank Churchill. It is here that several glances, smiles, and compliments lead the reader to further suspicions of a secret attachment between Frank and Jane; it is also at this ball that Mr. Elton humiliates Harriet by deliberately refusing to dance with her. The Crown ball is also responsible for promoting the first dance between Emma and Mr. Knightley, an important clue for their future attachment, since dances in Austen are potentially loaded with emotional and sexual meanings. Other events that take place outside include the picking of strawberries and the Box Hill picnic – both in Mr. Knightley's property (Donwell Abbey).

Austen's novel makes the issue of setting complex by relating it both to gender and economic/social status. Going out – depending on the distance and weather conditions – also requires having the means of transportation for that. The novel presents at least two instances that associate the (non)-possession of carriages with economic poverty/prosperity/social mobility. As it is typical with Austen, these pieces of information are usually scattered throughout the narrative in a way that they sound as irrelevant, though they serve to express relevant facts about the characters' economic and social conditions/milieu. On one level, for instance, Frank's revelation (known through a letter from Jane, though this is only alluded to) of "Mr. Perry's plan of setting up his carriage" (*Emma*, 221) enhances both Mr. Knightley's and the reader's suspicions of a secret attachment between Frank and Jane; on another, deeper

level, it also informs Mr. Perry's (who is an apothecary) rising social status, since carriages constitute economic and social status symbols. At the Coles' dinner, we are informed by an exultant Miss Bates that it was "Mr. Knightley's carriage [that] had brought, and was to take them home again" (*Emma*, 142). Similarly to the previous example, the most visible reading is that this functions as a pretext for Mrs. Weston to suspect that Mr. Knightley is possibly interested in Jane Fairfax. The dialogue between Mrs. Weston and Emma is also used to provide further information on Mr. Knightley, as when Emma says: "I know no man more likely than Mr. Knightley to do the sort of thing – to do any thing really good-natured, useful, considerate, or benevolent. He is not a gallant man, but he is a very humane one; and this, considering Jane Fairfax's ill-health, would appear a case of humanity to him; – and for an act of un-ostentatious kindness, there is nobody whom I would fix on more than on Mr. Knightley" (*Emma*, 143). Although Emma's words align with the general characterization that the narration at large offers of Mr. Knightley, they also reveal Emma's resistance to accept a probable attachment between them, perhaps because of her dislike for Jane. Besides, Emma's definition of Mr. Knightley's "un-ostentatious humanity" also contrasts with Augusta Elton's declared boasting and ostentation of her brother's and sister's "barouche-landau" (*Emma*, 175). But the passage also implicitly informs the Bateses' inferior economic conditions – referred to by the narrator, at the beginning of the novel, as "the very worst predicament in the world for having much of the public favour" (*Emma*, 11) – thus their dependence on others' benevolence.

McGrath's film is in general so unilateral in the way characters are constructed, in the way setting is used, and the dialogues are so shallow and the 'events' that tie the plot so committed to the romantic and comic relationships of the narrative, that the film does not problematize, or play with, these competing meanings, present in the novel all the time. To provide another interesting example, the film shows Emma driving her carriage alone several times. If on the one hand these moments reflect not only her social status, but her independent mind – she herself tells Harriet, "(...) mine is an active, busy mind, with a great many independent resources" (*Emma*, 55) – they also ignore, by denying, the 'gendering' of space, commented on above. In addition, Mr. Woodhouse (Emma's father) – characterized as an easily alarmed person in terms of health and safety – would never allow Emma to go out alone the way she does. The film explicitly contradicts itself in this matter: although Mr. Woodhouse is shown sometimes to be fearful of certain types of food (as for instance his aversion to cake, at the beginning of the film, in Mrs. Weston's wedding), and to be a rather complaining person, nothing is made of his reactions to Emma's going out and driving their carriage alone. Moreover, because the film does not reproduce Emma's subjective life – though her writing in the diary and a few instances of her talking aloud constitute an attempt to replace the way her imagination works in the novel – we have no access to the tensions and contradictions of her personality; nor is the ironic undermining of Emma's actions and behaviour, mainly provided by other characters' opinions about her (such as Mr. Knightley), by the novel's narrator – and by the filtering of action through her – brought into play (at least in a substantial way) in this version.

In the criticism of film studies, this aspect of gendered space (both interior and exterior) in 1990s Austen adaptations is substantially investigated by Julianne Pidduck in "Of windows and country walks: frames of space and movement in 1990s Austen adaptations" (*Screen*, 39:4, 1998). Symptomatically, McGrath's *Emma*, though a 1990s film, is not included in her corpus, an exclusion that she justifies as follows:

> I have chosen not to discuss one 1990s Austen adaptation, Douglas McGrath's *Emma* (1996) with Gwyneth Paltrow. Although many of my observations pertain to this film, I find it (...) stylistically divergent from the dominant British realist aesthetics of adaptation that unite the other texts. (384)

I notice a certain contradiction here, which I will try to explain in the long run. Pidduck's analysis of the question of space-movement, and its connection with issues of "gendered, class and colonial relations of power" (385) is substantiated and illustrated by three specific images, and the relevance they hold in the adaptations: the woman at the window (discussed mainly in relation to *Sense and Sensibility*), the country walk (supported by scenes of *Sense and Sensibility*, *Pride and Prejudice* and *Persuasion*) and the sailing ship (illustrated through *Persuasion*). In relation to the window, she argues that "the spatial confinement of Austen's interiors, so achingly and self-consciously framed by the window, gains resonance only in relation to some 'outside'" (385). Likewise, one would conclude that the scenes that take place outside – both the country and sea walks – and the possibilities of mobility and freedom that the 'sailing-ship' may offer, also acquire a further potential significance to the extent that they may be related to the inside and its confining and stifling properties. Actually, this dialogical inter-connection between inside and outside, between interior spaces and the countryside/the sea depend on one another to be effective.

That is why I actually doubt whether the use of space/movement in McGrath's *Emma* could be analysed on the terms suggested by Pidduck in relation to the other films. She herself admits the film's divergence from what she considers "the dominant British realist aesthetics of adaptation" – one which is defined, supposedly, by a critical treatment of setting and space. As previously pointed out, McGrath's film erases the boundaries between the house and the countryside; in this sense, if there is no wall separating them, the issue of confinement and constraint loses all resonance, unless one considers the matter in relation to its approach in the novel.

II. Images of Englishness: Setting and Mise-en-scène as Commodity and the Question of Irony

In "Re-presenting the National Past: Nostalgia and Pastiche in the Heritage Film" Andrew Higson theorizes on a strand of contemporary British cinema – mainly dominant between the 1980s and 1990s (he mentions, as examples, *A Passage to India*, *A Room With a View*, *A Handful of Dust*, *Maurice*, *Howards End*, *Shadowlands*, *The Remains of the Day*, among others) – in which "the national past [is] used as a prime selling point" (109). The past in these films is intimately connected with the

question of space and the recreation of period details. Higson argues that in these films, "Heritage culture appears petrified, frozen in moments that virtually fall out of the narrative, existing only as adornments for the staging of a love story. Thus, historical narrative is transformed into spectacle; heritage becomes excess, not functional, not something to be used, but something to be admired" (117). A significant consequence of that is the substitution of a critical perspective of history and of culture – imbued in the conception of the national past – by surface and style: "the past is reproduced as flat, depthless pastiche, where the reference point is not the past itself, but other images, other texts" (112).

In "The Heritage Film and British Cinema" Higson reflects on the argument developed in his previous text (mentioned above) and attempts to answer some of the critical responses that his text raised. The criticisms include what some critics consider as an over-generalization of his principles to the analysis of such films, by leading him to ignore the films' specificities and thus obscure other relevant issues at stake in those works – such as the expression of marginal voices, as those of feminists, gays, and the consideration of, for instance, identity concerns (244). Another criticism relates to what such critics conceive as Higson's overlooking of the traditional association of costume drama, usually seen as lightweight and feminine, with "mere decoration and display," therefore "lacking the seriousness of real history (...)" (245).

The question of irony is also a neglected issue in Higson's consideration of the heritage film. The section revealingly entitled "Narratives of instability, images of stability" provides an interesting point of departure for the discussion of this subject, mainly when he claims that,

> (...) at the level of the image, narrative instability [is] overwhelmed by the alluring spectacle of iconographic stability, providing an impression of an unchanging, traditional, and always delightful and desirable England, the England of 'English Heritage,' where social difference but also the possibility of making connections across social boundaries, are replaced by social deference, each person in their allotted place and transgression forbidden (239-40).

In his previous text, "Re-presenting the National Past," Higson mentions that "it is the tension between visual splendour and narrative meaning in the films that makes them so fascinating" (110). I would argue that part of this fascination arises exactly from the ironies stemming from the contrast between heritage setting and narrative complexity. Although, surprisingly, Higson does not consider the adaptations of Jane Austen's novels in his analysis, they would also serve as illustrations for the argument. As Moyra Haslett, in her reading of Jane Austen in the 1990s, says, "the images of a heritage England are associated primarily with Jane Austen" (202). In this respect, Monica Lauritzen's study of *Jane Austen's Emma on Television* (1972 version) already exemplifies the period research involved in the production of television series and films; the books *The Making of Pride and Prejudice* and *The Making of Jane Austen's Emma* also attest to this concern. So much attention is given to the reproduction of authenticity in terms of hairstyles, costumes, make-up, wallpaper, fabrics, drapes,

that a certain object may be recreated so as to be authentic in relation to the period, while being devoid of the meaning it has in the novel, thus acquiring a different function, or simply no function at all, in the film. Lauritzen mentions a very interesting case: Harriet's riddle book, which, she explains, "was made very lovingly by a woman prop-maker and appears in the serial as a beautiful volume decorated with pressed flowers and a variety of pictures (...) is a convincing replica of scrap-books from the period. What is lost in the process of adaptation, however, is Jane Austen's gentle mockery at the expense of the shallowness of Harriet's 'literary pursuit'" (115). This is an illustration of the fact that costume drama tends to value the visual aspects of the mise-en-scène, by making them authentic, though too splendid and sumptuous, thus without aligning them with the conflicts and meanings expressed in the source narrative. Another example that shows the contradictions linked to the effort at recreating period details in terms of visual splendour and authenticity is related to the clothes that Gwyneth Paltrow/Emma Woodhouse wear. In his diary of the making of *Emma*, McGrath also gives attention to clothes. He says: "Ruth Myers, our costumer, has a number of great ideas: She will use softer fabrics to give the clothes a more flowing, sensual quality. (...) Ruth sees clothes as an extension of the characters and has designed them accordingly. Emma's gown for the ball is golden and soft, with budding flowers all over it, a perfect emblem for Knightley's perception of her as changing from girl to woman" (*Premiere*, 1996, 77). Although in this case the visual aspect (costume) reflects the character's development (sexual maturation), the aspect of faithfulness to the period is ironically undermined by the presence of Giorgio Armani in the film's credits. Moyra Haslett says that "even though most costumes were hired from the London's costumiers Cosprop, who specialize in period dress (...) Armani, among the most expensive and chic of contemporary fashion designers, was ultimately preferred for the costumes for Emma/Gwyneth Paltrow" (210).

All this shows that if at first McGrath's film fails in recreating the ironies of Austen's novel, the failure, paradoxically, gives rise to other kinds of irony, or other levels of irony. But this reading certainly depends on the familiarity with Austen's novel, its values, and contextual frames (aspects actually required for the reading of any work), so as to make one identify and attribute the ironic interplays resulting from the intersection of both texts. For this purpose, not only the relational semantic association of irony (said and unsaid meanings; relations created between ironist, interpreter and target) proposed by Linda Hutcheon is important, but the inclusive association (both the said and unsaid are important to create the ironic meaning; the unsaid does not substitute the said) is relevant as well.

In this respect, the way McGrath's film represents social relations and the question of propriety and order almost totally denies the social gradations and distinctions found in Austen's novel. At least two scenes, at the beginning of the film, are significant: the positions that Emma and her father take at the table – one very near the other – seems not only very twentieth-century but erases the question of hierarchical relation and order that one finds, for instance, in the television version. Another relevant question concerns the way Emma relates to Harriet and Robert Martin (both her inferiors in terms of social ranks). The novel makes clear that Emma

wants to order people's lives, and this ordering about is mainly reflected in their ritualized relations and behaviour. The passage about their first meeting shows this aspect:

> They met Mr. Martin the very next day, as they were walking on the Donwell road. He was on foot, and after looking very respectfully at her, looked with most unfeigned satisfaction at her companion. Emma was not sorry to have such an opportunity of survey; and walking a few yards forward, while they talked together, soon made her quick eye sufficiently acquainted with Mr. Robert Martin. His appearance was very neat, and he looked like a sensible young man, but his person had no other advantage; and when he came to be contrasted with gentlemen, she thought he must lose all the ground he had gained in Harriet's inclination. Harriet was not insensible to manner; (...) Mr. Martin looked as if he did not know what manner was. (*Emma*, 19)

Whereas Mr. Martin *talks* to Harriet, the contact between him and Emma is made only in terms of *looks* (he looks very respectfully at her, and her 'quick eye' sufficiently [makes her] acquainted with Mr. Robert Martin). She also keeps away from them, and it is this spatial distance that allows her to *survey* him. The passage is significant for several reasons, but mainly for the creation of irony: Emma's evaluation of Mr. Martin is all based on his appearance, on what her *quick eye* (notice that the expression 'quick eye' overlaps the contradictory meanings of "deftness" and "precariousness of first impressions") manages to perceive. The choice of the term 'survey' informs the generality of the 'acquaintance,' and yet, Emma considers it to have been sufficient. Retrospectively, this passage acquires a level of structural irony as well, as Emma will discover that the 'other gentlemen' with whom she contrasts Mr. Martin (for example, Mr. Elton and Mr. Churchill) do not correspond to what they appear to be on the surface.

In McGrath's film, however, the viewer does not have this sense of class distinctions – so full of nuances – as one does in the novel. Considering the relations between Emma, Harriet, and Mr. Martin, such distinctions do not exist at all. When Emma and Harriet, for instance, are walking in the countryside around Highbury, and they meet Mr. Martin (the filmic equivalent to the novel's passage above), Harriet introduces Emma to him and they talk. The sense of distance and hierarchy implied in the novel is diluted in the film. Besides, Emma is so often seen together with Harriet – even their framing includes them side by side, thus suggesting an egalitarian relationship – that the viewer believes they are actually 'intimate' friends. The ironic undermining of Emma's intention to reform Harriet is all absent from this version.

Thus, the importance that McGrath gives to outer space – conveyed through the camera's frequent travellings in the countryside – is not only in consonance with the trend of heritage cinema, but is also emphatic of open-air scenes, thus denying the idea of confinement and restraint that Austen's female characters experienced at the time. In this way, the film dilutes Emma's psychological need to act as creative interpreter and inventor of stories – a way she finds of responding to imprisonment.

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FEAR AND DESIRE IN JACK LONDON'S "LAW OF LIFE"

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> "Indian" stories have until very recently been stories written by white people about Indians. . . The Indian tends to be made into a symbol; onto him the white man projects his own desire or fear.
> Margaret Atwood, *Survival* (1972)

Memorable among the old wives' tales that were told winter evenings during my childhood was a cautionary tale intended to teach a child to respect and to care for his elders. Simply put, a man found himself having to do something about his aged and generally useless father. With no poorhouse to send him to and pressured by his wife to eliminate the drain on the family's resources posed by his aged father, the man walks his father deep into the hills where he plans to abandon him. Feeling uneasy about what he is doing, the man, as he says goodbye to his father, hands him an old blanket. The father tears the blanket in half and hands one of the pieces to his son. Startled, the son asks, "Why have you done this?" The father answers simply, "It's so that when your son brings you out to the wilderness, you'll have half a blanket to keep you warm." His conscience pricked, the son decides to bring back his father to his place at home. But this is a European tale, reflective of a different ethos in a different world. Neither that world nor that ethos is germane to the world Jack London explores in tales about the Northland Indians.

"The Law of Life" is a case in point. In this story London was sure that he was on to something new. He had previously dealt with the Indians of the Northland but now he would approach his subject differently. He would apply "the particular, *through the particular*, to the universal" by exploring their point of view through a center of consciousness.[1] In a letter, taking as his example "The Law of Life," the magazine proof for which he had just corrected, he explained how this worked:

> It is short, applies the particular to the universal, and deals with a lonely death, that of an old man in which beasts consummate the tragedy. My man [Old Koskoosh] is an old Indian, abandoned in the snow by his tribe because he cannot keep up. He has a little fire, a few sticks of wood. The frost and silence about him. He is blind. How do I approach the event? What point of view do I take? Why, the old Indian's, of course. It opens up with him sitting by his little fire, listening to his tribesmen breaking camp, harnessing dogs, and departing. The reader listens with him to every familiar sound; hears the last draw away; feels the silence settle down. The old man wanders back into his past; the reader wanders with him—thus is the whole theme exploited through the soul of the Indian. Down to the consummation, when the wolves draw in upon him in a circle. Don't you see, nothing, even the moralizing and generalizing, is done, save through him, in expressions of his experience.[2]

Limited in his knowledge of the Indians he was writing about, London relied on his power of imagination to recreate what he was fictionally certain was transpiring in the consciousness of an isolated, abandoned old Indian as he awaits the inevitable enactment of a violent death. With the "law of life" working itself out, London, by staying within his principal's point of view, dramatizes his theme by positing will in conflict with resignation, emotion and self at odds with reason, custom, and tradition. If "Old Koskoosh sits by a dying fire, waiting for bestial but natural forces to put a snarling, tooth-slashing end to his life," as one recent reader puts it, he does not await his fate with unassailable stoicism or unquestioning courage.[3]

The engine that drives the world Old Koskoosh has emerged from, lived in, and into which he will die is appetite. Nature's hunger will always be satisfied in one way or another. Appetite leading to death and devouring followed by renewed appetite is the cycle of being in the world of animals and other living beings. But there is something else to occupy the lives of the people of Koskoosh, and that is the "task." If Nature does not care, she nevertheless sets out the task that each living being must perform: "To life she set one task, gave one law. To perpetuate was the task of life, its law was death." [4] This Old Koskoosh, who has been abandoned to die alone when his people have struck their tents and moved on, fully realizes is his natural fate. He has done his share to perpetuate life and should now be ready to die. This is what his head tells him. He understands the law of life (and death), has participated in it (having abandoned his own father in similar fashion), and says he is ready to accept its application to himself. Yet there is something within him that impels him to complain. At first he is comforted by the sight of the little stack of firewood that his family has left him. But as the stack dwindles down, he grouses that his granddaughter might have gathered more wood to make the pile larger. His complaint that she could have shown him more consideration seems at odds with his expressed fatalism. So is his short-lived hope that his son, having thought better of the matter, has come back for him. It seems, after all, the old man has not lost his will to live. He desires a longer life, no matter how long or brief. He will put off the cold and his death by husbanding his faggots. Only when the wolves begin to close in on him, moving toward him in a tightening circle, does he give in to his fate.

Nature has not failed to live up to her part of the bargain. The law of life is inexorable. But Old Koskoosh's society has not done as well—the complaint in the story. Its members, the chief, who is Old Koskoosh's son, and the granddaughter too distracted to think of final kindnesses for a grandfather, too readily accept the law of nature. Prolongation of human life through the means available to any society is not even considered (even as Old Koskoosh had not thought about it, presumably, in the case of his own father, the chief before him). The memory that is most vivid at the momentous end of the old man's life is that of the caribou that fought the pack of wolves which ultimately brought him down to his death.[5] The law of life is inexorable, surely, and that law is one of animal appetite and death, but part of that law is the animal desire to survive. Should it not be one of the roles of society to foster and sustain that desire to survive in whatever way it can? Surely, it is not merely the individual who should "rage, rage against the dying of the light," but that society should also rage for and work toward, if not the extinction of death, the prolongation, at least, of life. In this respect "The Law of Life" offers an interesting perspective on the conflicted mind of its author. If Jack London espoused both Nietzsche's notion of the *uber-mensch* and Huxley's theory of the survival of the fittest, he also embraced a socio-political system rejecting the notions of both Nietzsche and Darwin as he understood them and whose design it was to alter the human condition.[6] Making the aged Koskoosh his center of consciousness facilitated London's investigation into the nature of the ethos the now disturbingly superfluous chief shares with his tribe, but it also enticed him into embodying in the old man his own social and philosophical conflicts. London had tried to enter into the Indian worldview and individual consciousness without making the Indian a projection of his fears or desires. If he did not entirely manage to avoid such projection in "The Law of Life," he did succeed in constructing a compelling drama out of the contraries of will and necessity, fear and desire, the impulse to hold on and the need to let go.

Notes

1 Jack London to Cloudesley Johns, Dec. 22, 1900, in *The Letters of Jack London, Volume One: 1896-1905*, ed. Earle Labor, Robert C. Leitz, III, and I. Milo Shepard (Stanford: Stanford Univ. Press, 1988), p. 224.
2 London, *Letters*, 225.

3 James Lundquist, *Jack London: Adventures, Ideas, and Fiction* (New York: Ungar, 1987), p. 92.

4 Jack London, "The Law of Life," in *The Norton Anthology of American Literature*, 4th ed., ed. Nina Baym and others (New York: Norton, 1994), II, 857-61.
5 "Both he and the moose had fulfilled their task in life; yet, both of them still held life dear. The old man's final acceptance of death comes when he drops the last blazing stick into the snow and surrenders to the wolves" (Jacqueline M. Courbin, "Jack London's Portrayal of the Natives in His First four Collections of Arctic Tales," *Jack London Newsletter* [Sept.-Dec. 1978], 10:130).

6 Mario Mafii calls "'The Law of Life'—paradoxically—Jack London's most 'marxist' story" ("'The Law of Life': Jack London and the Dialectic of Nature," *Jack London Newsletter* [Nos. 2-3, 1979], 12:45). Reflecting the interests and concerns of the 1930s, Franklin Walker talks about "the union of Darwin and Marx, effected in his [London's] later fiction by assuming that the survival of the fittest applied to classes as well as to individuals and that the proletariat was the class most fit to survive" (Franklin Walker, *Jack London and the Klondike: The Genesis of an American Writer* [San Marino: Huntington Library, 1966], p. 224). See also See Edwin B. Eerbentraut, "Jack London, William Shakespeare, and 'The Law of Life,'" *Jack London Newsletter* (Sept.-Dec. 1978), 10:138-41.

THE PROPHECY OF A 'MAD WOMAN' AND THE IMPOTENCE OF A SANE MAN: A READING OF *SONG OF A GOAT* BY J.P. CLARK-BEKEDEREMO

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Abstract: A mad person's utterances are never taken seriously in any society. In most traditional African societies, madness is a taboo, and it is often associated with or attributed to attacks by evil spirits which are said to negatively and destructively affect the thinking capacity of the victim. But ironically, it is assumed that mad persons not only commune with spirits but also receive messages from them. In some cases, persons are said to be inflicted with madness because they have offended the world of the ancestors. In *Song of a Goat*, J.P. Clark explores this traditional belief system, using the character of Orukorere, the woman blessed with the gift of prophecy, but who like Cassandra in Greek mythology is punished by the gods so that people would disbelieve all her prophecies. The domestic tragedy of the Zifa family in this play is anchored on the prophetic ramblings of the mad woman, Orukorere, whose rantings are ignored by everyone. By the time the people realise that her prophecy about the leopard pouncing on a goat is true, it is too late. This paper examines the character of a mad woman and how 'mad' people are often ignored even in contemporary society. Indeed, most of such persons are not mad. They simply have the gift of penetrating analysis which often make the 'sane' sad and uncomfortable. The work has increased in significance because of the disdain with which prophetic statements are treated by the men of power and politics in our current world.

Let the prophet speak; let the mad man speak. He whose words come to pass is our true son, our true prophet.

Introduction

The lines of poetry which preface this work, define for us the focus of this paper particularly in relation to the mission of the prophet, the seer or the visionary whose resounding prophetic words are often ignored in the scheme of things in most societies. "Let the prophet speak, let the mad speak" is taken from a forthcoming novel (*Emperors of Salvation*: Malthouse) by this writer which centres on what African societies do to their prophets. Late Reggae musician Bob Marley addressed the question in a rhetorical manner when he asked: *"How long shall they kill our prophets while we stand aside and look?"* In contemporary politics, leaders often shun the sometimes-profound sayings of wise men or sages. Their political goals or self-interests are more important to them than the overall survival of the community or the nation. The voice of dissent or of *difference* immediately attracts hostility and negative images.

Most of J.P. Clark-Bekederemo's plays are set in the traditional African society where moral and ethical codes of inter-human relationships are still determined and controlled by ritual behaviour. However, there is a close relationship between the past and the present as Robert Wren (1984:20) observes when he says "Clark's plays and many of his poems represent a continuation of the past in the present". In this world, adultery is taboo, not just an offence against the cheated husband, but against the supernatural laws which govern the world. The world is defined in broad terms to include the world of the living, the world of the ancestors and the world of the unborn. Adultery is capable of ruining a family because in traditional thinking, strange things would haunt the family tree, and result in such occurrences as miscarriages, strange illnesses and sudden deaths, and sometimes, the appearance of strange creatures around the home. Because the community is patriarchal, when a man commits adultery, such strange things do not occur. Obviously, such ethics are part of an essentially patriarchal society's attempt to put women under perpetual subjugation.

In the world of Clark-Bekederemo's plays, women are subject to total male control and domination. It is true that there are some cases of the extra strong or extra gifted woman as we have in the character of Oreame in *Ozidi*. Yet the overall and sustained image is that of women whose fortunes and woes are determined by male attitude. A woman is obliged by tradition to produce children for the man, for the family she is married into. The child, male or female, therefore belongs to both the man and his extended family. When the children fail to come, the fault is usually attributed to the woman mainly because it is a male-dominated society, built on a structure which denigrates women. Procreation is a means of not only expanding the family; it is also a way of showing the strength of a man, particularly if the woman has produced sons. Failure or inability to produce children is tantamount to obstructing the material prosperity of the people, of the race. Inability to produce children can be regarded as a tragedy, and as George Frazer (*The Golden Bough:* 1957) has observed, in primitive societies, barren women were usually sent out of the land during the planting season so that their infertility may not affect the fertility of the soil. A man who is impotent hides this 'humiliating weakness' from the public. In

some families, secret arrangements are made for a male member of the family to have sexual relations with the impotent man's wife. All the children from this secret relationship belong to the husband, the man who had paid the bride price on the woman. A variant of this cultural attitude to childlessness is when a woman marries another woman by paying the bridal wealth. She keeps the woman in her home and ensures that a man comes to have sexual intercourse with her. The children from this relationship belong to the woman-husband. This practice is found among the Ishan of Edo State in Nigeria.

In all societies as depicted in both oral and written literatures, the seer occupies a special place, particularly if he has proved himself to be true and consistent in the art of clairvoyance and prophesying. Often the true seer is a man or woman, a diviner whose antecedents place him or her on the pedestal of truth, of sincerity, of straightforwardness and piety. Ironically, sometimes these traits do not endear the seer to the people because they make the prophet take unpopular positions in the eyes of the people. In Achebe's novel ***Arrow of God***, the Chief Priest Ezeulu stands out as a man of truth in the eyes of the District Officer (a white man), for testifying against his own people in a land dispute. But in the eyes of his own people, he has committed an abominable act, and they never forgive him. The tension generated by this predisposition to saying it as it is, eventually culminates in the catastrophe of both god and man in the novel. As a representative of the community's deity, he is not expected to tell a lie just to please his people, the people of Umuaro.

However, by this very penchant for telling the truth, the seer runs into trouble with the people because the truth is often bitter. In effect, when the people want truth, the best person to go to is not the seer, for the true seer is bound by the oath of his profession to tell the truth and damn the consequences. In male-dominated societies where the seer is a woman, a double burden is placed on the woman: telling the truth and telling it to men. Such characters according to Abena Busia (Parasites and Prophets: 1986, 90-91) "are liberating prophets in the sense that, even when powerless, they have a vision which can protect their men and at least steer them in the direction of some kind of salvation". They are powerless because theirs is essentially a patriarchal society dominated by notions of male superiority. However, this does not prevent a prophet from arising from among them. In most traditional African societies and to some extent, in modern Africa, women play a great role in the socialisation process. Ouisseina Alidou (*Gender, Narrative Space, and Modern Hausa Literature*, **RAL**: 2002, 139-140) has observed:

> The grandmother serves the role of a pragmatic mentor who teaches the young and impressionable audience survival and cognitive skills. She also assists them in their socialization into their culture and the wider world to be discovered, in the process enabling them to develop a consciousness of their collective identity.

The image of the grandmother as a teacher, visionary and adviser is another facet of the prophet identity in African literature. As a grandmother she is close with the

younger generation, often finding time to do the 'soft' task of instilling communal ethos into the children. Having seen through the world from the perspective of the weak or the deprived, she is able to impart lessons to the younger ones, both male and female. The character of Nana in *The Dilemma of a Ghost,* a play by Ama Ata Aidoo also typifies the image of the grandmother-adviser.

Images and types of Madness

A mad person is perceived as one without the innate ability to correctly assess a situation owing to impairment in reasoning. A mad person's mind is 'blown', 'weird', distorted or 'scattered'. Society confines such persons to psychiatric homes or sanatoriums and rehabilitation centres. Madness also varies in degree and type. Some forms of 'madness' in character-delineation arise from excessive intake of Indian hemp or hard drugs. The example of Maanan in *The Beautyful Ones Are Not Yet Born* comes to mind. According to the author, the hard stuff initially makes everything about life and its contradictions very clear. However, the consumer later loses control and degenerates into an addict. Sometimes, eccentric fellows are seen and judged as insane persons. Nkem Nwankwo's Danda in the eponymous novel *Danda* portrays this kind of 'madness'. Also, exceptionally gifted persons are branded mad because their level or degree of apprehension is more than the ordinary. We are familiar with the text at Acts of the Apostles in the Holy Bible where Apostle Paul is told that too much learning has made him mad. What this suggests is that madness can arise from being in possession of knowledge about the deep things of life. As a result of this deep understanding of things, the subject's behaviour becomes different, out of the ordinary. It is this motif of madness that informs the character of Orukorere in the play, *Song of a Goat.*

A Simple Plot

Song of a Goat centres on the character of Zifa, a man who suddenly becomes impotent after having the first child. He sends his wife, Ebiere, to the masseur, a herbalist cum diviner, for fertility treatment. The Masseur soon sees through the charade. He is a man who has treated a number of persons for infertility. As a result, he is very careful to keep his reputation. In such societies, reputation counts a lot. Added to this are the virtues of honesty and straightforwardness that a healer needs in order to retain the confidence of his clients. He says that there is nothing wrong with the woman's womb, which he sees is as 'warm as a room waiting to accommodate many'. Her 'gates are also intact' and 'she keeps her door open'; so, there is no reason for pregnancy not to occur He makes Ebiere admit the truth about her husband's impotent condition and suggests that for continuity in the family, the woman should be made over to her husband's younger brother. According to him, after the necessary ritual in the presence of both families, the taboo associated with the making-over action is obliterated. He says:

But
You are young still as I say, and do not
Know the ways of our land.
p. 5

Ebiere will hear none of this. She pours insults on the masseur, telling him to 'take his crooked hands off her', and takes her exit. Perhaps, the Masseur's suggestion touches a raw nerve because before long she gets into an illegal sexual relationship with Tonye. She plays the typical temptress in order to get Tonye into her bed. Zifa's reaction to the Masseur's suggestion is worse. First, he is angry that the secret about his condition is out. He is also outraged by the suggestion of passing his wife to his younger brother. by his utterances, he shows disregard for the demands and mores of his society which subsumes individual ego within the survival of the community. He calls the Masseur names and almost strangles him. He lives in false hope instead of confronting his plight within the framework of existing paradigms. Throughout the period, Zifa's auntie, Orukorere keeps crying about 'a lion' or a 'leopard' pouncing on a goat. Intermittently, she cries about 'a goat, a goat' adding that she hears 'the cry of a goat'. To make it more explicit she says:

I must find him, the he-goat;
His cry is everywhere, don't you hear it?
It is all over the house: I say, can't
You hear the poor billy bleating.
It's bleeding to death.
pp. 14-15

Her cries are ignored because it is believed that she speaks under the influence of alcohol. Tonye demonstrates the family's disregard for her sayings when he tells the neighbours:

Please, you know how it is with her
How then can you take her seriously?
p. 15

She is persistent in her cry for the bleating goat to be helped. She even questions the auditory capacity of the family.

Don't you hear it?
Don't you deaf of this world?
Are your ears so sealed and congealed
With pulp of plantain, you do not hear him?
p.16

Orukorere can hear and see what is not clear to the ordinary mind or eyes. Zifa's reply shows that he believes her 'vision' is alcohol induced. He says:

I told you people none must pour
Her wine any longer. Must I beat it
On calabash back before you heed me?
p.16

But the prophecy of Orukorere comes to pass when Tonye and Ebiere start a sexual relationship without a formal approval and the necessary ritual. Within the context of the play the sexual relationship arises from mere lust. It loses the sublime purpose that the Masseur had in mind when he made the suggestion. The union therefore becomes taboo. When Zifa finds out, he attempts to kill Tonye, but the latter commits suicide. Zifa also commits suicide too to cover his shame. This is the bare outline of the play.

Contradictions, Parallels, and Ironies

At the level of contradistinction and contrast, while Orukorere is an inscription of insanity, Zifa the central character the sane man is an inscription of the sexually impotent. In a sense they both subscribe to the ethos of the community. Zifa appears to be steady and stable, a hardworking man who is committed to the progress of his family. He would seem to love (or be dedicated to) his wife, doing by her all his obligations, except the most important one. Orukorere insists on a ritual sacrifice to cleanse the family from filth and pollution, thereby performing her role as the oldest person in the family. The Masseur is physically lame but has the capacity to provide help for the sick. It would seem therefore that in the play, there are different levels of sanity and insanity, conflicts between the whole and the part in a binary pattern. Ebiere is insane with lust when she seduces Tonye her brother-in-law. Zifa himself has traces of insanity by failing to see reason because of his pride and ego. The origins of the discredited or disbelieved prophecy are traceable to Zifa's impotence. We are told that for re-calling his father from the place of ignominy before time (having died an ignominious death through the 'white taint' – leprosy), the ancestors punish him with impotence. The tragedy of the family is thus two-fold; while the sane man is impotent, the visionary is insane. It is ultimately compounded with the tragic deaths of the two men of the family. In the socio-cultural environment of the play, the deaths of more than one male in a family on the same day are a taboo. It is an indication that something is fundamentally wrong.

Song of a Goat is one of J.P. Clark-Bekederemo's earliest plays. It was published in 1964 by the Oxford University Press London. Along with *The Masquerade* and *The Raft*, Clark made in these plays a profound statement on the Nigerian state as it drifted towards anarchy, what the poet Okigbo captured in "Thunder". His other plays include *Ozidi (1966); the Bikoroa Plays* which contain the *trilogy The Boat, The Return Home,* and *Full Circle (1985): All for Oil (2000).* All the voices of prophecy given by visionary-writers were ignored just as warnings about the impending cataclysm were cast aside. Using the framework of revenge tragedy, for example, Clark produced in *Ozidi* a work of art that warned against self-destruction

and killing of the heroes of the land. From 1967, the country became enmeshed in a bloody Civil War which dragged on till 1970. The Biafrans (Eastern Nigerians) accused the Federal Government (the Nigerian side) of genocide in the period before and during the war. Peoples who had lived in peace and harmony through decades became enemies over night. In might and in strength, the Nigerian side was like a lion or a leopard pouncing on a goat (the Biafrans) with more advanced weapons and technology. At the core of the conflict was who would exercise rights over the oil-rich delta region of the country. (As an aside, playwright and minority rights activist Ken Saro Wiwa later lost his life over who controls the wealth of this region in 1994). The metaphor of Zifa's property (wife) standing for the wealth of the country cannot be missed. Wren (1984:20) contends that *Song of a Goat* and *The Masquerade* are "made time-specific (recent) by allusions to the contemporary world, but their actions seem to take place in villages barely changed by recent history".

Prophecy rejection

There is a sense in which Orukorere is like the proverbial prophet (or prophetess) who is without honour in his own country. The Third Neighbour says:

As a result, they put this spell on
Her. But although she has this double vision
Nobody believes a word she says, even
Outside of the gourd.
p.18

As a member of the family, no one takes her prophecy about the leopard pouncing on the goat seriously. Taking this literally, its obtuseness could arise from the people's unfamiliarity with the animals so evoked in her imagery. The play is set in a riverine area, an area where such animals are not geographically located. Yet the people understand the metaphor. In such an environment the people are more familiar with fishes, crocodiles and other water mammals. But why should she use images that are generally unfamiliar to the citizens? Why should the prophecy be locked inside a nut that can only be understood after it has been cracked? Is it because as 'children of the floods', they are expected to see beyond what the sky offers, looking at the horizon and prognosticating on what the future, the hidden clouds can produce for all of humanity?

As it turns out, what she sees coming is the imminent destruction of the Zifa clan, through the sexual recklessness and lasciviousness of the pair, Ebiere and Tonye. The two characters have offended a moral code, a cultural code, which automatically leads to sanctions and opprobrium. In the earlier scenes the Masseur had suggested a union of man and woman, brother-in-law and wife sanctified by the blood of goat shed for the sake of the family in order to wipe out the taboo associated with such a relationship. The Masseur proposes:

Blood of goat
So large a cowrie may pass thro' its nose,
A big gourd of palm wine and three heads of
Kola-nut split before the dead of
The land, and the deed is done

p.5

As we observed earlier on, the character of Orukorere is fashioned after that of Cassandra in Aeschylus' *Agamemnon* where Apollo punishes her for refusing his hand in marriage. Agamemnon rejects Cassandra's prophecy of doom as they return home to Clytemnestra, only to meet a gruesome death in the hands of his wife.

Her odd sayings are however wrongly attributed to the power of alcohol, the local brew which she takes so often and which the people believe has impaired her sense of judgement. Her cries and calls are persistent, almost shrill and strident in view of the enormity of the crisis which they face. They are however inconsistent considering the different images, the different metaphors which she uses to convey the letter and spirit of impending tragedy.

At the bottom of the general disregard for her prophecies is the fact that she is a woman whose words are considered insignificant in a male-dominated society. The cause of her problems is also traced to her rejection of a predominantly male-controlled institution. A god had proposed marriage to her and she refused, thereby making her a target for their missiles. To compound her problems, she resorts to the protection of alcohol. Both men and women take alcohol in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria as a matter of course. It is fondly called '*Sapele water*', a euphemism for its predominance in the area. '*Sapele water*' is not enough to make one mad. But Orukorere is mad to the people.

In the milieu of the play, incest and adultery are seriously frowned at and condemned by all facets of society. For most families in the Izon or Urhobo clans, incest and adultery are considered serious moral offences enough to prevent procreation or prosperity for the family. The Masseur recognizes this danger. As a result, he proposes that the blood of a huge be shed for the remission of the taboo involved in a brother going to bed with his sister-in-law. Ebiere is the first to insult the herbalist-priest as we pointed out earlier on. Zifa later joins the train, calling the masseur 'lame' when indeed he is the lame one. But the suggestion takes roots in Ebiere's heart.

In the early 1980s, the late erudite and sagacious Nigerian politician, Obafemi Awolowo, called on the then President Shehu Shagari's civilian administration in Nigeria to re-focus its economic because the ship of state was drifting. He painted an image of impending disaster which a wise and discerning leader must respond to with speed and alacrity. He read all the signs of economic depression in the country and drew the attention of the government to it. Rather than respond with sound economic policies, Awolowo was called names, ranging from 'prophet of doom' to 'failed politician'. In fact, the Economic Adviser to the government, a Professor of Economics denounced the sage's assertion. A few weeks later the same civilian administration shamelessly declared a period of 'austerity' saying that the economy

was in a bad shape. To the ruling party and their ilk, Obafemi Awolowo was a 'mad man', so branded because as a man of vision he saw what others did not, could not see.

Madness and Truth

In a despicable world, it is only a mad person that can tell the truth, because to tell the truth is to enter a collision course with the powers-that-be. Everyone would seem to prefer the darkness of the lie, thus making the man who dares to think differently the mad person. Truth as perceived by Orukorere is that which is hidden from the ordinary eyes, or that which the ordinary eyes refuse to or cannot see. The truth of the Tonye/Ebiere situation is not clear to Dode, because he is a child. Zifa is blind from the truth, one because he refuses to face it as it is, and also because the real actors hide it from him. Zifa's pride sets the stage for the disaster mainly because he does not want to confront the truth of his situation. Armah's Man in *The Beautyful Ones Are Not yet Born* speaks about the blinding truth which he sees with clarity after sniffing marijuana. In Achebe's *A Man of the People*, the writer presents the story of the economist, a rather popular academic who is discredited by the politicians for refusing to do the government's bidding. Let us quote Achebe, (1966:3)

> The Minister of Finance at the time was a first-rate economist with a PhD in public finance. He presented to the Cabinet a complete plan for dealing with the situation.
> The Prime Minister said 'No' to the plan. He was not going to risk losing election by cutting down the price paid to coffee planters at that critical moment; the National Bank should be instructed to print fifteen million pounds.

The government's plan is anti-people but the economist is presented as a 'miscreant' who would sell his country for a mess of pottage. The real miscreant is the Prime Minister, although this is not known at the time.

The Medium and not the Message

As with most societies, people tend to place emphasis on the medium and not the message. 'If the message comes through this medium, it must be true', people seem to say. Sometimes, although the medium may be suspect particularly because of our prejudices, the message can be true either in totality or partially. Orukorere is very clear in her vision when she says:

I said there was
A serpent in the house but nobody as usual
Will take me seriously. Yet the hiss of the creature
Was up among the eaves, down under the

Stool. Last night I cried it had coiled itself
Into a pad to pillow my head but the house
Was full of snoring sound and as usual
Everybody snorted.

pp. 28-29

The 'hissing serpent in the house' suggests danger that is very close to the subject of the vision; the serpent has even gone into the 'eaves' and has 'coiled itself into a pad to pillow' for the visionary, for the entire family. The most important observation made by the visionary in terms of relevance to the focus of this essay is 'as usual nobody will take me seriously'. A vision which comes to a profound mind or a thinking mind, is usually not clear to others. As a result, they try to persecute whoever comes in the form of a prophet. The traditional metaphor of the black kettle being used to prepare white pap is apt in this case. But here we are in a dilemma. Can we really separate the medium from the message? One of the strengths of the play is in the use of language especially as the playwright loads dialogue with different layers of meaning. Perhaps this partly explains the people's ambivalence to the truth of the situation. Prophecies are hardly ever expressed in clear terms. How could her listeners, for example, relate the image of the 'pouncing leopard' to that of a man taking his brother's wife? How could the politicians have understood Okigbo when he wrote in "Come Thunder' (**Labyrinths**: 1965):

The smell of blood already floats in the lavender-mist of the afternoon.
The death sentence lies in ambush along the corridors of power;
And a great fearful thing already tugs at the cables of the open air,
A nebula immense and immeasurable, a night of deep waters-
An iron dream unnamed and unprintable, a path of stone.

Orukorere is an example of a visionary, a clairvoyant whose work is often despised by the community. Her case is compounded within her milieu because there is a curse placed on her which bars any human from appreciating her skills. The implication is that even when she says the truth, society is likely to disbelieve her because extraneous forces have blocked minds from accepting it. As a result, society suffers just as she does.

A message may be spurned either because in relation to current reality, it might sound far-fetched or preposterous. It may also be rejected if the words are hard on the persons who hold power and authority. If conventional thinking perceives and presents falsehood to be truth, a profound statement that counters the position of the establishment can be rejected and ridiculed.

Interpreting the Message

Interpreting the message of a seer is a function of variables often outside the control of the medium. Often receivers of a message tend to interpret it to suit their

purpose. One could interpret a message from a purely selfish perspective. Also, the source of the message can immediately spring up all kinds of reactions. In the play, the source is a woman, who ordinarily has no place in the society. To compound the situation, she is said to be addicted to the bottle in addition to being cursed by the ancestors so that 'her truths' would be ignored. The danger of this attitude is that man misses the gravity of the situation. The hands of the ancestors are against Zifa; the hands of the gods are also against Orukorere for refusing to be their maid. The family does not stand a chance against these formidable foes. Even truth can sometimes be a casualty to politics and politicking.

The Message and Zifa's impotence

The import of Orukorere's message is that except urgent steps are taken to save the situation, the family would meet with disaster. The enemy is within she seems to say. She does not attribute the impending calamity to extraneous forces. Rather she says the search for the helpless or the bleating goat should be carried out within the family. But the family itself appears to be impotent in terms of responding to the warning. Sometimes, failure to respond is caused by hidden objectives or selfish motives dressed in the guise of patriotism. The American public is yet to get a satisfactory response to accusations that in spite of warnings about a terrorist attack the Bush administration took no steps to prevent September 11. In Nigeria, the home country of the playwright whose work we are studying, the President Obasanjo has refused to heed warnings about the need to convene a national conference where the future of the country would be fully discussed. All the indications are there that except something serious is done about ethnic rivalry and suspicion there could be a conflagration in the years ahead. The President has ignored all the signs.

Zifa's impotence precedes the coming of the message of the prophetess. In other words, before the message of Orukorere comes to light, Zifa's plight is already known. The Masseur suspects this after his very revealing but delicate discussion with her. Very early in the play, the Masseur and Ebiere have this dialogue:

MASSEUR: Your womb
Is open and warm as a room;
It ought to accommodate many.
EBIERE: Well, it seems like staying empty.
MASSEUR: An empty house, my daughter, is a thing
Of danger. If men will not live in it
Bats or grass will, and that is enough
Signal for worse things to come in.
EBIERE: It is not my fault. I keep my house
Open by night and day
But my lord will not come in.

The delicate subject being discussed between the two characters is the central problem in the play, that of impotence and a threat to family continuity. Certainly, with the development of fertility drugs, in vitro fertilisation, surrogate parents, adoption of babies, and perhaps cloning, childlessness is not a serious and fundamental or emotional problem as it used to be, particularly in the Western world. However, in the setting of the play, an adopted child or a child born through other means than sexual relations between father and mother carries a question mark. Above all, the question of impotence has an intertwining relationship with the entire air of doom and catastrophe which Orukorere foresees in the micro cosmos of the play. Disaster is impending on the family and of course the land. For in the world of the play, one man's disaster has crucial implications for the entire race, the whole land.

Symbolisms

The notions of madness and impotence are conveyed in the vehicle of symbols drawn from nature and from the riverine setting of the play. The Masseur sets off the discussion using heavily loaded words like 'room', 'house', 'door', 'stout staff', 'lion', 'leopards', and 'gates' to connote fertility and openness. These words are suggestive of the necessity to build homes and families to shelter broken souls. The 'leopard' and 'lion' suggest the coming of danger or an intrusion into the safety of the home. The first danger is Zifa's lack of potency which can destroy the family tree. Tonye, the adulterer brother of the tragic character poses the second threat to order and communal morality. Zifa's impotence further symbolises the failure of the traditional way of doing things in a modern and progressive world. Continuity is a timeless, universal principle that must be respected by all members of society. Entrapping Tonye is also achieved through a largely symbolic ritual; that of compelling the culprit to force the head of a goat with horns into a pot with a thin neck. When Tonye contends that the pot would break, Zifa retorts with a "so you know?" The pot symbolises the communal ethos or family cohesion which can be lost when acts injurious to the common good are carried out. Forcing the goat head into the thin-necked pot is the equivalent of sleeping with another man's wife. The pot would break. In the contemporary world, such acts come in different forms.

Conclusion

The impotence of a sane man would seem to be more dangerous to the body politic than the prophecy of a mad woman. The equivalent of the impotent in modern discourse is failed or corrupt leadership. A sane man who cripples the process of procreation through his obstinacy and pride deserves to be punished. The woman in *Song of a Goat* is not mad, at least not in the sense of having a nervous breakdown. Her vision is very clear because she has a very active sense of observation and prognostication. For this, she is castigated and spurned.

The prophetic sayings of Orukorere, couched as warnings could have saved the Zifa clan from the deep and horrible tragedy if they had listened to her. But their misperception of her gift as a demonstration of madness leads them into a fatal error. If Ebiere or Zifa had discussed the Masseur's proposal with the seer of the family,

the tragedy would have been averted. A visionary often faces this risk in most societies, because by their nature, they are ahead of their fellow citizens. The traditional African saying that 'what an old man sees sitting down, a child cannot see standing up' applies to the work of a visionary and his society. The central character is sane but lacks the biological competence to extend the boundaries of procreation, an ability which his community, his kith and kin hold to be sacred because of the uncertainty of their existence.

One of the problems facing contemporary Africa is lack of vision. Clark-Bekederemo's play *Song of a Goat* is relevant for all times because for development to take place there ought to be the voice of the seer, the voice of deep and profound thinking which would see beyond the ordinary. *Difference* or minority expression should not be perceived as coming from the mind of the insane. That voice might just make the difference in the lives of millions.

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POETRY IN THE EFL CLASSROOM: A TRANSLATION-BASED APPROACH

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Abstract: This paper deals with the teaching of literature to EFL (English as a Foreign Language) students, presenting a translation-based lesson plan focused on one of the poems of the American poet Emily Dickinson (1830–1886). It begins with a review of some notable ideas in support of the use of literature in language teaching, both as an effective auxiliary means for the development of basic learning skills and as a practical resource for helping students increase confidence in their personal opinions and attitudes. Some insights on teaching poetry are then considered, with special attention to the opinions of teachers who use poetry in language classes, and not just in courses on literature.

Key-words: EFL, literature, poetry, translation

1

Referring to teachers' occupation and concerns, Brown (1994:395) points out that sometimes one's life *seems to be caught in a never-ending series of lesson plans*. He might as well have added that this should be the occasion for teachers to realize that classes are probably becoming very much alike, with the same routine steps for the same activities given "by the book." In the specific case of a language teacher, it could also be said that some grammar lessons and reading comprehension activities are living a life of their own – they have been so overworked through years of practice that they dispense with the real interaction between teacher and students. Trying to make students produce language in such artificial, redundant, and often boring situations, day after day, is to treat language – and learning as well – as a ready-made product instead of a creative process. The reason students feel uncomfortable about producing language, most of the time, is that they dislike those supposedly practical but almost always forced situations that intend to bring the "real world" into the classroom with the exploitation of non-authentic, pointless material.

Thinking of something new to stimulate spoken and written production, the conscientious language teacher might just as well come up with some remarks about a piece of literature, perhaps a little poem, as a casual warm-up activity. This "less traveled road" is probably the likeliest path to the most rewarding experiences in language learning. Encouraging critical analysis of literary texts, although occasionally and a little "out of schedule" – if literature is not within the contents of the adopted textbook – can most certainly give students a chance to depart from repetitive language classes, furthering their reading comprehension and vocabulary, and improving their written and oral expression. Thus we hope that teachers will, to quote Brown (1994:411) once again, *open the door to the intangible, to art, to poetics, to the invisible sparks of energy that kindle the flames of learning.*

Literature teaching in EFL classrooms is often considered unworthy of concern, both by students in general and by a great number, if not the majority, of Brazilian language teachers. The reasons for this negative attitude towards literature are not difficult to find: this same situation occurs in relation to the teaching of our very own Brazilian literature in high school. The fact is that reading and writing, the only two linguistic skills that are immediately and almost exclusively associated with literature, whether in Portuguese or in any other foreign language, are regarded as a burden by our students, because these skills are thought to be irrelevant to most of the demands of daily life. As a result of traditional methods that give priority to the perfunctory enumeration of literary schools and movements and to the mere naming of important writers and representative works, without a serious study of the literary text itself, literature is thought to be something highly abstract and artificial by secondary school students. And of course those are the same language school students who react with discomfort, unwillingness and even hostility when faced with the perspective of a "belletristic" initiation in a language they thought would serve them better if they could just listen and speak in a "normal" ordinary way, without having to struggle with those same old unsubstantial and pointless reading and writing activities. Also faced with serious problems when taking the risk of teaching literature, EFL teachers often have to resort to themselves in search of some intimate reassurance to answer students' worrisome questioning: "Why literature?"

According to Carter & Long (1992:1), *the teaching of literature in foreign language classes was* [in former times] *an activity whose justification was assumed to be obvious*, the study of literature being *considered a* ***sine qua non*** *for the truly educated person.* Although stating that more recently literature has experienced *an extensive reconsideration within the language teaching profession* (obviously not particularly in Brazil), the authors recognize that *the emphasis on the study of English for specific practical purposes . . . as well as, more broadly, on the spoken more than on the written language, has severely challenged the place of literature* in the teaching of English as a second or foreign language. Duff & Maley (1997:6) think that *there are three types of justification for using literary texts:* (a) *linguistic*, (b) *methodological, and* (c) *motivational*, explaining that *unlike many other forms of language teaching inputs*, which are often made to serve incidental pedagogic experiences or simply to fill a lesson plan gap, literary texts are ***genuine*** *samples* of common usage of language, and *for this reason alone they are worthy of consideration.* Lazar (1999:14-19) gives a list of eleven *reasons for using literature with the language learner*, among which are: (a) *motivating material*, (b) *accessing cultural background*, (c) *encouraging language acquisition*, and (d) *expanding students' language awareness*. Pondering the author's thorough discussion of these items would certainly supply any reluctant teacher with some convincing ideas about the role of literature in language teaching. Carefully chosen, motivating material, says the author, will make learners *feel that what they do in the classroom is relevant and meaningful to their own lives*; a literary text often provides students with cultural *insights into the possible relationships, emotions and attitudes* of other people; text-based activities, if conducted in groups *where students need to share their feelings and opinions*, can further language acquisition; and the exposure to the *fresh, unexpected language* conveyed by a literary text, rather than making students internalize "wrong" linguistic uses, would encourage them *to think about the norms of language use* and *to become aware of stylistic effects*. In this way, according to Shulman (1995:xix), literature could be taken as *a form of education as well as entertainment and amusement*, and reading, as *a journey of discovery, an exploration of the unknown*. These are things that certainly appeal to everyone – young and adult learners usually have similar responses when stimulated by "carefully chosen, motivating material". In fact, motivation is the touchstone for the acceptance of literature in language teaching, all the other reasons more or less depending upon it. Returning to Carter & Long (1991:16), it is clear that *students need to see a point to reading, particularly to reading extended texts*. "Entertainment and amusement" are key words to describe *a world dominated by television, magazines, comics . . .* for these media *provide immediate short-term satisfaction*, while reading a literary text *requires concentration over a period of time . . .* and *hard work for the reader*, who frequently needs to review a text time and time again and to search for an unusual word or expression in a dictionary. Bassnett & Grundy (1995:1) intend to motivate students *seeing the learner as a resource and working from that learner's store of experience*, valuing the *learner-centered, collaborative approach*, and recognizing *the role of the reader as being of crucial importance*. And it is of crucial importance to convince a student that he or she should not approach a literary text *in a spirit of humility*, which the authors call a *"how-will-I-ever-understand-what-such-a-great-writer-has-written"* approach, but rather *in a spirit of discovery*. They also think that *putting creative writing back into the language learning classroom* would be a choice for motivation and enjoyment for both teachers and students.

2

The negative initial response to literature in general, on the part of both teachers and students of language, turns into an overt rejection when it comes to the teaching of poetry. The reasons for this rejection are basically those already stated above as to the limited attention given to literary studies in our schools, plus some additional complications, for poetry is generally considered to be even more "distant" from the "real world" than fiction or drama. Language learners tend to dislike poetry outright because they think that its "odd language" is not as natural and useful as everyday language, and EFL teachers do not feel confident about using poems in the classroom

because they think poetry has too many "deep meanings" to deal with. Teaching poetry to EFL students is like getting blood from a stone, some teachers say, claiming that there is no practical compensation for the great amount of mental effort one has to exercise when trying to explain similes and metaphors.

This kind of dilemma in the teaching of poetry is not exclusive to Brazilian secondary and language schools – Mullican (1992:122), referring to native speakers of English in the United States, observes that *too many young people profess to hate poetry*. The author, who teaches poetry himself in high-school, says that young people do not like what one of his students called the *"shredding of poetry" for the purpose of sifting out that last bit of meaning in a poem*. The point should be, as stated by Jacobsen (1992:47), that *people are different* and *poetry is not for everybody*, for *nothing worth having seems to be for everybody*. It is a fact that children love nursery rhymes and fairy tales in rhyming style, while adolescents and young adults express their affection for verse in popular songs. Even adults respond, according to the setting and the occasion, to the enchantment of a lyric poem just for the musicality of the words or for the sake of old memories. But if the poet declares that "A poem should not mean / But be" (for just *being there*, with no apparent *meaning*, is often a normal characteristic of poetry), what is a teacher supposed to *do* with a poem in a foreign language classroom after all? The answer to this question is only partially given here, for it is beyond the scope of this project to define and analyze poetry itself. One of the basic assumptions of this work is that EFL teachers are either real readers of poetry or have done some kind of theoretical study of poetry and versification and are thus familiar with the concepts of accent, meter, rhythm, rhyme, line, stanza, alliteration, assonance, consonance, as well as style, tone, theme, setting, point of view, imagery, symbolism, simile, metaphor, and a few other common poetic features and literary terms. Teachers should remember, anyway, just to ease students' concerns about the alleged weirdness of poetry, that one of the basic *functions of language*, as taught by linguists and grammarians, is the *poetical function*, which is related to an *emphasis on the message for its own sake*, meaning that poetry, as one of the constituents of any act of verbal communication, focuses on the communication itself, without paying much attention to the *equivalencies* between words and sentences. So students are right when they talk about that *weirdness*, for poetical language deals precisely with what is *strange*, i.e., "not previously known, seen, heard, or experienced," or "quite unusual or uncommon; extraordinary; peculiar," as defined by any dictionary. *Strangeness* is the primal condition of art itself.

It goes without saying that the same reasons referred to above for the teaching of literature apply to the teaching of poetry, as well as the same quest for the learners' motivation. But poetry has an advantage over literary texts of other genres, for poems are normally shorter than a novel or a short story and often easy to memorize, and the fact that poetry breaks the usual rules of syntax, collocation, punctuation, and even cohesion and coherence, should be counted in its favor in a world where young people strive for originality and self-expression. That *fresh, unexpected language* of a literary text is certainly much more intense in a "hooting stanza"; that *journey of discovery* is more readily attempted in "a page of prancing poetry"; that *exploration of the unknown* is more enjoyable with a wild poetic metaphor than with a prosaic,

direct, uncomplicated, matter-of-fact observation. Poetry can always get people in the mood and open the doors of their imagination.

3

An almost forgotten line of thought in the discussion of teaching language and literature focuses on the role of L1 in the acquisition of a foreign language, indirectly reinforcing the concept of translation as a valid motivational tool. Calling into question the ideas of those who cling to fashionable theories and do not admit that every teaching method, old or new, has some positive aspects, Gohn (1996:191) thinks that translation is, in fact, another *specific skill* to be taken together with the four traditional skills with which teachers normally deal: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. With the same idea in mind, Lewis (1997:60-66) even insists that translation is inevitable in language learning, for the simple reason that *learning L2 is not identical to learning L1*. According to this author, *there are several excellent reasons for paying attention to translation*, not just for its own sake, but as a form of *consciousness-raising*, and since *a part of the teacher's task is to raise learners' awareness of the effects* [of L1 interference], it could be *a useful and efficient procedure. Sound pedagogy*, Lewis says, *should exploit rather than try to deny this*, for *it is inevitable that language learners use L1 as a resource, and that they make . . . associations on the basis of their experience of L1*. Also Duff (1996:6-12), for whom *the proper material of translation is* [or should be] *authentic, not "made-up" language*, gives a number of reasons for using translation in the classroom and shows the most common theoretical principles and strategies of translation to be applied in *material directly relevant to the study . . . and, in particular, to language practice*, which of course includes the use of literary texts, although they are not given that much attention by the author. Translation, states the author, more than *many of the fashionable activities invented for language learners . . . is a natural and necessary activity*.

This paper does not claim to be a guide of some sort to the introduction of poetry in the EFL classroom; nor does it provide any kind of theoretical discussion of teaching methods and techniques. The poem that follows, which is indeed the *raison d'être* of this paper, was chosen on the basis of interesting, yet accessible, content for the average language student, but the suggested activities are not in any way the "best" or the "most appropriate" manner of rendering it. The form of presentation of this poem is of course subject to the teacher's judgment, experience, and personal view on poetry itself, assuming that the teacher has a reasonable notion of literary theory or some related discipline. There are no suggestions as to the introduction of new words in class, on the assumption that teachers have their own preferences for this activity. Both presentation and discussion can be complemented with language usage lessons, according to the curriculum schedule and students' needs. The follow-up activities are meant to connect reading comprehension of the given text to the development of writing skills, assuming that these skills increase when students write poetry or stories. There is no indication of age or level in the suggested activities,

for standards vary in our EFL classrooms, whether in high schools or in language schools, both public and private. Needless to say, teachers are the only ones who can decide, in this case of "out-of-the-book" activity, whether this specific literary material is suitable for use in their classroom.

4

Before displaying Emily Dickinson's original poem, which we have chosen to exemplify both poetry and translation activities in EFL classrooms, the teacher may use a transparency to show the students its translation into Portuguese by the Brazilian translator Idelma Farias:

Se eu puder evitar que um coração se parta
Não viverei em vão.
Se eu puder suavizar a aflição de uma vida,
Aplacar uma dor,

Ou ajudar um frágil passarinho
A retornar ao ninho,
Não viverei em vão.[1]

The teacher will ask the class to translate the poem into English, writing the lines one by one on the board according to the students' consensual suggestions, and trying to get as many students as possible to take part in the activity. Students may want to use a dictionary. After finishing this back-translation, the teacher will use the transparency to present Emily Dickinson's poem:

If I can stop one Heart from breaking
I shall not live in vain.
If I can ease one Life the Aching
Or cool one Pain
Or help one fainting Robin
Unto his Nest again
I shall not live in vain.[2]

The teacher will proceed with the comparison of both texts in English, i.e., Dickinson's poem and the translation made by the students. This is a rather simple poem, not so open to interpretation as other works by Dickinson, so its discussion may be centered on the similarities and differences disclosed by the process of translation. But simple as this poem is, and although Idelma Farias did achieve a good translation, some little things got lost in the process, for the original features of a poem can hardly be reproduced in another language, so unique and meaningful is a poetical text, and some other things will certainly get lost again in its translation

back into English. Students will surely choose the verb 'will' instead of the rather formal 'shall,' and one could bet that the preposition 'unto', restricted nowadays to biblical language, will not be considered at all; the rhyming pattern *abab* of the first stanza (which Farias did not maintain) will probably not be recovered, as well as the slant rhymes in the final triplet; and the original meter (also not maintained by the translator) will certainly be modified. It should also be noted that 'passarinho' is a general term that does not specifically refer to 'robin', which is a kind of bird not found in Brazil. But what really matters in translation, whether in poetry or in any kind of message, including everyday speech, is *equivalence of meaning* as a whole, keeping the *feel* of the original text. Given the task of making a translation, most people just think of picking *words* and reproducing *sentences*, instead of simply conveying the *meaning* of the message. The teacher might stress that the same thing applies when students try to express themselves in a dialogue, and that this excessive concentration on individual words in a foreign language could be the reason for failure in oral expression as well. Depending on the students' needs, the teacher can draw material from this poem to show particular aspects of the English language (for instance, the structure of *if*-clauses and the words 'breaking,' 'aching,' and 'fainting' respectively functioning as a verb, a noun, and an adjective), hopefully increasing students' language awareness. Students may also be asked to give a title to the poem or to add stanzas of their own, either in English or in Portuguese, using a verbal structure similar to that of the first stanza of the poem, and subsequently to translate them into the other language. This follow-up task could also be given as a homework assignment.

5

Working on teaching material based on a literary text is not just a matter of providing teachers and students with a script and its "correct" answers. The suggested lesson was planned to give EFL teachers an extra tool for classroom activities and to help students make some contextual connections between a literary work and the acquisition of a foreign language. It suggests a valid choice of procedures in EFL teaching, assuming that literature, and especially poetry, although not so strictly within the most evident needs of language learners, may broaden students' perception of some aspects of language usage. No doubt there has to be a distinction made between the *study of literature per se* and the *use of literature as a resource* in foreign language teaching. A momentary change of routine – just two or three classes devoted to a few literary texts over a whole semester – will not endanger a schedule, and yet it is highly probable that bringing poetry into the classroom will give students an opportunity to make their way toward productive language explorations and to feel motivated by being challenged with something new and totally different from ordinary material. Poetry is a possibility in the EFL classroom and translation is a helpful tool in the teaching of a foreign language.

NOTES

1 Farias, Idelma Ribeiro. *Emily Dickinson: poemas.* São Paulo: Hucitec, 1986, p. 25.

2 Dickinson, Emily. *The Complete Poems of Emily Dickinson.* Thomas H. Johnson (ed.). New York: Back Bay Books, 1976, p. 433.

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BRAZILIAN SHAKESPEARE: EROTICISM AND CARNIVAL IN CACÁ ROSSET'S *A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM*

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Starting from the notions of "foreign Shakespeare" and "Shakespeare without his language" (Kennedy 1993, 1996), from the concern with "conception, enactment, and reception" (Rocklin 1999) of drama in performance, and following the methodology of performance analysis spelled out by Halio (1988, 2000), this essay examines a Brazilian production of William Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, under Cacá Rosset's direction and José de Anchieta's design, originally commissioned in 1991 by the New York Shakespeare Festival, staged by Teatro do Ornitorrinco [the Duckbilled Platypus Theatre] and performed in Brazilian Portuguese. Ultimately, I am interested in the impact which this Brazilian Shakespeare had on the New York Press.

In the collection of essays *Foreign Shakespeare* (CUP 1993) and in an article entitled "Shakespeare Without His Language" (Routledge 1996), Dennis Kennedy asserts that it is "natural and logical that Shakespearean studies and theatrical production have been Anglo-centered", but advises that such fact has also "tended to cloak Shakespeare's vast importance in the theatre in languages other than English" (133). In fact, Kennedy poses a question that is important to many of us, surely to me, in the present essay: how has Shakespeare operated on the stage and in the mind outside English-speaking environments? (133).

As I consider a Brazilian *Sonho de Uma Noite de Verão* staged by Ornitorrinco, initially, it pays to overview the company's beginnings, aims, main characteristics and professional trajectory. In 1977, two former drama students – Luiz Roberto Galízia and Cacá Rosset – and one former instructor – Maria Alice Vergueiro – of the nationally famous Escola de Comunicação e Arte (ECA), of the University of São Paulo, decided to leave the academic world and dedicate themselves to the theatre. The company's founding trio intended to produce theatre which would neither be strictly commercial nor strictly underground – and that might draw audiences as well. Besides putting on shows, Ornitorrinco developed research in the areas of acting,

dramaturgy, and scenography. In fact, for Galízia, theatrical activity has a "scientific nature", experimental theatre entailing more than pure and simple experimentation. "One can only experiment", he says, "after one has collected enough data, and such data are also part of a dramatic tradition" (teatroemcena 1).[1] Yet, more than for their involvement with research and guided experimentation, Ornitorrinco have always been known for their engagement in "frank mockery" and in a "popular language that seeks audience participation" (ETPAC 3). According to Rosset, the group's hallmarks were, in fact, "buffoonery, spicy jokes, and debauchery" (teatroemcena 1).

The company's professional background is solidly in keeping with their expressed aims and readily identifiable artistic profile. Initially, they presented shows in the cellar of the Oficina Theatre, in São Paulo. Their first production, staged in 1977, was *Ornitorrinco Canta Brecht e Weill* [Ornitorrinco Sings Brecht and Weill], a musical, cabaret-style comedy which toured extensively in Brazil and Latin America (as far as Mexico). In 1978 *Os Mais Fortes* [The Stronger] combined excerpts from three Strindberg plays. In 1984 they staged Brecht's *Mahagonny*, a production which moved the group from the cellar to the big stage. At that time, Joseph Papp invited the company to do Brecht's show in the USA. The performance, as envisaged by Cacá Rosset, infuriated the Kurt Weill Foundation for the Arts, which suspended the authorisation to stage the play, claiming that the show was pornographic and decadent, allegedly corrupting both the work itself and the public.

In 1985 the company embarked on a winning streak, performing Alfred Jarry's *Ubu, Pholias Physicas, Pataphysicas et Musicaes*. The show ran for three years at João Caetano Theatre (Rio de Janeiro), and toured Germany, Colombia, Spain, Venezuela, Canary Islands, and Mexico, reaching an audience of more than 350 thousand people. Around that time, the company made a decision which invoked the removal of theatre's fifth wall – the one that separates the stage from the street. Justifying Ubu's candidacy as governor of São Paulo and president of Brazil, Rosset asked: "If daily life, especially in politics, is forever appropriating theatrical language, why not appropriate something from daily life?" (teatroemcena 2).[2]

Albert Boadella's *Teledum*, in 1987, was Ornitorrinco's next polemical project. The performance entailed an ecumenical meeting in a television studio. In Brazil, the iconoclastic production was banned by the censors, and in Colombia, during the Bogota Festival, it was severely criticised by the Catholic Church. In 1989 the group staged *The Imaginary Invalid*, their first production of a Molière text. As I have already mentioned (and shall go back to), in 1991 Ornitorrinco performed Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, in New York City, later taking the show to Mexico and Brazil. Still in 1992, during the Shakespeare Festival, Papp invited Rosset to work with an American cast in another Shakespearean play text. And although Papp had died in 1991,[3] the Festival's organisers, in 1993, invited Rosset to stage *The Comedy of Errors* (teatroemcena 3). In 1994 Rosset staged the Brazilian version of *Errors*. In 1996, celebrating the hundredth anniversary of the opening of *Ubu roi*, Ornitorrinco staged Jarry's text, and in 1997 they took the production to Portugal, Spain, and France. The group's next project was Molière's *The Miser*, done in extravagant settings and costumes, with ballet and five musical numbers.

Still working with Molière, in 2000 the group performed *The Tricks of Scapin*. Looking for "Neapolitan" types to cast the production, Rosset placed an ad in the papers, summoning "tall, short, thin, fat, ugly, schizophrenic, catatonic, depressive, neurotic, in a word, outrageous types". He had more than 800 applicants, of whom only eight were selected (teatroemcena 4).

Other "alternative" theatre groups appeared more or less at the same time as Ornitorrinco, e.g., Asdrúbal Trouxe o Trombone [Asdrúbal has brought the trombone] and Pessoal do Victor [Victor's bunch], all of which revealed important actors. Ornitorrinco, however, was the one that survived as a group and that, in a matter of a few years, proved to be commercially feasible. No doubt, the brief historiography of Ornitorrinco's birth, purposes, and trajectory reveals that, from the outset, the company was driven by politics, polemics, and anti-establishment impulses, was concerned with research, and intended to produce theatre that was neither entirely alternative nor commercially formulaic. Moreover, the group's history indicates not only longevity but also a solid (national and international) experience in professional theatre, especially in the production of comedies.

The Grupo de Teatro Ornitorrinco had been in operation thirteen years, when in 1990 Joseph Papp invited them to put on the aforementioned production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* during the Shakespeare Festival, in New York City. The show would cost 600 hundred thousand dollars, and the Festival organisers would cover half of the expenses. As the Brazilian National Culture Committee would not offer any kind of funding, Rosset sought in vain corporate sponsorship with the Coca-Cola Company, Kibon, Shell, Rhodia, Banco Nacional etc. Finally, the Brazilian troupe managed to gather some 120 thousand dollars of their own, secured the support of NYC's mayor David Dinkins, and the New York Telephone Company agreed to sponsor the show (Rosset in *Newsweek*; Gaspari; teatroemcena 3). As the combined effort of a company of 45 people, the Brazilian *Sonho de Uma Noite de Verão* opened at the Delacorte Theatre, in Central Park, on 1st August 1991, running through 11 August.[4]

The show's conception combined humour, eroticism, and spectacle. In fact, the production was supposedly selected by the Festival's organisers for its "intelligent humour, combining theatre, circus, dance, and song" (*Isto É* 31/7/91). For a spokesman of the NYC Parks Department, the show would "probably be the most popular play ever put on in the park" (qtd. in Landa). Writing for the *Daily News*, Ruth Landa anticipated the production as a "comedy fantasy".

The overt emphasis on eroticism was consonant with the director's conception of the play. For Rosset, *Dream*

> is the most erotic of Shakespeare's plays. It has an almost hardcore facet. The play has a scene in which Titania, Queen of the Faries, falls in love with and makes out with an ass .... *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is a debate on sexuality. The whole play is a deferred love act. What happens is that, in the present century, we got used to seeing the fairies through the eyes of Walt Disney – those tiny, angelical, winged things – and I wanted to recover the eroticism and sensuality they expressed at Shakespeare's time. (*Playboy*)

Perhaps attempting to justify his erotic conception of the play, Rosset ended up confirming stereotypes about the Brazilian sensual ethos, reportedly stating that "The way people relate to their bodies in Brazil is quite different than in the United States", and alluding to a line in a famous song by the Brazilian song-writer Caetano Veloso: "There is no sin under the Equator" (qtd. in Landa); in another article, Rosset allegedly said that "nudity is more natural for Brazilians" (Tresniowski). However, at least in Rosset's express conception, nudity was not gratuitous, as it intended to "distinguish the play's fairy folk from the elaborately dressed characters of the court" (qtd. in Bone).

Before opening in New York City, the show went through a six-month rehearsal period in Brazil, from February through July '1991. The scrutiny of the show's production, taking into account key verbal, visual, and aural elements – i.e., text, costume and set design, lighting, music, dance etc. – demonstrates an effort to put into practice a specific conception of *Dream*, one that no doubt underlined eroticism and spectacle. It is noticeable, for one thing, that the adapted text often allowed the players to move away from the original, to present their personal, especially comical, performances. Actually, the concern with the actors' personal performances, going so far as to suggest adlibbing, "approximated the production to the experience of a television show in front of a live audience" (ETPAC 3). Also, the use of circus techniques was another element that apparently contributed to render the production more popular and exciting (ETPAC 3).

Acclaimed as a "great comedy director" (wmulher 4), Rosset (who also doubled as Nick Bottom/Píramo) himself translated and adapted Shakespeare's text (Program 45; EPTAC 2). The analysis of the production's verbal text based on a live recording done at the TUCA (theatre of the Catholic University), in São Paulo, on 7 May 1992, reveals that Rosset's translation was in verse and prose, the verse following the modulation of the original, i.e., at times polished and rhymed (as in Oberon's speeches throughout), at times comical doggerel (as in Wall's speech at 5.1.155). Moreover, the text was drastically cut in a number of speeches. Rosset's express intentions in regard to the translation had a pragmatic nature: "I write translations to be spoken, not just read. There are . . . Portuguese translations of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* that aren't bad from a literary point of view. But they don't work coming out of the actor's mouth" (*Newsweek*). However, some of the verbal cuts were compensated by eloquent visual and aural interpolations done to haunting, catchy music. Among such interpolations were a wordless trapeze scene enacted by Oberon's elves in the woods, the opening and closing pageants, and a final carnival song.

Perhaps the scene that best illustrates the production's eroticism was, in fact, a visual interpolation: Titânia's bath on that hot midsummer's night. Thought out by Christiane Tricerri (who doubled as Hipólita/Titânia) and promptly accepted by Rosset, the interpolation presented the Queen of the Fairies, in the nude, being bathed by seven bare-breasted "nymphs" (as Tricerri calls the fairies), downstage-centre (wmulher 4). The moment was so arresting as to deserve a large photograph in the show's program. Choreographed by Val Folly, Tricerri's nymphs, their faces and bodies powdered white, resembling, in the eyes of the London *Times* critic, "Greek statues come alive" (Bone), danced gracefully, spinning coloured streamers round themselves, under Peter Kaczorowski's soft "moonlight".

As a counterpart to the "nymphs", Oberon's retinue, in Anchieta's costumes, was a band of five strapping elves in bikini briefs and spiky, bleached-blond hairdos. Furthermore, Puck, in the words of *Variety*'s critic, Jeremy Gerard, "athletically played" by Augusto Pompeu, a Negro actor, also in briefs, appeared drawn in the set's scale model as the nationally known Brazilian folklore character of the Saci. Moreover, the night-time scenes in the woods were fraught with eroticism. As reviewers saw it, while a "gruff, diabolical manipulator" Oberon (played by Rubens Chachá) and a "wilful and mature" Titânia (Gerard) reconcile with a passionate kiss (4.1.85-), the near-nude fairies, in great excitement, "scamper and scurry and squeal" (Kirkpatrick), dancing in roller-skates around the lovers.

Needless to say, carnival is overtly spectacle. And for Rosset, theatrical language implies spectacle, with "music, clowns, acrobats, dancing. . . [forgotten] ancestral aspects of theater" (*Newsweek*). In keeping with carnival practices, the production placed great emphasis on pageantry, visual excitement and entertainment, dance and music. In Act 2, scene 2, Rosset interpolated a spectacular circus act. Under Moura Leite and Regina Oliveira's supervision (respectively, circus and gymnastic coaches), the aforementioned elves engaged in a variety of circus-like routines, including juggling, fire-eating, acrobatics, trampolines, and an exciting trapeze act. For Mel Gussow (*New York Times*), the athletic elves were a "robust troupe of variety performers [who] might be equally at home in a circus".

And the carnivalised conception was mostly evident in the production's opening and closing visual statements. As the show started, at the sound of drums, followed by Mendelssohn's Overture (under Duca França's arrangement) played by an onstage band, the audience was entertained by an opulent, masque-like opening pageant of extravagantly dressed courtiers, sweeping and swirling round the stage "to usher in Theseus and his Amazon bride" (Kirkpatrick). Amid revels, colourful banners and streamers, the noble pair moved downstage centre, escorted by two amazons on stilts.

In the grand finale, following the curtain calls, the company, backed by the onstage musicians, would move downstage in semicircle, singing a brilliant interpolation: the famous Brazilian samba "*Maracangalha*", by Dorival Caymmi (fig. 7). Next, they would dance up the stands, mixing with the audience, always singing the carnival song. From New York, writing for the Brazilian weekly magazine *Veja*, Elio Gaspari stated that anyone passing by the arena stage in Central Park around 10.30 p.m. could hear 2,000 people clapping hands to a given beat and a song in the background:

Eu vou pra Maracangalha,
Eu vou;
Eu vou de chapéu de palha,
Eu vou...[5]

How exactly was this Brazilian *Sonho* received in New York City? The production's foreign language was (predictably) the object of much commentary, and the two most obvious aspects of the show's conception – eroticism and spectacle

– seem to have been eloquently enacted, since both were duly caught on, and in the case of the former made much ado about by the American media.

If one considers public and critical reception, the Brazilian Portuguese spoken on stage was not an insurmountable communication barrier. All the 2,000 free seats facing the open-air stage in Central Park were taken in each and every performance (supposedly, another 600 people were nightly turned back ticketless).[6] One week before the show opened, Ruth Landa wrote in the *Daily News* that New Yorkers might not understand the "Portuguese-speaking cast" but predicted that they would be able to grasp the show's "body language" (wordplay?). In fact, writing for *The New York Times* the day after the opening performance, Gussow claimed that the *loss* of Shakespeare's language was compensated by the fact that "the dialogue is communicated through actors who are vocally and physically expressive". Milaine Kirkpatrick, however, one day after the show's last night at the Delacorte, writing for *The Wall Street Journal*, admitted that she had *not* looked forward to seeing the Brazilian *Sonho* because "it was to be performed in Portuguese with no supertitles". Confessing her lack of competence in (three) languages, she wrote: "Elizabethan English is enough of challenge: Portuguese is Greek to me". However, for Jeremy Gerard (*Variety*), the show "offered something to please everyone, whether or not one is fluent in the Portuguese spoken here". And, writing about the language barrier, Gaspari stressed the fact that the company would get the "greatest laughs from the audience" by apparently adlibbing comical remarks in English (we recall the aforementioned departures from the text to advance personal performances). In any event, although there was no simultaneous English translation, for the sake of New Yorkers who knew neither Portuguese nor the play's plot, the producers ensured that publicity materials made it clear that an English synopsis was available.

Surely, the production's opening caused excitement in the New York press. Artistically conscientious critics were concerned as to whether the nudity was only a gimmick to pull the crowds into Central Park (e.g., Melaine Kirkpatrick, *The Wall Street Journal*). In an interview with Ruy Castro, Rosset admitted that the bare-breasted players were quite an attraction, and he mentioned references made to the nude women in *The New Yorker* and the *Daily News*. However, in the same interview, for better or worse, Rosset reminds the readers that he "is not at all the first to use nudity in American theatre". In typical mockery, he adds: "It would be an honour, but I am not at all the pioneer" (*Playboy*).

The "nymphs" were especially highlighted by American newspapers and television shows. Kirkpatrick wrote that the second reason she had *not* looked forward to seeing the show was that "some of the actors were to be performing in the nude or semi-nude".[7] Moreover, the production was announced in *Entertainment Weekly* as "Nude Shakespeare" (Mullen). What is more, Landa punned her *Daily News* article, titling it "Good nudes! A play that won't clothes", and the opening line of Tresniowski's review read "To peel or not to peel". Accounting for the Brazilian *Sonho*, both Landa and Tresniowski used variants of the expression "Shakespeare in the buff". And from New York, James Bone reported to the London *Times* that the show's star was "indubitably Bottom. . . [N]ot Bottom, the Weaver, but Bottom the nether region".

Gaspari, with usual flippancy, concluded that despite the media hullabaloo, the production would not have such an erotic appeal to the American audience after all, for whom eroticism, "fixated as it is on the immensity of the female bust, the eighteen smallish breasts of the Brazilian women cannot compete with Dolly Parton's". Rosset himself declared that the show's nudity was artistically, not pornographically rendered (*Newsweek*). In fact, according to one member of the company, the nudity did not total more than five minutes of acting time (Bone). To be sure, for more than one American critic, the eroticism was *not* gratuitous. The production was, in fact, appraised as "artfully eroticized (sic)" (Tresniowski), the use of nudity considered "graceful", underlining the story's "natural primitivism" (Gussow).

Although to a lesser degree than eroticism, carnival and spectacle were also stressed in the production's critical reception. Gussow thought that the personal, carnivalesque performances of Oberon's and Titânia's nimble retinues were not only entertaining but also had a "forthright feeling for Shakespeare and for the imagery evoked by the director". Even though a couple of critics pointed out that the show sacrificed Shakespeare's poetry, the overall assessment was positive, neither the eroticism nor the carnivalised spectacle being considered gratuitous.

For the Brazilian press, *Sonho* was "one more polemical and successful production" by Ornitorrinco; besides, "In this production Rosset achieved a difficult balance, combining mockery, poetry, and eroticism" (ETPAC 3). South of the Equator, Rosset's *Sonho* managed to be received, at the same time, as "a delicate, visually attractive production, in keeping with the poetry and the aura of Shakespeare's original, and as a show that does not lose Ornitorrinco's characteristic bite of debauchery" (ETPAC 3).

True, North-American critics were less impressed with the rendering of the court of Athens than with anything else, and the clowns, led by Tácito Rocha's "amusingly instructive Peter Quince" (Gussow), were faintly praised; in general, however, north of the Equator, the show's reception was positive. For *Variety*, Gerard acclaimed the production's "unabashed exuberance"; for *The Wall Street Journal*, Kirkpatrick concluded that the Brazilian show "was no midsummer night's nightmare at all but a whimsical and witty rendering of Shakespeare's fairy fantasy". And while acknowledging previous productions as "more magical and metaphorical" (including, of course, Peter Brook's famous version) than Rosset's "less ambitious approach", Gussow proposed that *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, "with its spells and incantations, freely lends itself to directorial invention" and declared himself not in the least disappointed with Rosset's conception. In fact, he received the show as a "lithe and fanciful 'Dream'".

At least since Wilson Knight (1932), the conception of Shakespeare's *Dream* has been, as it were, split: is the play a fairy fantasy or an erotic nightmare? Surely, along with the comic movement are moments of hatred, fierce sexual jealousy, attempted rape, and sexual humiliation. No doubt, the play's moment is chaotic, in which seasons alter, causing illness, floods, rotting crops, and killing cattle. Certainly, within this darker conception, the play's eroticism has been emphasised often enough. At least as far back as the Reinhardt-Dieterle film (1936), eroticism was depicted, for instance, in the couple who dance an allegorical conflict, enacting an erotic

conquest of Moonlight by Night to Mendelssohn's "Nocturne" (Jorgens 43-45). More recently, consider Lindsay Kemp's highly sensual pantomime, performed at Teatro Eliseu in Rome (1979), as well as Eva Bergman's sensual filmic version (1989). Likewise, spectacle has invariably been present in dramatic and musical renderings of *Dream*, from Purcell's *Fairy Queen* (1692), through Kean's (1856) and Tree's (1900) stage extravaganzas, to Reinhardt-Dieterle's filmic exuberance.

The fact is that Rosset's production, which caused such an impact in New York City, more than simply rehashing eroticism and spectacle in the history of the play's staging, had a distinct Brazilian quality and was received as cohesive vis-à-vis the director's express conception. For Gussow, Rosset was clearly "interested in the comedy as a springboard for entertainment and performance art with a distinct Brazilian tang". However, the production's tang entailed more statements than the obvious, stereotypical themes of sin-free sex and revels below the Equator. Whether or not taking the cue from the fact that Hippolyta is Queen of the Amazons, Rosset set his "*Sonho*" in a stripped section of what appears to have been a rain forest. To be sure, Anchieta's set, with defoliated trees and more than a dozen tree stumps, two-meters each in diameter, was hardly an Amazonian rain forest any more. Was Ornitorrinco, amid the dream of eroticism and carnival, invoking the nightmare of the destruction of the Amazon jungle? Were they invoking the memory of Chico Mendes, the Brazilian rubber tapper and environmental activist murdered in December '1988?

In the aforementioned interview for *Newsweek* (printed fifteen days after the show's last performance at the Delacorte), asked how it felt to "come from a Third World country and perform in the First World", Rosset looked back over the experience and summed up the media event which his Brazilian *Sonho* had become:

> We're a little like Shakespeare's mechanicals going to perform at Theseus' court. . . . We're exotic. . . . But exoticism isn't what makes the play work. It works because of theatrical language, which we reinterpret from a Brazilian or *tropical* perspective. (my emphasis 52)

To my mind, the director's statement reveals at once remarkable self-awareness and sharp theatrical acumen, perhaps along the lines of Aimara Resende's conclusion to her essay published in the collection *Brazilian Readings of Shakespeare*: Brazilian drama "already [has] a national creative art . . . a unique form of national expression", no longer needing "to mediate" or "copy canonized performances of [Shakespeare's] text" (39). And national expression, in the case at hand, appears to have been concerned with a major national issue. It is small wonder that on 7 August 1991 (one week after the last NYC performance) a delighted Joe Papp sent a note, in longhand, to his "dearest ORNITORRINCO friends and colleagues", thanking the Brazilian troupe for their "wonderful work and fine New York reception once again". Halfway through the note, summing up his feelings for the success of the Brazilian-Shakespeare, Amazonian foray in the Park, Papp exclaims: "My day is made!!!" (Program 25).

Yet, played against an ominous set, this Brazilian "Shakespeare without his language" attempted to express more than obvious eroticism and tropical carnival; in fact, ultimately, the facile themes may have been undermined, suggesting that the carnivalised "dream" was, in fact, an ecological nightmare. Alas, the New York press failed to see that.

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Notes

1 All translation of sources originally in Portuguese is my own.

2 In 1993, during an untimely national referendum to decide about the maintenance of the Republic or the return to Monarchy in Brazil, the group sent out faxes to newspapers, radio and television stations, inviting the press for a meeting with Ornitorrinco, the "true" royal family. The event would take place in São Paulo, at the Praça da República (jokingly renamed Praça da Monarquia, "praça" being the Portuguese word for "square").

3 The Brazilian run of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* was dedicated to the memory of Jospeh Papp, whose obituary, written by the Brazilian critic Ignácio de Loyola Brandão for the newspaper *Folha da Tarde*, was reproduced in the show's program.

4 Immediately after the NYC run, the show went to Mexico, for seven performances. The Brazilian season opened on 16 January 1992, at the Municipal Theatre of Santo André (São Paulo), running through 23 February 1992; on 3 April 1992, the show moved to the TUCA (Theatre of the Catholic University-São Paulo), running through 22 August 1992, starting again on 2 September 1992.

5 [I'm going to Maracangalha (a town near Salvador, Bahia) / Yes, I am; / I will wear a straw hat, / Yes, I will].

6 In July '2000, at The Globe, in London, another Brazilian company – Gabriel Villela's Grupo Galpão – was to essay Shakespeare in Portuguese (*Romeo e Julieta*), in front of a predominantly English-speaking audience. Drawing on the popular appeal of circus techniques (clownish make-up, acrobatics, and visual gags), the production met a mixed-feeling reception. Benedict Nightingale, even though acknowledging competent acting and unquestionable audience rapport, felt that the story's tragic dimension was cut short: "If anyone was weeping it was from pleasure, not pain." However, writing for the *Daily Telegraph*, Charles Spencer considered the show "a mad and manic delight (...) blessed with real charm", the characters' tragic destiny not being obfuscated by the "comic mayhem".

7 In keeping with the company's notorious sense of humour, one of the ads in the program of the Brazilian run (coincidentally, by a patron-namesake of the show's director) read: "When our cast is dressed, the materials are by Rosset".(Program 47).

TEACHING LANGUAGE/CULTURE IN THE LIGHT OF CULTURAL STUDIES IN THE EFL CLASSROOM

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Abstract: The main goal of this paper is to raise a discussion on one of the aspects that teaching a foreign language involves, namely the relation between language and culture. Our claim is that aiming just at language as a system favors only a technical and thus reductive view of the EFL teaching. The first step towards the subject has necessarily to go through the concept of culture itself, which is controversial. It can be argued that part of the controversy is mainly drawn on what can be called fallacious responses to the debate that Cultural Studies has raised about the matter. Thus, aproaches that label themselves as 'transcultural ones' either fall into simplifications which reduce the cultural aspect to stereotypes or they place such an emphasis on this cultural aspect that goes far beyond the acknowledgment of the role that culture plays in the language acquisition/learning, favoring and ever nurturing the creation of a whole acculturation ideology in which one is led to believe that, in order to speak the other´s language one must first become the other, that is, think and act like the other. These two mentioned responses are quite harmful since they displace the focus of a critical teaching practice from the issue of inequality (both in terms of culture and language) to an attitude that does not question in which ways and for what reasons the task of acquiring/learning this new language/culture is being posed to us.

Key Words: culture, language, Cultural Studies, EFL teaching, acculturation, ideology.

The main goal of this paper is to raise a discussion on one of the aspects that teaching a foreign language involves, namely the relation between language and culture. Our claim is that this component of teaching cannot be set aside, since aiming just at language as a system favors only a technical, and thus reductive, view of the EFL teaching. The first step towards the subject has necessarily to start with the concept of culture itself, which is controversial. Hence, we chose to set out from a few definitions and considerations about the notion of 'culture' by different critics.

According to Raymond Williams in *Keywords* (1973), the word 'culture' is one of the two or three most complicated words in the English language. 'Culture' comes

from the Latin *cultura* and *colere*, which had a range of meanings: inhabit, cultivate, attend, protect, and honour with worship. These meanings then separated out: with Christianity, the 'honour with worship' meaning *cultura* became the Latin *cultus*, from which we derive our word 'cult'. More significantly, the 'inhabit' meaning became the Latin *colonus*, farmer, from which we derive the word 'colony' – so, we could say, colonization rests at the heart of culture, or culture always involves a form of colonization, even in relation to its conventional meaning as the tilling of the soil. The culture of land has always been, in fact, the primary form of colonization; the focus on soil emphasizes the physicality of the territory that is coveted, occupied, cultivated, turned into plantations and made unsuitable for indigenous nomadic tribes.

In English, 'culture', in its early use, was a noun of process, almost, we might say anachronistically, of organic process: the ploughing of the earth, the cultivation of crops and animals: 'agri-culture'. From the sixteenth century this sense of culture as cultivation, the tending of natural growth, extended to the process of human development: the cultivation of the mind. In the eighteenth century it came to represent also the intellectual side of civilization, the intelligible as against the material.

The social reference of cultivation was allied to the earlier distinction between the civil and the savage: to be civilized meant to be a citizen of the city (preferably walled), as opposed to the savage (wild man) outside or the more distant barbarian roaming in the lands beyond. It thus operated within the terms of the later ideological polarity of the country and the city, for the inhabitants of the city contrasted themselves to the savages outside by appropriating, metaphorically, an agricultural identity. The city people became the cultivated ones, and the hunters defined by their lack of culture – agricultural, civil and intellectual.

For us in the periphery, in the third-world, who have been consistently in history aligned with the savages and the barbarian of the "lands beyond", definitions like those of Matthew Arnold, a poet of the Victorian era, who wrote extensively on the topic of culture during his life (1822-1888), can be terribly dangerous and disadvantageous! Arnold saw culture as "contact with the best which has been thought and said in the world" . The obvious question invited here is, 'Best for whom?'. Fortunately, today, with the advancement of *Cultural Studies*, the idea of the so-called 'high culture' is totally demystified, and Raymond Williams, for instance, a pioneer in the field, argues that culture isn't just the "best that has been thought or said", but rather, that "culture is ordinary". Also the anthropological perspectives of John Bodley and Clifford Geertz attempt to view culture more descriptively and to approach the study of human societies with an assumption that values, behaviors, and ideologies are different from people to people. Every human society has its own shape, its own purposes, its own meanings. The making of a society is the finding of common meanings and directions, and its growth is an active debate. *Cultural Studies*, then, unlike traditional humanism, rejects the exclusive equation of "culture" with "high culture", and argues that all forms of cultural production need to be studied in relation to other cultural practices and to social and historical structures. *Cultural studies* is thus committed to the study of the entire range of a society's arts, beliefs, institutions, and communicative practices.

Of particular importance for us, English teachers in South America, is the reflection on the status given by us to the English language in our classroom. In the beginning of the boom of English teaching in Brazil for instance, it was very common, for students looking for an English course, to ask in an interview, "Do you teach American or British English here?". Moreover, ELT publishing companies used to have the "American" and "British" versions of teaching books. Evidently, books like *The Empire Writes Back* had not been written yet; the experience of colonization and the challenge of the post-colonial world had not started being investigated yet. Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin publish *The Empire Writes Back* in 1989, and that is when the academy stops thinking about British English or American English with capital letters (Eurocentric notions of literature and language), and starts thinking of 'englishes', that include englishes of all postcolonial societies and englishes spoken as a second language, and as a foreign language, with the most varied accents, by most people in the globalized world. The issue today is one of English's ownership. The English language is the language of the global village, and does not belong anymore to the U.K. or the U.S.A.. The question posed to the reflective teacher is, which should be our approach, starting from the premise that language cannot be dissociated from culture? Of course, institutions such as the *British Council*, for instance, have a very specific purpose. And that is not to help people in the poor countries to communicate. Their mission is still the 'civilizing mission' of the colonizer of the British Empire who pretended they were being generous with those savages of the New World, by disseminating their culture, which is so much "superior to the others", as wanted Matthew Arnold. What in fact happens is that the dissemination of their culture is their means of subjugating the other. Moreover, as we previously asserted, language is part of the cultural apparatus and, thus, in order to disseminate a certain culture appropriately, it must be spoken appropriately.

The words of professor Higgins to Elisa in *Pygmalion* still echo: "The English language is the greatest possession we have". Within this framework it becomes evident that the emphasis placed on proficiency, besides ignoring (and contradicting) the current academic discourse that acknowledges and praises the differences, also hides a high imperialist tone in which purity—a problematic concept itself, since it encompasses under this label accents from First-World countries (and ex-British colonies) like the U.S.A., Canada, Australia—is privileged over hybrid variants from ex-colonies, such as India and African coutries.

Running away from the British "civilizing missions" alone, however, does not solve our problem. The "American" language/culture—that is, the language and culture of the U.S.A — has reproduced the same logic of subjugation in the neocolonialism practiced throughout the twentieth century. Globalization is a reality.

Approaches that label themselves as 'transcultural ones', on the other hand, either fall into simplifications which reduce the cultural aspect to stereotypes, or they place such an emphasis on this cultural aspect that goes far beyond the acknowledgment of the role that culture plays in the language acquisition/ learning, favoring and ever nurturing the creation of a whole acculturation ideology in which one is led to believe that, in order to speak the other´s language one must first become the other, that is, think and act like the other. These two mentioned

responses are quite harmful, since they displace the focus of a critical teaching practice from the issue of inequality (both in terms of culture and language) to an atitude that does not question in which ways and for what reasons the task of acquiring/ learning this new language/culture is being posed to us.

Maybe a good way to begin to look at the problem seriously is by taking into consideration a suggestion made by Stephen Greenblat in his essay 'Culture'. He is talking about the study of literature, but we can make use of his statement in the EFL classroom. He says "An awareness of culture as a complex whole can help us to recover that sense [he is talking about the context when the literary work was written] by leading us to reconstruct the boundaries upon whose existence the works were predicated". Then, he suggests a set of cultural questions we could ask ourselves about a literary work we are reading. It is our contention that, by extension, questions like these, and similar ones, can help in the critical reception of whatever text is being brought to the EFL class:

> What kinds of behavior, what models of practice, does this work seem to enforce?
> Why might readers at a particular time and place find this work compelling?
> Are there differences between my values and the values implicit in the work I am reading?
> Upon what social understandings does the work depend?
> Whose freedom of thought or movement might be constrained implicitly or explicitly by this work?
> What are the larger social structures with which these particular acts of praise or blame might be connected? (226)

If we start looking at our teaching practice critically, we may begin to change a situation warned to us by the Brazilian critic Roberto Schwarz in his text, "Brazilian Culture : Nationalism by Elimination", in which he points out that Brazilians have always experienced the artificial, inauthentic and imitative nature of our cultural life. Its everyday manifestations go from the inoffensive to the horrifying. Examples of inappropriateness include Father Christmas sporting an eskimo outfit in a tropical climate. Awareness of these outrageous attitudes, combined with critical thinking and the set of cultural questions suggested by Greenblatt might turn out to be a good beginning.

In closing, we would like to give Edward Said's words some consideration. He says in *The World, The Text and the Critic*:

> In the first place, culture is used to designate not merely something to which one belongs, but something that one possesses and, along with that proprietary process, culture also designates a boundary by which the concepts of what is extrinsic or intrinsic to the culture come into forceful play. But, in the second place, there is a more interesting dimension to this idea of culture as possessing possession. And that is the power of culture by virtue of its elevated or superior position to authorize, to dominate, to legitimate, demote, interdict, and validate: in short, the power of culture to be an agent of, and perhaps the main agency for, powerful differentiation within its domain and beyond it too." (8-9)

With Michel Foucault we have learned to see culture as an institutionalized process by which what is considered appropriate to it is kept appropriate, and we have also seen Foucault demonstrating how certain alterities, certain Others, have been kept silent, outside or – in the case of his study of penal discipline and sexual repression – domesticated for use inside the culture. Culture achieves its hegemony based on a constantly practiced differentiation of itself from what it believes to be not itself. And this differentiation is frequently performed by setting the valorized culture over an Other. Our ultimate task as educators is to look at the task of teaching a foreign language critically and not naïvely. To be critical one must acknowledge that recurrently in history mainstream nations try to impose their culture/language over the Other(s). This awareness only becomes possible if one dares to establish a practice that leads both the teacher and the students to a constant questioning about what reasons are behind the processes that involve language teaching. But this questioning must be, above all, theoretically informed or, otherwise, it can degenerate either to tautology and despair or to a positivistic optimism.

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JOYCE: MEMÓRIA E IDENTIDADE EM *A PORTRAIT OF THE ARTIST AS A YOUNG MAN*

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JOYCE: MEMORY AND IDENTITY IN
A PORTRAIT OF THE ARTIST AS A YOUNG MAN

ABSTRACT: This article is part of the results of a research project entitled "Irishness: Memory and Autobiography". At first, we intend to create a theoretical knowledge through the research and analysis of topics concerning memory as an element of identity formation, be it individual or national. Then, we analyse the fictional autobiographic novel *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, by James Joyce, which narrates the development of Stephen Dedalus since babyhood up to his early twenties. Through the aspect of memory studies, we read this novel endeavouring to find out elements with which the author, while narrating his own life through the protagonist Stephen, narrates his own life and the life of his country, highlighting the aspects of national identity.

KEY-WORDS: Memory, Autobiography, Ireland

RESUMO: Este artigo é parte dos resultados do projeto de pesquisa "Irlandesidade: Memória e Autobiografia". Inicialmente busca-se um embasamento teórico através da pesquisa e análise das questões que envolvem a memória enquanto elemento formador da identidade, tanto individual quanto nacional. A partir de então, passa-se a analisar a obra *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, de James Joyce que, enquanto romance ficcional autobiográfico, narra o desenvolvimento da vida de Stephen Dedalus desde sua tenra idade até por volta de seus 22 anos. Sob o olhar da memória, observamos esta obra com o intuito de encontrar marcas de como o autor, ao contar, na figura de Stephen, sua própria vida, refaz também a vida e a identidade de sua pátria, a Irlanda.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Memória, Autobiografia, Irlanda

O presente trabalho refere-se ao estudo da obra *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, de James Joyce, que, segundo Paulo Vizioli (1991), é o resultado de uma análise que Joyce faz de seu meio ambiente e de suas reações a ele. Buscamos, nesta obra ficcional autobiográfica – em que "todos os fatos foram extraídos da vida e da realidade de James Joyce" (Vizioli, 1991: 49) – dar enfoque a aspectos que refletem como a reconstrução da memória da Irlanda pode ser feita através da memória individual que Joyce apresenta em seu texto.

Assim, neste romance, temos uma narrativa da vida de Stephen Dedalus, o protagonista, desde sua infância até por volta dos seus vinte e dois anos. Este crescimento físico da personagem é acompanhado por todo um desenvolvimento na narrativa: a sintaxe e a linguagem utilizadas pelo autor se modificam e amadurecem junto com a personagem.

Sendo a infância o ponto de onde Joyce inicia a narrativa desta ficção autobiográfica, a primeira frase da narração representa claramente o universo infantil: "Once upon a time and a very good time it was there was a moocow coming down along the road and this moocow that was coming down along the road met a nicens little boy named baby tuckoo... (*P*: 7)1

O narrador nos transporta para a lembrança dos contos de fada, das estórias que os pais contavam e, de uma forma irreverente, caracteriza esta fase do ser humano através da linguagem adequada a esta faixa etária (com neologismos típicos da infância, como é o caso de 'moocow', onde a onomatopéia é utilizada na denominação do animal), através das imagens produzidas e da própria sintaxe cheia de repetições e sem pontuação.

A partir de então acompanhamos o crescimento do pequeno Stephen: sua primeira experiência no colégio interno, a despedida e os conselhos dos pais; as férias de Natal em casa; a mudança de colégio; as primeiras aventuras de adolescente, a incerteza nas decisões do seu caminho; até que se torna um homem crítico e independente que deixa o lar e o país em busca de sua própria vida, de sua identidade, como demonstram as palavras finais do romance, quando Stephen diz: "Welcome, O life! I go to encounter for the millionth time the reality of experience and to forge in the smithy of my soul the uncreated conscience of my race." (*P*: 288)2

Joyce faz de sua memória a memória de sua nação. Mas esta memória a que ele se remete não representa a memória em sua totalidade e sim uma memória parcial, uma memória crítica, selecionada e reorganizada, mostrando um dentre outros vários pontos de vista. Isto pode ser confirmado através do próprio título da obra. Ao invés de utilizar o artigo definido "the", que especifica e define o retrato do artista como sendo o único possível, Joyce utiliza o indefinido "a", mostrando que este não é *o* retrato, mas *um* retrato entre outros que também se tornam possíveis, entre outros aspectos, a partir da abordagem de outros aspectos da memória.

Donaldo Schüler, em seu ensaio "A fragmentação da Memória" (1991: 417-427), nos fala, de uma forma totalmente alegórica e remetida à tradição grega de deuses e musas, sobre o papel da 'Memória'. Segundo ele, a memória organiza as lembranças através de uma seleção de fatos lembrados e também dos esquecidos, pois "a rememoração se faz com perdas" (1991: 422). Dessa forma o passado é inseguro, pois se apresenta através de múltiplas versões, verdadeiras ou não. Assim, ele nos

lembra o episódio de Ulisses (da *Odisséia*) em que este, "assistido pela Memória e pelas Musas, reconstrói o seu próprio passado. Fala como náufrago maravilhosamente salvo das ondas. Sem amigos, sem exército, só entre estranhos, cumpre arranjar as imagens que povoam a lembrança. Selecionando, alongando aqui, encurtando ali, compõe de fragmentos uma história comovente em que se vê a sabedoria do homem vencer a violência da natureza hostil." (SCHÜLER, 1991 : 425)

Ainda com Schüler, entendemos que a construção da Memória se faz a cada instante, pois novas experiências chegam para rever e reorganizar nossas recordações. Para ele, "o poder da Memória se comprova na habilidade de construir e destruir universos mentais" e "acima da memória de cada um de nós está a Memória da comunidade" (1991: 420)

É ao discutir a construção da identidade nacional que Benedict Anderson, em "Memory and Forgetting" (1996: 187-206), busca mostrar como as 'nações' passam de colonizadas a independentes com um pensamento de que para tal necessitam romper com o passado. Ele cita o exemplo do Peru, onde San Martin, em 1821, declarou que seus habitantes seriam, a partir daquele momento, conhecidos como Peruanos; também ao citar a *Convention Nationale* em Paris, que criou o calendário cristão ao inaugurar a nova era com o "ano um", Anderson ilustra o nascimento de uma nova era que surge com o desejo de uma profunda ruptura com o mundo já existente. Mas são apenas exemplos do que se passava no final do século dezoito e início do século dezenove.

Mas esta ruptura fica somente no desejo. Anderson faz uma análise de como, no novo mundo, ao contrário da ruptura, as cidades fundadas apresentam-se como uma cópia ou continuação de uma outra região ou comunidade. Isto pode ser observado inclusive na própria nomeação destas, que remetem aos lugares de origem (como New York, Nueva Leon, New Zeland), aos quais permanecem ligadas (subordinadas) ao passado através da memória.

Reiterando a importância do passado, Watson (1994) fala sobre o grande valor que o escritor encontra na história e na tradição de um povo, pois essas representam uma consolidação da identidade e da comunidade desta nação. Isto se comprova na obra de James Joyce, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. Apesar da Irlanda estar sob domínio inglês, o protagonista, Stephen Dedalus, é educado dentro de uma tradição irlandesa e convive com importantes e divergentes momentos históricos de seu país, sejam eles de ordem política ou religiosa e que, ao formarem a identidade nacional da Irlanda, contribuíram para a formação da identidade da própria personagem, como ele mesmo afirma ao dizer: "This race and this country and this life produced me" (*P*: 230)3

Wander Melo Miranda, no ensaio "As fronteiras internas da nação" (1998), fala-nos da construção desta identidade nacional através de uma narrativa memorialista, onde, como em Schüler, se faz necessário a presença do lembrar e do esquecer. César Guimarães, em "A imagem, signo da memória" (1997), também explora o esquecimento como fator necessário à memória. "É o esquecimento que desperta a virulência das imagens, sua expansão desordenada, caótica" (1997: 16) ocasionando a rememoração e revelando partes importantes da história do sujeito. Assim, segundo ele, tanto a memória quanto o esquecimento são excludentes, separando as imagens

que devem ou não ser lembradas no presente. Desta forma, a memória se faz da projeção do passado, lembrado ou esquecido, no presente.

Neste aspecto, Miranda elucida que "uma nação não existe sem passado: é preciso lembrar a herança deixada por seus fundadores" (1998: 417); desta forma, a nação é vista como a união da herança do passado com um futuro a construir e, assim, a nação e o povo formam um amálgama no sentido de que o povo cria a nação ao mesmo tempo em que é criado por ela (Vejam-se as palavras de Joyce em *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, citadas acima, p. 230). Observamos que, para Miranda, o esquecimento faz parte da narrativa da nação, pois é necessário que certos fatos sejam esquecidos (como a violência que sofre uma nação ao se formar) para que se constitua uma unidade nacional. Unidade não homogênea, mas pelo contrário. Sendo a fronteira o que separa e diferencia uma nação da outra, o discurso minoritário de classes marginalizadas representa a existência do que se denomina "fronteiras internas da nação", marcando o caráter heterogêneo da identidade nacional, o que se percebe na obra *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* pela diversidade de opiniões apresentada por suas personagens, como se discutirá mais adiante.

Esta heterogeneidade não se restringe apenas à construção da identidade nacional. Segundo Stuart Hall (2001) "as sociedades da modernidade tardia são caracterizadas pela diferença" que, de acordo com as circunstâncias, produzem diversas "posições de sujeito", ou seja, o indivíduo tem em seu próprio interior uma variedade de identidades (racial, sexista, religiosa, social, etc.) que se manifestam de acordo com cada situação e momento. Em *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, Stephen, quando adulto, percebe esta heterogeneidade existente em si, percebe que as circunstâncias o modificaram e afirma que na época que estudava em Conglowes "I was not myself as I am now, as I had to become." (*P*: 273)4

Analisando a construção da nação em seu ensaio "Memória, Esquecimento, Silêncio", Michael Pollak (1989), também nos remete a esse discurso minoritário que ele vai denominar "memórias subterrâneas", as quais se opõem à memória oficial de um povo, que é a memória nacional. Essa divergência entre as memórias da minoria e a memória nacional faz com que a memória coletiva sofra conflitos e disputas.

Desta forma, ainda com Pollak (1989), observa-se a existência de um caráter uniformizador e opressor da memória coletiva nacional que, percebendo a oposição feita por uma memória subterrânea, vai tentar fazer desta uma memória 'proibida', que não pode ser comentada (como no caso da União Soviética) para que se mantenha a dominação hegemônica. Assim, forja-se uma memória oficial conduzindo "as vítimas da história ao silêncio e à renegação de si mesmas" (p. 7). Mas esses silêncios e não-ditos das memórias subterrâneas são transmitidos oralmente de uma geração à outra, impedindo o esquecimento, reforçando a diferença e esperando o momento propício para passarem do não-dito à reivindicação, expressando e denunciando "o fosso que separa de fato a sociedade civil e a ideologia oficial" (p. 5).

Um claro exemplo desta situação é encontrado em *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, na ocasião do jantar de Natal em que Tia Dante, Mr. Casey e o pai de Stephen, Simon, discutem sobre política e religião, colocando e questionando fatos que, na opinião do Tio Charles, não devem ser discutidos, principalmente na frente de crianças. Observamos que Stephen presencia o pai criticando a linguagem da

Bíblia e, mesmo que este tente dissimular o que dizia, Stephen grava a situação em sua mente, repassando-a na sua narrativa:

> — (...) That's the language of the Holy Ghost.
> — And a very bad language if you ask me, said Mr. Dedalus coolly.
> — Simon! Simon! said uncle Charles. The boy.
> — Yes, yes, said Mr. Dedalus. I meant about the ... I was thinking about the bad language of that railway porter. (*P*: 36)5

Apesar da tentativa do pai em dissimular o que realmente pensava e manter no 'silêncio' sua opinião, o assunto é retomado e, agora, com mais fervor e fúria. Os 'não ditos' vêm à tona e, através da oralidade em família, reivindicam seu lugar na memória de Stephen para formarem, quando se tornar um adulto, sua identidade e a identidade de seu país, conhecendo as divergências religiosas e políticas deste:

> — Really, Simon, you should not speak that way before Stephen. It's not right.
> — O, he'll remember all this when he grows up, said Dante hotly – the language he heard against God and religion and priests in his own home.
> — Let him remember too, cried Mr Casey to her from across the table, the language with which the priests and the priest's pawns broke Parnell's heart and hounded him into his grave. Let him remember that too when he grows up. (*P*: 38)6

A partir deste trecho podemos perceber a ênfase que é dada ao papel da memória. Sabendo que, quando adulto, o garoto terá na memória um elemento formador e identificador de seu ambiente de família e de nação, os familiares tentam selecionar o que ele deve ou não se recordar.

É na tentativa de unir as divergências criadas entre as várias memórias que, lembrando Maurice Halbwachs, Pollak fala da necessidade de um processo de negociação para conciliar a memória coletiva com as individuais, o dito com o não-dito, o passado e o presente, percebendo onde uma pode contribuir para a reconstrução da outra e vice-versa. Assim, a memória apresenta duas funções essenciais, que são: manter a coesão interna e defender as fronteiras, ou seja, fornecer um quadro de referências. É o que Henry Rousso, seguindo Pollak, denomina de enquadramento da memória, unir na memória coletiva a identidade individual e também do grupo; como ocorre em *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, onde a memória de Stephen reflete a memória da Irlanda.

Reiterando este pensamento, Miranda retoma com Bhabha a oposição à generalização e homogeneização contida na metáfora "muitos como um" e elucida que uma memória se forma sob a perspectiva pedagógica quando a reconstrução do passado de uma classe se confunde com a história geral da nação. Então, o papel do narrador memorialista é narrar, através do sujeito que um dia o adulto foi, fatos que liguem o passado ao presente atual. Assim, o narrador é visto como um mediador entre diferentes gerações que agem como sujeitos performáticos na construção da nação, que se faz pelo agrupamento dos rastros das memórias individuais de cada época.

A este respeito Pollak nos fala que a reconstrução da memória coletiva também pode partir das memórias individuais, limitando o enquadramento e revelando "um trabalho psicológico do indivíduo que tende a controlar as feridas, as tensões e contradições entre a imagem oficial do passado e suas lembranças pessoais" (p. 12).

Assim percebemos a questão da memória em *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. O narrador, consciente do passado oficial de sua nação, refaz em terceira pessoa, sob o ponto de vista adulto, a sua infância como o jovem Stephen, ligando sua própria história com a história de seu país, a Irlanda, ao falar das questões políticas e religiosas que ele presenciou na época; como nos mostra o trecho abaixo, onde Stephen reflete sobre o que ele já havia ouvido a respeito de Parnell7 e, através de suas memórias, questiona e tenta encontrar uma junção das idéias:

> He wondered which was right, to be for the green or for the maroon, because Dante had ripped the green velvet back off the brush that was for Parnell one day with her scissors and had told him that Parnell was a bad man. ... There were two sides in it: Dante was on one side and his father and Mr. Casey were on the other side but his mother and uncle Charles were on no side. (*P*: 18)8

Outro exemplo vivo desta interseção entre a construção da história pessoal e da história da nação é o jantar de Natal na casa de Stephen onde Tia Dante, mais uma vez, se opõe a Mr. Dedalus e Mr. Casey. Presenciamos, neste trecho, mais uma vez, as divergências de pensamentos e pontos de vista acerca de questões religiosas e também políticas. O jovem protagonista convive com os dois lados da moeda: de um lado a acusação a uma Igreja corrompida pela política enquanto, de outro, Tia Dante defendendo o papel da Igreja como eixo de interferência na vida pública; Parnel é acusado de traição por desobedecer aos dogmas católicos enquanto outros o consideram traído pelo povo que antes o adorava. Stephen cresce em meio a esta dualidade e, revendo sua história, deverá aceitar ou rejeitar certos ideais.

Percebemos ainda que, ao narrar o episódio em que vai ao Teatro, Stephen recorda-se dos conselhos do pai para que fosse sempre um cavalheiro e um bom católico, entre outros conselhos que incluem as questões políticas pela qual passava a Irlanda, como transcrito a seguir:

> When the gymnasium had been opened he had heard another voice urging him to be strong and manly and healthy and when the movement towards national revival had begun to be felt in the college yet another voice had bidden him be true to his country and help to raise up her language and tradition. (*P*: 95)9

Vivendo tão intensamente entre questões políticas e religiosas, nosso protagonista se transforma num adulto crítico e independente, que enxerga com clareza os acontecimentos que o envolvem; e que, quando na universidade, discute política com os companheiros e mostra-se bastante crítico e confiante em suas falas. Dessa forma, percebemos seus questionamentos quanto às diferenças culturais entre Inglaterra e Irlanda, quanto à linguagem imposta ao povo irlandês ("The language in

which we are speaking is his before it is mine. How different are the words *home, Christ, ale, master*, on his lips and on mine! His language, so familiar, so foreign, will always be for me an acquired speech." *P*: 215)1 0; quanto à subjugação irlandesa à Inglaterra ("My ancestors threw off their language and took another. They allowed a handful of foreigners to subject them." *P*: 231)1 1; quanto às traições políticas à Parnell ("..you sold him to the enemy or failed him in need or reviled him and left him for another" *P*: 231)1 2; e outras mais, que mostram o que Stephen selecionou e aproveitou de sua vivência para se tornar o adulto que encontramos nas páginas finais do livro.

Refletindo sobre esta seletividade feita pela memória, Pollak observa que os pontos de referência mais freqüentes em nossas recordações são de ordem sensorial (como monumentos, explosões, cheiro de pólvora, etc) o que, nos dia de hoje, é extremamente utilizado pelo meio cinematográfico, embora, como afirma o autor, neste meio haja a impossibilidade de retratar as lembranças em sua totalidade. Em *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, percebemos a grande utilização dos sentidos como meio de uma maior exemplificação e interação do leitor com o fato ou com a imagem descrita; há uma intensa exploração de cores, de descrições visuais e auditivas, por vezes até mesmo unidas numa só definição - como por exemplo: *cold white sheets* (*P*: 20), *all the dark was cold* (*P*: 21), *The end: black, cold, void waste* (*P*: 160)[13]. Nestes poucos exemplos, podemos perceber que o visual está sempre ligado a um outro sentido, geralmente o tato – isto talvez se dê como um reflexo dos problemas visuais sofridos pelo próprio Joyce. Esta deficiência também se manifesta em Stephen, e pode ser comprovada no episódio em que este sofre humilhações por não haver cumprido a lição devido à quebra de seus óculos.

Pollak, encerrando seu ensaio, nos fala que, ao contar uma história de vida, essa própria história deve ser vista como um instrumento de reconstrução da identidade, isto é, ao recontar e, desta forma, reconstruir a própria vida, "o indivíduo tende a definir seu lugar social e suas relações com os outros." (Pollak, 1989: 13) Baseando-nos nesta afirmativa, voltamos novamente à obra de Joyce, quando ele, através da personagem Stephen, reflete essa tentativa de definir seu lugar social. No trecho abaixo, o protagonista, sentindo-se deslocado num colégio interno, busca encontrar sua posição perante ele próprio e perante o universo; tentando se localizar, ele escreve na capa de seu livro de geografia:

> Stephen Dedalus
> Class of Elements
> Clongowes Wood College
> Sallins
> County Kildare
> Ireland
> Europe
> The World
> The Universe
> (*P*: 17)1 4

Percebemos ainda, no trecho acima, que não somente Stephen se enquadra no Universo, mas também a Irlanda, que à época descrita já vinha passando por um processo de busca da sua liberdade na tentativa de redefinir sua identidade e se constituir como nação.

Em outro momento, Stephen, já jovem, acompanha seu pai, Simon Dedalus, de volta à sua cidade natal, Cork. Através de lugares e cenários, o pai começa a refazer as lembranças de sua própria infância e juventude, e as histórias começam a se misturar na cabeça de Stephen, criando nele uma necessidade de se mostrar diferente e independente de seu pai:

> ... He could scarcely recognise as his his own thoughts, and repeated slowly to himself:
> — I am Stephen Dedalus. I am walking beside my father whose name is Simon Dedalus. We are in Cork, in Ireland. Cork is a city. Our room is in Victoria Hotel. Victoria and Stephen and Simon. Simon and Stephen and Victoria. Names. (*P*: 105)1 5

Neste instante percebemos que a memória reconstruída não representa uma totalidade, pois muita coisa se torna vaga e cai no esquecimento, como aconteceu com Stephen que, como exemplifica o trecho abaixo, não consegue refazer a totalidade de seu passado, lembrando-se apenas de certos nomes e alguns fatos:

> The memory of his childhood suddenly grew dim. He tried to call forth some of its vivid moments but could not. He recalled only names. Dante, Parnell, Clane, Clongowes. A little boy had been taught geography by an old woman who kept two brushes in her wardrobe. Then he had been sent away from home to a college, he had made his first communion and eaten slim jim out of his cricket cap and ... (*P*: 105)1 6

Dando seqüência a este trecho, Stephen se recorda de quando esteve doente na enfermaria do colégio e, num delírio, viu-se morto. Ao relembrar este episódio, o protagonista lembra-se de que "he had not died then. Parnell had died. There had been no mass for the dead in the chapel and no procession" (*P*: 105)1 7. Nota-se, então, uma (con)fusão, um entrelaçamento entre este fato de sua vida, e um acontecimento importante que faz parte da história da Irlanda – a morte de um grande líder nacionalista, Parnell.

Ainda em Cork, Stephen acompanha seu pai que, após ter vendido a casa de sua propriedade, sai de bar em bar se embebedando. Num dos bares, Simon e seus companheiros vão relembrar o passado, falando dos antepassados e da importância de se preservar a memória: "...I can remember even your greatgrandfather, old John Stephen Dedalus, and a fierce old fireeater he was. Now, then! There's a memory for you! (*P*: 106)1 8

Este trecho exemplifica nossas observações de que, na tentativa de reconstrução de uma identidade, a memória tem papel fundamental, ligando o presente ao passado,

buscando nas experiências vividas uma conexão com o momento atual. Ao refazer sua infância, Stephen ainda se refere a outro momento anterior a este primeiro, pela voz do amigo do pai, valorizando a importância que o passado tem na construção do presente.

Numa fala a seguir, Simon, referindo-se a Stephen, diz "Well, I hope he'll be as good a man as his father"1 9. Podemos perceber neste trecho que Simon menciona a continuação do passado através das gerações, desejando que Stephen siga seu exemplo e continue a história de sua família; o que nos parece uma ironia, pois o pai não é um cidadão exemplar.

A respeito deste espelhamento do presente/futuro em um passado repleto de motivos dos quais se orgulhar, como dizem a Stephen, Frantz Fanon, em seu artigo "National Culture" (2001), diz-nos que:

> The native intellectuals decided to back further and to delve deeper down; it was with the greatest delight that they discovered that there was nothing to be ashamed of in the past, but rather dignity, glory, and solemnity. The claim to a national culture in the past does not only rehabilitate that nation and serve as a justification for the hope of a future national culture. (Fanon, 2001: 154)2 0

Stephen ainda não assimila sua identidade, chegando a questionar seus laços familiares, sentindo-se como se não pertencesse àquela família, ao expressar que "He felt that he was hardly of the one blood with them but stood to them rather in the mystical kinship of fosterage, fosterchild and fosterbrother. (...) By day and by night he moved among distorced images of the outer world." (*P*: 111-112) 2 1

E, ainda sentindo-se deslocado e não se encontrando nem no mundo exterior das imagens, Stephen, diante deste presente indesejável, vagueia sem rumo e deixa-se guiar pelas lembranças do passado: "He returned to his wanderings. The veiled autumnal evenings led him from street to street as they had led him years before... at times, in the pauses of his desire, the image of Mercedes traversed the background of his memory." (*P*: 112)2 2

Vale lembrar que a Mercedes a quem ele se refere é a personagem do romance que Stephen leu e venera, "O Conde de Monte Cristo", de Alexandre Dumas.

A busca pela identidade persiste: ao entrar para a universidade, os colegas começam a brincar com o nome de Stephen numa confusa música de trocadilhos com a língua grega, originária do nome Dedalus, dizendo: 'Stephanoumenos', 'Stephaneforos', 'Stephanos Dedalos'. A princípio tudo pareceu confuso e medonho, mas aos poucos as coisas se clarearam na mente de Stephen que, em conseqüência, numa linguagem bela e metafórica, fala da descoberta de sua identidade e de seu crescimento interior, apoiando-se na mitologia:

> Now, as never before, his strange name seemed to him a prophecy (...) Now, at the name of the fabulous artificer, he seemed to hear the noise of dim waves and to see a winged form flying above the waves and slowly climbing the air. What did it mean? Was it a quaint device opening a page of some medieval book of prophecies and symbols, a hawklike man flying sun ward above the

sea, a prophecy of the end he had been born to serve and had been following through the mists of childhood and boyhood, a symbol of the artist forging anew in his workshop out of the sluggish matter of the earth a new soaring impalpable being? (*P*: 192)2 3

Neste momento, Stephen descobre que seu nome se refere ao herói mitológico Dédalo, conhecido como grande artesão e a quem se atribuem variadas invenções artísticas e industriais primitivas. Dédalo foi preso com seu filho Ícaro num labirinto que ele próprio havia construído mas, pregando cera e penas às costas, ele constrói asas e consegue escapar. Stephen sente uma imensa satisfação ao se reconhecer, ao descobrir sua identidade, seu objetivo na vida. Uma sensação de liberdade, de grandeza e crescimento intelectual e espiritual, representado na imagem do vôo, invade o protagonista, como nos revela o trecho: "His heart trembled in an ecstasy of fear and his soul was in flight. His soul was soaring in an air beyond the world and the body he knew was purified in a breath and delivered of incertitude and made radiant and commingled with the element of the spirit." (*P*: 192)2 4

Stephen descobre-se, amadurece e passa a ter uma visão mais ampla e apurada como o falcão ("hawk"), permitindo que ele evolua e promova seu crescimento interior, libertando-se da infância, sentindo todo o poder e liberdade de sua 'identidade': "His soul had arisen from the grave of boyhood, spurning her graveclothes. Yes! Yes! Yes! He would create proudly out of the freedom and power of his soul, as the great artificer whose name he bore, a living thing, new and soaring and beautiful, impalpable, imperishable." (*P*: 193)2 5

Analisando a imagem do falcão, percebemos que a figura de pássaros é constante e percorre toda a obra. No início, temos a amedrontadora águia que vem arrancar os olhos do menino que faz xixi na cama; o falcão representa seu amadurecimento; as andorinhas surgem quando ele resolve ir embora da Irlanda, deixar seu lar, sua terra Natal, simbolizando a liberdade de ir e vir. Nessa sua ida, a analogia com Dédalo é clara: seu filho Ícaro se embriaga pela liberdade e voa alto demais – a cera derrete, as penas caem e ele cai no mar. Dédalo, no entanto, concentrado e perseverante em busca da liberdade, consegue escapar, como Stephen/Joyce escapa de Dublin.

Assim, podemos concluir que a obra autobiográfica de James Joyce, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, apresenta aspectos riquíssimos no que concerne às questões da memória, onde a construção da memória individual de Stephen nos remete à memória coletiva da Irlanda, e vice-versa. Stephen, dessa forma, ao crescer e amadurecer vai mostrando, também, o desenvolvimento de sua nação, o anseio e as lutas, físicas ou psicológicas, pela conquista da sonhada liberdade, da identidade própria e independente, que são comuns a ambos, povo e nação.

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NOTAS

* Trabalho realizado sob orientação da Professora Doutora Magda Velloso Fernandes de Tolentino, da Universidade Federal de São João del-Rei.

1 Era uma vez há muito tempo uma vaquinha que fazia muu vindo pela estrada abaixo e essa vaquinha que fazia muu que vinha pela estrada abaixo encontrou um menininho engraçadinho chamado neném belém...
Esta citação e todas as que se seguem são retiradas da edição JOYCE, James. *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. London: Peguim Books, 1996, identificadas pela letra *P* seguida do número de página, com minha tradução.

2 Seja bem-vinda, ó vida! Vou pela milionésima vez ao encontro da realidade da experiência e forjarei em minha alma a não desenvolvida consciência de minha raça.

3 Esta raça, este país e esta vida produziram meu ser.

4 Eu não era antes como eu sou agora, como eu me tornei

5 (...) Esta é a linguagem do Espírito Santo.
É uma linguagem muito ruim se você quer saber, disse friamente o Sr. Dedalus.
Simon! Simon! disse tio Charles. O menino!
— Sim, sim, disse o Sr. Dedalus. Eu quis dizer... Eu estava pensando na péssima linguagem daquele carregador da estação.

6 Realmente, Simon, você não deveria falar dessa maneira na frente de Stephen. Não está certo.

— Oh, ele se lembrará de tudo isso quando crescer, disse Dante calorosamente – a linguagem que ele ouviu contra Deus, contra a religião e contra os padres na própria casa dele.

— Deixe-o lembrar-se também, gritou Mr Casey, a linguagem com que os padres e os joguetes dos padres partiram o coração de Parnell e o perseguiram até sua sepultura. Deixe-o lembrar disso também quando ele crescer.

7 Segundo *The Oxford Companion to Irish History* (1998), Charles Stewart Parnell (1846 – 1891) foi um líder nacionalista irlandês. Suas realizações políticas mais efetivas foram a participação na decretação de reformas agrárias, especialmente o decreto de 1881; a criação de um partido parlamentar irlandês que levou a proposta da Lei Pátria ao centro político britânico e estabeleceu uma aliança com os liberalistas para obtê-la.

8 Ele imaginava o que era certo, ser pelo partido verde ou pelo marrom, porque Dante havia rasgado com a tesoura o veludo verde da escova que era para Parnell e havia dito que Parnell era um homem mau. ... Havia dois lados nisto: Dante estava de um lado e o pai dele e Sr. Casey estevam do outro lado mas a mãe dele e tio Charles não estavam em lado algum.

9 Quando (o Ginásio começara) ele ouviu outra voz dizendo para ele ser forte, varonil e saudável e quando o movimento de vivificação nacional começou a ser discutido na faculdade uma outra voz o havia convocado a ser fiel a seu país e a ajudar a erguer sua língua e sua tradição.

10 A língua que estamos falando é dele antes de ser minha. Como são diferentes as palavras lar, Cristo, cerveja, mestre, nos lábios dele e nos meus! A língua dele, tão familiar, tão estrangeira, sempre será para mim uma fala adquirida

11 Meus antepassados jogaram fora sua língua e adotaram outra. Eles permitiram que um punhado de estrangeiros os subjugassem.

12 Você o vendeu para os inimigos e o reprovou e o insultou e o trocou por outro.

13 ...lençóis frios e brancos/ toda a escuridão estava fria/ o fim: preto, frio, vazio, desperdiçado.

14 Stephen Dedalus/ Série Elementar/ Clongowes Wood College/ Sallins/ Condado de Kildare/ Irlanda/ Mundo/ Universo

15 ... Ele mal conseguia reconhecer como seus os próprios pensamentos, e repetia vagarosamente para si mesmo:
— Eu sou Stephen Dedalus. Eu estou andando ao lado de meu pai cujo nome é Simon Dedalus. Nós estamos em Cork, na Irlanda. Cork é uma cidade. Nosso quarto é no Hotel Victoria. Victoria, Stephen e Simon. Simon, Stephen e Victoria. Nomes.

16 A lembrança de sua infância de repente ficou apagada. Ele tentou se lembrar de algum de seus vívidos momentos mas não conseguiu. Ele se lembrava somente de nomes. Dante, Parnell, Clane, Clongowes. Geografia foi ensinada a um garotinho por uma velha mulher que tinha duas escovas em seu guarda-roupa. Então ele foi mandado para um colégio, fez sua primeira comunhão e comeu pipoca no seu boné e ...

17 então ele não havia morrido. Parnell sim. Não houvera missa na capela para os mortos nem procissão.

18 Posso até me lembrar de seu bisavô, o velho John Stephen Dedalus, e um tufão selvagem ele era. Bom, então... Eis aqui uma lembrança para você!

19 Bom, espero que ele seja um homem tão bom quanto o pai.

20 Os intelectuais da terra decidiram voltar no tempo e cavar profundamente; foi com imensa satisfação que eles descobriram que não havia nada do que se envergonhar no passado, mas havia muita dignidade, glória e solenidade. A reivindicação de uma cultura nacional no passado não somente reabilita a nação como justifica a esperança numa cultura nacional futura. (minha tradução)

21 Ele sentia que dificilmente era do mesmo sangue que eles mas se relacionava com eles naquele místico parentesco de adoção, filho adotivo, irmão adotivo. (...) Dia e noite ele se remexia entre as distorcidas imagens do mundo exterior.

22 Voltou para suas vagueações. As noites de outono o guiaram de rua em rua como o tinham guiado anos antes... às vezes, nas lacunas do seu desejo, a imagem de Mercedes atravessava o fundo de suas lembranças.

23 Agora, como jamais, seu nome estranho parecia uma profecia (...) Agora, ao nome do fabuloso artífice, ele parecia ouvir o som de ondas escuras e via uma forma alada voando sobre as ondas e vagarosamente subindo no ar. O que significava aquilo? Seria um pitoresco dispositivo abrindo a página de algum livro medieval de profecias e símbolos, um homem falcão voando sobre o mar, uma profecia do fim que ele nascera para servir e seguira através da névoa da infância e da juventude, um símbolo do artista forjando de novo em sua oficina, a partir da matéria pegajosa da terra, um novo e impalpável ser que levitava?

24 Seu coração tremia num êxtase de medo e sua alma voava. Sua alma planava além do mundo e o corpo que ele conhecia foi purificado em um suspiro e tornou livre da insegurança, e brilhante e se comungou com o elemento do espírito."

25 Sua alma havia se erguido do túmulo da juventude, rejeitando suas roupas fúnebres. Sim! Sim! Sim! Ele criaria orgulhosamente na liberdade e no poder de sua alma, como o grande artífice cujo nome ele carregava, alguma vida, nova e elevada e bonita, impalpável, imperecível.

"AH, BY THE GOLDEN LILIES": TWO PERSPECTIVES ON P.K.PAGE'S RIO GARDEN

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Abstract: This paper explores the intertextual patterns created by the literary allusions in P.K. Page's poem "Ah, by the golden lilies" (2003), in which she describes the garden of her official residence in Rio. By having inserted a *mote* from Juan Ramón Jiménez's "Primavera Amarilla" as a nutrient text for the development of her own *glosa*, as well as by evoking her *Brazilian Journal* through the images that permeate the poem, Page is using intertextuality not only for her poetic creation, but also as a critical stance, through metapoetry. This approach also allows us to follow how referential language becomes articulated into poetic language as the foreigner's eyes, viewing an original experience *in loco,* are transformed into the eyes of introspection, re-viewing that privileged instant in which her Rio garden surrounded her with the perfection of its "golden sunlight".

Key words: Canadian poetry, intertextuality, literary allusion, Comparative Literature

As is well known, P.K.Page's stay in Brazil from 1957 to 1959, as the wife of the Canadian ambassador Arthur Irwin, besides having been recorded in her *Brazilian Journal* (1987) has also been the subject of several poems published in *The Hidden Room* (1997): "Macumba", "Brazilian Fazenda", "Brazilian House", "Conversation". More than thirty years since their publication, and having meantime become one of Canada's great living poets, with more than ten volumes of poetry published besides prose books and books for children, Page has now, significantly, written a new poem about her stay in Brazil: "Ah, by the golden lilies" (2002), in which she muses on the lavish garden of the ambassadorial palace in which she lived in Rio.

This garden, encircling the "hot pink" *palacete* on Estrada da Gávea, and laid out by Burle Marx for the former owner, had already been described several times in her *Journal*, revealing the fascination she had felt not only when entering for the first time her new official residence –

> Approaching from the city, if you drive in through the second of the two street gates you pass the gatehouse where the gardener lives; peer through the garden's

fretwork of tree ferns, the ruler-straight trunks of palm trees, and the intense black of their shade; cross a little stream over a bridge; and there – beyond a lotus pond and a stretch of quite extraordinary lawn – stands the equally extraordinary house (...) (p.5).

– but also on all other occasions in which she was surrounded by the exotic beauty – for the foreigner's eyes – of her tropical garden and by the sound and sight of the water stream and of the lotus pond.

Nevertheless, although Page started to depict its flora and fauna in the *Journal* notes –

> In the garden one tree has four great sprays of tree orchids growing from it – white with purple centres; another has a yellow orchid with a rust centre; still another, an indescribable flower of bright cerise with cerulean blue tips on its large heather-shaped flowers" (p.15)

– she soon realized she was not able to portray this new environment properly. As she continues,

> I wish I knew how to describe the vegetation, or indeed how to paint it. It is so excessive. Every tree puts forth some flower in clumps or sprays or showers of yellow, purple, pink, white, or red – and almost every trunk bears orchids. Nature doesn't seem to know how to control itself! (p. 15)

This awareness may be one of the reasons why Page, besides continuing the "nature notes" about her "jeweled garden" (p.19), also started to have drawing and painting lessons (p.63). The drawings of her own garden, and plants – "I've been trying to draw, to recreate the wonderful shapes of the leaves..."(p.147) –as well as of her house and other motifs, reprinted in the *Journal*, attest to the endeavors to reproduce what her words did not seem to do. As she comments on her friend Helena's "dream garden", "words cannot describe it, which is perhaps why I draw"(p.75).

Her dexterity in drawing also brings to the surface another characteristic of this newly acquired talent which she herself considered "strange" – "how a hard point pleases me so much more than a brush ... I seem to lose all control of line and the capacity to dream when working with a flexible point"(p. 197); "odd how slowly I work in oil compared with the speed of my drawing"(p.203) – but which reminds us how similar it must have been for her the experience of "drawing" a poem with a pencil and drawing a picture with crayons, as if she had transferred her skill in words to a newly acquired skill in drawing lines: "Just as one word draws out another, so one shape draws out another" (p.211).

Interspersed with these comments we also find sudden realizations about herself in this tropical setting, which foreground not only her awareness of a new being inside her but also how this novel means of expression, the pictorial art, has made her a happier being:

> "Disturbed and excited by Brazil. Why? What is it all about? Does place alter person? It's like falling in love – with the country itself"(p. 46) (...) "Something mad is happening to me. I seem to be falling in love with the world"(p. 64.)(...) "I think I have never been happier than living as I now do, almost entirely through my eye". ... "I really think I might become a painter"(p.177)

It is the combination of these four trends in Page's *Brazilian Journal* – the descriptions of the garden, the realization that she could not describe the vegetation properly, the discovery of painting and drawing as a new medium of expression and the liberating perception that she was falling in love with the world – that will thus serve as an introduction to the discussion of her poem "Ah, by the golden lilies", in which, as will be demonstrated, she has so aptly been able to merge the arts of poetry and painting with an awareness of herself as belonging to the golden world that surrounded her – not any longer as a foreigner, as in the *Journal* notes – but as a living part of her Rio garden.

The poem, consisting of four ten-line stanzas or *decimas*, is introduced by a quartet by Juan Ramón Jiménez (1881-1958), that will serve as a *mote* for Page's own poem, as each of its four lines will become incorporated at the end of each of Page's own stanzas:

> ...ah by the golden lilies,
> the tepid, golden water,
> the yellow butterflies
> over the yellow roses... Juan Ramon Jimenez

By adopting this model, Page is making use of the *glosa* – this 14th century Spanish metric form consisting of a short stanza (*mote*) stating the theme of the poem and followed by one stanza for each line of the *mote*, explaining or glossing that line and incorporating it into this explanatory stanza as a refrain (Preminger 1973: p. 323) – in this way also paying homage to the Spanish poet she is addressing in her first and last stanzas.

And, as in almost every line of the poem there are references or signals which allude to Page's nature descriptions in the *Journal*, I will try to establish, using Ziva Ben-Porat's "The Poetics of Literary Allusion"(1976: p.105-128) as a theoretical framework, not only the intertextual patterns created by the literary allusion to Jiménez's thematic opening stanza, and thus inside a *general* intertextuality – in which the alluding and the evoked text belong to different authors – but also those patterns created by a *restricted* intertextuality (Dällenbach 1976: p. 282) – in which the alluding and the evoked text belong to the same author. The confrontation of three texts will necessarily lead us to the discussion of the dialogical relationships that are brought about by the juxtaposition and superposition of the three gardens – the one evoked in Jimenez's *mote*, the one described in Page's *Journal* and the newly created garden in Page's poem – for any reading that ignores this double indebtedness will impoverish the semantic potentialities of the poem which are offered by an intertextual approach. And, although "significant indefiniteness is the mark of

symbols" (de Vries 1974: preface), in my effort to reach a deeper comprehension of the expressiveness and "original numinosity" (Jung 1964: p.93) of the images in both poems, I have also resorted to the symbolic connotations[1] allowed by the contextual horizon of meaning in which these images are inserted.

If "metaphorically or metonymically generated, the literary allusion is a device for the simultaneous activation of two independent texts" (Ben-Porat: p. 107), this activation is explicitly started by the first line of Jiménez´s *mote* which is simultaneously the title of Page´s poem: "ah, by the golden lilies". As a fundamental element for the identification of any text and therefore as a marked element *par excellence*, (Reis 1988: p. 97) the title starts with an interjection expressing regret, as if lamenting the loss of something, and thus establishing the atmosphere of melancholic beauty that follows in the *mote*. The adverb of place "by", announcing nearness, concomitantly anticipates place as the dominant category of the poem, while the image of the "golden lilies" confirms this anticipation by implying a garden as the specific setting of the poem. The artistic aim of the title, in suggesting a mood of remembrance, of remoteness in time and place, is further foregrounded by its phonological texture, for the softness of the liquids and nasals and of the consonants b/g/d/z/, all of them members of the voiced category, corroborates the image of an idyllic and picturesque place – "by the golden lilies".

The image of the "lilies" - this kind of bulbous plant bearing large showy flowers on tall slender stems – already prefigures the setting of a garden. Simultaneously, the lilies also bring to mind connotations of majesty, queenly beauty and grace, as the flowers of paradise and, inside the more general symbolism of the flower, they also suggest joy and transitoriness. These implications are further highlighted by their color being "golden", for there is an ancient belief that the sun had 'spun' the gold in the earth, while rotating round her, so "gold" is as divine, as magically powerful, and as immortal as the sun himself, connoting fertility as well as spiritual illumination (as the medium between the natural and the supernatural). The "golden" color, with its symbolic associations, thus establishes from the very start its significance and prefigures its reappearance not only as a qualifier for the other images but also as the dominant color in the poem.

First presented as a paratextual element, the semantic pertinence of the title will then be confirmed by its repetition, like a reflected image, not only in the first line of Jiménez's *mote*, but also prefiguring its repetition, together with the other lines from the *mote*, in Page's stanzas. This reflected image is then carried on to the second line – "the tepid, golden water" – by the aforementioned recurrence the color "golden", as if the lilies had turned the water golden by being reflected in it, or as if the sun were shining on it, thus also reminding us of the connection of water with the sun and fire through heat, for the water is "tepid". And, as heat is also associated with the source of life, it thus attributes to the golden water an inherent living quality, in accordance with the flowers and butterflies around and above it.

The image of "the yellow butterflies / over the yellow roses" confirms the golden aura which involves Jiménez's *mote*, for the color yellow – the color of the sun and therefore transmitting light, warmth and fertility – by impregnating butterflies and roses with its symbolic associations, is simultaneously also affected, through

contiguity, by the connotations of beauty and transitoriness inherent in the butterflies and roses, thus implying how fleeting and evanescent this perfect moment of beauty will be.

If the recognition of the marked elements in the *mote* and the identification of the evoked text (Ben-Porat: p. 110) as belonging to Jiménez is provided by Page herself, and thus characterizing the use of a metonymical literary allusion operating within the framework of initially related texts (Ben-Porat: p. 122), the recovery of the evoked text as a whole – Jiménez's "Primavera Amarilla"["Yellow Spring"] (Florit 1991:p. 96) – will reveal how seminal it is for intertextual patterning to discover the alluding text's larger referents (Ben-Porat: p. 110), in order to properly evaluate the purpose of the activation of the source text as well as of Page's addressing Jiménez:

April was coming, full
Of yellow flowers;
The brook was yellow,
The fence, the hill were yellow,
The children's cemetery,
That orchard where love used to live.

The sun anointed the world in yellow
With its fallen light;
Ah, among the golden lilies,
The tepid, golden water;
The yellow butterflies
Over yellow roses!

Yellow garlands were climbing
The trees; the day
Was a gold-incensed blessing,
In a golden awakening life.
Among the bones of the dead,
God opened His yellow hands.

As the two initial lines of Page's first stanza point out –

Jimenez, but for the roses

– by evoking Jiménez's *mote* as an image of a "Rio garden", as if his words had actualized the memories of her own "tropical garden"(p. 13), Page – as the addresser – is not only foregrounding the figure of the Spanish poet as a "painter" of gardens and thus reminding us of her own wish to be able to describe or to paint the vegetation. The recollection of "a Rio garden" – the use of the indefinite article "a" suggesting removal in time and space, for the garden is no longer hers except in memory –leads us towards the recognition of a second marker and consequently to the identification and recovery of the evoked text – the garden descriptions in her *Brazilian Journal*.

The first two lines also stress that, by addressing Jiménez, and engaging in a metapoetic dialogue with him by comparing both evoked gardens ("but for the roses/ you paint a Rio garden", the alliteration Rio/roses foregrounding the only difference between the two gardens) Page is concomitantly annulling the time lapse that separates her poem from Jiménez's and also from her own *Journal*, making the three texts and gardens co-exist not only in space – the printed page onto which they are concretely incorporated – but also in time, as Page's poem, written in the present tense, absorbs into its "eternal present" the distancing in time projected by the past tense of Jimenez's poem and of her own *Journal*. The use of the apostrophe thus becomes a metapoetic device by means of which Page not only addresses Jiménez but also her own utterance. The interaction between the three different texts and contexts, each with its own aura of connotations, has now started, through the process of actualizing the first (explicit) and the second (implicit) literary allusions, and will be developed and amplified throughout the poem by way of the modification of the initial local interpretation of the signals in the alluding text as well as by the activation of the evoked texts as a whole, in an attempt to form maximum intertextual patterns (Ben-Porat: p. 110-11).

As Page begins to describe her Rio garden - "where every golden morning/ the golden sunlight spills on my Brazilian breakfast" – she is simultaneously making us visualize an Edenic landscape, confirmed by the associations of the garden not only with earthly Paradise and ordered Nature and fertility, but also with spiritual states. The image of the golden "morning" – reminding us of youthfulness, freshness in nature and pristine happiness – and of the golden "sunlight"– this cosmic energy and creative force transmitted by the sun – which suffuses the whole poem, further corroborates the idyllic beauty suggested by this scenery.

The symbolism of the golden color, mentioned above, enriches even more the associations of these nouns, and further substantiates the significance of the garden as a site of fertility, immortality and, as will be seen, of spiritual illumination. The recurrence of the qualifier "golden", by also being reechoed in the liquid /l/ and in the nasal /n/ of "sunlight", "morning", "spills", further binds these words together in a semantic capsule.

The image of the "Brazilian breakfast", in its turn, by bringing together the concepts of eating and being in foreign place (the alliteration again drawing both words together in meaning), prefigures the colorful food displayed at her breakfast, thus enhancing once more the beauty and fertility of this garden. The perceptual qualities of the "strawberry-fleshed papayas" and of the "sensuous persimmon" with their warm red and orange colors – already retrieved in the image of the "sunset-

coloured arcs of mamão" in the *Journal* (p.47) – are further highlighted by the golden sunlight that literally "spills" on them, a "spilling" that is phonologically prepared by the alliteration sunlight/spill, visually enacted by the enjambment "spills/on", and rhythmically emphasized by the strong accent on "spills".

Moreover, the qualifiers "fleshed" and "sensuous" – reminding us of the symbolic associations of life and of the joys of the senses – are further bound to their nouns by subtle sound parallelisms: the fourfold repetition of the fricative /s/ in "sensuous persimmon" linking the qualifier to the fruit, as if "sensuous" were an inherent characteristic of the persimmon; "sensuous", in its turn, also impregnates the "strawberry-fleshed papayas" – already bound to "persimmon" through alliteration – with a sensuous quality by contiguity with "fleshed", a quality which is latent in the noun "flesh", while the repetition of the initial consonant cluster /st/ in "strawberry" at the end of "fleshed", and thus enveloping both qualifiers, creates a further semantic bond between them.

The reference to the "aloes", with their erect spikes of flowers and bitter juice, to which the taste of the coffee is compared (suggesting that its taste is too strong for a foreigner), reminds us of their green color as offering a vivid contrast to the red and orange fruits, while the simile acquires expressiveness and depth through the associations which this plant brings out, for, as a symbol of fertility in the Old Testament, the aloes corroborate the associations of fertility and delight projected by the garden. The aloes also prefigure the reappearance of the lilies, not only visually, as the aloe is a genus of plants of the lily family, but also in sound, by the partial rhyme in aloes/lilies.

Moreover, as food is the visible form of divine life, both inherent in the food itself and in the incorporation of divine beings, its qualities will also be acquired by the addresser and eating will consequently become a fertility rite, for the eaters share the receptive quality of Mother-Earth, and become part of the deity. This sharing, however, can become even more meaningful in this context: if the papayas and the persimmon, containing the seeds of new life, already symbolize, as seen, fertility, abundance and earthly desires, and, as red food, the papayas corroborate their connection with the hidden joys of the senses and with the food of the gods, eating food in "another world"– the Brazilian breakfast – binds a person symbolically to that region, and therefore there is also the suggestion that the poetic "I" will remain a "prisoner" of this enchanted garden, in the same way that Page, as a living part of her "jeweled" Rio garden and. by writing about it after so many years, is still bound to it.

Consuming vegetable life – materialized and personified in the fleshed and sensuous fruits and in the medicinal taste of coffee – and being surrounded by a golden atmosphere also seem to contribute to make the addresser's "young head", this vessel of transformation, become "full of follies", while her youth connects her again with the symbolism of the sun. The pararhyme full/follies, as if "full" anticipated the appearance of "follies", further enhances the connotations of madness, excitement and imagination contained in the expression, therefore also foreshadowing the atmosphere of Dyonisian revelry implicit in the "sambas *jocosos, macumba, feijoada*, Bahian *vatapá*" of the last stanza. By including herself in the picture and for that

reason affected by all this profusion of colors, as her imagination seems to run wild, Page brings this first stanza to an end by evoking a third time Jimenéz's line "ah, by the golden lilies", with which "my head full of follies" forms a couplet. The feminine rhyme follies/lilies, already anticipated in sound by the recurrence of the liquid /l/ in "full" and reinforced by "golden", gives this couplet the same soft sound texture as Jiménez's *mote*.

This evocation, nevertheless, establishes a double difference with Jiménez's text. As Page integrates his line into her poem, she adds to it the remembrance of her own golden lilies, as registered in the *Journal* – "All our lilies are out – white, yellow, orange, flame. Also the agapanthus – blue and white – and a tall tree with flame flowers and some orchid-coloured orchids. Quite beautiful"(p. 92). The evocation of the second referent-text, which amalgamates Jimenez's line and her own description, creates a new context for his line, for it is in an atmosphere of freshness, youthfulness and happiness transmitted by the "golden morning" and the "golden sunlight" that envelops her Rio garden that the poetic ego will become immersed.

Moreover, by adding a joyous tone to her evocation of the golden lilies – their color and shape foregrounding their structural analogy with the sun itself –, Page is simultaneously contrasting it with the atmosphere of melancholic beauty which impregnates Jiménez's sextet from which the *mote* was removed:

The sun anointed the world in yellow
With its fallen light;
Ah, among the golden lilies,
The warm, the golden water;
The yellow butterflies
Over yellow roses!

For, as the image of Jiménez's golden lilies is preceded by the "fallen light" of the sun, with its overtones of sloping down and decline, the act of the sun ritualistically "anointing" the world in yellow – a consecration which is universal in the religious world – adds an ambiguous tone to the act, for it can also be done in the hour of death, as the "fallen light" of the sun conveys.

By comparing the images of nature in this stanza with other excerpts from the *Journal,* such as when Page muses how "the days wind by on their spool – golden day after golden day – with no time to enjoy them fully"(p. 169) , one can feel how in this first "drawing" or sketching of images in this garden of words, color has become the pictorial matter of the poem and sound and meaning simply seem to be flowing out of this golden atmosphere. The repetition of the n/m/l sounds in "golden/ morning/sunlight", drawing the three words together in meaning, further corroborates their semantic relationship.

As we move from the evocation of the golden lilies in stanza I to a vision of the yellow cassia blossoms in stanza II we are surrounded once more by the golden/ yellow color which impregnates all the images, thus making the first stanza flow into the second:

Beneath the cassia boughs,
the fallen yellow blossoms
reflect a mirror image.
Barefoot among the petals
I tread a yellow world.
And small canaries flutter
above the lotus pond.
I trail my golden fingers—
for I am Midas' daughter—
in the tepid, golden water.

The cassia tree, already mentioned in the *Journal* – "the other day a yellow-bellied flycatcher flew out of a cassia tree heavy with yellow blossom, the tree growing in a flowerbed massed with yellow day-lilies, and caught, if you please, an immense yellow butterfly"(p.15) – and significantly surrounded again by yellow day-lilies is now retrieved, not only with its associations of sweet, aromatic and pungent flavor and perfume, but with its fallen yellow blossoms bringing forth once more the symbolic connotations of beauty, joy and transitoriness inherent in the flowers.

As the fallen yellow blossoms "reflect a mirror image" – the pleonasm reinforcing the vision of a yellow world in which the cassia blossoms above and beneath see themselves Narcissus-like – we are reminded again of an illuminated garden, through the aforementioned connection of yellow with the color of the sun and of gold, as well as with light and fertility. The spreading of yellow as a double image also prefigures the appearance of the lotus pond, another "mirror image" that will become concretized in the following lines.

And it is inside this mirror image, in the middle of the second stanza, that the poetic "I" becomes active: "barefoot among the petals I tread a yellow world" - a world which is not only the scene of the addresser's existence but also her poetic universe, onto which the color yellow, like gold, exerts its positive associations. The fact that the addresser walks 'barefoot among the petals", and thus in direct contact with the fallen blossoms and the earth, makes her acquire again – as she has acquired the symbolic qualities of food, related to Nature – their positive qualities. Moreover, the resemblance of the fallen yellow cassia petals to miniature yellow feet covering the earth foregrounds the structural analogy between both images, which is further corroborated by the phonological parallelisms b/p, a/e, t/t between "barefoot/petals".

The coordinating conjunction "and", anteceding "small canaries flutter above the lotus pond", juxtaposes both actions as being of equal rank, as if the poetic I, inside this yellow world, had placed itself at the same level with the flowers and birds. The small canaries, besides reminding us of excerpts from the *Journal* – "Awoke this morning to an immense chittering (...). Through the field glasses saw (...) six different kinds of small brilliant birds (...) one minute yellow canary and his paler wife" (p. 24) – further increase, by the symbolic relationships of birds with air, wind, the sun, freedom, pleasure, and divine essence, the striking beauty of this idyllic scene. As the canaries flap their wings, their quivering motion is simultaneously

reflected, again in a mirror image, in the lotus pond, attributing movement and color to the water and sound to the scene.

Several times referred to in the *Journal* – "yesterday, flying over the lotus pool, dragonflies of bright cerise with blue wings" (p.18) – the lotus pond, prefigured in the "mirror image" of the blossoms in and beneath the cassia boughs, becomes now concretized. Symbolic of reflection, the pool is also psychologically associated with universal consciousness, thus foreshadowing the identification of the poetic "I" as "Midas' daughter", as she sees her own reflection in the water. The lotus plant (*Nymphea lotus*), in its turn, represented in ancient Greek legend as inducing luxurious dreaminess, further validates the symbolism of the pond; by corresponding to the Egyptian and Asiatic water-lily, the lotus flower also overlaps in shape with the golden lilies, whereas its associations with the mystic center, the heart and the sun – the lotus often represents the renewal of the sun, as born from a lotus – makes these associations superimpose again with those of the golden color, fire and light.

As the addresser continues her activity –

> I trail my golden fingers –
> for I am Midas'daughter –
> in the tepid, golden water.

– the parallelistic structure "I trail/ I tread", enhanced through alliteration and synonymity, reinforces the similarity of the actions she performs – treading barefoot a yellow world of flowers /trailing her golden fingers in the pond – while the play-like associations brought forth by trailing her fingers in the water again add movement and color to the pond, as if the touch of her fingers could transmit life and their golden quality to the water.

Isomorphic of the six-petal lilies and of the five-petal lotus, the golden fingers simultaneously recreate a moving image of the golden lilies in the water, analogous to the fluttering of the canaries above and their reflection in the pond below, making the images of the flowers, fingers and birds amalgamate in color, shape and movement, while the phonological similarities –alliteration in cassia/canaries; fallen/reflect/ flutter/foot/fingers; boughs /barefoot /above; world/water – further draws these words together in meaning.

Symbolic of divination and poetic inspiration, the fingers, trailing in the golden water, also seem to delineate the image of Midas, and, by identifying herself, with her head full of follies, as "Midas' daughter" – who was also transformed into gold when touched by her father's hands – the addresser creates a conceptual analogy between herself as Midas' daughter and as the sun's daughter, through the connection of gold as metal with the sun. The repetition of the voiced plosive /d/ in "Midas' daughter" as well as of the letters "I am" in "Midas", forming a chiasmus, once more binds the two concepts together.

An interesting parallel can also be established between "I am Midas' daughter" and Page's reference to herself as Mrs. Midas in the *Journal*:

> "I feel I am Mrs. Midas, with this difference: everything I look at turns to beauty. On a rational basis I find it difficult to believe that everything is beautiful, and yet, to my eye, it is. The leaves, the beach, the sea". (p. 174).

With the alluded text as reference, the original classical legend of Midas transforming into gold whatever he touches becomes enriched by the addresser's capacity, as Midas' daughter, to transmit not only the golden color but also beauty to whatever she looks at, as the final rhyming couplet enhances –

> for I am Midas' daughter
> in the tepid, golden water.

– while the reference from classical mythology to the king of Phrygia adds a timeless dimension to this sunlit scene.

"The tepid, golden water", retrieved from Jiménez's *mote*, as examined above, closes this picture of excessive color, in which the cassia boughs, the yellow blossoms, the petals, the canaries, her golden fingers, the golden water, become one immense canvas of color, like an impressionistic painting, one image becoming suffused in the next through the golden sunlight, in the same way that past remembrances in the evoked texts become merged in the tepid, golden water – with its implications of knowledge and memory stored in the unconscious – and in the timeless present of alluding poem.

The suggested blue and the visualized golden color of the pond is then transferred, in Stanza III, to the image of Page's *arara*, in this way providing once more a transition from one stanza to the next, through color:

> My blue and gold macaw
> laughs his demented laugh
> dilates his golden pupils.
> A golden spider spins
> a spangled golden web
> for beauty-loving flies.
> Above the cassia trees
> the cassia colored sun;
> above the yellow lilies
> the yellow butterflies.

As Page projects into the poem her fascination with the beauty of the *araras*, again registered in the *Journal* not only in relation to these birds seen in the zoo –

> (Went to the zoo the other day in order to see the kinds of perches and *ambientes* that *araras* like. O what birds! Ours is *Caninde, Ara ararauna. Linnaeus 1758.* There was a blue one – incredibly beautiful Lapis lazuli, highly polished. And the red, which I had thought I didn't like, was divine. He had a beak of old ivory"(p.172)

– but mainly in relation to her own blue and gold macaw –

> Friday I returned home to find myself the proud possessor of an *arara*, the large Amazonian parrot we call a macaw. (...) His underparts are a glorious orange-yellow, his upper back light ultramarine, and the top of his head pale olive green. (...)
> (...) I wouldn't have thought a bird could have so human a face – I suppose it's that flesh-coloured skin. (...)
> Am most enormously amused by Arara. (...) He emits high whistles and throaty purrs and an absolutely imbecile laugh that sends my blood cold.(...) (p. 167-9)

– her painter's eyes makes us visualize, with new eyes, this large, long-tailed bird with bright-colored feathers, and harsh voice, so characteristically native to Brazil. His blue and golden feathers, plus his golden pupils, enhance once more that gold is the predominant color in the poem, while blue, the color of Eden, makes the macaw also symbolic of the garden in which he is inserted. His association as a bird to the air, the sun and creation, further confirms the symbolism of the garden as an earthly Paradise.

Nevertheless, Page's sensibility as a poet is simultaneously perplexed by the macaw's "demented laugh" – the change from the depreciatory "imbecile" in the *Journal* to the mysterious "demented" in the poem confirms her fascinated interpretation of the laughter. Furthermore, as in "laughs his demented laugh" the verb and the noun "laugh" surround "demented" (the Latin root "*de+mens, mentis*" = out of one's mind, attributing an almost human characteristic to the bird, which is corroborated by Page's statement about the bird having "so human a face"), it is as if "demented" has become an intrinsic quality of laughter, therefore confirming the associations of laughter with joy but also with mystery, madness or stupidity (a characteristic that cannot be discarded by the macaw's clamorous and foolish chatter). Significantly, it is also the only shrill sound that interrupts the idyllic atmosphere, in contrast to the almost noiseless flutter of the canaries above the lotus pond.

We are referred again to the evoked *Journal* through the other line which qualifies the macaw – "dilates his golden pupils" – a detail that had already perplexed Page:

> Observation: Arara's eye dilates and expands independent of light. I cannot determine what causes it to behave in that way. The pupil of the human eye adjusts to light only, as I remember it. What is his adjusting to? (He is funny. I gave him a bath the other day with a garden spray. He dropped his jaw in astonishment and then emitted a great, blood-curdling scream. Clearly not his idea of a good time, as I had been led to believe by *arara* lovers) (p.175).

As the macaw expands his pupils – that circular opening in the center of the eye – it is as if they had absorbed the golden color of the whole scene and thus become, in their enlarged roundness, an iconic image in miniature of the golden macrocosm which surrounds the bird, in this way also foregrounding the symbolic associations of the eye with the sun, the orb and the world, all of them reflected in the pupils, thus making structural and conceptual analogies merge into one golden ring.

The parallelistic structure "[my gold and blue macaw] laughs his demented laugh / dilates his golden pupils", plus the recurrence of the voiced consonant /d/ in "gold/ golden/ demented/ dilates" and of the liquid /l/ in "blue/ gold/ golden/ laughs/ laugh/ dilates/ pupils", further confirm the relationship among the three lines in form, sound and meaning, as these sounds are carried from one word and line to the next, while the acts of laughing and of dilating the pupils are again encircled by the golden color.

The "golden spider" continues the concept of golden roundness initiated with the morning sun enveloping the world of the garden, to then become reflected in the macaw's pupils. As the sunlight "spills" gold on the spider, thus reflecting a color already inherent in it, it simultaneously transforms the spider into a work of art, together with the "spangled golden web" the spider is spinning, as if the particles of the web resembled, in their shine, golden spangles or miniature suns. By the fact that, once more, the qualifier "golden" practically envelops the lines "a golden spider spins / a spangled golden web", the roundness of the spider and the circular form of the web become literally visible.

Moreover, the difficult task of spinning is enacted in the sound texture by the "hardness" conveyed by the conspicuous alliteration of the voiceless consonant cluster /sp/ in spider/ spins/ spangled, an alliteration that simultaneously merges the image of the spider with the action it performs and with the work of art it creates. The whole sentence is again a concrete instance of how one word flows into the next, as the /d/ in "golden" is repeated in "spider", the /sp/ in "spider" is repeated in "spins", while "spangled", besides forming a pararhyme with "spins", also contains the qualifier "golden" in inverted position, forming a chiasmus: sp.ngl.d / g.ld.n thus blending in its sound texture the maker, the act of making and the golden color of the work of art. And the web, which appears at the end of the line as the final result of the act of creation, becomes in this way also a verbal simulacrum for the work of art. This reading can be even more amplified by the fact that the spider, as a weaver, is associated with creation and thus with fertility, an association which is confirmed by the connotations related to the spider's web: on the one hand symbolic of the labyrinth, by its shape, and also of the Mystic Center and the unfolding of Creation; on the other hand, by its isomorphism with the garden in which it is inserted, the web becomes, like the garden, once more symbolic of fertility.

Nevertheless, the spider is also naturally associated with craftiness as it weaves snares for an enemy, as the following line in the poem confirms; in this way, the act of spinning threads spangled with gold becomes an ambiguous activity, as the spider's craftsmanship turns into craftiness. The description of the spider and the inherent ambiguity of the web was again registered in the *Journal:*

> Nature notes: I saw a spider with a golden web.(It sounds like the start of a riddle poem) This spider has a torso about the size of the top joint of my thumb and of the same general shape. In colour it is dark grey with gold spots. The web matches the spots. I would have thought it a trick of light except that, no matter what the light, the gold was unchanging, and on the spider's abdomen was a clot of golden thread (...).

> I had believed, without knowing much about spiders, that they spin webs as invisible as possible in order to deceive insects into thinking they are flying through air. If that is so, then what is this spider up to? And still what, even if it *isn't*? Does it eat only those it can lure by beauty? Do flies have an aesthetic sense?) (p. 52)

By referring to the evoked text, one sees how Page has transferred to the poem not only the image of a golden spider spinning a golden web and the suggestion that this gold comes from the spider itself, which the sun just further illuminates, but even the idea that insects are lured by beauty, like the "beauty-loving flies" – an image that contradicts the symbolism of the fly, generally associated with impurity, pest, and diminutive life. This line also continues the interlacing of phonological repetition, as the voiced plosive /b/ in "web" is retaken in "beauty" and the liquid /l/ in "loving flies" reechoes the /l/ in "golden", in this way bringing the words together again in meaning, as the golden color and the concept of beauty become intermingled in order to exert their attraction on the flies – as if the flies, with their suggestion of having an aesthetic sense, also wanted to be impregnated with the golden color. Page's question in the *Journal* seems to be answered in the poem, as the flies receive a human attribute: they do have an aesthetic sense, by being lured by beauty.

As our eyes move from the image of the lotus pool, connected with the underground, to images connected to the earth and the sky, following the directions from "beneath the cassia boughs" to "above the lotus pond" and "above the cassia trees", we have now returned to "the cassia colored sun" and thus to the zenith, to this point of heavens directly above the observer, completing the circle that had started in stanza I with the sunlight spilling on the garden. By presenting an image in which the color of the cassia tree is transmitted, in an inverted movement, to the sun, the addresser conveys the interchangeability of the qualities attributed to each of elements of the garden, as the sun first impregnates the garden with its golden color and then the sun itself becomes imbued by the very color of the cassia trees with their yellow blossoms, once more stressing how the golden color unites all elements in one golden sphere. The symbolic associations implicit in the tree – as cosmic life and as connection among the three worlds, for its roots are in the underworld, its trunk on earth and its foliage in heaven – can further enrich and substantiate the meaning of "above the cassia trees / the cassia colored sun", while the repetition of the word "cassia", the alliteration in cassia/colored and the repetition of the fricative /s/ in cassia/sun approximates the three words in sound and meaning.

Reminding us of Jiménez's first line in the *glosa* and of Page's incorporation of it at the end of the first stanza, stanza III ends with a rhyming couplet, in which we again visualize the beauty and grace of the lilies, but seen now in their yellow color, like the cassia colored sun, thus suggesting again that yellow, by being the color of the sun and connected with gold, becomes actually amalgamated with the golden color. The yellow butterflies, by retrieving the images of the "beauty-loving flies" through alliteration and rhyme, and of the canaries, through their color and flight, makes them become, through their color and shape, isomorphic with the petals of the lilies, with their yellow wings flying above yellow petals, or, inversely, as if the petals had been transformed into wings and thus acquired movement, an overlapping

of images that is further substantiated by the eye-rhyme lilies/butterflies. Moreover, by being symbolic of soul, like the bird, as well as of resurrection, the butterflies enhance the symbolic associations of the garden as a place of mystic ecstasy.

Page's fascination with blue and yellow butterflies, as registered in the *Journal* –

> For the first and quite unforgettable time, we have seen a Brazilian blue butterfly –as large as a flying hand – the upper surfaces of its wings an iridescent Mary-Blue, the underside soft as the colour of snuff (p.12) (...) the other day a yellow-bellied flycatcher (...) caught (...) an immense yellow butterfly (p.15).

– provides us with another shared world component that binds the three texts together, all of them enveloped in this mood of remembrance which impregnates both poems.

Like the sextet of a sonnet, the last stanza offers a conclusion to the initial statement – "Jimenez, but for the roses you paint a Rio garden" – as Page addresses the poet again. This time, however, positioning herself as independent from the *mote* she had been using as a nutrient text for the composition of her poem:

> Jimenez, I am freed
> by all this golden clangor.
> Jimenez, your roses
> offer a dying sound —
> a sound that does not fit
> with sambas *jocosas*
> *macumba, feijuada*
> Bahian *vatapá*.
> A different sun disposes
> over the yellow roses.

The synaethestic image presented in "all this golden clangor" – analogous to Jiménez's "en un alarde / de color y de luz" (1949: p. 87) –, in which the succession or prevalence of clanging noises, of loud resonant metallic sounds is described in terms of another sense modality – sight –, reminds us again that gold as a metal is connected with the sun, thus transforming this image into a conceptual analogy of the sun itself. It is as if the images in the garden, condensed in "all this golden clangor" had acquired a sound produced by the metallic color of gold, thus enhancing their vividness through the use of the noun "clangor".

The repetition of the voiced consonants and liquids in "all/golden/ clangor" in inverted positions (.l / g.l..n / l.n.g), configuring a chiasmus, makes their similarity in sound further corroborate the merging of the sense of sight and sound, as if the word "clangor" had leaped out of "golden", and "golden" had become an intrinsic characteristic of "clangor". It is this creative power of sound that has given the addresser her freedom, as if the "golden clangor" were a call to the joy of the senses and to liberty, as will be concretized in "sambas *jocosos, macumba, feijoada*, Bahian *vatapá*".

Relieved from Jiménez's "painting" and "influence", the addresser is now able to conclude this stanza by metapoetically contrasting the "golden clangor" with the "dying sound" of Jiménez's own roses, as if the two words, encapsulated by the voiced plosive /d/ and with the nasals in inverted positions, had become one concept, dominated by the qualifier "dying". Furthermore, as "golden clangor" stands for life force and freedom for the addresser, a contrary synaesthetic image is presented in "your roses offer a dying sound" in which the impetus of golden clangor becomes the fading sound of death, of the loss of vital force.

Thus, if on a first reading of stanza I , one could suppose that "but for the roses you paint a Rio garden" refers to the fact that roses are not a part of this garden by not being a native Brazilian shrub, for the great majority of the *Rosaceae* family is native to Asia, this interpretation now acquires a much deeper implication by the "dying sound" offered by Jiménez's "roses". It is at this point that we need to activate the evoked text as a whole (Ben-Porat: p. 111) in order to further qualify this "dying sound" of the roses, the only shared world component in both texts that the addresser discards as not belonging to her garden.

By rereading "Primavera Amarilla", it becomes clear why the roses offer a "dying sound". For, although Jiménez's poem presents the awakening of life in a springtime setting, the poem is nevertheless a reminder of the inevitability of death, as in every stanza there are concrete or metaphoric references to it: the children's cemetery, the fallen light of the sun, the bones of the dead. Consequently, in contrast to Page's golden sunlight "spilling" on her Brazilian breakfast – with its suggestion of abundance, of allowing to flow over – it is a different sun, "anointing" the world in yellow with its fallen light, that "disposes over the yellow roses", as Page has so sensitively intuited. The expressiveness of "anointing" now receives its full impact: on the one hand, by denoting "to pour oil on", it makes us visualize the same movement as in "to spill", thus merging both actions; but on the other hand, as briefly mentioned above, besides implying a sacred rite of great antiquity and thus adding a timeless and religious quality to the act, by the fact that in the Roman Catholic Church it is the sacrament in which a priest prays for and anoints with oil a person dying, "anointing" generates a contrary movement to the act of "spilling" – not only as a consecration of life, as in Page's poem, but also as a consecration of death as an integral part of life.

This activation also allows us to reinterpret the symbolic associations of "roses", as seen above. If decontextualized from the alluded text as a whole, the rose would keep only its positive associations by contiguity with images of the yellow butterflies, the golden water and the golden lilies. But when inserted into the complete poem, its contrary symbolism becomes activated, not only as the opposite of the lily but also associated, as a flower, with transitoriness, death and resurrection. The threefold repetition of the sonorous /o/ in "over the yellow roses", further enhances this suggestion of a "dying sound" in "roses", a sound that Page will highlight again in the final couplet disposes/ roses, thus making it vibrate on ear and memory.

It is this sound that "does not fit" with the sound of the "sambas *jocosos, macumba, feijoada*, Bahian *vatapá*" – the sudden introduction of Portuguese, with its different rhythm, intonation and speed, suddenly foregrounding the contextual and semantic

distance between both poems. The registering of these manifestations of Afro-Brazilian music, dance, religious rites and food in the *Journal* –

> It is from the favelas that the sambas come (...) (p.10).
>
> (...) Incredible luncheon. *Vatapá,* the special Bahían dish of shrimps and glue and chiles. (p. 161).
>
> (...) On New Year's Eve all the *macumbeiros* swarm to the beaches around Rio, the women in white skirts with ankle-length trousers beneath them (...) white flowers, white candles. (...) At midnight they all wade into the sea, offering Iamanjá drinks, cosmetics, flowers – whatever she might want (p. 192)
>
> (...) I wish I knew more about *macumba*. It is a form of voodoo, of course, brought from Africa by the slaves. Today it has appropriated many of the symbols and artefacts of the Catholic Church – that Church having permitted and even, I believe, initially encouraged it as a way of bringing the Negroes into the "true faith" by easy stages. But the fact is, it is *macumba* that holds them –and steals from Catholicism to enrich itself. Most of the dancing women the other night wore crucifixes (p.193).

– reveal not only her fascination with Afro-Brazilian culture. As she substitutes the dying sound of the roses for the merry sound of sambas *jocosos* (the qualifier increasing the connotations of playfulness implicit in the dance); the lighted candles, the dancing, the offerings to Iemanjá implied in the *macumba* ritual; and the mentioning of two typical dishes – *feijoada* and *vatapá* – all of them related to the life of the senses and faith, Page is emphasizing, through the distinctive elements in both gardens, the difference between her and Jimenez's aesthetic perception of beauty: although she is reinforcing the "emotionally charged pictorial language" (Jung 1964:p. 43) of her own work through the explicit use of Jiménez's *mote*, nevertheless, as already stressed, the unforgettable presence of death coexists with the awakening of life in "Primavera Amarilla" while the creative force and psychic energy that impregnates Page's Rio garden with its golden clangor makes her garden become metaphorical of life itself.

As the final couplet brings out, it is "a different sun" that "disposes over the yellow roses", in which the qualifier "different", by stressing the "other nature" of Jiménez's sun, and the religious connotations of "disposes" reminding us of God determining the course of events – "man proposes, God disposes" –, make the horizon of meaning of Page's poem acquire even more depth and significance, through the transcendental associations of the sun generated by "disposes". These associations, confirmed by Philip Wheelwright in his discussion of the archetypal or emblematic way of imagining –

> There is one daily phenomenon in particular that impresses men repeatedly, and in the most diverse ages and countries, as symbolizing certain attributes of godhead. (...) The solar effulgence arouses men's minds to a sense of power and majesty, while the light of it, in making vision possible, becomes a ready symbol for the spiritual vision which is synonymous with the highest wisdom.

A further attribute of the sun, its orderly course through the sky, is symbolically suggestive of the element of law in nature (1968: p. 124-5).

– allow us to interpret Page's reference to Jiménez's " sun" as an archetypical image of divinity and order. In this way, the expressiveness of his last two lines – "among the bones of the dead, / God opened His yellow hands" is retrieved in Page's "a different sun disposes over the yellow roses": it is a different godhead that stretches his hands over the yellow roses, it is a different sun that orders Jiménez's poetic universe.

By employing Jiménez's *mote* as a metonymical literary allusion and by providing us with the recollection of the original form of her own *Brazilian Journal* through metaphorical allusions, Page has activated the alluding and the evoked texts in several ways:

– establishing analogical and dialectical bonds between the three texts, thus abolishing the distance in time and place that separated the three gardens: the distant setting of "Primavera Amarilla", the more recent setting of the *Journal* notes and the newly created artifact – the "Rio garden";

– by incorporating Jiménez's images – as "il miglior fabro" – into her own poem, Page has herself become a painter in the creation of a fictional world which has absorbed and expanded the pictorial qualities of Jiménez's *mote* , while the only differentiating signal – the roses – becomes simultaneously the very word that leads to the diverging aesthetical and philosophical stances of both poets implied in "a different sun disposes over the yellow roses";

– as Page's imagination operates not only creatively but interpretively, by rewriting, enlarging and transgressing Jiménez's *mote* and engaging in a metapoetic dialogue with him, Page has simultaneously made her poem become twice an aesthetic object – as poetry and as metapoetry.

– the juxtaposition of Page's poem with the activated images from her *Journal*, on the other hand, highlights the differences between her diary as a "period piece" – revealing her cultural posture in contact with Brazilian flora and fauna – and the poem as an aesthetic creation which transcends its historical period while simultaneously it continues being a testimony of her experience in Brazil. It also allows us to follow how referential language becomes articulated into poetic language as the foreigner's eyes, viewing an original experience *in loco*, are transformed into the eyes of introspection, re-viewing that privileged instant in which her Rio garden surrounded her with the perfection of its "golden sunlight".

Page ends her *Journal* stating "Already the very special quality that was "Brazil" for us exists only in our memories and no words can recreate, for us or for anyone else, what was golden, perfect, complete" (p. 241). However, she has contradicted herself, for she was able with her "inward eye" and through her poetic skill and mastery, to retrieve in "Ah, by the golden lilies" "la consagración del instante"(Paz 1990: p. 185) , the memory of "what was golden, perfect, complete".

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Notes:

1 All symbolic references are taken from Ad de Vries' *Dictionary of Symbols and Imagery.*

THE AMBIGUOUS REPRESENTATION OF RACE AND CLASS IN APHRA BEHN'S *OROONOKO* (1688)

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Review of Literature

Recent reassessment of Aphra Behn's novel *Oroonoko* has produced not merely a revival of previous commentaries on its alleged antislavery stance but has given vent to gender analysis throughout the latter part of the 20th century, especially in the wake of Second Wave feminism. The outdated themes connecting Behn's biography (her stay and experience in Surinam) and *Oroonoko* have reappeared in Ramsaran (1960), Hargreaves (1970), Rogers (1988), while the myth of the "noble savage" has been discussed either with denials (Guffey, 1975) or with variable vigour (Steeves, 1965; Davis, 1966; Grant, 1968; Miner, 1972; Allen, 1980; Weston, 1984). Taking the hint from a much cited phrase by Woolf (1977) and charged by feminist thematics, the novel has been appropriated by feminist authors (Brown, 1987; Ferguson, 1991; Medoff, 1992; Ballaster, 1992; 1993; Sussman, 1993) who, applying models of critique by Bhabha, Said and Spivak, have deepened discussions on early British female authors and their writing initiation within the confines of patriarchal society. Although race and class themes have been dealt with too in *Oroonoko*, it seems that a new evaluation is needed. The aim of this paper is to examine the way in which the complex relationship of race and class inscribes Behn's *Oroonoko*.

Race and Class

From the early sixteenth century when it was introduced into the English language denoting a class of persons, through its spurious and pseudo-scientific use in the 19th century for the classification of human beings into distinct groups, to the heavily charged term of today, *race* has developed into a construct that distinguishes pure and hybrid races, immutable natural human types, different innate behaviours, abilities and hierarchies. During the 16th and 17th Centuries *race* was limited to mean a literary term

of classification, without any connotation of physical characteristics transmitted by genes, albeit deep practical racism has been ingrained for centuries in European society. After Bernier's work in the late 17th century and in the context of expanding colonial trade, human groups were not merely distinguished by face characteristics and skin colour, but hierarchized into superior (white Europeans) and inferior (black Africans) categories, with various shades in between. In practice and at least for the last two centuries and a half the black race had been stigmatized by white Europeans as primitive and, consequently, predetermined to be integrated within the former's capitalist and imperialist initiatives (Thomas, 1997; Ashcroft et al., 1998). There is currently a consensus among anthropologists and geneticists that, strictly speaking, race, as synonymous of a subspecies, is not applicable to modern humans (Cooper et al., 2003) and that in many post-colonial (such as Caribbean and South American) countries the morphological classification of humans means very little in genomic terms, even though the physical appearance is socially enhanced. This information was obviously unknown to the writer of *Oroonoko* and race in its modern acceptance is an anachronic term for the period under discussion, albeit the underlying ideology is not.

On the other hand, the intersection and coexistence of class and race have been crucial in colonial domination, even though the former has been insufficiently studied. The European colonizers, whether noblemen, middle class or lowborn, constructed their own attitudes towards the natives, and a class society, rather different from the original European one, was formed on invaded territory. A variegated Eurocentric central class (landowners, civil servants, clerics) and a subordinate marginal class (landless) were "naturally" formed on the binary model, even though the intertwining of race and class was taken for granted during this period. If in 17th century economic structures the African and the Amerindian stood at the bottom of the class ladder, the "obvious" colonized worker had to be an African/Afro-American or an Amerindian within the means of production integrating the great European trade network (Ahmed, 1992; Ashcroft et al., 1998).

Screening the African for Race and Class

The anonymous female narrator in *Oroonoko,* constructed by the 17th century Aphra Behn, is a white, middle-class English subject, daughter of the would-be lieutenant-general of thirty-six islands and Surinam, temporary living in the then British colony of Surinam. She alleges that the best house on the plantation has been given to her to stay, that she has a certain influence on Oroonoko to appease him in his revolt against slavery and that she has a sort of dominance on the arriving governor to free Oroonoko/Caesar from bondage and send him to his country. It seems, however, that her authority, merely based on language and a woman's pen within patriarchal and colonial society, is highly marginal and ineffective. The Governor on whom she claims to be influential never appears during the course of the story. It is true that some colonizers engage her to persuade Oroonoko, by arguments and stories, not to lead a mutiny. Actually, the mutiny is avoided for the time being. However, when things come to a head, she neither persuades the deputy governor Byam nor the settler community to spare him. It is from this marginalized and powerless white narrator's point of view that the reader has a glimpse of the African slave, the

Amerindian native and the white settler in *Oroonoko*. Consequently, her concept of race is paramount and will be discussed below.

One of the most important distinctions that the female narrator makes at the start of her novel is between the African slaves and the Amerindians. Self-conscious of her role as a white woman, the narrator focuses on the bi-partite non-European Other, and emphasizes their differences in economical terms. The former are brought to the colony "to work in our Plantations of Sugar", whilst in the case of the latter "we find it absolutely necessary to caress 'em as friends, and not to treat 'em as slaves" (Behn, 1997, p. 11). She says that the Europeans, owing to absolute necessity in an unknown region, live on friendly terms with the Amerindians "without daring to command 'em; but, on the contrary, caress 'em with all the brotherly and friendly affection in the world, trading with them" (Behn, 1997, p. 8). Since they are often dependent upon the natives for the supply of water and fish, as the 17th century English enterpriser Strachey (apud Kermode, 1990) and other colonial reports testify, Europeans are prone to be tolerant with natives. Contrastingly, colonists have invested their money in buying and transporting Negro slaves from Africa to work on their plantations and they expect a strict return. Even if the colonial enterprise requires the different treatments, the concept of the colonial Other is based on race, as a qualifying distinction from the white European. Since it seems that the narrator is incapable of conceiving the Other on their own terms, they have to gyrate around the European, albeit in a strictly hierarchal system.

Ferguson (1991) says that the narrator and the other female settlers fear Negro sexuality and flee to safety for fear of being raped when the slave rebellion headed by Oroonoko begins. This opinion places Oroonoko as a potential rapist, supported by common Negro stereotyping of sexual prowess. However, in hindsight, that is, after the rebellion, the white narrator confesses that she feared that Oroonoko "wou'd come down and Cut all our Throats" (Behn, 1997, p. 57), which apparently exempts her from sexual racism. Moreover, there is a covert allusion on honour made by Oroonoko himself, coupled to another on his "Rough and Fierce" unsatisfied spirit made by the narrator (Behn, 1997, p. 42), both without any sexual overtones, but not free from barbarian attitudes. This unstable representation of the cause of fear in the females seem to be, in the words of Ricoeur (1967, p. 25), "a quasi-material something that infects as a sort of filth, that harms by invisible properties, and that nevertheless works in the manner of a force in the field of our undivided psychic and corporeal existence". Although terror of Negro sexuality has been fictionally represented by authors as wide apart as Camões's *Os Lusíadas* ("Verão os Cafres, ásperos e avaros, / Tirar à linda dama seus vestidos"), Shakespeare's Caliban in *The Tempest* ("Thou didst seek to violate / The honour of my child") and Coetzee's *Disgrace* (the *non plus ultra* crime of rape practiced by the Negro gang on a white girl), such racial bias with sexual overtones does not seem to be shared by the white narrator. Contrastingly, Oroonoko has an overt fear that his wife Imoinda would possibly be raped by white people after his death. "'Perhaps' said he, 'she may be first Ravished by every Brute, exposed first to their nasty Lusts, and then a shameful Death'" (Behn, 1997, p. 60). It seems that the narrator is more prone to charge the Europeans rather than the Africans with rape and thus racism.

In the 16th and 17th century literature practical racism (lack of a human soul, inferiority, descent from Cain, member of Cam's race) is rife and has the clear purpose of enslaving Amerindians and Africans alike. For the notorious Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda, in his 16th century book entitled *The Second Democrates; or, The Just Causes of the War against the Indians*, the Indians, called *homunculi* in whom hardly a vestige of humanity remains, have been intended by God to be slaves to those whose "magnanimity, temperance, humanity and religion" made them their natural masters. The narrator portrays the Africans Oroonoko and Imoinda with physical beauty, courage, honour, honesty, fine feelings, delicate conscience and good breeding. The two characters are contrastingly different from the constant 200-year-old ethnological information given by Portuguese colonizers and even from literary representations, such as the African-born, hoop-shaped Sycorax and her hybrid son, the "most brutish" Caliban. Whereas Oroonoko's description is closer to the European stereotype physique (prominence given to his Roman nose) and distant from the common Negro type, Imoinda is called a "beautiful black Venus", desired by both white and black men. The physical and spiritual Europeanization of the couple harks to a very common practice in which natives, especially South Americans, are depicted with European features during the same period. Analyzing pictorial representations of 16th and 17th century Amerindians, Raminelli (1996) states that etchers and painters ignored the descriptive narratives of the colonizers and adopted the stereotype figures propagated in northern Europe, with an ideology underlying stances of domination, catechetic work and economical utility. The distance between close experience and pictorial production is also repeated in fictional works. The hero and heroine in *Oroonoko* are closer to European physical types than to the natives actually seen in Africa or to the slaves working in the Caribbean and South America. Perhaps this is due to the concept of heroic romances, prevalent after the English Restoration, in which women are ubiquitous and love supersedes empire and conquest. Literary conventions of the time make the narrator of *Oroonoko* distinguish Oroonoko and Imoinda by the body type, a fact that enhances the stereotyped seduction attitudes of Africans and highlights the horror scenes of dismemberment and murder by non-Europeans which are attributed to their barbarian nature.

Furthermore, the positive qualities of the African couple contrast with her opinion on African culture in general and on the Negro slaves brought to Surinam. The narrator's remarks on the "gloomy Race" (Behn, 1997, p. 12), the barbarous African music (Behn, 1997, p. 37), their unpronounceable names, their extreme ignorance and simplicity, and their lack of stamina in a durable marooning reveals a narrator marginalizing the Negro because of his difference. This othering is corroborated by the downplaying of the subhuman life on the plantations and the romanticizing of the slaves which, together with her comments on the assets of Cormantin (Gold Coast), Oroonoko's country, as exporter of so many slaves eventually sold to Europeans as part of their capitalist enterprises, rather demonstrates a covert justification of slavery by the Europeans. Actually, since she is not far from calling them "a vile race", it seems that the narrator has a racial bias for Africans, with the sole exception of Oroonoko whose body and story fulfil her poetic fancy and satisfies Restoration aristocracy.

The use of *Oroonoko* as an early propaganda for antislavery causes is a historical fact (Sampson 1979), albeit its anti-slavery stance has been highly questioned and its ambiguity affirmed (Guffey, 1975; Starr, 1990; Fogarty, 1994; Pacheco, 1994). If the narrator has anti-slavery beliefs, she corroborates the slavers' point of view that slaves, *qua* Negroes, are different from herself. Although there are descriptions of the slaves' plight during the Middle Passage and glimpses on torture meted to slaves, although there are scenes of Oroonoko's impatience with bondage and his fervent oratory against slavery, no comments on slavery as an institution are made by the narrator. Contrary to Johnson, who a century later was "always [...] very zealous against slavery in every form [... and whose] violent prejudice against our West Indian and American settlers appeared whenever there was an opportunity" (Boswell, 1980, p. 876), the narrator fails to enrol arguments against racial bias revealed through the institution of slavery. Her comment that Cormantin is privileged to be always at war and that it abounds with prisoners who are eventually sold as slaves by the Negroes themselves to West Indian traders betrays the narrator's justification of "legitimate slaves" (Vainfas, 2000). Further, there is a deep contradiction between Oroonoko's famous disrupting speech against slavery (Behn, 1997, p. 52) and his engagement in the slave trade (Behn, 1997, p. 13; 30). Even within the very heart of the speech Oroonoko admits the licit enslaving of Negroes in war.

The narrator's racial bias (European v. African) reveals itself in Oroonoko's class bias (aristocratic African v. common Africans incapable of self-ransoming). On perceiving he has been betrayed by his fellow countrymen Oroonoko makes a speech which rather shows class bias: the aristocratic-born Oroonoko, brave to the point of dying rather than surrendering to Byam, the deputy governor of Surinam, calls the other Africans rogues, slaves by nature, tools for the use of Europeans, dogs, cowards, treacherous and vile people. If the European marginalizes and others the African, the latter, noble-born and brave, others the poor slaves who, from the aristocrat's point of view, are "naturally" only fit to be subalterns and objects. The aristocratic Oroonoko claims self-righteousness and distances himself from the cowardly underlings. Since Oroonoko's othering of his fellow Africans and companions undermines the resistance speech, this fact hints that the narrator has put it in Oroonoko's mouth as an exclusively self-motivated discourse, or rather, with the sole purpose of securing Oroonoko and Imoinda's release from bondage owing to their aristocratic class. This personal story, the nucleus for bourgeoisie attitudes, may be further seen in Oroonoko's hunger strike during the Middle Passage. His freedom, conceded by the captain, does not become extensive to the other African slaves, while his speech to end their hunger strike fails to mention their release and their repatriation. On the contrary, it seems to appropriate not merely the captain's opinion on the African slaves, but encourages them to continue their journey as slaves, although at surface level Oroonoko's discourse explicitly states the opposite. The captain's enslaving of Africans, noble or common alike, is race-motivated, whereas Oroonoko's attitude on the ship is class-motivated. The former is evidenced by the release of the white Frenchman, Oroonoko's tutor; the latter by encouraging resignation in his fellow countrymen.

Although the narrator emphasizes the human virtues (humanity, greatness of soul, idea of honour, generosity, love and gallantry), acquired by Oroonoko in his pre-European period, a complementary and more refined education (a Eurocentric nucleus) is added by a French tutor, and by contact with English and Spanish traders. However, Oroonoko's natural virtues are linked to war and fighting, or rather, barbaric features; those acquired are linked to mental achievements: wit, morals, language and science which the Frenchman "infus'd into his young pupil" (Behn, 1997, p. 29-30). This stratification seems to reveal that without the Eurocentric qualities, Oroonoko would have remained an uncivilized (albeit aristocratic) Negro, but incapable of rising above his companions who are taken with him into captivity. Actually the narrator "unwittingly intensifies negative attitudes towards Africans" when she Europeanizes his attitudes and qualities (Ferguson, 1992, p. 30), besides transforming him already into a colonial subject even before he leaves Africa (Rivero, 1999). This racial bias perpetuated by the narrator is deepened when Oroonoko and the Frenchman, apparently treated alike in captivity, are discriminated by race. In the case of the Frenchman the captain is merely pretending to hold him slave: he is both a Christian and, above all, a white man. In the case of Oroonoko the captain means to (and in fact he does) sell him as a slave because he is a heathen and a Negro. Curiously the narrator repeats Raleigh's stereotyping of the European in the New World (Raleigh, 1985) when she distinguishes between the English and the Spaniards who were influential in the maturing of Oroonoko: the former (from northern Europe) are called gentlemen and their influence is restricted to trade, presumably honest transactions; the influence of the latter (from southern or Mediterranean Europe) comprises trafficking in human flesh and therefore illicit.

The white narrator's representation of the Negro royal slave seems to be an idiosyncratic and singular event; or rather, a "Divine Power" (Behn, 1997, p. 29), perhaps a phallic symbol, in the midst of colonial subjects. Nevertheless, Ferguson (1994) and Lobsien (1998) have gone too far when they would like us to believe that they have detected a sexual rivalry between the narrator and Imoinda vis-à-vis Oroonoko's body. The trusty and tricked Oroonoko, a colonial subject in Africa and in Surinam, is othered because of his race, while his name, vilified by the European colonizer, lives through a "female pen". If "women mediate their own needs and desires, their unconscious sense of self-validation, through representations of the colonial other" (Ferguson, 1992, p. 4), then the narrator of *Oroonoko* portrays the position of marginalized females and their reactions towards subjectification. She equates gender, class and race as marginalized entities in colonial practice. There is no doubt that "it [is] impossible to ignore the contradictory social positioning of white, middle-class women as both colonized patriarchal subjects and colonizing race-privileged subjects" (Donaldson, 1992, p. 6). The narrator's power lies in her obsession with Oroonoko's body. This ambiguous obsession, founded on fear and desire, hails from the Self's superiority (the narrator's "civilized" status) and the Other's inferiority (the slave's "primitive" status). Actually Oroonoko's handsome and powerful colonized body, a forbidden object to the white colonial woman, is fetishized but at the same time fragmented so that it could be transformed into an object of analysis and domination (Spurr, 1993; Hall, 1997).

Does the narrator also mediate Charles I, the beheaded Stuart king, in the marginalized Oroonoko, transforming the novel into an allegory? The real purpose of European representations (pictorial, historical or fictional), especially by Albert Eckhout and Theodor de Bry, of colonial subjects (cannibalized natives, murdered missionaries) with dismembered bodies has always been the object of debate. The most plausible theory is that they provide a repugnant but effective picture that gives information on people of the New World. Europeans will feel similar emotions when they see or read about these horrible killings as witnesses experienced them on the spot. It would otherwise have been impossible for Europeans to imagine these New World happenings in all their terrifying impact. If the narrator of Oroonoko is racially biased against Africans in general and her narrative, albeit ambiguously, singles out Oroonoko for perpetuity, it is not altogether out of the question that his torture, murder and dismembering of the body represents the Stuart king whom she mentions with high esteem (Behn, 1997, p. 13). Although a "simple political allegory" may not be the answer, a highly complex repetition of the English Revolution and the traumatic events leading to the beheading of Charles I is plausible, as Brown (1987) convincingly argues. The fictional representation of the black Oroonoko, a prince in Africa and a "king" in Surinam, may be projecting the death of the white Charles I, a far too shocking event but frequently memorialized by Royalist writers and possibly by a narrator of Stuart sympathies (Guffey, 1975). The colonial reenactment of the horrible death and cutting up of the African royal slave may have been Behn's means to produce horror and terror in Europeans for all those who suffer in the wake of Britain's thrust towards imperialism and world wide trade.

Screening the Amerindian for Race and Class

If black Africans and reddish-yellow Amerindians are commodities in the capitalist-colonizing enterprise, they should be dealt with similarly. However, ambiguity exists in the narrator's treatment of the two races. Although the narrator mentions the feud between the English and the Surinam natives and the latter's atrocities committed after her departure to England, she is inclined to give a rather positive ethnographical picture of the natives. In fact, *Oroonoko* displays an unspoilt and a pre-lapsarian utopia, characterized by the manufacturing of artefacts (wreaths made of feathers, baskets, weapons, aprons, body ornaments), social organisation (war captains, witchdoctors, common people), hospitality, friendliness, personal courage, innocence, sincerity and lack of malice of the Amerindians. The distinction that the narrator makes between natives and non-natives is that the former are an essential element in Surinam and needed for the survival of the white colonizers; the latter are black, brought to the South American continent, with the specific aim to work in the Europeans' plantations. This distinction is based on strict capitalist notions of the Other fabricated by the European and involved in the accumulation of capital. If, on the one hand, the natives "supply us with what 'tis impossible for us to get [...] So that they being on all Occasions very useful to us, we find it absolutely necessary to caress 'em as friends" (Behn, 1997, p. 10-11), on the other, "those then whom we make use of to work in our Plantations of Sugar, are Negroes, Black slaves altogether; who are transported thither" (Behn, 1997, p. 11). However, it seems that the distinction

or racializing is merely illusory: both races are under the thumb of European superiority. Even though the text does not tell us anything about the enslaving of Surinam Amerindians, the traditional bartering process and the transmission of information or worlding (Spivak, 1987) on exotic fauna/flora and other commodities are proper to subjection to colonial capitalism, hardly different from downright slavery. Paramount is the radical ideological othering of non-Europeans used, in different manners, in the context of capitalism. In fact, the same bartering (described by Colombo, Vaz de Caminha, Vespucci and others) and the same worlding processes are employed to introduce the natives in capital accumulation.

Another illusion is presented by a panoptical ethnographic view of Surinam natives. To keep Oroonoko in abeyance and distract him from disrupting the incipient capitalist economy, eighteen English men and women from the colony, including the Negro royal slave and the narrator, make a "surprise" visit to a far off Surinam native village. An "eye-witness" account is given by the narrator who inverts the usual procedure of the European gaze and endeavours to furnish the reader with a detailed native gaze on the Europeans.

> By degrees they grew more bold, and from gazing upon us round, they touch'd us, laying their Hands upon all the Features of our Faces, feeling our Breasts and Arms, taking up one Petticoat, then wondering to see another; admiring our Shoes and Stockings, but more our garters, which we gave 'em, and they ty'd about their Legs, being Lac'd with Silver Lace at the ends; for they much Esteem any shining things. In fine, we suffer'd 'em to survey us as they pleas'd, and we thought they wou'd never have done admiring us (Behn, 1997, p. 48).

At this point the natives seem to be transformed into active observers, with a subsequent attribution of power, inherent to the gaze (Bratach, 1996). However, while disguising "the female pen", the narrator is in absolute control of the narrative and the native gaze is another of her self-conscious acts, and thus an illusion. In fact, the visit has been planned (a guide is employed; a theatrical demonstration of burning a piece of paper with a magnifying glass is given), only three people (narrator included; however, Oroonoko is purposely and temporary absent) experience the first colonial encounter, and the account holds more ethnological information on the natives than the other way round. However, the visit with its subsequent information cannot be described as neutral and apolitical. Not only peace was established between the English and the Amerindian tribe, essential to the colonizers' survival in a hostile environment, but the narrator's comment that "[...] we had a perfect, open and free Trade with 'em" (Behn, 1997, p. 50) has clear capitalist undertones and reveals the real issues.

Moreover, the horrible spectacle of mutilated men holding council in a separate hut demonstrates class division among the Amerindians. Oroonoko, officially a slave in Surinam, but a general in his native Africa, visits the warrior-leaders of the tribe. They were distinguished from the common people by their demonstrations of courage which have produced mutilated bodies, the result of vying between them for leadership in war. In this intermixture of race and class, the narrator and Oroonoko hold different

views on the matter: the bourgeois white female describes them as "Hobgoblins, or Fiends" (Behn, 1997, p. 50), or rather, the narrator shuns them as aesthetically inferior to her and to the courageous Negro, and classifies them by otherworldly nomenclature common to the contemporary European imaginary; on the other hand, Oroonoko expresses his esteem for their courage, holds them as his equals, but doesn't approve such deleterious self-mutilation. Once more, the gendered narrator is seen consciously controlling the narrative. Actually, in the course of narrating the mutilation story, she subtly refuses to recognize white male authority merely because of race or class, but only according to courage and honour. Her criticism is manifest not only when she compares the courage of the Surinam natives and the lack of it in English gentlemen who send their younger sons to death in battle, but especially in the frailty of English soldiers who try to quench the rebellion by rusty swords and useless guns. Such deplorable attitudes, derided by the narrator, witness to the fact that the male authority of the English colonizers, far from being omnipotent, is hollow and unfounded.

Radical and ideological othering of the natives and their forced inclusion in the capitalist-colonizing system may also be observed when the narrator's party is returning from the village to the plantation. Indians of a different tribe and country produce bags of gold dust and give information on the distance covered and time spent to reach the "Eldorado" in the mountains. Eldorado is actually mandatory for the Europeans' accumulation of capital, even though at the time the statements by Columbus ("los rios [...] traen oro", Jane, 1988, p. 7), Raleigh ("stores of gold", Raleigh, 1985, p. 408) and Caminha: "lhome preguntaua douro que nos desejauamos saber seo avia na trra" (Pereira, 1964, p. 147) are mere conjecture. The foreign natives are forced to remain on the plantation (kept as slaves?), the gold rush is stalked by superior orders and royal appropriations are intended but not implemented owing to transference of the Surinam colony to the Dutch in 1667. In the context of trade and colonial accumulation of capital, difference in non-European races, their cataloguing and their cultural or physiological elements are unimportant. Labelling the colonial Other as different and inferior is.

Screening the European for Race and Class

Since the story of the royal slave Oroonoko is told from the point of view of the middle-class colonial woman, obviously the Negro's and the colonizing subject's voice is mediated. How can the colonized Negro and white Europeans speak through a stereotypically doubly colonized white woman? Is she not, paradoxically, a colonized patriarchal object and simultaneously a race-privileged female narrator? In the first place the narrator vaunts of her authority to free Oroonoko from bondage and send him back to his country. If she has any authority, there will be connivance between the gendered white narrator and the racial colonizers. However, ambiguity is rife in this point. The Negro Oroonoko, his wife Imoinda and the Surinam Indians are portrayed in a more positive light than the white colonizers. In fact, the latter are indicted with falseness, treachery, hypocrisy, cruelness, lack of humaneness, whereas natives both in Cormantin (Gold Coast) and in Surinam are, as a whole, treated as reasonable and tolerant people. In the course of the novel's events the scales of

condemnation weigh more on the European side than on the non-European one.

Moreover, the appropriation of non-European voices by white authors or narrators has always been on debate (Coetzee, 1988; Begam, 1994). Discussions on the impossibility of the history of the muted black Cruso in Coetzee's *Foe* being narrated by the white Susan Barton, and the possibility of the story of Dulé/Caliban in Warner's *Indigo* being told by the black Caribbean Serafine, or the history of the mad Antoinette/ Bertha Cosway in Rhys's *Wide Sargasso Sea* being narrated by herself, shows the arrogance of the white narrator's stance and the responsibility of the non-European author/narrator within a post-colonial point of view. In fact, "we must also recognize the burden of racist discourse she [the narrator] must assume to speak as a white English woman" (Sussman, 1993, p. 230). No such debate was possible in Behn's time and the outcome confirms the theory above. Perhaps this is the reason why we have a romanced Oroonoko, the body of Imoinda as the battleground of sexual politics and a highly unreal picture of slaves in the New World. Perhaps that is why *Oroonoko* does not contain a direct indictment against slavery. The incapability of the marginalized white narrator to be the spokesperson of the Negro is obvious.

A deep analysis of *Oroonoko* shows that the white colonizers are not a homogeneous group and classes, grounded on political and philosophical issues, abound. In the first place the Caribbean re-enacts the political strives between Royalists and Parliamentarians at home. Historically the fictional governor and deputy governor of Surinam would be the royalists Lord Francis Willoughby (absent in the novel) and William Byam (Oroonoko's executioner) who are at odds with other Royalists in the colony. Parliamentarians, such as George Martin, "Brother to Harry Martin, the great Oliverian" are also held as enemies (Behn, 1997, p. 45). In the novel George Martin disapproves of double dealing with Oroonoko, his torture and execution. Although not against slavery, Martin refuses to "govern his Negroes without Terrifying and Grieving them with frightful Spectacles of a mangl'd King" (Behn, 1997, p. 65). Trefry, Oroonoko's fictional owner and protector, is against Byam and denies legitimacy to the deputy governor in imprisoning and whipping the royal slave. Although we are not informed about Trefry's political allegiances, he approves of slavery nevertheless, and he may be paradoxically considered a "humanitarian". The narrator, a Royalist herself, inveighs against Byam and his council made up "of such notorious Villains as Newgate never transported" (Behn, 1997, p. 59). Moreover, Quakers (albeit many had an ambivalent behaviour and did not heed the advices of the Society of Friends) are very active against slavery at the time in the Caribbean and in Surinam, with obvious complaints and indictments by white planters and colonizers (Thomas, 1997). However, overt Puritan involvement is not mentioned in the novel, even though the equation Puritan = Parliamentarian is, as a rule, valid. It may be said that the heterogeneous white colony was not only divided with regard to details on the slave issue (but not against the institution of slavery), but that animosity and ill-will among them reflected the political situation in England (Brown, 1987).

One of the most intriguing and revealing issues in the novel is the use of "we" and "they" by the narrator, a fact that corroborates the statement above. The colonial white woman constantly shifts from one political *topos* to another according to her ambivalent allegiances. When she is dealing with the abuse of slaves and the torture

of Oroonoko, she conveniently distances or absents herself from the colonizers who are now called "they".

> But *they* were no sooner arriv'd at the Place, where all the Slaves receive their Punishments of Whipping, but *they* laid Hands on Caesar and Tuscan, faint with heat and toyl. [...] When *they* thought *they* were sufficiently Revenged on him, *they* unty'd him, almost Fainting, with loss of Blood, from a thousand Wounds all over his Body; from which *they* had rent his Cloaths, and led him Bleeding and Naked as he was; and loaded him all over with Irons, and rubbed his Wounds, to complete *their* Cruelty, with Indian pepper, which had like to have made him raving Mad [...] *They* carry'd her [Imoinda] down to Parham, and shut her up (Behn, 1997, p. 57, my italics).

However, when the narrator is dealing with the peaceful coexistence of the Surinam Indians and the English colonizer or when the womenfolk are meting comfortable words to the tortured Oroonoko, the omnipresence of "we" can be detected.

> *We* were no sooner Arriv'd, but *we* went up to the Plantation to see Caesar, whom *we* found in a very Miserable and Unexpressable Condition; [...] *We* said all things to him, that Trouble, Pitty and Good Nature cou'd suggest; Protesting *our* Innocency of the Fact, and *our* Abhorrence of such Cruelties; making a Thousand Professions and Services to him, and Begging as many Pardons for the Offenders, till *we* said so much, that he believ'd *we* had no Hand in his ill Treatment (Behn, 1997, p. 58, my italics).

Nevertheless, when it comes to personal or to the settlers' survival the narrator's allegiance is with the colonizers and the racial bias of the white people, including the narrator's, is confirmed. The female narrator's commitment to the English capitalist enterprise is obvious in the dialogue between the narrator and Oroonoko when mutiny is looming overhead.

> It would but give *us* a Fear of him, and possibly compel *us* to treat him so as *I* shou'd be very loath to behold: that is, it might occasion his Confinement. [...] After this, *I* neither thought it convenient to trust him much out of our View, nor did the Country who fear'd him; [in his visits to the plantation of the Negroes he had] to be accompany'd by some that shou'd be rather in appearance Aattendants than spys (Behn, 1997, p. 41-42, my italics).

In the narrator's view, Oroonoko, a slave and a Negro and therefore a potential usurper and possibly a murdered, should not be trusted, and she is taking all precautions to dissuade him from doing so. It seems that during this period the shifting and contradictory female narrator is the rule and may be "an emblem which can be read as justifying either patriarchy on the one hand or an emergent feminism on the other, or perhaps as an icon of the contest between the two" (Belsey, 1985, p. 184). Since the narrator does not challenge the institution of slavery nor changes her common racial bias; rather she adopts the menacing tone of the colonizers, Belsey's first

alternative seems to be the most plausible. If the narrator shuns responsibility for any ill-treatment meted out to slaves and allies herself with other powerless members of colonial society (for all purposes the "we" denotes the white females), race and class are the fulcrum of the novel. The ideology of the Negro prince-soldier places women as property. However, in the capitalist colonial world he himself is property and the white narrator's words, ineffective as her flight, are a false guarantee to save him from the colonial enterprise.

Moreover, an underlying motif of Christian and anti-Christian rhetoric may exist in the narrator's treatment of European race and class. In the first place, throughout the novel white people seem to be equivalent to Christians and the narrator applies the pronoun *they* to this category. Although she distances herself from the Christian category, she is still adamant to the white colonial taxonomy. A distinction, however, has to be made at this point: the a-religious and the anti-Christian stance. When the narrator describes the nakedness of the Surinam Indians at the start of the novel, she comments on their pre-Fall status of innocence and lack of malice. Some lines further she writes that things would become worse if religion is introduced in the life of these guileless people.

> And these People represented to me an absolute Idea of the first State of Innocence, before Man knew how to sin: And 'tis most evident and plain, that simple Nature is the most harmless, inoffensive, and vertuous Mistress. 'Tis she alone, if she were permitted, that better instructs the World than all the Inventions of Man: Religion wou'd here but destroy that Tranquillity they possess by Ignorance; and Laws wou'd but teach 'em to know Offence, of which now they have no Notion (Behn, 1997, p. 10).

Different from the opinion of Colombo and Caminha that Amerindians should be urgently taught the Christian religion ("[...] allende d'esto se fazen cristianos, Jane, 1988, p.9; "[...] nom doujdo segº asanta tençãm de vosa alteza, fazeremse xpaãos e creerem na nossa samta fe", Pereira, 1964, p. 163), the narrator in *Oroonoko* not only affirms that the Christian religion will be harmful to them but attributes to the Christian "white men" any bad influences the natives may have. Since, she says, it is a mistake to deny virtues to the Negro and restrict them "to the White Men, especially to those of Christendom" (Behn, 1997, p. 14), the narrator's thesis seems to be that natural virtues exist in non-Europeans who may be seriously contaminated by white civilization and by the Christian religion.

When the narrator analyzes the practice of Christian people who are engaged in human traffic and in the colonial enterprise, the indictment against the Christians is deeper. Since it is taken for granted that the captain of the slave ship is white and therefore a Christian, the indictment applies because the captain treacherously orders his men to imprison and enslave Oroonoko and other guests and he twice breaks his solemn word to free the Negroes. Oroonoko's reaction, who "never had violated a Word in his Life" (Behn, 1997, p. 32), is devastatingly against the white man and the Christian religion: "'Farewel, Sir, 'Tis worth my suffering, to gain so true a Knowledge both of you, and of your Gods by whom you swear'" (Behn, 1997, p. 34). Whereas

physically the Negro is vilified and the white man triumphant, the Negro shows himself morally superior to the white man and victorious in this spiritual combat. The same problem occurs when Oroonoko revolts against the delay in obtaining his freedom. When he is left alone to withstand the English slavers, he does not mince his words and tells the cruel deputy governor Byam that

> there was no Faith in the White Men, or the Gods they Ador'd; who instructed 'em in Principles so false that honest Men cou'd not live amongst 'em; [...] that he knew what he had to do when he dealt with Men of Honour; but with them a Man ought to be eternally on his Guard, and never to Eat and Drink with Christians without his Weapons of Defence in his Hand; and, for his own Security, never to credit one Word they spoke (Behn, 1997, p. 56).

In Oroonoko's mouth the terms *colonial white people* and *Christians* are synonymous and denote treacherous persons. This indictment is extended by the narrator to the members of the colonial council who are called "notorious Villains [...] who understood neither the Laws of God or Man; and had no sort of Principles to make 'em worthy the Name of Men" (Behn, 1997, p. 59). Colonial authorities, therefore, in so far as they are white or Europeans and in so far as they are Christians, live below human dignity and their religion fails to inform ethically their behaviour. Trefry, Colonel Martin and the narrator are the only exceptions, but are impotent in freeing Oroonoko and preventing his torture and murder. If *The Tempest* disqualifies low class people, such as Trinculo and Stephano, and non-Europeans, such as Caliban, to rule (Brown, 1989), the novel shows that middle class colonial authorities are likewise incapable of governing since they neither keep their word and refrain from false dealings nor are they capable of stopping others from doing so.

Conclusion

Race and class are hot issues in Behn's *Oroonoko* and together with gender have always been. Since the white narrator has ambivalent views on slavery and definitely she is not against the institution, her allegiance to traditional Puritans and Quakers cannot be proved. No theory such as William Edmundson's that slavery was unacceptable to the Christian or Benjamin Lay's prophetic protests (Thomas, 1997) are available in the novel. On the contrary, it seems that her commitment to the Stuarts and the Royalist cause with their concessions of property and settlements in the Caribbean and South America indicates that non-Europeans, especially Africans, *qua* Negroes, should by their very essential inferiority be used as slaves, although she concedes that humanitarian principles should govern the relationship between the European and the colonial subject.

Moreover, her portrayal of Surinam Amerindian is not free from race bias. The worlding attitudes and gaze that the female narrator uses are clear signs of the superiority of the white race and their subaltern role in the colonial relationships. They are not made slaves not because they are non-Europeans but because the colonial enterprise needs them for its own survival and maintenance. Their infantilization by the cultured narrator is a consequence of their essential inferiority and proves that, if

it were not for the above-mentioned pretexts, they would have the same fate as the dislocated Negroes. Consequently, it seems that, for the narrator of *Oroonoko*, the colonial Other, *qua* non-European and non-white, is by nature inferior to the white colonizer to whom the right is given to subordinate. The heterogeneous politics, philosophy and religious tenets of the white man are not important. Only race determines the issues on hierarchisation in human relationships.

It seems that the only exception to this sombre view is the fictional Oroonoko. The redeeming characteristics in the Negro are his natural virtues and his acquired European culture. However, he does not escape othering as a common colonial Other, either by the patriarchal African society of his grandfather or by the colonial European society of the English traders, slavers and settlers. He himself is class-biased against other native Negroes, but not race-biased against white people *qua* white people. Oroonoko, as a colonial Other, is probably used by the narrator to remind people of the terror and horror instilled in all by the dismembering of the English king. The appropriation of the Negro Oroonoko by the dominant power, ambiguously represented by a colonized patriarchal object and a colonizing race-privileged female narrator female, for political ends, is the best site to symbolize hierarchised Self-Other relationships and to perpetuate the issue of resistance against European political disorders.

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Cristina Maria Teixeira Stevens e
Maria Jandyra Cavalcanti Cunha (org.).
Caminhos e colheita: ensino e pesquisa na área de inglês no Brasil.
Brasília: Editora UnB, 2003, 280 p.

Mapeamento histórico da pesquisa e ensino de línguas e de suas literaturas

*GEORGE RAMOS**

"O que é um mapa?", perguntou Elizabeth Bishop.

"Um quadro do Todo, ou uma parte da superfície da Terra", foi a resposta poética que a escritora deu à sua própria pergunta.

Ressaltados em epígrafe no livro *Caminhos e colheita: ensino e pesquisa na área de inglês no Brasil* (Editora UnB, 2003), os versos de Elizabeth Bishop nortearam o trabalho de Cristina Maria Teixeira Stevens e Maria Jandyra Cavalcanti Cunha, organizadoras do volume.

As duas pesquisadoras da Universidade de Brasília definiram a " parte da superfície da Terra" quando estabeleceram que os limites geográficos do ensino que queriam ver discutido: o Brasil. Para reforçar o traçado dessas fronteiras, elas juntaram-se a outros pesquisadores de diferentes cantos do país: Carlos Daghlian (UNESP), José Carlos P.de Almeida Filho (UNICAMP), Lynn Mario T. Menezes de Souza (USP), Sarah Walker (Instituto Rio Branco), Sonia Zyngier (UFRJ), Vera Lúcia Menezes de O. e Paiva (UFMG) e Vilson J. Leffa (UCPel). Conhecendo o perfil desses profissionais, Stevens e Cunha atribuíram-lhes temas para serem dissertados em capítulos do livro.

Os temas relacionavam-se com os pontos relevantes no "quadro do Todo" que elas queriam mostrar: o ensino e a pesquisa na área de inglês. Assim, os capítulos do livro tratam da inserção do ensino de língua inglesa na história do ensino de outras línguas (Cap. 1); das potencialidades e dificuldades dos quatro mais importantes setores de ensino de inglês: instituições de ensino superior; ensino regular em escola pública; ensino regular em escola privada; e o ensino em instituições particulares de ensino de língua (Cap.2); da legislação vigente sobre o ensino e formação de professor de língua inglesa (Cap.3); das diferenças conceituais entre a didática e a pedagogia no ensinar língua inglesa (Cap. 4); do uso da estilística e da pedagogia crítica no ensino das literaturas em língua inglesa (Cap. 5); da pesquisa na área de literaturas em língua inglesa em programas de pós-graduação (Cap. 6); da pesquisa na área de língua inglesa (Cap. 7) ; das perspectivas futuras para o ensino de inglês no país (Cap. 8); das associações de professores de língua inglesa e de suas literaturas (Cap.9)

O décimo e último capítulo foi "reservado para o registro de depoimentos de grandes nomes que fizeram e fazem a história do ensino e da pesquisa na área de língua inglesa e de literaturas correspondentes no Brasil": Francisco Gomes de Matos (UFPE), Hilário Bohn (UFSC), Maria Antonieta Celani (PUC-SP), Munira Mutran (USP) e Nora Thielen (UFRGS). Eles narram trechos de suas histórias de vida para explicar a motivação no seu aprendizado de inglês. Stevens e Cunha qualificam os depoentes como "marcos na abertura dos *caminhos* que (nos) permitem uma *colheita*" nessa área acadêmica.

Se, originalmente, o projeto tinha como objetivo o mapeamento do ensino e pesquisa na área de inglês, transformou-se no final em uma contribuição importante para a emergente historiografia do ensino de línguas no Brasil.

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Marcos Guedes de Oliveira (org.).
Brasil e EUA no novo milênio.
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GISÉLE MANGANELLI FERNANDES
UNESP S. J. Rio Preto

Trata-se do primeiro volume da *Coleção de Estudos Estadunidenses*, do Núcleo de Estudos Americanos da Universidade Federal de Pernambuco, que tem por objetivo "publicar estudos que promovam o entendimento da cultura e sociedade dos EUA e de suas relações atuais com o Brasil". Além de uma "Apresentação" pelo organizador, o volume reúne trabalhos de onze pesquisadores brasileiros de várias áreas: seis de Pernambuco (UFPE, UCP), dois de Brasília (UnB) e três de São Paulo (USP, UNICAMP). O organizador concebe o volume em três partes: a primeira volta-se para questões de política externa e das relações Brasil / EUA; a segunda trata de estudos americanos e comparados com o Brasil; na terceira, três dos autores lançam olhares brasileiros sobre os EUA.

Discutir as relações entre Brasil e Estados Unidos certamente inclui reflexões sobre o 11 de setembro, a ALCA, a economia de mercado, e também considerações no tocante ao papel desempenhado pelos dois países no mundo. É o que o leitor encontra no livro *Brasil e EUA no novo milênio*, cujos artigos buscam mostrar, sob diferentes aspectos, os pontos que norteiam esta conexão entre os maiores países das Américas do Norte e do Sul.

Os textos revelam divergências entre os dois países, por exemplo, nas questões econômicas relativas a produtos como o suco de laranja, a soja, entre outros, em um mundo dominado pela lógica do mercado. Há também questões diplomáticas, como o fato de o Brasil não apoiar a invasão do Iraque. Entretanto, mostram colaborações entre pesquisadores dos dois países no campo científico e isto merece real destaque.

Os autores são de variadas áreas: relações internacionais, arquitetura, ciências sociais, ciência política, literatura, segurança internacional, e algumas das pesquisas apresentadas são desenvolvidas com apoio financeiro do CNPq.

Nos textos, são analisadas questões relativas à importância do fortalecimento do Mercosul, quais as vantagens e desvantagens do estabelecimento da ALCA, à postura brasileira em relação a guerras e suas conseqüências, o problema da segurança nas três Américas e do tráfico de drogas, a presença do terror na tríplice fronteira na América do Sul, a necessidade do constante aprendizado da História pelos analistas de Relações Internacionais, a fim de que possam avaliar os processos históricos com mais acuidade, a classificação do "eixo do mal", feita pelo Presidente Bush, a preocupação com a Coréia do Norte. Os Estados Unidos invadiram o Iraque sem a autorização da ONU e, agora, torna-se necessário redefinir o papel da ONU, que se

mostrou impotente diante do ocorrido. O ataque de 11 de setembro deu ao Presidente Bush a justificativa para executar planos, tais como os chamados "ataques preventivos", a fim de evitar uma nova tragédia em seu território, e levou-o a tomar atitudes que atingem os direitos civis dos americanos.

No âmbito da colaboração científica, são apontadas experiências nos campos da antropologia e da arquitetura. Houve uma visão da antropologia americana que denegriu o Brasil, mas outros antropólogos contribuíram para o incremento de estudos étnicos e culturais com ênfase no Nordeste, sobre populações marginais, além da importância de programas estabelecidos pela Fundação Ford e a presença de Voluntários da Paz em território brasileiro. Quando se aborda a questão do meio ambiente e do paisagismo, discute-se a grande exploração que os Estados Unidos fizeram de seus recursos naturais, levando-se em conta o fato de lá ter nascido uma cultura ambientalista, responsável pela conservação de parques nacionais com o objetivo de preservar a vida selvagem. Ressalta-se a contribuição americana no sentido de despertar uma preocupação com o paisagismo no Brasil, estimulada pela vinda de professores americanos.

A literatura é um elemento para a compreensão dos valores da sociedade americana, de sua relação com o Outro, de sua situação atual. Várias decisões que partem dos Estados Unidos ainda levam em conta a crença que de há a "missão" de levar o cristianismo e a democracia a todo o mundo, como acreditavam os Puritanos. Autores como Nathaniel Hawthorne, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Toni Morrison, Guillermo Gómez-Peña, Adrienne Rich, e cineastas como Michael Moore, em diferentes momentos, com distintas abordagens, revelam como o ideal do Sonho Americano foi destruído pela predominância do materialismo, do capitalismo, do individualismo, do "perigo" que o Outro representa para a América, do racismo e dos preconceitos de modo geral. Na verdade, nunca houve e não há lugar para todos ascenderem socialmente.

A questão dos imigrantes também está presente no livro, pois os Estados Unidos vivem problemas relacionados a questões de fronteiras (sobretudo com o México), devido à corrente imigratória. A situação dos imigrantes deve ser enfrentada, pois muitos sofrem grandes desilusões na busca pelo tão apregoado Sonho Americano.

No mundo contemporâneo, fronteiras de todos os tipos têm sido postas em xeque. Diante da guerra contra o terror, construir o futuro passa, sem dúvida, pela necessidade de entender a variedade de culturas e de realidades econômicas existentes no planeta. Ora, as mais diversas vozes querem ser ouvidas no mundo globalizado.

Este livro ajuda o leitor a analisar posições brasileiras e americanas em diversos assuntos, mas o importante é que os dois países prossigam no caminho da compreensão de suas peculiaridades e das razões que cada país tem para agir da forma que julgar melhor para o seu povo. Brasil e Estados Unidos podem chegar a bom termo em questões econômicas e devem ampliar cada vez mais suas colaborações nos campos científico, tecnológico, cultural e comercial.

TRABALHOS PUBLICADOS NOS NÚMEROS ANTERIORES DE *ESTUDOS ANGLO-AMERICANOS*

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SENAPULLI
Seminário Nacional de Professores Universitários de Literaturas de Língua Inglesa

I. "O ensino da Literatura Norte-Americana e da Língua Inglesa no Brasil e da Literatura Brasileira e da Língua Portuguesa nos EUA", UFRJ, Rio de Janeiro, 10-17 janeiro 1970. [Comissão Fulbright]

II. "O ensino da Literatura Norte-Americana e da Língua Inglesa no Brasil e da Literatura Brasileira e da Língua Portuguesa nos EUA", UnB, Brasília, DF, 11-16 janeiro 1971. [Comissão Fulbright]

III. "O ensino da Literatura Americana e da Língua Inglesa nas Universidades Brasileiras", USP, São Paulo, SP, 30 janeiro a 9 fevereiro 1972. [Comissão Fulbright]

IV. "O ensino da Literatura Americana nas Universidades", UnB, Brasília, DF, 4-10 fevereiro 1973. [Comissão Fulbright]

V. "O ensino da Literatura Americana e da Língua Inglesa nas Universidades Brasileiras", PUCCAMP, Campinas, SP, 3-9 fevereiro 1974. [Comissão Fulbright]

VI. "O ensino da Literatura Norte-Americana em Universidades Brasileiras", UFPR, Curitiba, PR, 26 janeiro a 1º fevereiro 1975. [Comissão Fulbright]

VII. "O ensino da Literatura Norte-Americana em Universidades Brasileiras", UFBA, Salvador, BA, 2-6 fevereiro 1976. [Comissão Fulbright]

VIII. "Língua e Literatura Inglesa", São Paulo, SP, 5-9 julho 1976. [Conselho Britânico]

IX. "O ensino de Shakespeare", São Paulo, 18-22 julho 1977. [Conselho Britânico]

X. "O Teatro Inglês Moderno", PUC-RS, Porto Alegre, RS, 10-14 julho 1978. [Conselho Britânico]

XI. "O Teatro Inglês Moderno", Universidade Católica de Petrópolis, Petrópolis, RJ, 17-21 julho 1978. [Conselho Britânico]

XII. "*Commonwealth Literature*", Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 4-8 fevereiro 1980. [Conselho Britânico]

XIII. "O ensino da Literatura de Língua Inglesa em nível universitário", UFES, Vitória, ES, 26-30 janeiro 1981. [Conselho Britânico]

XIV. "*Anglo-Irish Literature with Emphasis on Joyce*", Nova Friburgo, RJ, 21-26 janeiro 1982. [Conselho Britânico]

XV. "O Romance Comtemporâneo Inglês desde 1960", Embu, SP, 20-26 janeiro 1983. [Conselho Britânico]

XVI. "Teatro Comtemporâneo", PUC-MG, Belo Horizonte, MG, 26 janeiro a 1º fevereiro 1984. [Conselho Britânico e USIS]

XVII. "Poesia e Ficção Contemporâneas", PUCCAMP, , Campinas, SP, 28-31 janeiro 1985. [Conselho Britânico e USIS]

XVIII. "Tendências da Crítica Contemporânea", CIES "Farias Brito", Guarulhos, SP, 27-30 janeiro 1986. [Conselho Britânico, CNPq e USIS]

XIX. " O Conto Moderno", Universidade Federal de Juiz de Fora, 26-30 janeiro 1987. [Conselho Britânico, USIS, CNPq]

XX. "A Sátira na Literatura", Ibirá, SP, , 1-5 fevereiro 1988. [Conselho Britânico, Embaixada da Irlanda, USIS]

XXI.. "*Trends in Recent Literature*", Universidade Estadual de Maringá, 23 a 27 janeiro 1989. [Comissão Fulbright, Conselho Britânico, CNPq, CONCITEC].

XXII. "Literatura Comparada: Teoria e Prática", Faculdade de Filosofia, Ciências e Letras de Poços de Caldas, 22-26 janeiro 1990. [Prefeitura Municipal de Poços de Caldas, Conselho Britânico, CNPq]

XXIII. "Literatura, História e Mito", UFMG, Belo Horizonte, 28 janeiro a 1º fevereiro 1991. [Comissão Fulbright, Conselho Britânico, CNPq, FAPEMIG]

XXIV. "A Literatura dos Descobrimentos", UFPB, João Pessoa, 27-31 janeiro 1992. [Conselho Britânico, CNPq, USIS]

XXV. "Interdisciplinaridade", UNESP S.J. Rio Preto, 25-28 janeiro 1993. [Conselho Britânico, CNPq, FAPESP, USIS]

XXVI. "Humor e Ironia na Literatura", PUCCAMP, Campinas, 25-29 janeiro 1994. [Conselho Britânico, CNPq, USIS]

XXVII. "Redemarcando as Fronteiras: Literaturas de Língua Inglesa Hoje", Águas de Lindóia, SP, 30 janeiro - 3 fevereiro 1995. [Conselho Britânico, CNPq, FAPESP, USIS]

XXVIII. "Literatura e Cinema" (XXVIII SENAPULLI), Ouro Preto, MG, 29 jan. - 2 fev. 1996. [Conselho Britânico, CNPq, CAPES, FAPEMIG, UFOP, USIS]

XXIX. "Literatura e Estudos Culturais", Atibaia, SP, 27-31 janeiro 1997. [Conselho Britânico, CNPq, CAPES0, FAPESP, USIS]

XXX. "Ensaio e Biografia", Atibaia, SP, 27-31 julho 1998. [Conselho Britânico, CNPq, CAPES, FAPESP, USIS]

XXXI "Neo-Realismo: Página, Palco e Tela", CES Juiz de Fora, MG, 17-21 julho 2000 [ABECAN, *The British Council*, Embaixada Americana, CAPES, CNPq, FAPESP]

XXXII "Literaturas de Língua Inglesa: Visões e Revisões", UFSC 6-10 abril 2003. UFSC, [ABECAN, CAPES, CNPq, Embaixada Americana FAPESP]

ENPULI

Encontro Nacional de Professores Universitários de Língua Inglesa

I. "Ensino e Aprendizagem da Língua Inglesa", UFRN, Natal, RN, 29 janeiro a 2 fevereiro 1979. [Conselho Britânico]

II. "Ensino e Aprendizagem da Língua Inglesa", UFMG, Belo Horizonte, MG, 30 junho a 4 julho 1980. [Conselho Britânico]

III. "Ensino e Aprendizagem da Língua Inglesa", UFBA, Salvador, BA, 16-21 julho 1981. [Conselho Britânico]

IV. "Ensino e Aprendizagem da Língua Inglesa", UFSC, Florianópolis, SC, 14-20 julho 1982. [Conselho Britânico e Comissão Fulbright]

V. "Ensino e Aprendizagem da Língua Inglesa", PUC-SP, São Paulo, SP, 17-22 julho 1983. [Conselho Britânico, CNPq, FINEP / FNDCT]

VI.. "Ensino e Aprendizagem da Língua Inglesa", UFPE, Recife, 22-27 julho 1984. [Comissão Fulbright, Conselho Britânico, CNPq]

VII. "*Communicative Language Teaching*.", UFC, 28 julho a 2 agosto 1985, Fortaleza, CE. [Comissão Fulbright, Conselho Britânico]

VIII. "Ensino e Aprendizagem de Língua Inglesa",Universidade de Brasília, 25-29 julho 1988. [Conselho Britânico, CNPq]

IX. "Desafios na formação do professor / profissional de língua estrangeira no Brasil", UFRN, Natal, 21-25 agosto 1989. [Conselho Britânico, FNDE/MEC, INEP/ MEC, FUNPEC, USIS]

X. "Avaliação curricular: repensando objetivos, métodos e testagem no ensino de inglês", PUC/RJ, 30 julho 3 agosto 1990. [Comissão Fulbright, Conselho Britânico]

XI. "Ensino e Aprendizagem de Língua Inglesa", Faculdade São Marcos, São Paulo, SP, 29 julho a 2 agosto 1991. [Conselho Britânico, CNPq, Embaixada do Canadá, USIS]

XII. "A autonomia na aprendizagem (*Towards learner autonomy*)", UFRGS, Porto Alegre, 19-23 julho 1993. [Conselho Britânico, CNPq, FAPERS, USIS]

XIII. "Interdisciplinaridade e Trocas de Experiências Inter-Universitárias: Compartilhando Recursos Humanos e Acadêmicos", PUC / RIO, 24-28 julho 1995. [Conselho Britânico, CNPq, FAPERJ, USIS]

XIV. "*Social Implications [in Pedagogy and in Discourse] of Teaching English as a Foreign Language*", UFMG, Belo Horizonte, 21-24 julho 1997. [Conselho Britânico, CNPq, CAPES, FAPEMIG]

XV. "*The Teaching / Learning of English: Focus on Identity, Texts and Practices*", FFLCH / USP, 19-22 julho 1999. [Conselho Britânico, CAPES, Yázigi, Alpha Idiomas, CEL-LEP, CNPq, CAPES, FAPESP]

XVI. "Formação de Professores em Tempos de Mudança", UEL, Londrina, PR, 2-6 setembro 2001. [CAPES, CNPq, Conselho Britânico, Embaixada Americana, Fundação Araucária]

XVII. "A Interculturalidade no Ensino de Inglês", UFSC 6-10 abril 2003. UFSC, [ABECAN, CAPES, CNPq, Embaixada Americana FAPESP]

Outros

Mesa-redonda sobre "Pós-Graduação em Literaturas de Língua Inglesa no Brasil", Itamaraty, Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 11-13 outubro 1982. [UFRJ e Conselho Britânico]

I Encontro Regional de Professores Universitários de Língua Inglesa (Região Centro-Leste), PUC / RIO, julho 1986. [Comissão Fulbright, Conselho Britânico]